

Red Rocks Community College

Shaping the Future of Health and Emergency Services

Introduction

Red Rocks Community College is embarking on an ambitious initiative to address the burgeoning demands of the Colorado labor market by proposing the construction of a state-of-the-art Health Sciences, Emergency Medical Services, and Fire Science Technology Building.



Demand is High

The surge in workforce demand for health professionals, as highlighted in the 2023 Colorado Talent Pipeline Report, underscores the necessity for such an educational facility.

- **Increase in demand for Registered Nurses: 28.6%**
- **Increase in demand for Emergency Medical Technicians/Paramedics: 26.8%**
- **Increase in demand for Firefighters: 15.5%**

Solutions

To meet the escalating need to fill approximately 20,000 job openings in nursing per year, Red Rocks Community College is launching an **Associate Degree in Nursing**, commencing in the fall of 2025. This dynamic new program will add nearly 100 nurses per year to the workforce, effectively addressing this crucial gap by developing talent with short-term education and intensive, hands-on training.

In addition, while RRCC's existing **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** and **Fire Science Technology (FST)** programs are vital for the regional economy, growth has been hindered by spatial constraints at its Lakewood campus. The strategic solution encompasses relocating those programs to the Arvada campus, thereby alleviating the space deficit and facilitating their expansion.

Red Rocks Community College's proposal for the new Health Sciences, Emergency Medical Services, and Fire Science Technology Building demonstrates a proactive response to the evolving needs of Colorado's workforce. By investing in cutting-edge facilities and innovative programs, RRCC is poised to meet the demands of the ever-growing healthcare and emergency services sectors.

Investing in the Future of Health and Emergency Services at RRCC

Background

According to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the population of Coloradans aged 65 and older is projected to increase by 28% by the year 2030, alongside an additional 10% growth across all age groups compared to 2022 population levels, further demonstrating the urgent need for education and training for healthcare workers and first responders.

- In 2022, the Colorado General Assembly passed SB 22-226 to support in-demand career workforce needs through Care Forward Colorado. The bill aimed to meet healthcare and first responder industry demands by providing free college for students enrolling in short-term healthcare and first responder education and training.
- In 2023, the Colorado General Assembly passed HB 23-1246 paving the way for Career Advance Colorado, designed to boost enrollment in community college first responder and nursing programs. This bill also provided \$2.5 million for RRCC to develop and launch an associate degree nursing program.

Capital Construction

Red Rocks Community College has submitted a Capital Construction request for consideration. The plan includes a 36,562 square foot facility that will replace a dilapidated building once occupied by the Colorado State Home and Training School, or Ridge Home.

Estimated Costs

- Total for renovation and new construction: \$37,339,236
- RRCC contribution (reserves and fundraising): \$7,467,847
- Request from Capital Construction Fund: \$29,871,389
- Projected timeline for completion (if funded): Fall 2027

The facility will provide the highest level of learning experiences for RRCC students with:

- Medical simulation center lab space including a simulated ER
- Apparatus bay for working ambulances and fire trucks
- Virtual reality training lab
- Interprofessional education (IPE) lab space
- Workstations, meeting rooms, and lounge space