

# Police Officers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## Police Officers - [NOC 2021: 42100/ NOC 2016: 4311]

**Police Officers** may also be called:

- *police detective*
- *police investigator*
- *constable*
- *crime prevention officer*
- *patrol officer*
- *canine team police officer*
- *community relations police officer*
- *RCMP police officer / constable*
- *police officer, diver / search & rescue*
- *police officer, foot patrol / bike patrol*
- *police officer, highway patrol / harbour*
- *police officer, mounted/motorcycle patrol*
- *railway police officer*

### 1. What Would I Do?

*Police Officers protect the public, detect and prevent crime and perform other activities directed at maintaining law and order. Duties may include:*

- patrol assigned areas to maintain public safety & order and to enforce laws and regulations
- investigate crimes and accidents, secure evidence, interview witnesses, compile notes and reports and provide testimony in courts of law
- arrest criminal suspects

- provide emergency assistance to victims of accidents, crimes and natural disasters
- participate in crime prevention, public information and safety programs

**More information:**

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Police Officers**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/plan-career/explore-careers>
- **Police Officer. Justice Institute of British Columbia**  
<https://www.jibc.ca/career/police-officer>
- **Career Cruising** database (Profiles for 'Police Officer' and 'Detective')  
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

## 2. Am I Suited For This Job?

**Police Officers should be:**

- *physically fit*
- *good with people*
- *observant*
- *detail oriented*
- *calm*
- *able to work well as part of a team*

**You should have:**

- *good judgment*
- *good communication skills*
- *problem-solving skills*

Police officers may work in an indoor setting, as well as outdoors where you can be exposed to various weather conditions. Police officers work shifts, including weekends and nights. You may spend your shifts in patrol cars and at crime and accident scenes.

*Sources:*

- *WorkBC Career Profile & Career Cruising*

### 3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

**WorkBC** reports that in British Columbia the **median** annual salary for Police Officers is \$87,595.

In BC's regions, you can expect to earn:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<a href="#">British Columbia</a>	25.48	42.00	61.06
<a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>	25.48	42.00	61.06
<a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>	25.48	42.00	61.06
<a href="#">Lower Mainland–Southwest Region</a>	30.29	43.75	61.06
<a href="#">Nechako Region</a>	31.85	40.00	41.83
<a href="#">North Coast Region</a>	31.85	40.00	41.83
<a href="#">Northeast Region</a>	25.48	42.00	61.06
<a href="#">Thompson–Okanagan Region</a>	24.27	40.87	45.19
<a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a>	25.48	41.35	57.69

Table from Job Bank Canada Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

Most police officers receive benefits, such as pension plans, health coverage, and sick days. Benefits and salary levels are typically negotiated by police associations or unions on behalf of police forces.

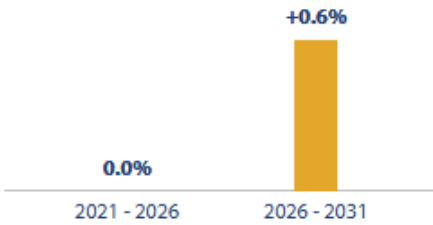
Sources: WorkBC Career Profile & Career Cruising

### 4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

Approximately 10,800 people work as police officers in BC. *JobBank Canada* predicts that the job outlook will be good for the 2021-2023 period.

## Job Outlook in BC, 2021-2031

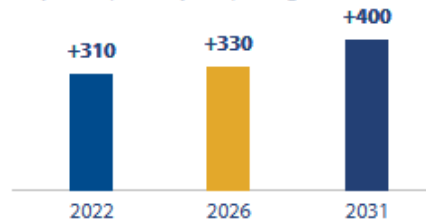
### Forecasted average employment growth rate



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

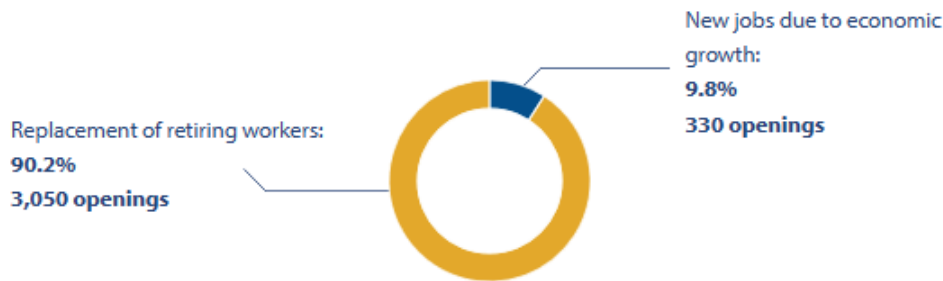
### Job openings

10 year expected job openings: 3,380



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

### Composition of job openings



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Chart from WorkBC

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profile
- JobBank Canada: Job Outlook <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-job-outlooks>

## 5. How do I become a Police Officer

**\*\*\*in British Columbia, all police recruits must be Canadian citizens or have permanent resident status\*\*\***

## **Police Officers in Municipal Forces**

### **Requirements/ Qualifications for Recruits to Municipal Police Forces**

The following are basic requirements for police recruits:

- *must have Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status*
- completion of secondary school is required
- completion of at least one year of post-secondary education, preferably graduation with a college diploma or university degree
- physical agility, strength, fitness and vision requirements must be met, and psychological or other tests may also be required

**Check with your local police force as each municipal force has its own detailed list of qualifications for recruits.** For examples of qualifications, see:

- Vancouver Police Department, <https://vpd.ca/join-us/recruiting/become-a-vancouver-police-officer/>
- New Westminster Police Department, <https://www.nwpolice.org/join-nwpd/police-officer/>

### **Education/Training for Municipal Police Forces**

- a 41 to 44 week police training program is provided:
- in BC, the Justice Institute of BC operates a police training program through **The Police Academy**
- The Police Academy is responsible for training **all municipal police recruits** in British Columbia

For more details on the police recruit training program, see

#### **Police Academy**

<https://www.jibc.ca/police-academy>

- upon successful completion of the Recruit Training Program, candidates graduate as “*Qualified Municipal Constables*”
- **Please note: ALL candidates in the Police Academy must already be hired by a municipal police department prior to receiving training**
- For a list of **municipal police forces in BC** (including transit police, First Nations police and railway police), see:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/bc-police-forces>

## **Officers in Royal Canadian Mounted Police – RCMP**

### **Requirements/ Qualifications for Recruits to RCMP**

- Canadian citizen or permanent resident status and has resided in Canada for the past ten years
- completion of secondary school is required
- successful completion of RCMP entrance exam\*\*  
\*\*the **entrance exam is waived** for candidates who have completed a college program or university degree
- minimum requirements for cadet applicants are listed here <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/qualifications-and-requirements>

### **Education/Training for RCMP recruits**

- cadets must successfully complete 26-week training program at Depot, the RCMP Training Academy in Regina, Saskatchewan. For more details see: <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/cadet-training>
- upon completion of training at Depot, candidates are granted *peace officer status*
- for a list of RCMP detachments in BC, see: <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?languageId=1&siteNodeId=27>

## **Reserve Constables / Community Safety Officers**

Some larger urban police forces have an additional class of officers who may be called 'Reserve Constables', 'Community Safety Officers', 'Auxiliary Officers'. These officers may have reduced training/education requirements depending on their police force. They usually work as a **volunteer**, often assisting at community events, crime prevention programs, or traffic safety for their police force. They may be classed as 'Auxiliary Constables' or 'Special Municipal Constable'. For more details on qualifications and requirements, check with individual police forces in your area.

For examples, see:

- Vancouver Police Department, Special Municipal Constable  
<https://vpd.ca/join-us/recruiting/become-a-special-municipal-constable/>
- New Westminster Reserve Constable Program  
<https://www.nwpolice.org/join-nwpcd/reserve-constable-program/>
- Delta Police Reserve Programs  
<https://deltapolice.ca/reserve-constable-program>
- Victoria Police Department, Reserve Constables  
<https://vicpd.ca/joinvicpd/#reserve-constable>
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Community Constables  
<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/community-constables>

### ***Education/Training for Reserve Constables***

Each local police force recruits its own candidates for reserve constables who will then be required to complete a 92 hour basic training program and successfully pass an exam. For more details on training program, check with individual police forces in your area

For further information also see:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/the-structure-of-police-services-in-bc/auxiliary-reserve-constables>

### ***Jail Guards***

Some police forces *\*may\** hire jail guards. All candidates ***\*must be Canadian citizens or have permanent resident status\****. For examples, see the following police forces for details on requirements/qualifications and training:

- **Vancouver Police Department**  
<https://vpd.ca/join-us/recruiting/become-a-special-municipal-constable/>
- **Victoria Police**  
<https://vicpd.ca/joinvicpd/jail-guard/>



## 6. How Do I Find A Job?

### **Where would I work?**

- for municipal and federal governments
- some provincial and regional governments
- the armed forces
- transit/railway companies

### **Finding Advertised Jobs**

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

### **Local Newspapers**

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

### **Online Job Postings**

#### **Municipal Police Forces in BC**

- Positions with **municipal police forces in BC**, BC Transit police and railway police services are posted by each individual police force. See: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/bc-police-forces> (go to each police force website and look for their “careers” or “employment” links)

**Careers with Royal Canadian Mounted Police RCMP**, see:

- <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/police-officer-careers>
- **Indeed.ca**  
[https://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)  
<https://ca.indeed.com/Law-Enforcement-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>
- **WorkBC**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/search-and-prepare-job/find-jobs#/job-search>

## ***Finding "Hidden Jobs"***

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.*

## ***Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of employers who are in this industry. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- ***Municipal police forces in BC*** (including transit police, First Nations police and railway police), see: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/bc-police-forces>

- **Reference Canada**

<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "police" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

**NOTE:** You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database.

## ***Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies***

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

### ***Networking and the Hidden Job Market:***

*When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.*

### **Volunteer opportunities**

- **Volunteer BC**  
<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/>
- **GoVolunteer.ca**  
<https://govolunteer.ca/>

### **Reserve Constables**

If you are Canadian citizen or have permanent resident status, you can consider applying to be Reserve Constable:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/the-structure-of-police-services-in-bc/auxiliary-reserve-constables>

### **Volunteers in Municipal Police Forces**

Some municipal police forces may also accept volunteers who perform in community safety programs such as 'Speed Watch Program', 'Theft from Auto Program', or may assist in staffing a 'Community Policing Centre'. For further volunteer opportunities, check with your local police force. Here are some examples:

- **Vancouver Police Department**  
<https://vpd.ca/join-us/volunteer-opportunities/>
- **New Westminster Police**  
<https://www.nwpolice.org/join-nwpd/volunteer7/>
- **Delta Police**  
<https://deltapolice.ca/joindpd/volunteer>
- **Port Moody Police Department**  
<https://portmoodypolice.ca/join-pmpd/volunteer-opportunities/>
- **West Vancouver Police**  
<https://westvanpolice.ca/join-wvpd/volunteer-opportunities>

More information:

- **Networking for Employment**  
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**  
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/getting-canadian-work-experience>

## 7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, <https://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

*For more information see:*

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/writing-resumes-and-cover-letters>

## 8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With additional training and experience, you may progress to commissioned senior police officer or senior detective positions.

## 9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Policing in BC**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc>

Information on structure of police services in BC, First Nations Policing and municipal police forces

- **Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in British Columbia**

<https://bc-cb.rcmp->

[grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=14&languageId=1&contentId=-1](https://grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=14&languageId=1&contentId=-1)

**Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.**

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.*

