

Human Resources Specialists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Human Resources Specialist [NOC 2021: 11200 / NOC 2016: 1121]

Job Description

Human resources specialists develop and manage a range of activities including hiring and promoting employees; training and supporting workers; creating labour relations policies, programs and procedures; and laying off or firing people.

As a Human Resources Specialist you may perform the following duties:

- plan and manage staff and labour relations including policies, programs and procedures
- oversee programs that support employees and make sure that the workplace is diverse, fair, respectful and inclusive
- write job descriptions, occupational classifications and pay scales
- hire, promote, layoff and fire staff
- tell employees about policies, pay rates, benefit programs and union agreements
- settle collective agreements on behalf of employers or workers, and act as a go-between in labour disputes and grievances
- co-ordinate employee job reviews
- advise on wage/salary levels and other rewards programs

More Information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Human Resources Professionals**

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Industry Overview

While there are currently enough people graduating from HR programs, most recent graduates do not have the experience needed for a specialist role—and that means those jobs are in high demand. In the past few years, employers in B.C. have found it difficult to find experienced HR professionals and HR generalists. This is expected to continue in the coming years until graduates gain the skills needed for these jobs. Employment is the greatest in larger urban areas such as Metro Vancouver, or more remote locations which have large employers.

You will be most in demand if you have previous experience. Formal HR education and a CHRP designation (Certified Human Resources Professional) are also preferred by most employers. Employers have an increasing interest in those with the ability to interpret data, prepare and deliver presentations and a broad understanding of human resources trends. You will also have an advantage if you are competent using social networking technologies.

Job Outlook in BC

Human Resources Specialists

B.C. Labour Market Outlook (2019-2029)

Provincial outlook

Forecasted average employment growth rate



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Job openings

10 year expected job openings: 2,770



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Composition of job openings

Replacement of retiring workers:
71.6%
1,990 openings



New jobs due to economic growth:
28.4%
790 openings

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/careers/1121>

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WorkBC provides job openings for *Human Resources Specialists* in BC regions from 2019 to 2029:

| Region | Employment in 2019 | Average Annual Employment Growth | Expected Number of Job Openings 2019-2029 |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Lower Mainland / Southwest | 5,770 | 0.9% | 1850 |
| Vancouver Island | 1210 | 1.0% | 520 |
| Thompson-Okanagan | 570 | 1.3% | 240 |
| Kootenay | 110 | 0.5% | 40 |
| Cariboo | 210 | 1.3% | 70 |
| North Coast & Nechako | 90 | 0.1% | 20 |
| Northeast | 80 | 2.0% | 40 |

You can learn more about working in Human Resources in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Human Resources Professionals**

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

- **Career Cruising** – Profile for 'Human Resources Specialist'

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

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

Types of Employers

HR professionals work in the private and public sectors, may work for an HR consulting company, or may be self-employed. They work for all types of businesses and organizations, including:

- public administration (government)
- professional, scientific, and technical services industries
- accounting firms, hospitals, banks, department stores

Salary

The average *median* salary for HR specialists in BC is \$78,752 a year, with an hourly *median* rate of \$37.76/hr.

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Income in this field depends on level of education and experience. It also depends on the type of work specialists do. The location and size of the company they work for are also factors.

HR specialists usually get benefits as well as a salary. These can include dental coverage, paid vacation and sick days, and a retirement plan.

Job Bank Canada provides hourly wages for Human Resources Specialists in BC regions:

| Community/Area | Wages (\$/hour) | | |
|---|-----------------|--------|-------|
| | Low | Median | High |
| British Columbia | 15.38 | 28.85 | 60.17 |
| Cariboo Region | 15.38 | 28.85 | 60.17 |
| Kootenay Region | 15.38 | 28.85 | 60.17 |
| Lower Mainland–Southwest Region | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Nechako Region | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| North Coast Region | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Northeast Region | 15.38 | 28.85 | 60.17 |
| Thompson–Okanagan Region | 15.38 | 28.85 | 60.17 |
| Vancouver Island and Coast Region | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Canada | 15.38 | 27.93 | 60.17 |

Source: JobBank Canada <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/12396/BC>

Working Hours

Most human resources specialists work a standard five-day work week, with a minimum of 40 hours per week. In some cases (such as if you have a management position) you may work longer hours during the week and occasionally on weekends.

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Human Resources Professionals**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

- **Career Cruising** – Profile for 'Human Resources Specialist'
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

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2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- ability to work independently and in a team
- excellent oral and written communication
- good analytical abilities
- strong critical thinking ability
- excellent problem-solving skills
- understanding of business principles and procedures
- work well under pressure

Education and Experience

In order to work as a human resources specialist you need a university degree or college diploma in a field related to personnel management (including business administration, industrial relations, commerce or psychology).

Other professional requirements may include:

- *Chartered Professional in Human Resources* (CPHR) designation
<https://www.hrpa.ca/designations/chrp-certified-human-resource-professional/>
- three to five years of progressive experience in a position related to personnel administration
- extensive skills in using computer-based management-information systems

Qualifications

This occupation is not regulated in British Columbia.

There are no mandatory requirements for licensing or professional certification in order to work as a human resources specialist in BC.

However, the *Chartered Professional in Human Resources* (CPHR) designation is becoming increasingly important to many employers.

Information about obtaining the CPHR designation is available at:

- **Chartered Professionals in Human Resources [CPHR] BC and Yukon –**
<https://cphrbc.ca/cphr/become-a-cphr/the-cphr-path/>

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Human Resources Professionals**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **JobBank Canada**
<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/requirements/25771/BC>

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources.

Local Newspapers

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

Online Job Postings

- **HRJob.ca**
<https://www.hrjob.ca/>
- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search

Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards.

- **Neuvoo**
<https://neuvoo.ca/>
- **BC JobConnect (Immigrant Employment Council of BC IECBC)**
<https://www.bcjobconnect.ca> **must have permanent resident number**
newcomers can post their skills, education and work experience to BC employers looking for workers

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **CPHR BC Career Centre**
<https://cphrbc.ca/resources/career-centre/>
Available to members only

Identifying the Right Position

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For human resources specialists, look for these related job titles:

- consultant, human resources
- employee relations officer
- employment equity officer
- human resources research officer
- labour relations officer
- job analyst
- wage analyst
- compensation research analyst

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of potential employers. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

Since human resources positions exist in many industries, you'll need to decide what industry you would like to work in, and then find directories for that industry. A couple to try:

- **Business in Vancouver Book of Lists**

Includes contact information for the biggest companies in BC.

Available at the Central Library, 338.9711 B97b or online at:

<http://www.biv.com/lists>

- **BC's Top Employers**

<https://www.canadastop100.com/bc/>

- **Reference Canada**

<http://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 "human resources" 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. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume (curriculum vitae) and a cover letter. These should identify the position you are applying for and summarize your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following guides which are available in print at the Central Library or online:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Networking for Employment]
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Associations for human resources professionals in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **Chartered Professionals in Human Resources [CPHR] BC and Yukon**
<https://cphrbc.ca>
- **CPHR Canada Chartered Professionals in Human Resources** (formerly Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations CCHRA)
<https://cphr.ca/>

Industry Journals

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. Examples at the Central Library:

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- **Canadian HR Reporter**

Available at the Central Library 658.305 C2122; also available online at:

<https://www.hrreporter.com/>

and through the *Canadian Business and Current Affairs* database available

through the VPL Digital Library page: <http://www.vpl.ca/digitallibrary>

- **Peopletalk – CPHR Canada** (formerly HRVoice)

Available in print at the Central Library, 658.3005 P41 or online at:

<https://peopletalkonline.ca/>

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library,
Vancouver Public 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 <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>*

