

# Journalists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## **1. Working as a Journalist**

**[NOC 2021: 51113/ NOC 2016: 5123]**

### ***Job Description***

Journalists research, investigate, interpret and communicate news and public affairs through newspapers, television, radio and other media.

Working as a Journalist you perform the following duties:

- collect local, national, and international news through interviews, investigation and observation
- write news stories, editorials and/or commentaries
- receive, analyze, and verify news and other copy for accuracy
- arrange for and conduct interviews as part of research
- write critical reviews of literary, musical, and other artistic works
- you may specialize in print, broadcast, or webcast media in particular issues such as political affairs, arts, sports or business reporting, or in a particular geographic area

Source:

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

## ***Industry Overview***

The majority of journalists in BC are employed in the Lower Mainland (62%) and Vancouver Island (16%) regions.

Technology has impacted this occupation in a number of ways. Journalists familiar with new technologies and with good computer skills will have an advantage over others seeking work in this field. Journalists may have to use web access and laptops for remote filing of stories and they may also now play a greater role in offline editing. These technological changes may create a trend towards part-time work and self-employment.

In the last several years, there has been a slow decline in newspaper readership and an increased interest in internet news sites. As a result, prospects for broadcast journalists are improving, and journalists increasingly require knowledge of the internet and related technology.

Due to downsizing, television stations tend to need fewer people, so it is an asset for a journalist to be able to operate a video camera and supply the visuals for their own story. Journalists who can write about scientific or technical subjects will have an advantage in the labour market.

Source:

### **WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists**

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

## **Job Outlook in BC**

### **Journalists – Employment Outlook**



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

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Employment in 2019</b>	<b>Average Annual Employment Growth 2019-2029</b>	<b>Expected Number of Job Openings 2019-2029</b>
Vancouver Island	210	0.6%	80
Lower Mainland /Southwest	800	0.5%	240
Thompson-Okanagan	110	1.3%	40
Kootenay	70	1.5%	20
Cariboo	40	3.5%	20
North Coast & Nechako	30	2.1%	10

You can learn more about working as a Journalist in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising** [profiles for Print Journalist and Television & Radio Reporter]  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>  
*Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library*

### **Types of Employers**

Journalists are employed by:

- radio
- television networks stations
- internet sites
- newspapers
- magazines

You may also be self-employed, working on a freelance basis.

### **Salary**

The **median** annual salary for Journalists in BC is \$55,143. The hourly median rate is \$26.44/hour.

## Earnings – Journalists:



Source: **WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists** <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Many journalists work full-time, but some work on a freelance basis and sell their stories to several different publications. Earnings for freelance journalists vary depending on the price you are able to get for your stories, and the number of stories you sell each year.

Usually, the larger the size of the publication, the higher the salary. Publications with a wide circulation often pay the most. Many journalists start out working for small, local papers. Then, they move on to larger publications with a wider circulation.

Journalists working for large newspapers, magazines, or media companies are often unionized. These positions often include benefits such as dental and health care, paid sick days and paid vacation.

Television reporters' earnings depend on the size of the market they work in. Reporters who broadcast nationally or to large cities earn higher salaries. Those who work in small towns or rural areas earn less. Many reporters start off working in smaller markets. They move up to larger markets as they gain experience

Sources:

**WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists**

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

**Career Cruising** [profiles for Print Journalist and Television & Radio Reporter]

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

***Working Hours***

Journalists work approximately 35–40 hours per week, although you may be required to work longer hours due to deadlines or other factors. The pace of work is also typically fast in order to meet deadlines. Newspaper journalists may have to work late into the night to cover important stories. If you work on a freelance basis you have the freedom to set your own hours, as long as you meet your deadlines.

Entry-level television reporters may work on a temporary contract basis before finding full-time work. They often begin by working nights or weekends. As they gain seniority, they get better shifts. Full-time reporters work 8 to 10 hours a day, and 40 to 50 hours a week. If a big news story breaks, they may have to work long, irregular hours.

Sources:

**WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists**

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

**Career Cruising** [profiles for Print Journalist and Television & Radio Reporter]

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

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## **2. Skills, Education and Experience**

### ***Skills***

- excellent written language and communication skills
- research skills and attention to detail
- working well with others
- good computer skills
- knowledge of current events
- willingness to take risks
- critical thinking
- initiative and persistence
- knowledge of journalistic ethics, laws, and standards
- able to work within tight deadlines
- able to take in a wide variety of information quickly and accurately

### ***Education and Experience***

Journalists must have a college diploma or a university degree in journalism or a related field (i.e., communications). Other requirements may include:

- A university degree in English or history with proven writing skills.
- One to two years of experience for daily newspapers
- Newspaper layout experience and proven competency with a digital camera

Reporters are not required to get post-secondary training, but, you are not likely to get a job without it. You can earn a degree or diploma in journalism or communications. Many programs offer an internship in a newsroom.

Sources:

#### **WorkBC Career Profile for Journalists**

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

**Career Cruising** [profiles for Print Journalist and Television & Radio Reporter]

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

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



## **Qualifications**

***This occupation is not regulated in British Columbia.***

## **3. Finding Jobs**

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, electronic sources, and through professional associations.

### ***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***

- **Indeed.com**

[http://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)

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

- **Jeff Gaulin's Journalism Job Board**

<http://www.jeffgaulin.com/>

Canada's leading web site for employment in the journalism, media, and communications industry

- **Media Job Search Canada**

<http://www.mediajobsearchcanada.com/>

Site for media-related jobs across Canada

- **Neuvoo.ca**

<http://neuvoo.ca>

- **BC JobConnect**

<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***

- **Canadian Media Production Association** – Job Board  
<https://cmpa.ca/careers/>

### ***Identifying the Right Position***

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

For journalists look for these and other related job titles (from NOC)

- Book reviewer
- Content provider
- Broadcast journalist
- Columnist
- Correspondent
- Cyberjournalist / cyberreporter
- Investigative reporter
- News commentator
- Reporter
- Television news anchorperson
- News correspondent

### ***Creating a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of companies in the Lower Mainland or BC in the journalism sector. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Canadian Media Production Association** – Membership Directory  
<https://members.cmpa.ca/member-directory/member-directory-search/>  
<https://members.cmpa.ca/member-directory/?filter=abc>
- **Canadian Advertising Rates & Data CARD**  
Available at the Central Library, 659.05 C21 or online at:  
<https://www.cardonline.ca/> (search by category, radio, television, newspapers, magazines)

- **Canadian Writer's Market**

Available at the Central Library, 808.02 G65c11

- **PWAC Guide to Canadian Markets for Professional Freelance Writers**

Available at the Central Library, 808.0205 P445pa

- **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 "newspaper" or "magazine" or "television stations" or "radio stations" 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 that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes 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 pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **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 journalists and news organizations in BC and Canada can provide you with information and assistance.

- **Canadian Association of Journalists**  
<http://caj.ca/>
- **Canadian Journalism Foundation (CJF)**  
<http://www.cjf-fjc.ca/>
- **Canadian Media Production Association**  
<http://www.cmpa.ca/>
- **Canadian Freelance Guild**  
<https://canadianfreelanceguild.ca/en/>
- **Community News Media Association - British Columbia and Yukon**  
<http://bccommunitynews.com/>
- **News Media Canada**  
<https://nmc-mic.ca/>
- **Science Writers & Communicators of Canada**  
<https://sciencewriters.ca/>

## **Industry Journals**

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

- **In the Field** / The Canadian Association of Journalists  
Available online at [https://caj.ca/In\\_the\\_Field](https://caj.ca/In_the_Field)  
<https://caj.ca/blog/id/91>
- **Quill and Quire**  
Available at VPL, Central Library Branch, 015 Q6  
And online at <http://www.quillandquire.com/>

**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/>.