

Veterinarians

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Veterinarian, NOC 3114

Job Description

Veterinarians prevent, diagnose and treat diseases and disorders in animals. You also advise clients on the general care of animals. You may specialize in the care and treatment of either small or large animals.

As a **Veterinarian** you perform some or all of the following duties:

- Examine animals and diagnose problems or diseases
- Treat sick or injured animals
- Vaccinate animals to prevent diseases and illnesses
- Provide obstetrical and dental services
- Provide advice about animal care to owners
- May be responsible for overall operation of animal hospital or clinic
- May conduct veterinary research
- May enforce government regulations in disease control and food production

Source: WorkBC Career Profiles <http://www.workbc.ca/Careers/> [Veterinarians, NOC 3114]

Industry Overview

This profession has become highly competitive in BC. This is especially true for those in small animal practice, which accounts for approximately 80%.

Growth for veterinarians has been driven by pet owners spending more on animal care and technological and medical advancements enabling better care for animals.

Many veterinarians work as employees for several years before forming partnerships or starting new practices. The cost of setting up a new business in veterinary medicine can be as high as \$500,000.

If you are willing to handle large animals or willing to work in rural and isolated areas you may have better employment opportunities.

Veterinarians also provide expertise in the area of disease outbreak identification and control. You may help to ensure food safety for humans during food production from animal sources.

Job Outlook in BC



Chart from WorkBC

Regional Outlook: 2015-2025

Region	Number of Job Openings	Expected Increase in Employment	Avg Annual Employment Growth
Vancouver Island	40	5	0.2%
Lower Mainland / Southwest	180	90	1.4%
Thompson-Okanagan	40	15	0.8%

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

- **WorkBC, Career Profiles**
<http://workbc.ca/Careers> [search NOC 3114]
- **Career Cruising** (Profile for Veterinarian)
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

Types of Employers

The majority of veterinarians work in private practices. You may also work for the government or private industry in areas such as animal disease research, zoo consultation, or meat and milk inspection (at packing plants and dairies). Some teach in veterinary schools.

Salary

The average annual salary for veterinarians working full-time in BC is \$77,977. Experienced full-time vets may earn between \$70,000 and \$110,000 a year. If you own a successful private practice, you can make over \$150,000 a year. Veterinary surgeons and researchers typically earn the highest salaries.

In addition to a salary, most full-time veterinarians receive health and dental benefits, paid sick days, and paid vacations. If you are self-employed, you must provide your own benefits.

Sources: Work BC & Career Cruising

Job Bank Canada Wage Reports provides annual wages for Veterinarians in these BC regions:

Location	Wage (\$/yr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	32,764	78,026	139,403
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	31,871	77,263	120,282
Thompson--Okanagan Region	51,288	78,043	124,062
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	20,786	76,586	148,346

Source: Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency publishes the salary ranges for veterinarians employed by the federal agency.

- For more information on the salary range for this group, please visit the following link: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/hrrh/col/vm/appae.shtml>

Working Hours

You generally work 8 to 10 hours a day, up to approximately 50 to 60 hours a week. You may work nights and weekends to accommodate the schedules of pet owners.

It is common for a large animal veterinarian to be called out to a farm for an emergency in the middle of the night.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Work well with others in a team environment
- Good with people
- Problem solving
- Observant
- Decisive
- Hard-working

Education and Experience

In order to work as a veterinarian you require:

- two years of pre-veterinary university studies or completion of a college program in health science

AND

- a four to five year university degree in veterinary medicine
- completion of national certification exams
- a provincial license to practice

Entry into research positions may require post-graduate study

Qualifications

This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.

You must be registered with the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC) to work as a veterinarian.

If you wish to be registered with the CVBC, you must:

- complete a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree or equivalent from an institution recognized by the Canadian Veterinary Medicine Association;

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- successfully complete the National Examining Board (NEB) examinations and receive a Certificate of Qualification;
- complete the practical training required as part of the program of study;
- be legally entitled to work in Canada;
- demonstrate to the College that you are of suitable character and conduct

Further details about registration:

- **The College of Veterinarians of British Columbia**
<http://www.cvbc.ca/>

Internationally Trained Veterinarians

If you are qualified as a veterinarian in another country you must satisfy all the above listed requirements. You must also have a Certificate of Qualifications from the National Examining Board (NEB) **before** you are eligible to apply for registration by the BCVMA. Proof of English-language proficiency is also required if English is not your first language.

Also see:

- **National Examining Board (NEB) examinations**
<http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources/national-examining-board>
- **Canadian Veterinary Medical Association**
<http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/resources/examining-board-summary>

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

- **Western College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, Job Postings**
http://www.usask.ca/wcvm/employment/career_veterinarians/veterinarians_job/index.php
- **Canadian Animal Health Institute, Job Opportunities**
<http://cahi-icsa.ca/job-opportunities/>
Job opportunities with companies that make animal health products
- **The Vet Recruiter**
<http://thevetrecruiter.com/category/location-jobs/canada/>
- **Neuvoo.ca**
<http://neuvoo.ca/en>
- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC)**
<http://www.cvbc.ca/CVBC2/News/Classifieds/CVBC2/Classifieds.aspx?hkey=c88ea512-8c83-49cc-b3f1-8599018a35e2>

Identifying the Right Position

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

For veterinarians, look at these related job titles (NOC 3114):

- Animal Pathologist
- Dentist, Veterinary
- Internist, Veterinary
- Microbiologist, Veterinary
- Physiologist, Veterinary
- Radiologist, Veterinary
- Veterinary Pharmacologist
- Veterinary Surgeon
- Veterinary Virologist

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.

- **College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC)**
<http://www.cvbc.ca/CVBC2/FindVorC/CVBC2/FindVorC.aspx?hkey=c7e7c0a6-4108-47f7-b72c-22ae89bb0faa>
- **Directory of Canadian Veterinarians and Clinics**
<http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/membership/directory-vets-hospitals>
- **Canadian Animal Health Institute Resource Directory**
<http://cahi-icsa.ca/whos-who/>

- **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 "veterinary" 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 or 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 at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/job-search-resources/>

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/job-search-resources/>

- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/job-search-resources/>

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
Go to <http://pwp.vpl.ca/siic/job-search-resources/>

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

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

- **College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC)**
<http://www.cvbc.ca>
- **Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)**
<http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/>

Industry Journals

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

- **Canadian Veterinary journal** / Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
Available at the Central Library, 636.08905 C21 and online at:
<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/science-knowledge/cvj>
- **West Coast Veterinary Magazine**
<http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/sbcv/west-coast-veterinarian.aspx>

**Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Branch,
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/>*