

Human Resources Specialists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Human Resources Specialist [NOC 1121]

Job Description

Human resources specialists hire, fire, and train personnel, and manage other aspects related to company workforces.

As a Human Resources Specialist you perform the following duties:

- plan, set up and evaluate staffing strategies including policies, programs and procedures
- create job descriptions and salary scales
- recruit and hire employees
- oversee and lead appropriate training programs
- advise managers and employees on understanding staffing policies, compensation and benefit programs
- settle collective agreements on behalf of employers, and act as a go-between in labour disputes and grievances
- coordinate employee performance and appraisal programs

Source: National Occupational Classification

<http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/QuickSearch.aspx?ver=16&val65=1121>

Industry Overview

In the past few years employers in BC have reported difficulty finding experienced human resources specialists. This is expected to continue as most recent graduates do not have the necessary experience to fill a specialist role.

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 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

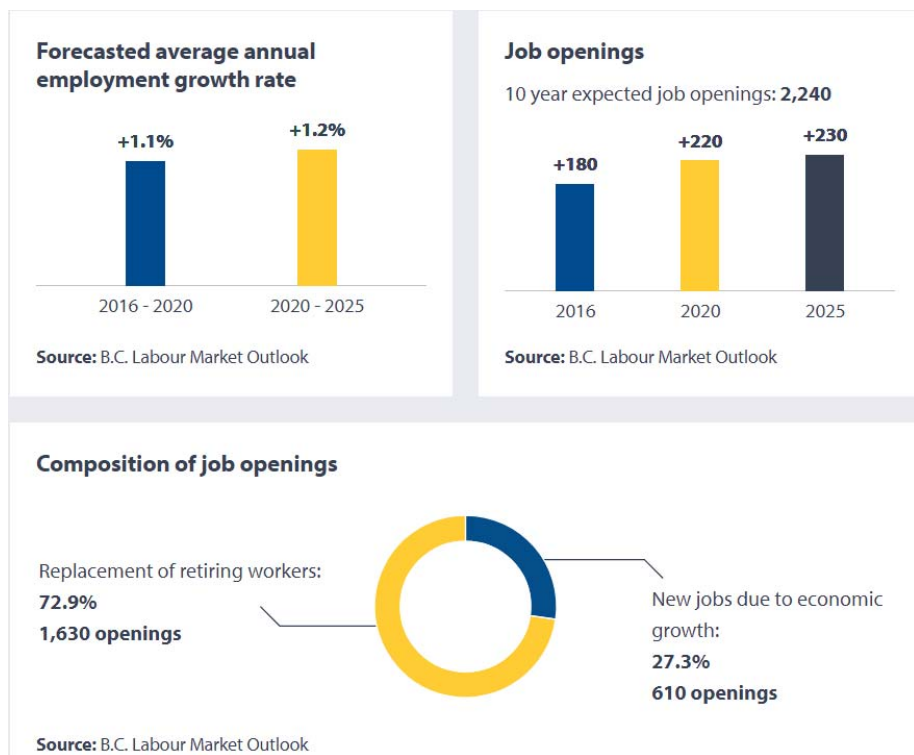


Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions from 2016 to 2025:

Region	Employment in 2016	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island	800	1.2%	400
Lower Mainland / Southwest	3950	1.1%	1630
Thompson-Okanagan	390	1.1%	160
Kootenay	40	NA	NA
Cariboo	80	NA	NA
North Coast & Nechako	20	NA	NA
Northeast	NA	NA	NA

You can learn more about working in human resources in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profiles** <http://www.workbc.ca/Careers> [search NOC 1121]
- **Career Cruising database** [*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

Human resources specialists work for all types of businesses and organizations. The biggest employers include:

- public administration (government)
- professional, scientific, and technical services industries

Salary

The average median salary for HR specialists in BC is \$65,238 a year. Entry-level salaries start at approximately \$30,000 to \$45,000 a year. However, you can earn \$100,000 a year or more as a senior specialist.

You generally receive benefits, such as dental coverage, paid vacation and sick days, and contributions to retirement plans.

Job Bank Canada provides hourly wages for human resources specialists [NOC 1121] in BC regions:

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	17.58	32.05	54.87
Cariboo Region	17.58	32.05	54.87
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	17.00	30.77	63.19
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	15.00	32.65	49.45

Source: Job Bank, Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage

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:

- *Career Cruising*
- WorkBC Career Profile
- Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

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.

Other professional requirements may include:

- Certification as a Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP).
- hands-on experience that would help you choose amongst the many areas of specialization
- 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 Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation is becoming increasingly important to many employers.

Information about obtaining the CHRP designation is available at:

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

Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profiles
- *Career Cruising*

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.

Job White Pages

- **JOB Freeway.com**

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

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

Access at VPL locations only

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.

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **CPHR BC Career Centre**

<https://cphrbc.ca/resources/career-centre/>

Available to members only

- **Hire Authority. Human Resources Professional Association**

<http://niche.workopolis.com/frontoffice/enterSeekerAdvanceSearchJobAction.do?sitecode=pl70>

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 (from NOC):

- human resources officer
- classification specialist
- wage or compensation research analyst
- personnel officer
- employee relations officer
- employment equity officer
- job analyst
- labour relations officer
- staffing analyst

Source: National Occupational Classification.

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>

- **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 LOOKUP. 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>
- **Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations (CCHRA)**
<http://www.cchra.ca>

Industry Journals

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

- **Canadian HR Reporter**
Available at the Central Library 658.305 C2122 or Online in the *Canadian Business and Current Affairs* database available through the VPL Digital Library page:
<http://www.vpl.ca/digitallibrary>
- **HRVoice Peopletalk**
Available in print at the Central Library, 658.3005 P41 or online at:
<http://www.hrvoice.org/>

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/>