

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators

An employment guide for newcomers to British Columbia



Vancouver Public Library

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Contents

1. What Would I Do?	2
2. Am I Suited For This Job?.....	4
3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?	5
4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?.....	6
5. How do I become a Bus driver, transit or subway operator?	7
6. How Do I Find A Job?	8
7. Applying for a Job	12
8. Where Can This Job Lead?.....	12
9. Where Can I Find More Information?.....	12

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators (NOC 7512)

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators may also be called:

- *school bus driver*
- *sightseeing tour driver*
- *tour bus driver*
- *motor coach driver*
- *streetcar operator*
- *conductor, bus / streetcar*
- *operator, light rail / subway / trolley*
- *shuttle driver - auto dealership*
- *shuttle driver - car rental company*

1. What Would I Do?

Bus drivers:

- work for urban transit systems, school boards or transportation authorities and private transportation companies

Streetcar, subway and light rail transit operators:

- work for urban transit systems

Bus drivers and streetcar operators' duties can include:

- drive buses or streetcars to transport passengers along established routes to local destinations, or intercity or long distance destinations

- drive sightseeing tour buses to transport passengers locally or over long distances
- drive buses equipped for wheelchair accessibility, and aid passengers in boarding
- provide passengers with information on fares, schedules and stops
- collect fares, issue and validate transfers, check bus passes
- conduct pre-trip and post-trip inspections of vehicle
- may provide information on points of interest during sightseeing tours
- may load and unload passengers' luggage and express freight

School bus drivers' duties can include:

- drive school buses to transport children between school and home or on excursions
- ensure children's safety when boarding and leaving buses and crossing street while bus is stopped
- maintain control of student activities during travel to prevent distractions or behaviours that could compromise safety
- may transport adults outside of school hours on chartered trips

Subway train and light rail transit operators' duties can include:

- operate subway or rail transit vehicles as part of two-person crew
- observe signals at crossings and arrival and departure points
- operate controls to open and close transit vehicle doors
- report delays, malfunctions and accidents to control unit
- ensure passenger safety and welfare in emergencies, and direct passengers during evacuation procedures

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7512>

- **Career Cruising** (profiles for 'Bus Driver' and 'Transit Operator')

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

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

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators should have:

- excellent driving skills
- good communication skills and interpersonal skills to interact with passengers
- organization and time-management skills for co-ordinating passenger pick-ups
- a thorough knowledge of the areas they drive in

They should be:

- able to concentrate despite distractions
- able to follow instructions carefully
- able to think and act quickly in various situations
- patient

Most people entering these occupations can expect to work part time through evenings, weekends and sometimes holidays before working full time. Split shifts are also common. Those who have been in the industry longer can expect more regular shifts and full-time hours (40 hours per week). **Public transit operators** are more likely to be part of a union and work full time. **School bus drivers** usually only work part time.

These workers may also have to handle difficult passengers from time to time. More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators**

<https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7512>

- **Career Cruising** (profiles for 'Bus Driver' and 'Transit Operator')

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3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the average annual median salary *for Bus drivers, transit & subway operators* is \$51,097. According to WorkBC, hourly wages can range from \$17 - \$30. JobBank Canada lists hourly wages for BC's regions where drivers/operators can expect to make:

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators, NOC 7512 Hourly Wages

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	17.00	25.98	31.20
Cariboo Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kootenay Region	17.00	25.98	31.20
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	17.00	26.00	31.20
Nechako Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Coast Region	18.00	23.47	33.49
Northeast Region	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thompson--Okanagan Region	17.00	25.98	31.20
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	17.50	27.50	29.51

Table from Job Bank Canada Wage Report <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>

Full-time transit operators usually get benefits as well. This can include health coverage, pension plans, and paid vacation time. They may also get free rides on their transit system.

These workers are usually part of a union. Their wages and benefits are negotiated by union representatives

Sources:

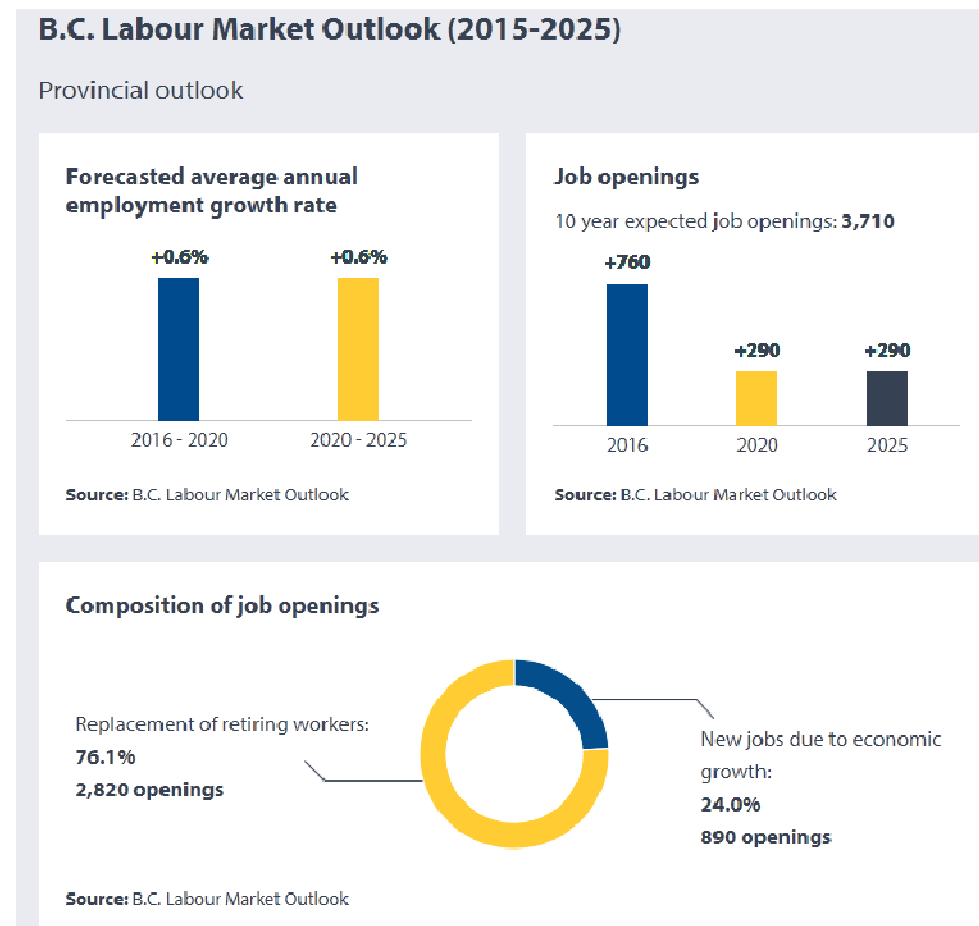
- **WorkBC Career Profile for Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/7512>
- **Career Cruising** (profiles for 'Bus Driver' and 'Transit Operator')
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
 Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
- **Job Bank Canada Wage Report**
<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

Jobbank Canada reports that the employment outlook will be good for bus drivers, subway operators and other transit operators (NOC 7512) in British Columbia for the 2017-2019 period. The following factors contributed to this outlook:

- employment growth will lead to several new positions.
- several positions will become available due to retirements.
- there are a moderate number of unemployed workers with recent experience in this occupation.

Bus Drivers, Transit & Subway Operators, NOC 7512



Sources:

- WorkBC Career Profile

- JobBank Canada, Employment Outlook,
<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>

5. How do I become a Bus driver, transit or subway operator?

Certification is not required to be a Bus driver or transit operator in BC. Employers do require some secondary school education, and a high school diploma is generally preferred.

As competition for transit driver openings is often very strong, some post-secondary education and excellent communications and interpersonal skills give applicants a definite advantage. Other requirements may include:

- a Class 2 driver's license with airbrake endorsement and at least one to five years of safe driving experience
- on-the-job training that may take up to three months to complete
- basic first aid, which may be included in on-the-job training
- medical examination
- criminal record check

Sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profile**
- **JobBank Canada**, Education & Job Requirements
<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home-eng.do?lang=eng>
- **Career Cruising** (profiles for 'Bus Driver' and 'Transit Operator')
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

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

Certification:

Voluntary certification as a **Certified Professional Bus Operator CPBO** is available through the *Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada MCPCC*.

Requirements include:

- training received through an Accredited Training Program, OR evidence of completed training, which meets the National Occupational Standards

- three years bus operator experience

Source:

Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada MCPCC

<http://www.buscouncil.ca/certification/en/index-bus-operator.php>

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

- *Work for bus companies, local governments, and school boards*

Bus drivers:

- *work for urban transit systems, school boards or transportation authorities and private transportation companies*

Subway, light rail transit & streetcar operators:

- *work for urban transit systems*

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.

Job White Pages

Available in print at the Central Library or online at

JOB Freeway.com

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

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

NOTE: Access at VPL locations only

Online Job Postings

- **Translink** – Public Transportation Services including Coast Mountain Bus Company, Skytrain and West Coast Express Rapid Transit
<https://www.translink.ca/About-Us/Careers.aspx> (Skytrain/West Coast Express)
<https://www.translink.ca/About-Us/Careers/Bus-Operators.aspx> (bus drivers)
- **Handy Dart**
Handy Dart is a shared ride service for passengers with physical or cognitive disabilities who are unable to use conventional public transit without assistance
Operator: MVT Canadian Bus: <https://www.mvtcanada.com/>
- **Indeed.ca**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
<https://ca.indeed.com/Bus-Driver-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>
<https://ca.indeed.com/Tour-Driver-jobs-in-Vancouver,-BC>
- **WorkBC**
<https://www.workbc.ca/JobSeekers/SearchResults.aspx>
- **BC Jobs.ca**
<https://www.bcjobs.ca/>
- **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

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 taxi / limousine companies.

Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Motor Coach Canada: Canadian Tour Planner & Operator Guide**
Look for: ‘*Tour Operator Listings*’

<http://www.motorcoachcanada.com/events/conference.html>

<http://www.nxtbook.com/naylor/MTRG/MTRG0016/index.php#/20>

- **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 'bus' and click LOOKUP. Select the appropriate headings (you can also try 'tour bus' or 'school bus'). 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

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**

<http://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/>

- **GoVolunteer.ca**

<http://govolunteer.ca/>

- **Meals on Wheels Programs – Volunteer Drivers**

Many communities throughout BC offer a ‘meals on wheels’ program that delivers hot nutritious meals to those who cannot cook for themselves. *Meals are delivered by volunteer drivers.* For example,

- **Vancouver: Health & Home Care Society of BC, Meals on Wheels,**

<http://www.carebc.ca/volunteering.html?gclid=Cifxt9H57ckCFZRffgodexwM8Q>

- **Burnaby: Meals on Wheels**

<http://www.mealsonwheels-burnaby.com/>

- **Surrey / North Delta: Meals on Wheels**

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

- **Seniors Transportation Access & Resources**

<http://starcanada.ca/seniors-their-families/available-ride-programs/> (lists communities throughout BC that offer free or low cost seniors transportation – click on your community and contact the organization to see if they need volunteer drivers)

- **Volunteer driver programs** (B.C. Ministry of Family & Social Supports)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/transportation/volunteer-driver-programs>

For additional tips see:

- **Networking for Employment**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search 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, <http://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**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

Advancement into supervisory or management positions, or into non-driving occupations such as dispatcher, safety officer or driving trainer, is possible with additional training or experience.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada MCPCC: *Drive a Bus***
<http://www.buscouncil.ca/driveabus/>
- **Motor Coach Canada: Canadian Tour Planner & Operator Guide**
<http://www.nxtbook.com/naylor/MTRG/MTRG0016/index.php>
- **BC Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure, Registrar, Passenger Transportation Branch**
<http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/rpt/index.htm>
- **ICBC Driver Licensing**
<http://www.icbc.com/driver-licensing/types-licences/Pages/Licence-classes-and-types.aspx> [click on 'Commercial Licenses' and then scroll down to 'Class 2']

Learn More About Working in BC and Canada

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Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

***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 <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.*