

Journalists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Journalist [NOC 5123]

Job Description

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 or entertainment news, or in a particular geographic area

Source: NOC <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/QuickSearch.aspx?ver=16&val65=5123>

Industry Overview

Journalism is a diverse field that offers a variety of career possibilities.

Technology has impacted this occupation in a number of ways. There is a decline in print media and new opportunities for journalism in electronic media. If you are familiar with new technologies and have good computer skills you may have an advantage over others seeking work in this field.

Journalists who can write about scientific or technical subjects will also have an advantage in the labour market.

Journalism is a highly competitive field. As a result, some journalism graduates find work in closely related fields, such as advertising and public relations.

The majority of journalists in BC are employed in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island regions.

Job Outlook in BC

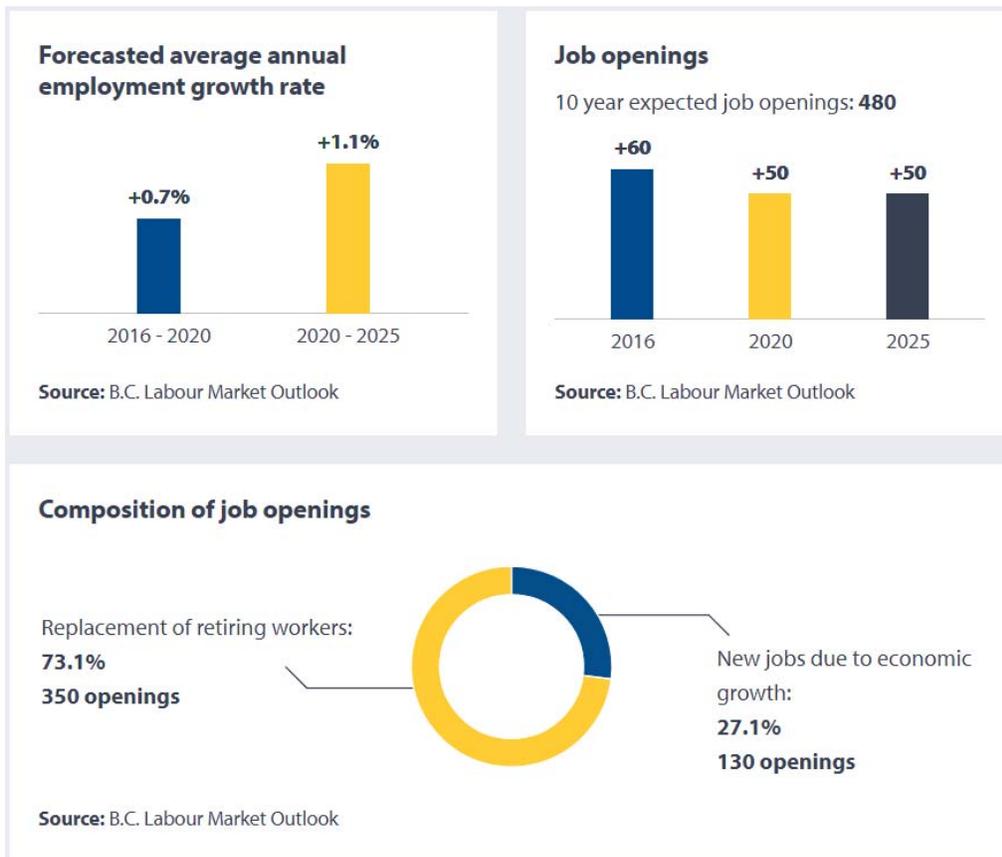


Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions:

Region	Employment in 2016	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island	250	1.3%	120
Lower Mainland/Southwest	790	1.0%	290
Thompson-Okanagan	60	n/a	n/a
Kootenay	60	n/a	n/a
Cariboo	40	n/a	n/a
North Coast & Nechako	50	n/a	n/a

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

- **WorkBC, Career Profiles**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx> [search NOC 5123]
- **Career Cruising** (Profiles for Print Journalist & Television and Radio Reporter)
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Types of Employers

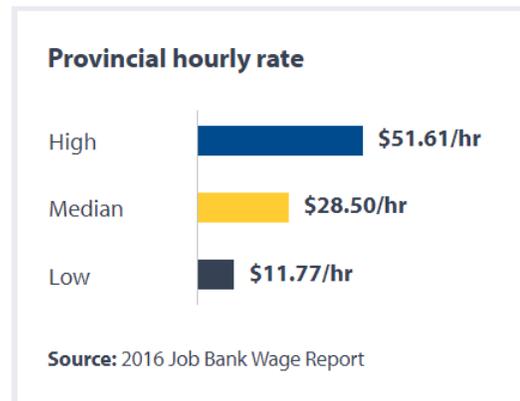
Journalists are employed by:

- 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 \$59,440. Journalists who advance to editor or manager positions may make over \$80,000 a year.



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.

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

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising (Profile for Print Journalist)

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.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

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
- ability to handle heavy workload and work within tight deadlines

Sources: Work BC and Career Cruising database (Profile for Print Journalist)

Education and Experience

A university degree or college diploma in journalism or a related field such as communications is usually required. Most employers prefer to hire candidates with experience, so a bachelor's degree or a program in journalism or communications that offers a period of internship in a newsroom is excellent preparation.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

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.

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

- **Indeed.com**

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

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Canadian Media Production Association – Job Board**

<http://www.cmpa.ca/about-cmpa/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 5123)

- 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**

<http://www.cmpa.ca/membership/membership-directory>

- **Canadian Writer's Market**

Available at the Central Library, 808.02 G65c11

- **PWAS 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" 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 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/>
- **Community Newspapers Associations - British Columbia and Yukon**
<http://bccommunitynews.com/>
- **News Media Canada**
<https://nmc-mic.ca/>
- **Professional Writers Association of Canada**
<http://www.pwac.ca/>

Industry Journals

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

- **Canadian Writer's Market**
Available at VPL, Central Library Branch, 808.02 G65c11
- **Media / The Canadian Association of Journalists**
Available online at <http://caj.ca/Media>
- **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/>.