

Security Guards

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Security Guard [NOC 6541]

Job Description

Security guards protect buildings and areas from theft, fire, vandalism, and illegal entry. Specific duties depend on where you work.

As a security guard you may do the following:

- control access to establishments
- operate security control-room equipment
- patrol assigned areas to guard against theft, vandalism and fire
- maintain order and resolve conflicts
- ensure safety and emergency procedures are followed
- issue passes and direct visitors to appropriate areas
- check age identification of patrons
- perform security checks of passengers and luggage at airports

Sources:

WorkBC Career Profile <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx> [search 6541]

Career Cruising (Profile for Security Guard) Available from the VPL Digital Library:

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

Industry Overview

There is currently a shortage of security guards in BC. Many new graduates quickly move to higher paying jobs outside of the industry, so job opportunities are regularly available.

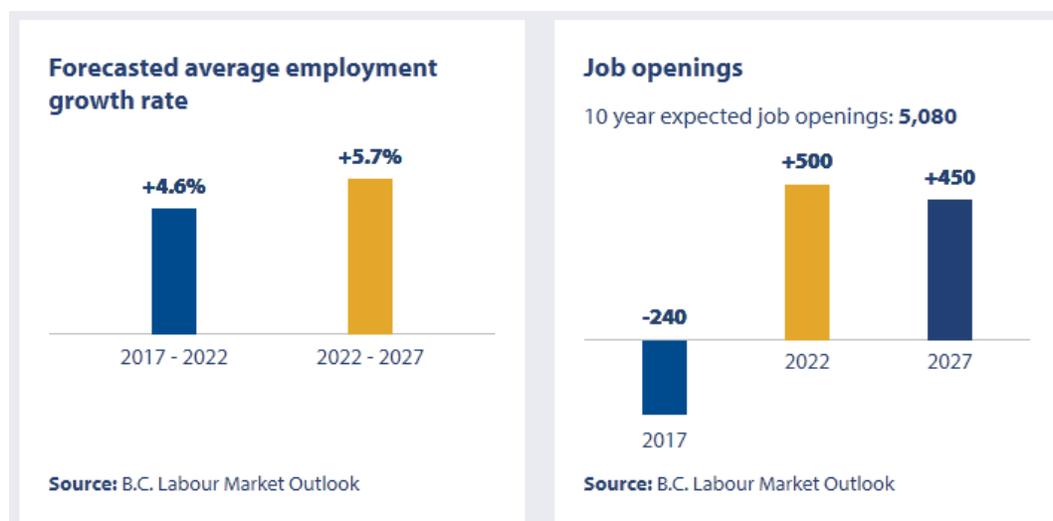
If you have previous experience working as a security guard, in law enforcement, or in the armed forces you will have greater employment prospects. Experience using closed circuit camera monitoring equipment and software also increases your chance of employment.

There is a growing demand for guards with advanced security solutions training and threat/risk assessment skills.

Most jobs are found in large urban centres such as the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island regions. There may be higher growth in any port area of BC due to changes to the Marine Security Act by Transport Canada.

Job Outlook in BC

Security Guards and Related Occupations, NOC 6541



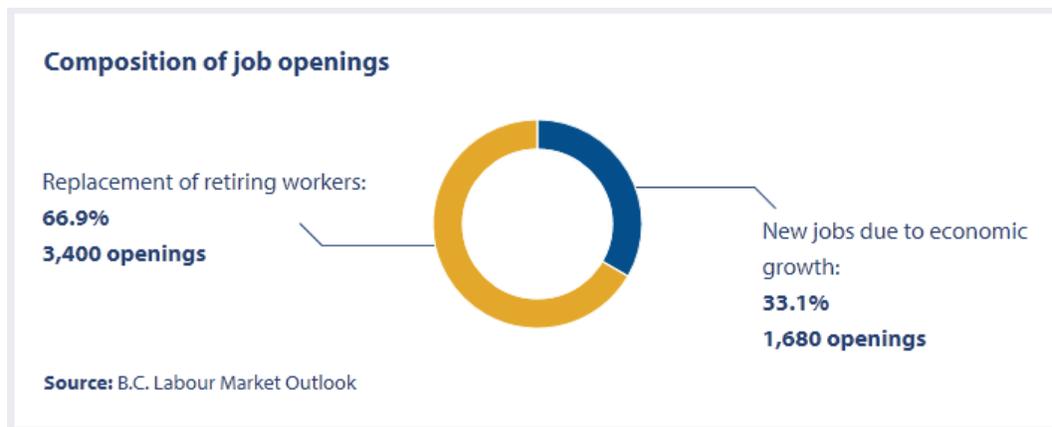


Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions from 2017-2027:

Region	Employment in 2017	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island	1,770	0.6%	530
Lower Mainland / Southwest	11,850	1.0%	3,630
Thompson-Okanagan	1,260	1.5%	500
Kootenay	230	-0.2%	50
Cariboo	530	1.7%	250
North Coast & Nechako	130	0.3%	40
Northeast	170	1.7%	80

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

- **WorkBC Careers** at <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
 [search Security Guard or 6541]
- **Career Cruising** [Profile for Security Guard]
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
 Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Types of Employers

Security guards are employed by security agencies or directly by businesses, governments, and various other organizations. You may work in a wide variety of establishments, including:

- airports
- museums or galleries
- office buildings
- factories
- hotels
- hospitals
- retail stores, banks, and more

Salary

The annual median salary for Security Guards working full-time in BC is \$31,180. Your salary depends on employer, location and experience.

If you are hired by a security agency you generally receive a lower salary and fewer benefits than if you are hired directly by businesses, government agencies, or other organizations. Guards who are certified to carry firearms often earn more than those who are not.

In addition to a salary, you may receive benefits such as paid vacation days, health and dental benefits if you work in a full-time job.

If you are employed by a government agency you may belong to a union, which means your salary rates and benefits are negotiated on your behalf by union representatives.

Sources: WorkBC and Career Cruising

In BC regions you can expect to earn:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	12.65	14.28	24.04
Cariboo Region	12.65	14.28	24.04
Kootenay Region	12.65	14.28	24.04
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	12.65	14.00	21.25
North Coast Region	14.00	16.50	22.00
Northeast Region	16.00	18.50	25.00
Thompson--Okanagan Region	12.65	14.28	24.04
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	12.65	14.75	26.50

Source: Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage [Search 0213]

Working Hours

Most security guards work full time, typically working 40 hours per week. However, many job opportunities are seasonal, so you may be employed only part of the year.

You may be required to work shifts that include evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- strong observation and communication skills
- ability to make quick decisions during emergency situations and work in stressful situations
- comfortable working alone
- ability to stick to procedures, routines and regulations
- ability to act in a disciplined, honest and ethical manner
- physically fit, good hearing and vision

Education and Experience

To work as a Security Guard in BC you require:

- Completion of grade 12 (***preferred by employers but not mandatory***)
- Licensing under the Security Services Act
- A criminal background check
- Completion of the Basic Security Training (BST) course with a grade of 60 percent or higher on the final exam for each course

Additional training requirements vary depending on your employer.

Source: WorkBC

Qualifications

This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.

You must obtain a valid ***BC Security Worker Licence*** in order to work as a security guard in BC.

There are a number of requirements before obtaining a security worker licence including:

- Complete *Basic Security Training (BST)*
- Comply with the Security Services Act “Code of Conduct”
- Consent to a Criminal Record check
- Provide fingerprints and photograph
- Supply proof of Canadian Citizenship or Landed Immigrant status
- Be sufficiently fluent in the English language to converse with the public while carrying out duties.

For more information on licensing see:

- **Security Industry Licensing. BC Ministry of Justice**
<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/securityindustry/workers/index.htm>
- **Basic Security Training. Justice Institute of BC (JIBC)**
http://www.jibc.ca/police/programs/security_training/index.htm
JIBC develops and offers the *Basic Security Training* course and oversees all approved security schools in British Columbia.

Internationally Trained Security Guards

If you believe you have acquired the equivalent training and/or experience required from outside BC for a security guard licence, there is a process set up to demonstrate your skills.

Contact the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) (<http://www.jibc.ca/>) directly to have previous training or experience reviewed.

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional association publications.

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

- Available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>

NOTE: You can only access this database from the Central Library or VPL branch libraries. Access is NOT available from home or outside the Library.

Online Job Postings

- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards
- **Neuvoo.ca**
<http://neuvoo.ca/en>

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Canadian Security Association Job Board**
http://www.canasa.org/canasa/EN/Membership/Job_Board/CANASA/Membership_Pages/Job_Board.aspx

Identifying the Right Position

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

For security guards look for these related job titles

- bodyguard (except police)
- bouncer
- commissionaire
- gate attendant – security
- night watchman/woman

Source: <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/QuickSearch.aspx?ver=16&val65=6541>

Creating a List of Potential Employers

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

- **Canadian Security Association Directory of Members**

<http://www.canasa.org/canasa/EN/>

Directory of Members is found under the "Membership" tab

- **BC Association of Security Professionals Members Directory**

<http://bcasp.org/members/>

- **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 "Security" 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.*

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 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://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 security services in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are usually required for membership.

- **BC Association of Security Professionals**
<http://www.bcasp.org/>
- **Canadian Security Association (CANASA)**
<http://www.canasa.org/>

Industry Journals

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

- **Canadian Security**
Available at VPL Central Library 658.4705 C21
And online at: <https://www.canadiansecuritymag.com/>

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/>