

Pharmacists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Pharmacist (NOC 3131)

Job Description

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

- Check patients' medical histories and fill their prescriptions
- Tell patients how and when to take medications
- Inform patients of any side effects and answer their questions
- Supervise pharmacy technicians as they prepare and dispense medications

As an **Industrial Pharmacist** you perform some or all of the following duties:

- Participate in research for the development of new drugs
- Develop information materials concerning the uses, properties and risks of particular drugs
- Promote pharmaceutical products to health professionals

Source: NOC,

<http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/ProfileQuickSearch.aspx?val=3&val1=3131&ver=16&val65=pharmacist>

Industry Overview

There is a shortage of pharmacists in British Columbia and a significant number of job openings are expected in response to new job creation and the need to replace retiring workers.

Rural and smaller communities, in particular, are short of both community and hospital pharmacists.

Job Outlook in BC

Pharmacists

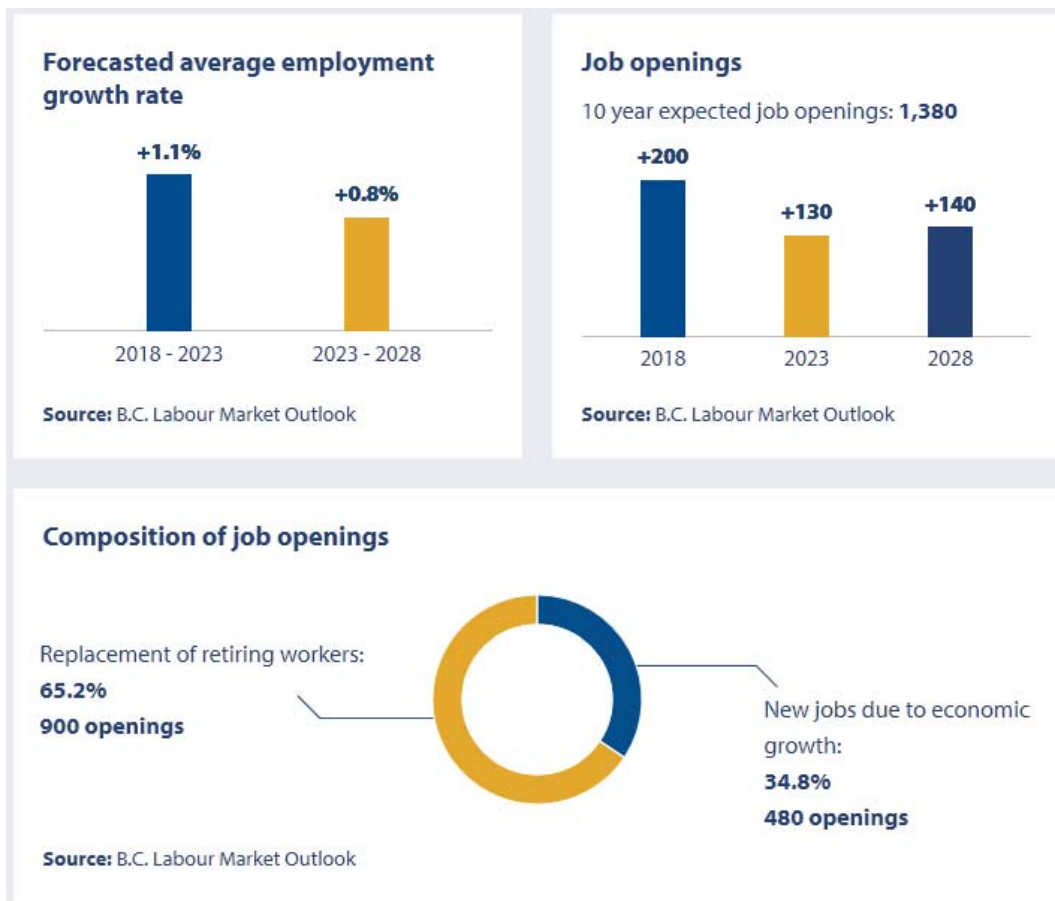


Chart from Work BC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions from 2018-2028:

Region	Employment in 2018	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island	720	1.3%	270
Lower Mainland / Southwest	3,010	0.9%	870
Thompson-Okanagan	510	1.0%	160
Kootenay	90	1.0%	30
Cariboo	180	0.3%	20
North Coast & Nechako	70	1.5%	20
Northeast	80	0.5%	10

You can learn more about working in BC from the following sources:

- **WorkBC Career Profiles**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx> [search 3131]
- **Career Cruising**
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/> [profile for Pharmacist]
 Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Types of Employers

- Hospitals
- Universities
- Government
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Retail pharmacies, which include privately-owned and operated pharmacies, national chains, and pharmacies located in super markets and big box stores.

Salary

In BC, the median annual salary for pharmacists is between \$95,455. Pharmacists who work full-time usually receive benefits such as dental coverage, paid sick leave and vacation time. Some pharmacists can also earn bonuses or participate in profit-sharing programs.

Depending on the work place, you may belong to a union. This means wages and benefits are negotiated by union representatives on your behalf.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

In BC regions you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/year)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	68,708	98,725	127,387
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	61,756	94,433	120,312
Thompson--Okanagan Region	81,859	105,191	142,872
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	80,221	104,160	129,079

Source: Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage [Search 3131]

Working Hours

Most pharmacists work approximately 40 to 50 hours per week. Working in community pharmacies may require evening and weekend work. Pharmacists working in hospitals may work rotating shifts.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Good manual dexterity
- Good mathematical and computer skills
- Strong ethical sense
- Enjoy personal interaction

Education and Experience

Pharmacists require:

- Bachelor of science degree in pharmacy
- Pass a board examination, Pharmacy Examination Board of Canada
- Practical training under the supervision of a pharmacist
- Registration with the College of Pharmacists of BC
- New pharmacists must pass an English Language Fluency exam

Qualifications

Pharmacist is a regulated profession in BC

You must be registered with the *College of Pharmacists of British Columbia* in order to work as a pharmacist in BC.

For more information on registration and licensing see:

- **College of Pharmacists of British Columbia**
<https://www.bcpharmacists.org/>

International Applicants:

There are a number of steps for international pharmacy graduates to follow in order to become registered to practise pharmacy in BC.

Step 1 Enroll with Pharmacists' Gateway Canada and apply for Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) for the Document Evaluation and Evaluating exam

International Pharmacy Graduates (IPG) must successfully complete the Document Evaluation and PEBC Evaluating exam before starting the registration process with the College.

- ***Pharmacists' Gateway Canada***
www.pharmacistsgatewaycanada.ca

Step 2 Pre-register as an applicant with the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia

Complete and submit an "International Pharmacy Graduate – application for registration"

Step 3 Successfully complete the English Language Proficiency requirements set by the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia

Step 4 Successfully complete the jurisprudence examination

Based on the information contained in the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia's *BC Pharmacy Practice Manual*

Step 5 Successfully complete the Structured Practical Training Program

Step 6 Successfully complete the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada qualifying exam – Part I and Part II

Step 7 Complete the "Application for Full Pharmacist Registration"

For further information on the above steps see the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia's site:

- **International Pharmacy Graduates**

<https://www.bcpharmacists.org/international-pharmacy-graduate-ipg>

The College of Pharmacists of British Columbia has partnered with the University of British Columbia to provide the ***Canadian Pharmacy Practice Programme*** (CPPP). The CPPP focuses on courses relevant to international graduates who already have a pharmacy degree in order to help them meet Canadian practice standards and licensing requirements. *Enrollment in the Program is mandatory.*

For more information see:

- **Canadian Pharmacy Practice Programme**

<https://cpd.pharmacy.ubc.ca/programs/international-pharmacy-graduate-ipg>

3. Finding Jobs

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

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 <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

- **HealthMatchBC**
<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/>
Hospital pharmacist recruitment service funded by the Government of British Columbia.
- **Provincial Health Services Authority**
<http://www.phsa.ca/careers>
Operates nine agencies that provide province-wide health care services.
- **Indeed.ca**
<https://www.indeed.ca/>
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students and Interns - Jobs**
<https://www.pharmacy-jobs.ca/jobs/>

Identifying the Right Position

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

For pharmacists, look for these related job titles (from NOC 3131):

- Clinical Pharmacist
- Community Pharmacist
- Dispensary Department Supervisor
- Druggist
- Pharmacist Consultant
- Registered Pharmacist
- Retail Pharmacist

Creating a List of Potential Employers

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

- **Who's Who: Canadian Grocer Magazine's Annual Directory of Chains & Groups in Canada**

Available at the Central Library, 380 Fo6Cw

Includes listings of pharmacies in grocery stores

- **Directory of Retail Chains in Canada**

Available at the Central Library, C380 D5983

See listings under "General Merchandise: Drugs/Health & Beauty Aids" for chain drugstores.

- **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 "pharmacies" 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 (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 pharmacists in BC and Canada provide assistance to individuals. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **British Columbia Pharmacy Association**

<https://www.bcpharmacy.ca/>

- **College of Pharmacists of British Columbia**

<https://www.bcpharmacists.org/>

- **Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists – BC Branch**

<https://cshp-bc.com/>

- **Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students and Interns**

<https://capsi.ca/>

An association of pharmacy students, pharmacy interns, and undergraduate pharmacy organizations across Canada.

Industry Journals

Search for journals related to your profession. An example includes:

- **Canadian Pharmacists Journal (CPJ/RPC)**

<http://cph.sagepub.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/>.*