

Travel Counsellors

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Travel Counsellor [NOC 6521]

Job Description

Travel counsellors arrange trips for travellers and provide them with travel advice and information.

As a travel counsellor you perform the following duties:

- give clients information about travel options and tour packages
- make bookings and reservations
- prepare tickets and receive payment
- investigate and promote particular destinations, tour packages and other travel services

Industry Overview

The job market for travel counsellors is very competitive. You will be more successful finding work if you are fluent in several languages, particularly Asian languages. Computer skills are also an asset.

Employment in this field is dependent on economic conditions, so the number of openings is likely to vary from year to year.

The majority of BC travel counsellors are employed in Metro Vancouver.

Job Outlook in BC

Travel Counsellors (NOC 6521)

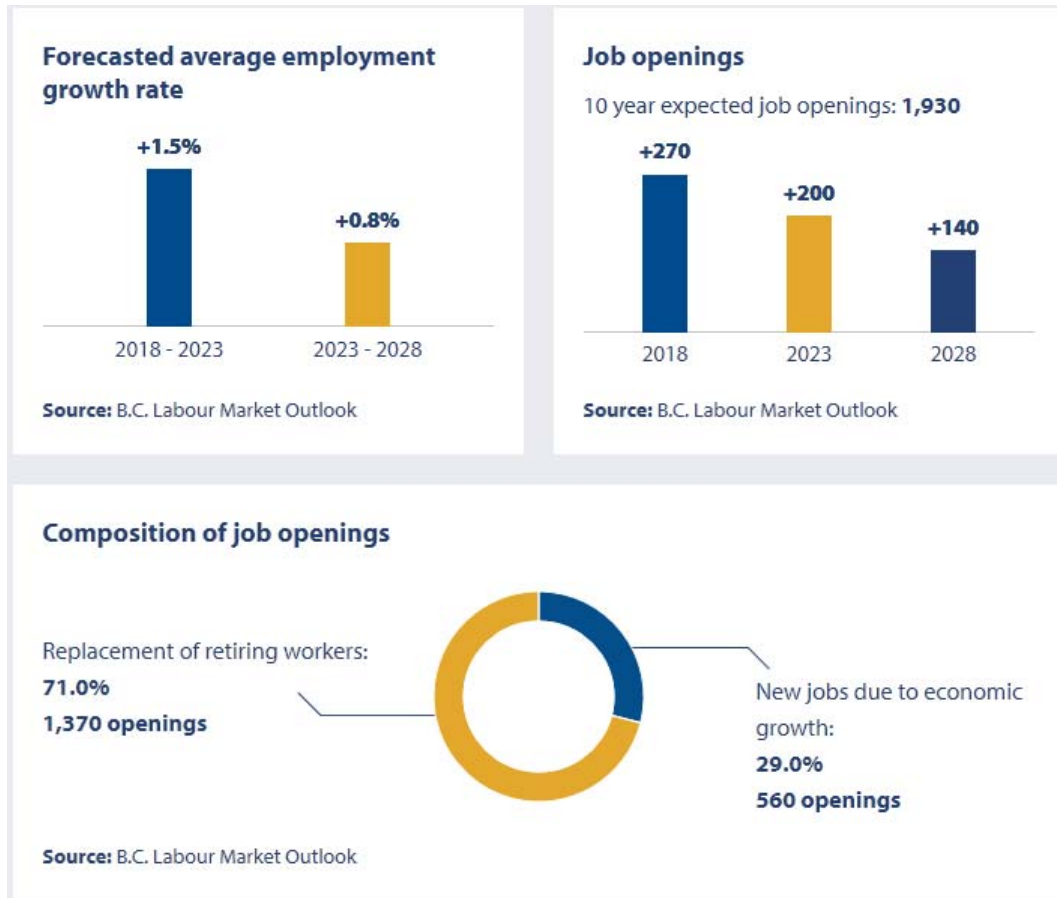


Chart from WorkBC

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	570	1.2%	270
Lower Mainland / Southwest	3,450	1.2%	1,470
Thompson-Okanagan	250	1.2%	110
Kootenay	50	1.3%	20
Cariboo	60	1.1%	20
North Coast & Nechako	40	1.6%	20
Northeast	30	0.6%	10

You can learn more about working as a travel counsellor in BC from these sources:

- **Work BC Career Profiles**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>[Search 6521]
- **Career Cruising** (Profile for Travel Agent)
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
- **Go2HR Career Explorer** (Travel Counsellor)
<https://www.go2hr.ca/career-summary/travel-counsellor>

Types of Employers

Travel counsellors work for a variety of businesses including:

- travel agencies
- tour wholesalers
- airlines and other transportation companies
- tourism organizations
- hotel chains
- corporate offices that have enough business travel to need their own booking divisions

You may also be self-employed.

Salary

The annual median salary for travel counsellors in BC is \$33,370.

You may also get bonuses or incentives such as inexpensive fares, free promotional vacations, and other travel-related rewards.

In BC regions you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<u>British Columbia</u>	13.85	17.31	25.90
<u>Lower Mainland - Southwest Region</u>	13.85	17.14	25.96
<u>Thompson--Okanagan Region</u>	13.85	17.31	25.90
<u>Vancouver Island and Coast Region</u>	13.85	17.31	25.90

Source: Job Bank Wage Report http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage [Search 6521]

Working Hours

Most travel counsellors have regular work schedules: 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. You may be expected to work evenings and weekends, especially during peak travel periods.

If you are self-employed you usually work longer hours.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- strong written and verbal communication skills
- customer service
- aptitude for selling and marketing
- ability to work under pressure
- ability to handle money and other forms of payment
- proven research, organizational and time management skills
- travel experience and knowledge of world geography an asset
- second language an asset

Education and Experience

To work as a travel counsellor in BC you require:

- Completion of secondary school
- A college diploma or vocational training in travel or tourism is usually required

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 travel counsellor in BC.

However, some employers may request you have certification with the *Association of Canadian Travel Agencies*. Additional information on certification can be found here:

- ***Association of Canadian Travel Agencies***
<https://www.acta.ca/ctc-ctm-certification>

Sources: WorkBC Career Profile & Go2HR

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

- 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

- **go2 Job Board**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/jobs>
Tourism jobs available throughout BC
- **Indeed.com**
https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **Association of Canadian Travel Agencies (ACTA)**
<https://www.acta.ca/acta-careers>

Identifying the Right Position

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

For travel counsellors, look for these related job titles

- Booking Agent
- Reservation Sales Agent
- Tourist Information Counsellor
- Travel Consultant
- Travel Agent
- Travel Specialist

Source: <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/QuickSearch.aspx?ver=16&val65=6521>

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.

- **Personnel Guide to Canada's Travel Industry**, *online directory of Canadian companies in the hospitality, travel and tourism industry*
<http://www.personnelguide.ca/>
 - also available in print at the Central Library, Level 4, Reference Resource, 338.479 P46
- **Consumer Protection BC – Licensed Travel Agencies**
<https://www.consumerprotectionbc.ca/check-a-licence-search/>
Listing of all licensed travel agencies in British Columbia - search by city
- **Association of Canadian Travel Agencies Travel Directory**
<http://www.acta.ca/travel-directory>

- **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 "travel agencies" 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. 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 travel professionals in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **Association of Canadian Travel Agencies**
<https://www.acta.ca/>
A national professional association for travel counsellors
- **Go2: The Resource for People in Tourism**
<https://www.go2hr.ca/>
Provides information about careers in BC's tourism industry
- **Discover Tourism**
<http://tourismhr.ca/discover-tourism/>
A website created to promote careers in tourism.

Industry Journals

Provide current information about the travel industry. Examples include:

- **Travel Industry Today.com (Canada)**
<http://www.travelindustrytoday.com/web/index.php>
- **Canadian Travel Press**
<https://www.travelpress.com/>
- **Travel Weekly**
<http://www.travelweekly.com/>
- **Travel Agent Central**
<http://www.travelagentcentral.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/>