

# LABOUR MARKET NEWS

Alberta Employment and Immigration

Peace River • High Level



## Secure a career that matters



### Occupations in security and protective services

Working in security and protective services can be demanding and challenging, but as many people who do these jobs will tell you, it can also be fulfilling and worthwhile.

#### Characteristics

Generally people who get into these areas of work have similar characteristics. They need strong communication skills, both spoken and written; the ability to handle potential conflict situations with patience and fortitude; good observation, problem-solving and decision-making skills; the ability to work well independently and as part of a team; and the ability to react quickly and with good judgment. In most cases, people in these positions need to be physically fit and able to restrain others. In some cases, such as a security guard, most of the day may be spent standing in one place or sitting monitoring electronic security systems.

#### Requirements

Workers in this field will need security clearance and a criminal

record check. Employers require that their employees in these fields be at least 18 years old, of good character and trustworthy.

“We’re looking for people who have values such as integrity, honesty, professionalism, compassion and accountability,” said Constable Carol McKinley, RCMP recruiter for the western Alberta area.

They may also need safety training, such as First Aid and CPR, and if they are working on plant sites, may also need WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) certification and H2S.

People in this industry generally work shifts, including weekends, holidays or nights. The exception to

*Continued on page 2...*

### Occupations in security and protective services:

- Bylaw enforcement officer
- Police officer
- RCMP officer
- Special constable
- Private investigator
- Fish and wildlife officer
- Conservation officer
- Correctional officer
- Security guard
- Highway or traffic sheriff
- Courthouse sheriff
- Peace officer
- Transport officer

In the following bulletin, we will examine some of the different occupations in security and protective services.



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**Job seekers**

**Employers**



**Look for the articles that are of most interest to you.**



Bylaw enforcement officer Graham Smith working in his office.



Security guards work in a variety of settings, from plants or mills to construction sites.

*“Right now, there are many positions available for people looking to get into this line of work.”*



A routine security check at the Peace River Court House.

*Continued from page 1...*

this would be for occupations such as a bylaw enforcement officer or a courthouse sheriff, who primarily works during the day, Monday to Friday.

### Education

Some occupations in this industry require high school diplomas, such as a bylaw officer, or a correctional officer. In other occupations, high school diplomas, such as a security guard, are preferred but not required.

Others require further specialized education, such as a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officer, who must go to the RCMP Academy Depot Division in Regina Saskatchewan.

See the Education chart on page 8 for education and training options for the security and protective services industry.

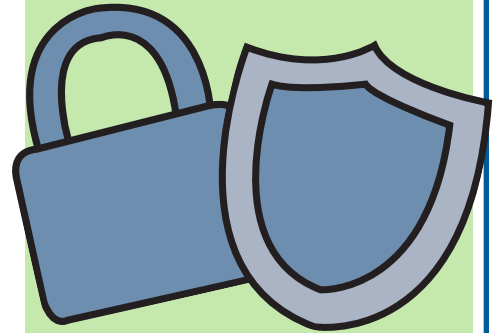
### Demand

Right now, there are many positions available for people looking to get into this line of work and for the most part, mobility between occupations is possible and quite common.

Graham Smith, the bylaw enforcement officer for the Town of Peace River said he knows someone who started his career path in parking enforcement in Edmonton. From there he moved on to transporting prisoners for the RCMP and then worked as a court sheriff. He now works as a traffic sheriff.

There are a wide range of occupations a person can get into from entry level to senior management. See the sidebar ‘Who hires?’ on the many different jobs available in this industry.

## Who hires?



**The employers who hire for security and protective services jobs are most often government: municipal, provincial and federal.**

Occupations that can be employed by municipal governments are: bylaw enforcement officers, special constables, police officers and peace officers.

Occupations that are employed by the provincial government are: fish and wildlife officers, conservation officers, highway or traffic sheriffs and courthouse sheriffs.

Occupations employed by the federal government are jobs such as: RCMP officers and fish and wildlife officers and conservation officers in national parks.

Security guards are one of the few security and protective services occupations that are employed by organizations other than the government. In the Peace River/High Level area, people would most likely find work as a security guard in one of the plants or mills in the area.

Some of the occupations are examined on pages 3 to 4.

## Royal Canadian Mounted Police



Dreaming of a fulfilling career as a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer? In the next three years, the RCMP is hoping to hire 1,700 new members across Canada.

Recruits must be Canadian citizens, be willing to relocate to anywhere in Canada, work shift work, be of good character, speak English or French, have a Canadian high-school diploma, be 19 years old at the time of engagement, be physically fit and meet certain medical/health standards.

“Our selection process helps us determine if that individual’s personal history, as well as their traits and characteristics are suitable for a career in our organization,” said Constable Carol McKinley, RCMP recruiter for the Grande Prairie and western Alberta area.

Training to become an RCMP officer takes place at their RCMP Academy Depot Division in Regina, Saskatchewan.

### New!

All trainees now receive a Cadet Allowance, which provides \$500 per week allowance for the entire 24-week training period. Room and board is also provided for the cadets.

After training, cadets become constables, with a starting salary of \$46,000. They can earn up to \$74,500 in three years. Pay increases as they go up through the ranks.

To find out more about becoming an officer with the RCMP, visit their website at [www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca), where you can also find a listing of when recruiters will be in the area. Interested individuals can also call Constable McKinley at 780-292-0732.

## Law court sheriffs

Law court sheriffs provide and maintain a safe setting for everyone within Alberta’s 75 provincial court houses. They are responsible for managing and transporting prisoners within Alberta and assisting out-of-province prisoner escorts in bringing those arrested in Canada (but outside of Alberta) back to the province. Law court sheriffs might also work with police officers in the community and at major public events.

Jed Paul is one such sheriff, and says he likes the fairly regular hours and teamwork that comes along with the job. He also enjoys being relied upon, both in the court house and by his team members.

“I have come to appreciate being a problem solver and being looked upon in times of difficulty.”



Although the daily operations of a sheriff may be scheduled, Paul says the activities within each day are never the same.

“Being able to think on your feet and roll with the punches is an integral part of your day.”

Applicants must have two years of post-secondary study in law enforcement, police science or social sciences, or the equivalent combination of education and experience. Potential sheriffs must also complete physical testing and a training program set by the Solicitor General. This entry-level position starts out with a salary between \$45,528 and \$56,292.

More information on job duties, requirements and training can be found at the Government of Alberta [Corporate Human Resources website](http://www.pao.gov.ab.ca/jobs).

Current job opportunities are listed on the Government of Alberta Jobs website ([www.pao.gov.ab.ca/jobs](http://www.pao.gov.ab.ca/jobs)).

## Bylaw enforcement officer



Bylaw enforcement officers are employed by municipalities to enforce local bylaws. They may also take on other roles with the municipality, such as safety officer. Bylaw officers work closely with other departments, such as the fire department and planning and development.

Duties can involve dealing with traffic, signage, unsightly premises, land-use issues (e.g. wrong permits), weed issues, and sometime animal control.

According to the 2007 Wage and Salary Survey, bylaw enforcement officers made \$18 to \$28 per hour

and on average made \$45,053 annually.

Some of the employers in the area are: Town of Peace River (780-624-2574), Town of Manning (780-836-3606), Town of Grimshaw (780-332-4626) and Town of High Level (780-926-2201).



## Fish and wildlife officer

Fish and wildlife officers are employed by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development ([www.srd.gov.ab.ca](http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca)). In northwestern Alberta, there are offices in High Level, Fort Vermilion, Manning, Peace River and Fairview, with fish and wildlife officers working out of all of them. Hiring is done provincially and postings can be

seen at [www.srd.gov.ab.ca/aboutus/careers](http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/aboutus/careers).

“We do resource law enforcement—we monitor hunters, fishermen and trappers for resource compliance,” said Jacki Gerwing, district fish and wildlife officer in High Level. “We also deal with problem wildlife complaints.”

Fish and wildlife officers have to be willing to move around and are

relocated every three to five years. Gerwing said that once an officer becomes a district officer, they stay longer in that location.

According to the 2007 Wage and Salary Survey, wages for fish and wildlife officers in Alberta were between \$44,000 and \$56,900—the average annual salary being \$52,400.

## Correctional peace officer



Correctional peace officers in the region work at the Peace River Correctional Centre. They are responsible for the care, custody and control of offenders, as well as the safety of others within the centre.

Applicants must meet minimum recruitment standards, which include a high school diploma and

two years of related experience for an entry-level position (correctional peace officer 1). Applicants must have valid standard First Aid and CPR certificates, a clear criminal records check and successful completion of the COPAT (Correctional Officer Physical Assessment Training). Wages for

the correctional peace officer 1 position start out between \$43,068 and \$58,764 per year.

Details on this position can be found at [www.solgps.alberta.ca](http://www.solgps.alberta.ca). Job openings in this field can also be found on the Government of Alberta Jobs website ([www.pao.gov.ab.ca/jobs](http://www.pao.gov.ab.ca/jobs)).

## Industrial security officer



The duties of plant security guards vary by company, but most involve keeping the property and the people working on the plant safe and secure.

Certain employers may require some form of safety training, such

as CPR, while other training may be offered on the job.

Security guards who work on a contract basis must be licensed by the Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security. Information on licensing can be found at [www.solgps.alberta.ca](http://www.solgps.alberta.ca).

Salaries for security guards vary just as much as job duties. However, according to the 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, the average salary of Albertans working in this job category was \$27,500 a year.

# Emergency services: Fire/medical



*While most firefighters in northwest Alberta are volunteers, there are many opportunities for people wanting to get into this kind of work, including paid training and honoraria or payment when they are called out for an emergency.*

A job in emergency services is fast-paced and many people in this industry say being able to help others is one of the greatest rewards of the job.

“I enjoy going out and helping people. Knowing you’re doing something when people are probably having the worst day in their lives—that’s what I like about it. It’s the smallest things that make people happy and makes me enjoy what I do,” says Trevor Grant, deputy chief of operations for the High Level Fire Department.

There are many opportunities in northwestern Alberta for both fire fighting (NOC 6262) and emergency medical response (NOC 3234). Employers range from local municipalities to industry and there is a lot of opportunity to advance in this industry.

## Firefighting

There are a number of fire departments and emergency medical service providers in the Peace River/High Level area. The

fire departments in the area are generally volunteer departments, which means their chief is usually the only paid staff member. Staff may be paid for when they are called out to work, or sometimes they are paid an honorarium. Volunteers are not charged for training, which takes place in either Peace River or High Level

([peacriver.govoffice.com](http://peacriver.govoffice.com) and [www.highlevelfirerescue.com](http://www.highlevelfirerescue.com)).

The High Level Fire Department has all volunteers except for the chief, and the department offers training to their volunteers free of charge.

“We run formal firefighting courses here throughout the year and it’s free to membership,” says Grant. “We are part of a regional training centre, which trains pretty much everyone in this area, including: Rainbow Lake, Zama City, High Level, Fort Vermilion, and La Crete. We’ve had members come to our training from as far away as Berwyn and Peace River. Our training is exceptional and we are known for it throughout the province.”

Many of their volunteers do have their Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) training and the High Level Fire Department works with the ambulance service in High Level to provide emergency coverage for the area.

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## Wildland firefighters

Wildland firefighters (NOC 8422) are employed by Alberta Sustainable Resources Development (ASRD) ([www.srd.gov.ab.ca](http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca)) and generally work in remote areas to suppress fires. Working outdoors, in all weather conditions and in isolated area, the work is physically demanding. Firefighters may be required to work up to 24-days long and can be relocated anywhere in the province.

Besides the ASRD-approved training program, there are a number of safety courses and certificates that are a benefit to have prior to employment, such as chain saw certification, defensive driving certification, TDG (transportation of dangerous goods) certification and a radio operator’s licence.

According to the Alberta Learning Information Service, 2007 rates of pay for wildland firefighters ranged from \$16.96 to \$22.81 per hour.

Visit the ASRD job website for more information on the jobs they offer: [www.srd.gov.ab.ca/wildfires/employment](http://www.srd.gov.ab.ca/wildfires/employment) and click on **Careers** for information on the year-round full-time opportunities that are available. Or, click on **Seasonal Employment** for more information on Wild Fire Crews or lookout observer positions.

Continued from page 5...

### Firefighter/paramedics

While firefighting and emergency medical response were traditionally separate occupations, the job of firefighter/paramedic is popping up more and more now and many people in these occupations are cross trained for both emergency services.

The Peace River Fire Department has positions for 30 firefighters—six of them paid. They provide fire suppression, rescue services and emergency medical response for the residents of the Town of Peace River. Full-time positions consist of a number of paramedic/firefighters and firefighter/EMTs (emergency medical technician). Wages range from \$55,900 to \$69,106 annually. They will hire paramedics without fire fighting experience and train them themselves.

There is advancement in the industry. Lance Bushie, Peace River fire chief and manager of Protective Services says that while postings do sometimes come up, they try to advance from within, by training up one of the volunteer firefighters.

Training is generally done in-house or in conjunction with one of the local colleges.

Volunteer and paid opportunities with fire departments can be found by contacting local towns or municipalities, or by visiting their websites.

For more information on firefighting, visit the Alberta Learning Information Service and search by occupation or NOC code (6262), at [www.alis.alberta.ca](http://www.alis.alberta.ca).

### Emergency medical services

Emergency medical staff can be employed by a number of different employers, including; local municipalities, contractors to municipalities (some municipalities hire a contract company to provide their emergency services), local health regions, industrial safety

companies and on site at plants and mills.

There are generally three levels of emergency medical occupations: emergency medical responder (EMR), emergency medical technician (EMT), and paramedic (what used to be called EMT-P). Beyond that are specialization options such as critical care training.

Stephen Woodburn, owner and CEO of Advanced Paramedic in Peace River says there is a demand for emergency medical staff in this area and there are many options for people interested in this kind of work.

Advanced Paramedic is a ground, air, and industrial ambulance service provider that employs about 50 people. The shifts vary for their employees depending on which industry they work in. Air ambulance staff are generally on-call, but ground ambulance staff generally have a set schedule. Industrial emergency response staff are on call as well, and also work seasonally.

### Training and job opportunities

There are many different training and employment opportunities for job seekers interested in emergency response positions. Many employers will provide free training for dedicated staff members. For example, the Peace River Fire Department will pay for training for staff if they want or need more emergency medical training. Woodburn with Advanced Paramedic says they have their own training courses in partnership with NAIT's Peace River campus.

An excellent resource when looking for emergency medical positions is the Alberta College of Paramedics' website at [www.collegeofparamedics.org](http://www.collegeofparamedics.org). All emergency medical responders must be registered with the Alberta



*There are many opportunities in northwest Alberta for emergency medical staff and advancement is common. Staff can work in many industries and for many different employers.*

College of Paramedics in order to work in Alberta. Job postings can be found on the website.

Other common requirements to being an emergency medical responder are having a Class 4 driver's licence, specific safety training such as H2S or WHMIS and a criminal record check.

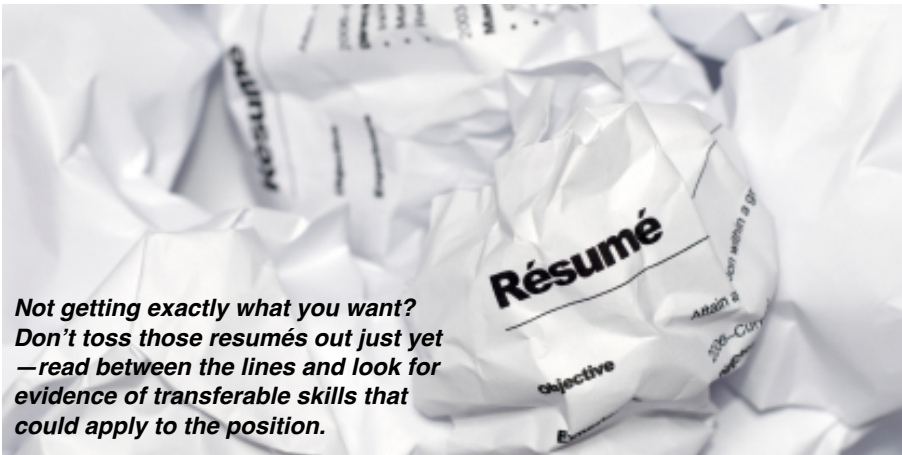
### Wages and salary

Wages and salary for emergency medical staff vary greatly based on experience and level of training. Wages are also higher for industrial positions. The 2007 Wage and Salary Survey states that in Alberta the average hourly wages for emergency medical personnel range from \$14.84 to \$24.86 per hour, but wages increase from there for industrial or air ambulance positions.

For more information on emergency medical response, visit the Alberta Learning Information Service and search by occupation or NOC code for emergency medical personnel (NOC 3234), [www.alis.alberta.ca](http://www.alis.alberta.ca).

# A new way of hiring

How assessing transferable skills can help you hire your next employee



*Not getting exactly what you want? Don't toss those resumés out just yet —read between the lines and look for evidence of transferable skills that could apply to the position.*

If you want to hire a new employee but you just can't seem to find one who meets all your requirements, maybe you need to change your search criteria. Someone who doesn't have the specific skill you're after might be skilled in another area that's very similar to what you're looking for—in other words, they may have transferable skills that would make them qualified for the job after all.

Next time you're skimming through a resumé, keep your eyes open for the skills you might not normally take note of, for instance; technical skills that don't necessarily apply directly to the position, or soft skills and even hobbies or volunteer experience. These qualifications, while they might not seem like it at first glance, could be just as useful as those you've deemed necessary for the position.

"Sometimes we miss things that could potentially make a difference," says Lynn Bakewell, career and employment consultant with Alberta Employment and Immigration's Peace River Service Centre. One example Bakewell lists is friends of hers who are interested in genealogy (the study of family ancestry)—for someone to pursue this as an interest, they'd have to be a skilled researcher,

organized and good at documenting information. Even if their job has nothing to do with genealogy, the skills they've picked up from their interest could come in handy.

Transferable skills come in many different forms, such as:

**Communication:** Does the applicant like to read or write? Perhaps they're a member of a speech club or they belong to an online community where they interact with other people. Each of these scenarios would help a person hone their communication skills.

**Attention to detail:** This skill is also wide ranging. You could find it in anyone, from a person who likes to work on cars in their spare time to someone who has a background in accounting and bookkeeping.

**Multitasking:** Parents are some of the greatest multitaskers. If an applicant has kids at home, or is re-entering the workforce after some time as a stay-at-home parent, you can bet they've perfected the art of multitasking.

**Problem solving:** Again, parents excel in this category—who else could figure out how to get paint out of the carpet or retrieve a toy from a jammed toilet? (In which case,

cleaning and plumbing skills could be added to the list!) Or perhaps you've got someone who likes to solve puzzles or is a handyman around the house—those are all great examples of problem solvers.

**Organization:** If you have an applicant who's fresh out of university after juggling five courses, a part-time job, homework and hobbies, you probably have someone who is excellent at organization.

**Computer skills:** A person may be familiar with Windows, but you work with Mac in your office. Or maybe they know how to use the layout design program Pages but they've never used the similar program, QuarkXPress. These "problems" don't have to be problems at all—anyone who is skilled at one should be able to pick up another program or platform without too many difficulties.

**Commitment:** This might not be an outright skill, but it's certainly something most employers look for and something you're likely to find in a person who is devoted to his or her hobbies. It takes time, patience and dedication to commit yourself to a hobby, and that type of person is likely to show commitment in other areas of their life as well—such as at their job.

The list could go on, as transferable skills can be found in almost any situation. So next time you're hiring, check out that stack of resumés you've already got filed away instead of holding out for that perfect employee. You'll probably find the position will be filled that much sooner, and you might even come to appreciate skills in your new employee that you didn't even know you were looking for.

# Looking for labour market information?

## Education programs for protective services industry

Colleges/universities	Courses/programs offered	Contact
Athabasca University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Professional Arts, Criminal Justice (must already have a two-year diploma in a criminal justice-related area)</li> <li>Distance education</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.athabasca.ca/programs/bpacrjs">www.athabasca.ca/programs/bpacrjs</a> 800-788-9041
CDI College of Business, Technology and Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policing and Protective Services program</li> <li>Edmonton</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.cdishool.com">www.cdishool.com</a> 866-789-1903
Grant MacEwan College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police and Security diploma program, specialization in police studies</li> <li>Edmonton</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.macewan.ca">www.macewan.ca</a> 800-497-4622
NorQuest College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal Policing and Security certificate program</li> <li>Edmonton</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.norquest.ca/programs/humanservice/policing.htm">www.norquest.ca/programs/humanservice/policing.htm</a> 780-644-6401
University of Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bachelor of Arts, Criminology</li> <li>Edmonton</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ualberta.ca">www.ualberta.ca</a> 780-492-3111
Canadian Society for Industrial Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accredited Security Professional designation</li> <li>Professional Certification Program</li> <li>Edmonton</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.csis-scsi.org">www.csis-scsi.org</a> 800-461-7748



Peace River Alberta Service Centre

### Alberta Employment and Immigration Offices

Your source for Labour Market Information

#### Peace River Alberta Service Centre

9715 - 100 Street, Peace River, AB  
Phone 780-624-6135

#### High Level Alberta Service Centre

10106 - 100 Avenue, High Level, AB  
(We've moved to the first floor)  
Phone 780-841-4315

#### Peace River Job Corps

Valley Chrysler Building  
9603 - 90 Avenue, Peace River, AB  
Phone 780-624-7112

#### High Level Job Corps

10604 - 93 Street, High Level, AB  
Phone 780-926-4515

#### Fort Vermilion Job Corps

4305 - 46 Street, Fort Vermilion, AB  
Phone 780-926-4515

Want to see all the employment news and information from the Peace River & High Level areas?  
[employment.alberta.ca/northwest](http://employment.alberta.ca/northwest)

### Spirit of the North Trade Show

The High Level Chamber of Commerce is holding the Spirit of the North tradeshow on September 19 to 20 at the High Level Sports Complex.

#### RCMP

One of the recruiters who will be at the Spirit of the North Trade Show is Constable Carol McKinley, RCMP recruiter for western Alberta. Meet McKinley to find out what it means to be an RCMP officer. For more information, contact McKinley at 780-292-0732.

#### Other Recruiters

For information on other attending recruiters and employers, call the High Level Chamber of Commerce at 780-926-2470, or visit [www.highlevelchamber.com](http://www.highlevelchamber.com).

## We want your feedback!

Forward comments, suggestions and requests for articles to:

phone: 780-425-6741

e-mail: [eii.webmaster@gov.ab.ca](mailto:eii.webmaster@gov.ab.ca)



For information on resources and services about career and education decisions:

Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline at **1-800-661-3753 or 310-0000 (toll free)**

or visit the Alberta Learning Information Service website at

[www.alis.gov.ab.ca](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca)