

UTM CAREER CENTRE

INDUSTRY PROFILE:

GOVERNMENT



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What Do Professionals in Government Do?

*Government **exists to improve people's lives.** If you want to make your corner of the world a better place to live, consider a **career in the public service.***

Overview

Jobs in the public service are as interesting and varied as the people who hold them and represent a wide range of fields.

Before highlighting some of these positions, here's a primer on Canada's three levels of government. The federal government (the Government of Canada) creates laws and is responsible for things that affect the whole country, such as citizenship and immigration, national defence and trade with other countries. Provincial and territorial governments, for example, the Province of Ontario, are responsible for matters such as education, health care and highways. Municipal or local governments (cities, towns, and villages in Ontario) deal with things that affect our daily lives directly like firefighting, public transportation, parks, libraries and other local matters.

Following are just a few occupations that are specific to government.

City Councillor

A City Councillor is a politician who is elected on a four-year term to represent the interests of their ward and the people who live there with the local government. Councillors are a bridge between the community and the council for residents to help shape their neighbourhoods. They deal with issues as diverse as getting speed bumps installed on local roads, revitalizing parks and noise complaints.

Constituency Assistant

At the provincial and federal levels of government, Members of Parliament or provincial legislatures, are elected to represent the people in a geographical area or constituency. They need Constituency Assistants to help manage many of the day-to-day issues that come up for citizens in their riding. This could include, for example, helping with immigration, student loans or seniors' issues, taking appropriate initial action to resolve, document or escalate their concerns or enquiries.

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What Do Professionals in Government Do? (cont.)

Economic Development Officer

In cities and towns, Economic Development Officers work with communities, local government and business to bring investment, jobs and facilities to an area. Municipalities always seek to expand and diversify their tax bases. A new business opening or an existing business expanding are beneficial to the local economy as they bring more tax revenue and provide citizens with new employment opportunities. By establishing relationships, building networks and meeting the needs of business, economic developers help their communities to thrive.

Policy Analyst

Governments at all levels make public policy, which is the system of laws, regulations and courses of action that touch every aspect of our lives, including education, law enforcement, healthcare and the like. Policy Analysts research and evaluate policy options, and consult with stakeholders to develop government policies. They then brief Ministers and senior management to provide the best advice for government to adopt. Typically, policy analysts specialize in a specific area, such as immigration or environmental policy.



Food Inspector

Common to everyone is the need to eat. The federal and provincial governments employ Food Inspectors to ensure that our food is safe to consume. Inspectors enforce laws about how food is prepared, handled, and stored and ensure that foods are graded, packaged, and advertised properly. They inspect farms, plants, and stores, making sure proper sanitation and quality control standards are met. Food inspectors may inspect fruit and vegetables, poultry, meat, dairy, or plant products.

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What Do Professionals in Government Do? (cont.)

Foreign Service Officer

The job of a Foreign Service Officer is to defend and promote her country's interests abroad. The Canadian Foreign Service is divided into four career tracks: Trade Commissioners, Foreign Service Immigration Officers, Political/Economic Officers, and Management and Consular Affairs Officers. Depending on the career track you choose, the job will include things like promoting foreign investment in and out of Canada, helping to broker peace agreements between disputing parties and preparing briefings for Cabinet Ministers. Foreign Service Officers need to be fluent in French.

Each fall, the Public Service Commission runs a highly competitive recruitment process for permanent entry-level positions called the Post-secondary Recruitment Competition. It entails writing the Public Service Entrance Exam, along with a number of other tests and interviews.

Intelligence Officer

If a career as an Intelligence Officer appeals, working with the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), you will help investigate threats to national security and prepare intelligence reports to combat threats such as terrorism, espionage and foreign interference. CSIS has a co-op program and recruits students in May, January and September. Work terms range between four and 16 months. Students must apply online one year before their planned work terms and must be Canadian citizens and enrolled in a co-op/internship program.

Fast Facts

In 2018, approximately 273,571...
people were employed as federal civil servants, according to the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Ontario's Financial Accountability Office...

estimates there were about 650,000 public servants in Ontario in 2018, of which 88,000 were employed in public administration in government ministries. The Ontario Government employs 11% of the province's salaried workers.

By 2017...

the average Ontario public sector worker earned \$16,049 more than the average private sector worker, with public sector employees earning an average of 33.6% more than the typical private sector employee, according to the Treasury Board Secretariat.

There are about 3,700...

municipal governments in Canada and 444 in Ontario.

Approximately 23,700 people...

work as business development officers and marketing researchers and consultants in Ontario.

About 12,750 people...

work as constituency assistants/executive assistants in Ontario. Some 94% are employed full time and 91% are female.

As many as 21,700 people...

work as social policy researchers, consultants and program officers in Ontario, with 41% employed by the federal government and 16% by provincial and territorial governments.



Around 12,400 people...

in Ontario are employed as food inspectors and inspectors in public and environmental health and occupational health and safety.

Canada's foreign service...

employs approximately 1,600 people.

Industry Trends

Skills shortage points to need for technology-savvy workers to meet demand.

Overview

In its 2019 Ontario Economic Report, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC), which represents businesses across the province, says that embracing technological innovation and addressing Ontario's skills mismatch will be major factors in the province's economic success. Although their members are mostly optimistic about their own businesses' economic outlook, almost half say they have difficulty finding and retaining qualified staff.

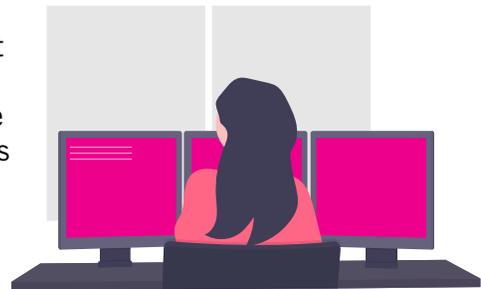
Precarious Employment

An increasing trend in Ontario is employees in temporary working arrangements or holding multiple jobs – generally referred to as precarious employment. Over the last 20 years, the share of Ontarians in precarious employment has increased, reflecting structural changes in the Ontario economy. According to Ontario's Financial Accountability Office, in 2018, the share of employees in temporary arrangements or holding multiple jobs stood at 11%. Contract employment is now more common in government, as well as the private sector.

Role of Technology

At the same time, the federal public service has plans to develop a new digital platform that will make government services more user-centered, customized and accessible. However, Canada has a shortage of professionals with the necessary digital skills and those who do have these skills are in high demand in other sectors.

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Industry Trends (cont.)

In-Demand Skills

A 2019 Public Policy Forum report states, “The skills shortage is most acute in areas including artificial intelligence (AI), analytics, the Internet of Things, cloud-based development, and matching technology to the specific requirements of users. Virtually all industrial sectors are now increasingly reliant on technology, and demand for skills has increased more swiftly than supply.”

The report also notes a significant decline in the percentage of young women in technology roles in the federal government, due to a smaller pool of women pursuing education in engineering, along with an increased demand by the private sector. This points to great opportunities in government for graduates with these in-demand skills.

Labour Woes

For Foreign Service Officers, labour woes were reported in March 2019, after their union, the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers, filed a request for arbitration after declaring an impasse in its collective bargaining negotiations with the federal Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS).

Food Safety Regulations

Meanwhile, in January 2019, Canada’s Minister of Health, Ginette Petitpas Taylor, announced new food safety regulations allowing for faster removal of unsafe food from the marketplace. Businesses will also have to trace their food back to their supplier and forward to businesses that bought their products. These regulations will affect the work of food inspectors.



Employment Outlook Government Professionals

The employment outlook will be average for Constituency Assistants and executive assistants (National Occupation Code (NOC) 1222) in Ontario for the 2017-2021 period.

Executive Assistant

Executive assistants are employed by all industries. Key employers include public administration mainly at the federal level, as well as finance and insurance, and professional, technical, and scientific services.

Many executive assistants work in direct support of senior management, boards and committees in roles that require initiative, good decision-making, and the ability to coordinate multiple schedules. As more tasks become automated due to technological advancement, the nature of the occupation may change and duties may become more focused on research and coordination with people and managing smaller projects.

Candidates with at least five years' administrative experience, strong oral and written communication skills, and knowledge of advanced Microsoft Office Suite are the most sought after in the labour market. Employers also usually require individuals who have completed a college or university-level program in a discipline related to business or administration.

Social Policy Analyst

The employment outlook will be fair for Social Policy Analysts, consultants and program officers (NOC 4164) in Ontario for the 2018-2020 period.

Nearly two thirds of all social policy researchers, consultants and program officers work in public administration. They are also employed in smaller numbers in the professional, scientific and technical industry and in health care and social assistance. Governments, social services organizations, and other civic groups rely on the work of researchers, consultants and program officers when making policy decisions on a variety of social issues.

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Employment Outlook for Government Professionals (cont.)

Social Policy Analyst (Continued)

The federal government's latest budget proposes increased funding for research, which could help sustain employment for social policy researchers and consultants over the next few years. However, the Ontario government may reduce spending on social programs, which may affect prospects for social policy program officers.

Employment in this occupational group has grown strongly over the past decade. A large number of qualified candidates enter the job market every year and advancement in this field usually requires a master's or doctoral degree in the social sciences. More than a third of social policy researchers, consultants and program officers in Ontario have a graduate degree or other type of advanced qualification.

Foreign Service Officers

For Foreign Service Officers (Program officers unique to government and other professional occupations in social science) (NOC 4168), there is expected to be a surplus of workers in this occupational group over the period 2017-2026 at the national level. The unemployment rate increased sharply to 17.5% in 2016, well above the national average of 7%, suggesting that the number of job seekers substantially exceeded the number of job openings.

Surplus of Labour

As job openings and job seekers are projected to be at relatively similar levels over the 2017-2026 period, the surplus of labour seen in recent years is expected to continue. About two-thirds of all job openings will be from retirements and the retirement rate is expected to be stronger than the average for all occupations.

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Employment Outlook for Government Professionals (cont.)

Job Creation

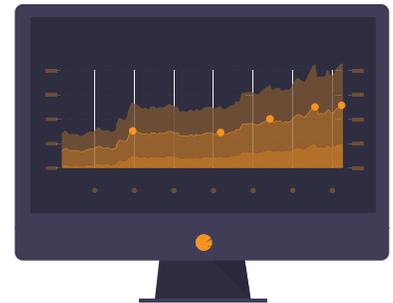
Job creation will be driven by the ongoing need to assess the impact of government policies, such as the efficiencies of public services, effects of budget changes, and advantages of proposed improvements. However, the fact that governments at various levels have to operate under tight budget constraints is expected to limit job opportunities in this occupational group over the next decade. This is a highly-popular occupation among graduates due to good wages and working conditions, although the high educational requirements (a master's degree or above is often required) is likely to limit accessibility.

Employment Outlook for Food Inspectors

The job outlook is above average for Food Inspectors and inspectors in public and environmental health and occupational health and safety (NOC 2263) for 2017 to 2021, in Ontario.

Employment in this occupation has increased over the past decade. Close to a third of workers are employed in public administration. A smaller proportion of workers is employed in professional, scientific and technical services, manufacturing, and health care and social assistance.

Increasing concerns and regulations related to food, environmental, and workplace safety could potentially increase demand for these workers. However, growth in public sector employment in Ontario may weaken over the forecasted period due to budget constraints.



What You Need To Succeed

Despite the wide variety of careers in government, there are some common skills and attributes that would serve you well in any public service role. Public servants need excellent people skills, along with the ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. They should be able to exercise sound judgment and diplomacy and be discrete, honest and respectful. The ability to research and analyze information is key, along with critical thinking and creativity. Good problem-solving and decision-making skills are also important. A commitment to serving the public good is a prerequisite.



In-Demand Jobs and Salary Ranges

Job Title	Salary Range
Economic Development Officer	\$ 35,390 - \$ 80,700
Constituency Assistant	\$ 37,500 - \$ 59,838
Policy Analyst	\$ 59,995 - \$ 89,823
Municipal Councillor	\$ 35,317 - \$ 114,307
Food Inspector	\$ 31,444 - \$ 63,317
Foreign Service Officer	\$ 61,156 - \$ 110,000
Intelligence Officer	\$ 36,826 - \$ 81,923

Where the Jobs Are



These industries show the strongest demand for criminal justice professionals:

- Federal government ministries and agencies
- Ontario government ministries and agencies
- Municipal governments

[Federal Student Work Experience Program](#) - FSWEPP is the primary vehicle through which federal departments and agencies recruit students for some 7,000 temporary student jobs/ internships each year.

[Ontario Internship Program](#) - OIP is aimed at developing a future generation of public service professionals in the Ontario Public Service (OPS) by hiring graduates for a two-year internship in a variety of areas. Applications are usually due in January every year.

Industry Associations

Industry Associations	Website Link
Association of Administrative Professionals	canadianadmin.ca/branches/toronto/
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	www.inspection.gc.ca/eng/1297964599443/1297965645317
Economic Developers Association of Canada	edac.ca
Federation of Canadian Municipalities	fcm.ca/en
Global Affairs Canada	www.international.gc.ca/gac-amc/careers-carrieres
Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers	pafso.com
Public Service Commission of Canada	www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission



Where to Find More Information

Stay connected with the UTM Career Centre:

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Find more career-related resources at:

- utm.utoronto.ca/careers
- clnx.utoronto.ca