



Parole/Probation Officer

SALARY RANGE (2017): \$64,000–\$86,000

I have been employed with Correctional Service Canada (CSC) for many years now; it's a large organization that stretches across Canada with more than 50 institutions and almost 100 parole offices. My first position was within a correctional facility, supervising and managing a caseload of offenders, but now my office is located outside of the prison, in a community-based office. This allows me to support individuals to make a successful transition back into the working world. I have policies and procedures that guide my work, but daily I have to rely on my professional judgment to make decisions that will best support these individuals while also protecting the public interest. Individual meetings tend to focus on individual interventions: treatment, supports, programs, services, etc. I am responsible for meeting with each offender as outlined by the court. In these meetings I interview, observe, listen, question, counsel and intervene. It is my job to assess risk, hold individuals accountable and provide tailored support.

The Tip: Set clear goals for yourself. Write down three goals for your day, but also write down goals for the week and for the month. Keep these in a place where you can see them daily. This will make you more focused and productive.

PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Evidence-based Decision Making

- Must have excellent skills in decision-making to support the parole process and conduct clear, bias-free assessments, and make decisions based on solid evidence

Advanced Research & Analysis Skills

- Critically analyze reports
- Synthesize information from multiple sources
- Experience with database management

Knowledge of Human Behaviour

- Understand developmental histories, the impact of trauma and the complications of living with addictions or mental health issues
- Relate to people with empathy while also setting clear boundaries
- Expert knowledge of the rehabilitation process

Advanced Communication Skills

- Strong documentation skills
- Strong verbal skills. Able to communicate well with clients and members of the judicial system.
- Present complex information to a wide variety of audiences (public, professional, clients, case review)

Inter-personal Skills

- Work with diverse populations
- Work within a multidisciplinary team
- Set clear boundaries

Intra-personal Skills

- Able to manage stress
- Efficient, self-aware, aware of biases
- Evaluate situations objectively

Additional Skills

- Well-organized, reliable, ethical
- Excellent time-management skills

- Follow policies and procedures

BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

<p>Education & Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) with a minor in justice studies • Completed two-day course on Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) • Up to date First Aid Training and CPR—Level Three (with automated external defibrillator AED training) 	<p>Combining a psych major with the justice studies minor made a real difference in my undergrad experience. When I started work I was able to combine my understanding of the system with my knowledge of human behaviour and development. I think this has been a real strength, and I know that combination stood out on my resume.</p>
<p>Employment Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp counsellor for youth summer camps where I led groups in weeklong programs • In third year, I worked on campus in residence as a live-in leader. I assisted my floor of about 30 students; did programming and organized events; was “on call;” and did rounds with campus security and provided individual help when students were in crisis. • I was a security guard in the federal prison system 	<p>Back in university, working in residence was great experience. I learned a lot about emergency response and the role that security services has in helping communities to prevent or respond to incidents. Working as a security guard in the system was a great experience. I feel I’m getting to know the system from several points of view and I think this makes me a better parole officer.</p>
<p>Community Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workout with a personal trainer and have support from a life coach • Very involved with community school projects • Volunteered time photographing graffiti for a community database in collaboration with local police 	<p>Being an active citizen is important to me. I do what I can to encourage others to become involved in making a positive difference.</p>
<p>Contextual Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I’ve had some random experiences, but for the most part I’ve been focused on the justice experience with a human-development perspective 	<p>I believe that people do the best that they can with the choices they have. As a parole officer, I work to broaden those choices, add in supports and remove barriers so that these former inmates can reconnect with society in a positive way.</p>
<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are very important to me. I live my life with honesty and integrity and expect others to do the same. 	<p>I owe a debt to the officer who volunteered in my high school. He showed me that officers can be kind, yet still command respect. I would like to think of myself in that same way: strict but empathetic; kind, but also with strong boundaries.</p>