

Dentists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Dentist [NOC 2021: 31110 / NOC 2016: 3113]

Job Description

Dentists diagnose, treat and prevent disorders of the mouth.

Working as a Dentist you will perform some or all of the following duties:

- Examine patients' teeth, gums, and surrounding tissue to diagnose disease, injury, and decay, and plan appropriate treatment
- Restore, extract, and replace diseased and decayed teeth
- Perform oral surgery, periodontal surgery, and other treatments
- Give advice on oral hygiene

Source:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Dentists**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Industry Overview

Population growth, an aging population, and technological advancement in diagnosis and treatment, are increasing the demand for dental services. Many opportunities for dentists will also become available due to retirements.

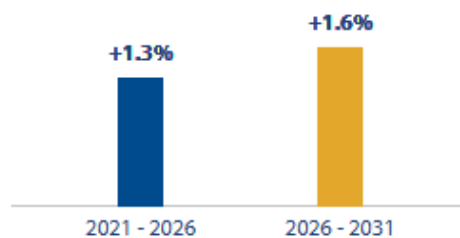
Industry reports the current supply of new graduates is not sufficient to meet demand. In particular, there is currently a shortage of dentists in rural areas of the

province. As such, new graduates may find higher employment opportunities in more rural regions of the province, where employers have more difficulty finding qualified dentists.

Job Outlook in BC

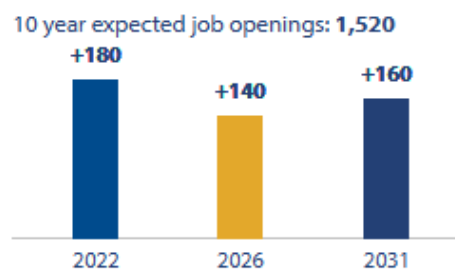
Employment Outlook, 2021-2023

Forecasted average employment growth rate



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Job openings



Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

Composition of job openings

Replacement of retiring workers:
61.6%
930 openings



New jobs due to economic growth:
38.4%
580 openings

Source: B.C. Labour Market Outlook

You can learn more about dentists in BC from:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Dentists**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising (Profile for Dentist)**
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

Types of Employers

Most dentists work in private practice, but you may also be employed in hospitals, clinics, public health facilities, or universities.

Salary

The annual provincial median salary for dentists is \$104,055.

Dentists are paid directly by patients or by patient insurance companies. Much of a dentist's earnings are used to pay for business expenses such as equipment, insurance, and staff salaries. Self-employed dentists must provide their own benefits.

Your income varies based on level of experience, location, and specialty. Your salary also depends on your number of regular patients.

Salary range for dentists in British Columbia:

Community/Area	Low (\$/year)	Median (\$/year)	High (\$/year)
British Columbia	32,959	104,055	214,663
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	32,959	100,384	211,227

Table from Job Bank Canada: <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

Working Hours

Most dentists work 7 or 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. Dentists in private practice often have the flexibility to choose when and how many hours (full-time or part-time) they want to work. In some instances, you may be required to adjust hours to meet patients' needs. Early evening and weekend work is becoming more common.

Sources: WorkBC Career Profile & Career Cruising

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- strong interpersonal and communication skills as well as patience
- good hand-eye coordination
- aptitude for using mechanical equipment
- high degree of manual dexterity
- able to calm people who are scared or in pain
- in control and focused, even when tired

Source: Career Cruising

Education and Experience

Dentists require:

- One to four years of pre-dentistry university studies, **and**
- university degree from a recognized dental program – a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree is most common; however, a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree or Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree may be sufficient
- registration with the BC College of Oral Health Professionals is mandatory

The **Faculty of Dentistry at the University of British Columbia** offers the province's only program that leads to a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree (DMD)

<https://www.dentistry.ubc.ca/education/>.

Further education is required in order to become a dental specialist.

Qualifications

This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.

Licensing Requirements for Dentists

To practise dentistry in BC, you must:

- be registered and licensed with the **BC College of Oral Health Professionals**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca/>
- pass the **National Dental Examining Board of Canada** exam
<https://ndeb-bned.ca/>

To maintain a licence to practise in BC you must follow the BC College of Oral Health Professionals **Quality Assurance** program, which includes:

- evidence of continuing education on a regular basis
- evidence of Continuous Practice (CP) - number of practice hours required to hold practising registration

For more information on licensing and registration as a dentist, see

- **BC College of Oral Health Professionals:**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca/register-renew/dentist-registration-renewal/>
- **Quality Assurance Program**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca/practice-resources/quality-assurance/dentist/>

Internationally educated dentists

Registration with the BC College of Oral Health Professionals is required in order to be able to practise as a dentist in B.C.

The path to registration depends on whether your education is from an **Accredited** or **Non-Accredited Dental Program**.

- Graduates of an **accredited dental program** in Canadian, American, Australian (must have graduated on or after March 31, 2010), New Zealand (must have graduated on or after December 14, 2011) or Irish

- (must have graduated on or after December 5, 2012) schools are eligible to apply directly to sit the national examination administered by the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB).
- **Non-accredited programs:** If your dental training was obtained outside of the above-noted jurisdictions, you must successfully complete either an accredited full-time, two-year Qualifying Program or the NDEB Equivalency Process. These are the two paths by which you can become eligible to take the Canadian national examinations administered by the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) – a requirement for all candidates.

More information & assistance:

- **National Dental Examining Board of Canada**
 - **Accredited Programs**
<https://ndeb-bned.ca/certification-process/entry-to-practice-graduates-of-accredited-dental-programs/>
 - **Non-Accredited Programs**
<https://ndeb-bned.ca/equivalency-process/entry-to-practice-graduates-of-non-accredited-dental-programs/>
- **Support Program for Internationally Trained Dentists. SUCCESS BC**
<https://successbc.ca/internationally-trained-dentists/>

This program is designed for people preparing for the licensing examinations required by the National Dental Examining Board of Canada. It offers assistance with study groups, exam preparation and pre-testing.
- **BC College of Oral Health Professionals**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca/register-renew/dentist-registration-renewal/dentist-registration-information/>
- **International Professionals. Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada**
https://www.cda-adc.ca/cdacweb/en/international_professionals/

3. Finding Jobs

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

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free.

Online Job Postings

- **BC's Provincial Health Authorities**
 - **Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**
<https://careers.vch.ca/>
 - **Fraser Health Authority**
<https://careers.fraserhealth.ca/search-jobs.aspx>
 - **Interior Health Authority**
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/careers/Pages/default.aspx>
 - **Northern Health Authority**
<https://careers.northernhealth.ca/>
 - **Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)**
<http://www.phsa.ca/careers>
 - **Island Health Authority**
<https://www.islandhealth.ca/careers>
- **First Nations Health Authority**
<https://www.fnha.ca/about/work-with-us>
- **Indeed**
<https://ca.indeed.com/>
- **Professional Posting Service for Alumni– UBC Faculty of Dentistry**
<https://www.dentistry.ubc.ca/professional-posting-services-for-alumni/>
- **University of Toronto Faculty of Dentistry, Practice Opportunities**
<https://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/jobs/practice-opportunities>
- **Royal College of Dentists Canada Job Board**
<https://rcdc.ca/job-board/>

Identifying the Right Position

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

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

- dental surgeon
- endodontist
- oral pathologist
- oral radiologist
- orthodontist
- pediatric dentist
- public health dentist

Source: <https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/>

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of dental offices and other agencies within the dental sector in BC and Canada. Contact them directly to see if there are job opportunities:

- **BC Dental Association – Find a Dentist**
<https://www.yourdentalhealth.ca/visiting-your-dentist/find-a-dentist/>
- **Dentist Directory Canada**
<https://www.dentistdirectorycanada.ca/>
- **BC Association of Oral Health Professionals Public Register**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca/public-register/>
- **Reference Canada**
<https://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 "Dentists" 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

4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <https://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 at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/writing-resumes-and-cover-letters>
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/getting-canadian-work-experience>
- **Networking for Employment**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/learn-more-about-working-in-bc-and-canada>

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Associations for dentists in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry**
<https://acfd.ca/>
- **BC Dental Association**
<https://www.bcdental.org/>
- **Canadian Dental Association**
<https://www.cda-adc.ca>
- **BC College of Oral Health Professionals**
<https://oralhealthbc.ca>
- **National Dental Examining Board of Canada**
<https://ndeb-bned.ca/>
- **Royal College of Dentists of Canada**
<https://rcdc.ca/>

Industry Journals

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. Examples at the Central Library:

- **JCDA : Journal of the Canadian Dental Association**
Available online at <https://jcda.ca/>
- **Newsletters of the BC College of Oral Health Professionals**
Available online at <https://portal.oralhealthbc.ca/practice-resources/newsletters>

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, 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 <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.