

Looking For a Job as an Older Worker

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. What is an “older” worker?

Introduction

There are many definitions of “older” workers:

- The Government of Canada defines an older worker as someone 50 years of age or older who is interested in continuing to work or looking for a new job to match his/her skills.
- In BC, older worker programs are targeted for workers 45 years of age and up.
- Other private agencies target older worker programs to workers over 45 years of age and older.

To collect the Old Age Security pension from the government, you must be 65 years of age.

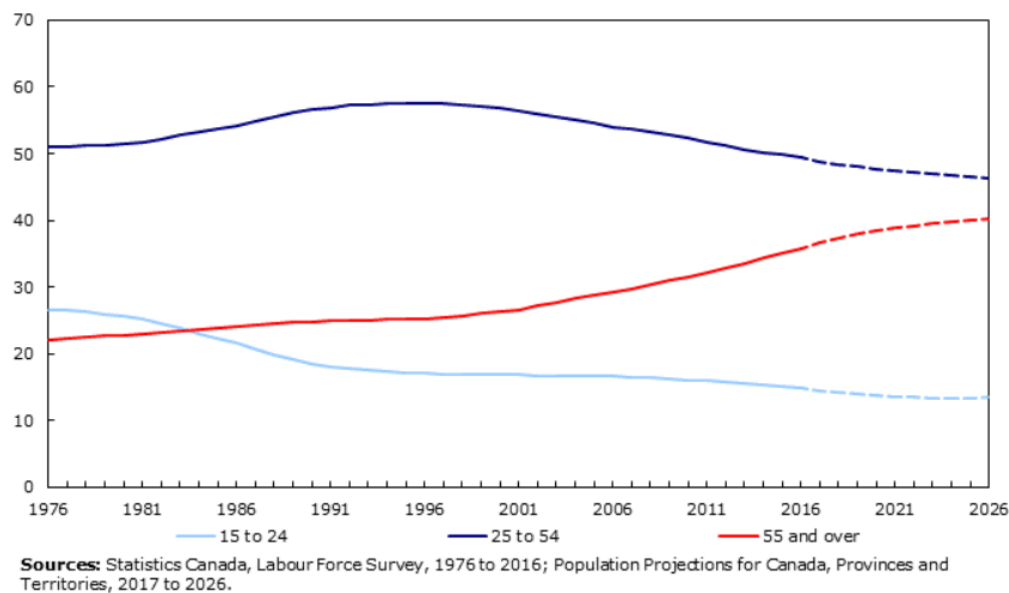
2. Older workers in the workforce

The Canadian workforce is aging quickly. According to the 2021 Census, more than 1 in 5 (21.8%) persons of working age are aged 55 to 64. Older Canadians are a growing economic group and are staying healthier, active, and involved for longer.

- *There are more persons aged 55-64 than young adults aged 15-24*
- *This means older workers with experience are needed to maintain the current workforce.*

As an older worker, you have significant experience and knowledge of workplace operations. You can be a valuable resource for information sharing to younger workers. The current trend is for older workers to work as professional service consultants or contractors, working part- or full-time without being on permanent staff.

Distribution of Working Age Population by Age Group, 1976-2026



Sources: Statistics Canada

- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2017001/article/14826-eng.htm>
- <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220427/dq220427a-eng.htm?HPA=1>

3. Helpful Books

The Vancouver Public Library has a number of books that can help you look for work. The titles below are just some examples:

Career Exploration and Job Search

- **Best Job Search Tips for Age 60 Plus: A Practical Work Options Resource for Baby Boomers** / Toby Haberkorn. 2017. Central Library, 650.142 H11b
- **How to Get a Good Job after 50: A Step-by-Step Guide to Job Search Success** / Rupert French. 2015. Central Library, 650.142 F87h
- **The Encore Career Handbook: How to Make a Living and a Difference in the Second Half of Life** / Marci Alboher. 2013. Central Library, 650.1 A33e
- **Great Jobs for Everyone 50+** / Kerry Hannon. 2018. Central Library, 331.702 H24g2
- **Finding Work After 40: Proven Strategies for Managers and Professionals** / Robin McKay Bell. 2011. Central Library, 650.142 B43f

Resumes and Cover Letters

- **Expert Resumes for Baby Boomers** / Wendy S. Enelow. 2007. Central Library, 650.142 E56eb
- **Expert Resumes for People Returning to Work** / Wendy S. Enelow. 2008. Central Library, 650.142 E56ep1
- **Resumes for the 50+ Job Hunter** / McGraw-Hill. 2009. Central Library, 650.142 R4361v2

4. Networking

Networking is still one of the best ways to find employment, regardless of your age. If you've been in Canada for a few years, you may already have a network of family and friends who you can talk to about your job search.

Another option is to grow your network by joining a professional association or using social media to connect with like-minded professionals.

- **Networking for Employment**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>

- **Associations Canada**

Available at VPL Central Branch, 060 A84 and online:

<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/canada-info-desk>

VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

- **MeetUp**

<https://www.meetup.com/cities/ca/bc/vancouver/>

Many of the groups in MeetUp are based on professional networks. Search the Vancouver site for groups with similar career interests.

- **Use Social Media to Find your Dream Job!** How to Use LinkedIn, Google+, Facebook, Twitter and Other Social Media in Your Job Search / W. Daniel Quillenn. 2016. Vancouver Public Library, 650.142 Q67u

5. Job Boards

Search job posting sites for current employment opportunities. Try limiting your searches by keyword (ie: semi-retired) or type of employment (part-time, casual, etc).

- **Experience Matters Job Board**
<https://experience-matters.ca/job-board/>
- **Indeed.com**
<https://ca.indeed.com/>
- **WorkBC Job Board**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Find-Jobs/Jobs.aspx#/job-search>

6. Working as a Consultant

If you find it difficult to find permanent work in your professional field, you may want to consider working as a consultant. Consultants have the flexibility to set their own hours, and you can work as much or as little as you choose.

- **Starting a Consulting Business – Small Business Accelerator**
<https://sba.ubc.ca/guide/consulting-guide>
- **How to Start a Consulting Business**
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/41384>
- **Starting a Small Business Guide – BC Employment, Business & Economic Development**
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/small-business/resources/starting-a-small-business-guide>

7. Employment Programs for Older Workers

- **Older Workers 55+, BC Skills Training for Employment Programs**

<https://www.workbc.ca/Training-Education/Skills-Training-for-Employment/STE-Older-Workers-55.aspx>

Programs offered by numerous employment services throughout BC

- **Workplace Integration for Multi-Barriered Individuals, PICS**

<https://pics.bc.ca/programs/employment/wimbi/>

Tip:

- *Make sure to check the requirements for older worker programs. Often government-funded programs have special requirements for where you live, whether or not you've received employment insurance recently, or a specific age range.*

8. Your Rights as an Older Worker

The BC Human Right's Code states that an employer cannot refuse to interview, hire or promote you or decide to fire you because of your age.

What **can't** a prospective employer ask:

- Your age
- When you expect to retire

In BC, you are protected from age discrimination in the workplace related to:

- employment (hiring, firing, or terms and conditions of employment);
- age requirements in employment;
- membership in a trade union, employer's organization, or occupational association (such as excluding or expelling from membership because of age, or discriminating against a person or member due to their age)

If you have experienced age discrimination

- If it is safe to do so, tell the person firmly that their actions or comments are unacceptable and ask them to stop. If you find this difficult, consider asking a friend for help.
- Keep a written record of exactly what happened and when and what was said.
- File a human rights complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal. Filing a complaint starts a legal process that is similar to a court proceeding. Assistance is available when either filing or responding to a complaint.

For more information see:

- **Human Rights Protection – BC Law, Crime & Justice**
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/human-rights/human-rights-protection>

9. Additional Resources

- **CARP**

<https://www.carp.ca/>

A national non-profit organisation that promotes the interests of older Canadians

- **WorkBC – Mature Workers**

<https://www.workbc.ca/resources-for/mature-workers.aspx>

- **Resources for Mature Workers, ALIS [Alberta]**

<https://alis.alberta.ca/tools-and-resources/content/additional-resources-for/mature-workers/>

- **Older Workers/Job Seekers – Use Your Age to Your Advantage.**

LiveCareer.com

<https://www.livecareer.com/resources/jobs/search/age-advantage>

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff on Level 4, Central 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/>.