



INFORMATION FOR A CAREER AS AN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS) PROFESSIONAL IN CANADA

OVERVIEW

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) professionals work as health and safety consultants and coordinators, ergonomics and safety specialists, quality assurance professionals, health and safety officers, safety inspectors, occupational hygienists, safety project officers, and safety specialists. OHS professionals may be employed in a wide variety of settings including manufacturing, petrochemical, forestry, mining, construction, government, service and trade sectors. They evaluate and monitor health and safety hazards and develop strategies to control risks in the workplace.

The profession is not regulated in Canada and there are no requirements to be registered with one of the provincial regulatory authorities to practice as an inspector in occupational health and safety anywhere in Canada.

However, most positions in health and safety call for applicants to have a comprehensive knowledge of BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (OHSR) and Workers Compensation Board Act, post-secondary education (degree or diploma) in occupational health and safety or Risk Management; or a degree in related or supporting field; and Certified Human Resources Professional designation (CHRP) or Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP) certification is preferred.

STEPS TO BECOMING A SAFETY OFFICER

A bachelor's degrees in occupational health and safety or a related scientific field (chemistry, engineering or biology) is usually required. Bachelor's degree programs instruct students about the ethical, legal and professional responsibilities of occupational health and safety specialists in the workplace. Coursework includes safety and health standards, health hazard identification, industrial hygiene, occupational safety and hazardous materials and waste management.

A significant amount of on-the-job training is needed to learn the inspection procedures and applicable laws of the varied work environments. Since occupational health and safety specialists can work in numerous settings, the training they receive will be specific to the environment that they work in.

Prepared July 2019 by BCPLAN Navigator. Updated December 2021

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CERTIFICATIONS

While certification is voluntary for occupational health and safety specialists, many employers prefer candidates who have obtained certification. One can become certified through a variety of organizations, including the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) and the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP). Through the ABIH, a specialist can become a certified industrial hygienist (CIH). The certified safety professional (CSP) credential is offered by the BCSP. To achieve these certifications, one must meet requirements regarding education, coursework and years of experience and pass an exam.

The Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP) offers the designation Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP) to applicants who have been employed as safety professionals for at least three years and have successfully completed an evaluation, interview and examination process.

Internationally educated Occupational Health and Safety officers must:

- Hold a minimum of a one-year college/university certificate/diploma in OHS OR a two- year college/ university non-OHS certificate/diploma. Transcripts must be evaluated by a CRSP approved foreign credential assessment agency (e.g. ICES)
- Currently hold full-time employment in a position with OHS responsibilities comprising greater than 50% (minimum of 900 hours per calendar year)
- Have at least three continuous years of OHS experience immediately prior to making an application
- Provide proof of professional development – the minimum requirement is 15 points (one point is awarded for six hours of professional development) over five years immediately prior to submitting the application
- Pass a Regional Screening Centre interview
- Pass the Canadian Registered Safety Professionals exam (CRSPEX)
- Meet or exceed the CRSP's minimum English requirements

NOTE: All eligibility criteria must be met for an application to be assessed by the Qualifications Review Committee of BCRSP.

• Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP)

The Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP)[®]/Professionnel en sécurité agréé du Canada (PSAC)[®] certification is considered a benchmark in the OHS profession and the certification of choice for OHS professionals.

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The CRSP®/PSAC® certification demonstrates a minimum formal education and experience and passing the competency-based certification, CRSP® Examination (CRSPEX).

- ***Canadian Registered Safety Technician (CRST)***

A [Canadian Registered Safety Technician](#) (CRST) has met the requirements for certification/registration established by the BCRSP Governing Board. A CRST maintains OHS administrative processes, conducts training and uses a range of state-of-the-art tools, processes and common practice solutions to OHS risks. CRSP has three pathways:

Pathway A:

- Applicant oversees and drives monitoring and compliance in relation to technical and behavioral risk controls.
- Successfully completed a one-year OHS certificate program from a recognized educational institution.
- Technical Practice: Has one year of OHS work experience (at least 35% OHS duties) immediately before submitting their application.

Pathway B:

- Formal Education Requirement: Have successfully completed a two-year NON-OHS formal education program from a recognized educational institution (Community College or University) OR is qualified to journeyman status in a trade.
- Have completed professional development courses or training
- Have had one year of OHS work experience (at least 35% OHS duties) immediately prior to submitting their application.

Pathway C – For Graduates of Recognized OHS Programs

- Graduates from an approved 2-year (900 hour) OHS program from a recognized educational institution are eligible to write the Technician Certification examination immediately upon graduation, and if successful hold the Technician level certification.



- Upon obtaining 4 years' relevant OHS experience (professional level), they will be eligible to apply for the CRSP certification.

The exam (CRSPEX) consists of ~200 multiple choice questions to be completed in 3 ½ hours (no scheduled break).

CRST and CRSP PREPARATORY COURSES

Enrolment in an examination preparatory course is not an assurance of certification. Nor is attendance at any preparatory course. The subject content of these courses is representative of the knowledge required of an OHS generalist. However, the successful completion of the *CRSPEX* is dependent upon a combination of the applicant's academic background, OHS experience and individual preparation.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN BC (See separate information sheet)

BCIT – offers both a certificate and diploma in Occupational Health and Safety, considered the most comprehensive and recognized in Canada.

<https://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/6850diplt>

Okanagan College offers a certificate program in [Occupational Health and Safety](#) as a distance program.

University of Northern BC (UNBC) – offers an [Occupational Health and Safety Online Certificate](#).

University of Victoria (UVIC) – offers a [Certificate Program in Environmental and Occupational Health](#) through distance education.

RESOURCES

Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada - <http://www.awcbc.org/>

Board of Canadian Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP) - <https://www.bcrsp.ca/>



BCRSP preparatory courses listing - <https://www.bcrsp.ca/prospective-certificants/crsp-examination/examination-preparatory-course-providers>

BCRSP OH&S Careers <https://bcrsp.ca/employers-employment/bcrsp-career-resources/careers-ohs>

BCRSP Resources <https://www.bcrsp.ca/employers-employment/bcrsp-career-resources/industry-links>

Canadian Center of Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) - <https://www.ccohs.ca/>

CCOHS listing of OH&S courses - <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/information/courses.html>

Institute for Work and Health - <https://www.iwh.on.ca/> (Leader in work injury and disability prevention research in Canada that aims to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of working people)

WorkSafe BC OH&S resources - <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety>

JOB BOARDS

Eluta. - <https://www.eluta.ca/Occupational-Health-Safety-jobs-in-Vancouver-BC>

Indeed - <https://ca.indeed.com/Occupational-Health-Safety-jobs-in-British-Columbia>

SimplyHired - https://www.simplyhired.ca/search?q=occupational+health+and+safety+manager&l=vancouver%2C+bc&job=OEUdjXYJ0_2qGN4ciCzOVwrpVsEU8i_kdNx83zMIPByeU5JZCP-aew

Workopolis - https://www.workopolis.com/jobsearch/occupational-health-and-safety-jobs/vancouver-british-columbia?job=vVq0PNLfMn1I2W1MW_7NuV-i3UzUfg4wMMQaz-RDVePzYo5YrOZsrA