

Flight Dispatcher

Plan the route, pick the fuel, watch the weather. On many flights you share control with the captain.

TYPICAL PAY

\$114,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$53k to \$221k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

**Airline operations control centres,
open around the clock**

How you get there

- 1 Finish high school** Grade 12
 Math, physics, geography and English. Weather and numbers are the job.
- 2 Take a flight dispatcher course** 3 to 9 months
 A private aviation school or college program covering air law, aeroplane operations, navigation, radio aids, flight planning and meteorology.
- 3 Pass both Transport Canada exams** Exam days
 One 3.5 hour exam of 80 questions on air law, operations, navigation and flight planning, and one 3.5 hour exam of 100 questions on meteorology. You need 70% on each.
- 4 Get hired and do operator training** 3 to 6 months
 You cannot begin on the job training until both exams are passed. The airline then trains you on its own aircraft, routes and manuals.
- 5 Competency check and sign off** Ongoing
 A check dispatcher confirms you can do the job. The check is repeated every year.

Pros and cons

- + Airline pay without buying a pilot licence
- + Indoor, year-round work
- + You go home at the end of the shift
- Shift work including nights, weekends and holidays
- Very few employers, so you may have to move
- A bad weather day is hours of sustained pressure

Optional boosts

Check dispatcher. Operations control manager. Weather specialist. A private pilot licence.

Good to know

Two exams stand between you and the job

Transport Canada's dispatcher exams are 3.5 hours each, one of 80 questions and one of 100 questions on weather, with a 70% pass mark. You cannot start training at an airline until both are passed.

You share control of the flight

At large Canadian airlines, dispatch is joint: the flight dispatcher and the pilot in command both have to agree the flight can go. A dispatcher can refuse to release it.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Flight Dispatcher in Canada, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Transport Canada: Study and Reference Guide for Flight Dispatchers
 Job Bank: Air traffic controllers and flight dispatchers, job requirements

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/flight-dispatcher>



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