

Probation Officer

Supervise people serving sentences in the community. A social science degree, then a government job with a pension.

TYPICAL PAY

\$84,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$63k to \$117k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 6 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Probation offices, courts,
community agencies, home visits**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 Social sciences, English, and volunteer hours with a youth or community group.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
 Social work, psychology, sociology or criminology. Ontario accepts any degree if you also have more than five years of relevant experience.
- 3 Get experience** 1 to 3 years, often during the degree
 Youth work, shelters, addiction services, corrections, victim services. Ontario suggests volunteering at a local probation office.
- 4 Apply and get hired** Months
 Provincial ministries post openings; federal parole officer jobs come through Correctional Service Canada. Interviews, references, security screening.
- 5 Basic training** Weeks, then ongoing
 Ontario runs a comprehensive basic training program on assessment and intervention, then ongoing courses.

Pros and cons

- + Good pay with a pension, mostly daytime hours
- + Real influence on whether someone rebuilds their life
- + A degree in a broad field, with many exits
- Heavy caseloads and paperwork
- Some clients reoffend or threaten you
- You carry other people's trauma

Good to know

Most sentences are served outside

Far more people in Canada are under community supervision, on probation or parole, than are locked up. Probation officers, not prison guards, supervise most of the correctional population.

The judge reads your report first

Before sentencing, a judge can order a pre-sentence report. A probation officer interviews the person, their family and employers and writes it. It shapes the sentence.

Optional boosts

Youth probation. Federal parole officer. High-risk and domestic violence units. Court liaison and pre-sentence reports.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Probation officers, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Ontario: Become a probation and parole officer

Job Bank: Probation and parole officers, requirements

Correctional Service Canada

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/probation-officer>



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