

Recreation Coordinator

Run the programs a town lives on: swim lessons, hockey ice, day camps, seniors drop-ins and the summer festival.

TYPICAL PAY

\$64,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$44k to \$99k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

City recreation centres, arenas, pools, camps, community centres

How you get there

- Get your first aquatic or leadership awards** Ages 13 to 16
 Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross from the Lifesaving Society, then National Lifeguard once you are old enough. Many people work as camp counsellors first.
- High school diploma** Grade 12
 Keep working summers and weekends at the pool, arena or camp. Hours on the deck are what get you hired later.
- College or university** 2 to 4 years
 A 2-year recreation and leisure services diploma, or a 4-year degree in recreation, kinesiology or sport management.
- Placement and first full-time job** Built into the program
 Programs include a field placement with a municipality or non-profit, which is how most graduates get hired.
- Move up** 3 to 10 years
 Program coordinator, then supervisor, then facility or community services manager.

Pros and cons

- + You can start getting paid at 16 and never stop
- + Municipal jobs come with a strong pension and job security
- + Visible, social work in your own community
- Evenings, weekends and holidays are your busiest times
- Full-time permanent jobs are scarce, seasonal ones are everywhere
- Budget cuts hit recreation before almost anything else

Optional boosts

National Lifeguard. Swim and lifesaving instructor. HIGH FIVE (a Canadian quality standard for children's programs). Facility operator training.

Good to know

Recreation is a municipal service, not a frill

Cities and towns run most of Canada's pools, arenas, ball diamonds and community centres. That is why the biggest employer of recreation staff in any province is local government, not the private s...

Lifeguarding is a national standard

The National Lifeguard award administered by the Lifesaving Society is recognized coast to coast, so a guard trained in Halifax can work a pool in Kelowna without retraining.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Co-ordinator, leisure, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
 Parks and Recreation Ontario
 Lifesaving Society 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/recreation-coordinator>



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