

# Translator and Interpreter

Move meaning between languages, in writing or out loud, without adding or losing anything.

## TYPICAL PAY

**\$71,000**

a year, full time

## PAY RANGE

**\$42k to \$106k**

starting to experienced

## TIME TO QUALIFY

**4 to 6 years**

after high school

## DEMAND

**Moderate**

job outlook

## LICENCE NEEDED

**No**

anyone can do it

## WHERE YOU WORK

**Government, translation firms, courts and hospitals, freelance fr...**

## How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12  
Take French or another second language as far as your school offers, and take English seriously. You are selling your writing.
- 2 Get genuinely fluent** Ongoing  
Immersion, exchange, or growing up with the language at home. Classroom French alone is usually not enough.
- 3 Translation degree or certificate** 1 to 4 years  
A 4-year bachelor's degree in translation, or a certificate or graduate diploma if you already hold a degree in another subject.
- 4 First jobs and volunteer work** 1 to 2 years  
Agency junior roles, community interpreting, subtitling. You need mileage before anyone trusts you with a contract.
- 5 Certification (optional but useful)** After about 2 years of work  
Pass the certification exam run through the Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council, offered in May and November.

## Pros and cons

- + Cheap, short training compared with most professional work
- + Real remote and freelance options
- + Steady federal and provincial demand in Canada because of two official languages
- Machine translation has pushed rates down on easy, general text
- Freelance income is uneven and chasing invoices is part of the job
- Isolating work if you translate full time

## Optional boosts

Legal and court interpreting. Medical interpreting. Conference interpreting. Technical and financial translation.

## Good to know

### Ontario put a word under legal protection

In 1989 Ontario gave the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario a reserved title. Since then only someone it certifies can advertise as a Certified Translator in the province.

### The national body does not actually certify anyone

The Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council, formed in 1970, runs the exam but cannot hand out the credential. Certification is a provincial power, so the seven member societies gr...

### Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Translator in Canada, wages (updated November 2025)  
Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council  
Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario  
Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interpretes agrees du Quebec

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/translator-interpreter>



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