

Recreation Coordinator

You run the programs a town actually uses: summer camp, the pool schedule, the senior center, the youth league.

TYPICAL PAY

\$36,560

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$28k to \$50k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 4 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

City recreation departments, community centers, summer cam...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 10 to 12
Start working the seasonal jobs now: camp counselor, pool attendant, rec aide, youth sports official. Experience is the currency in this field.
- 2 Get the basic certifications** Days
CPR and first aid at a minimum, lifeguarding if you want pool hours. Short courses, often paid for by the employer.
- 3 Associate or bachelor's degree** 2 to 4 years
Recreation management, parks and recreation, kinesiology, or a general degree with recreation experience. Most coordinator postings ask for a bachelor's.
- 4 Full-time program role** 1 to 3 years
Program leader or specialist first, then coordinator once you have run things and supervised part-time staff.
- 5 Optional credential** After a degree plus experience
The CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professional) is not required anywhere, but some public employers list it as preferred and a few pay extra for it.

Pros and cons

- + You can start working in the field at 16 and get paid for it
- + Public jobs come with a pension and family health coverage
- + You see the effect of your work in your own town every week
- The pay is low and it stays low unless you move into management
- Nights, weekends and the entire summer
- Lots of seasonal and part-time positions before a full-time one opens

Optional boosts

Lifeguard and water safety instructor. Youth sports coaching and officiating. Inclusion and adaptive recreation training. CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professional).

Good to know

Public pools run on teenagers

Municipal aquatics programs across the country are staffed almost entirely by 16 to 22 year olds, and a lifeguard shortage is the usual reason a town pool opens late or closes early. It is one of the few fiel...

The credential expires every two years

The Certified Park and Recreation Professional credential is valid for two years and then has to be renewed with continuing education. It costs \$275 for association members and \$320 for everyone else.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Recreation Workers (39-9032.00)

National Recreation and Park Association: the Certified Park and Recreation Professional credential

National Recreation and Park Association: apply for the credential

USAJOBS (the official federal hiring site)

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/recreation-coordinator>



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