



COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

# Jobs in COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT



career opportunities series



Canada

Cette publication peut aussi être disponible en français sous le titre:  
Emplois dans les gouvernements communautaires

*Cover Photos  
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# **JOBS IN COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), we depend on community governments – including First Nations, Métis, Inuvialuit and Municipal Governments. The work and decisions of our elected officials, leaders and community government employees help make our communities healthier and stronger. In the past, this work included:

- carrying on the overall operation of the community;
- administering the community's budget;
- maintaining public buildings;
- planning for land use and new community and housing developments;
- administering community land;
- ensuring the development and safety of roads;
- delivering water and picking up solid waste;
- approving and distributing various licenses;
- organizing and delivering recreation programs,
- overseeing emergency management;
- operating and maintaining recreation facilities; and
- enforcing municipal bylaws.

Today, many community governments are involved in a broader range of partnerships and activities, including:

- working with education and health and social service boards;
- planning and delivering community tourism and economic development activities;

- administrating income support payments;
- operating housing programs; and
- representing their community at local, territorial, provincial or national events.

Community governments need local people to make local decisions and carry out local work. By training Northerners to fill these positions, community governments are providing opportunities for local people to work and contribute to the direction and development of their own communities. This benefits the North and community because local residents have a much better understanding of the opportunities, needs, language, culture and traditions of their communities.

## **WHAT IS A COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT?**

Communities in the NWT have different kinds of government. In some Aboriginal communities, the community government is the Chief and Band Council. In other communities, it is a Hamlet, Village, Town or City Council. These councils are called Municipal Councils. Some communities, called Charter Communities, have formed governments by combining responsibilities of the Band Council and Municipal Council.

Community governments' two roles are political and administrative. Elected councils are responsible for the political role. Councils are made up of Councilors and Mayors or Chiefs. Council provides leadership and gives general direction to administration; makes bylaws and policies; and ensures that bylaws and policies are followed.

This booklet looks at the broad range of jobs related to the administrative function of community government. The number and type of jobs within a community government depends on the size and needs of the population it serves. Individuals in community government jobs ensure the well being of community residents through the provision of valuable community programs and services.

## **BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH A COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT**

The number of community government jobs is growing. This trend is expected to continue as community governments throughout the NWT take on new program and service responsibilities and as land claim and self-government agreements come into play.

Community governments of the NWT play an important part in shaping our northern communities and community government employees can be an integral part of this growth. Community governments offer exciting challenges, reliable employment, unlimited possibilities and continued training and development.

## **WHAT TYPES OF JOBS ARE AVAILABLE WITH A COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT?**

Community governments are one of the most diverse and multi-faceted employers that offer a wide range of professional positions and other employment opportunities. They are responsible for a range of programs and services, including fire protection, emergency management, public safety, public works, land use, and recreation. By-law officers, community planners, land administrators, recreation leaders, and finance officers are some of the community government employees who provide basic services and ensure the local bylaws and policies are enforced. Some community governments in the NWT also deliver social programs. Employees involved in social programs and services may include community wellness coordinators, employment officers, community justice coordinators, child and youth workers, drug and alcohol workers, tenant relations officers, and housing managers.

To help discover which community government job may best suit you, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' (MACA) School of Community Government developed a series of community government job descriptions that would be helpful with career planning as they identify the training and education that may be required. For more information contact your local MACA office or online at [www.maca.gov.nt.ca](http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca).

## ENTRY LEVEL JOBS

Entry level jobs require little or no previous experience. You will need to demonstrate that you are responsible, willing to learn and work hard. On-the-job training may be provided and some jobs may require that you have a grade 12 level of education.



<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Keeps records, files and completes time sheets. Makes appointments for senior management, administrative and program staff. Responds to requests from the public, answers the telephone, and does some word processing. Other similar jobs include Office Clerk, Secretary, Administrative Clerk, Receptionist, Clerk/Receptionist and Secretary.
<b>Janitor/ Custodian</b>	Responsible for performing custodial duties, minor maintenance and other miscellaneous duties in order to ensure that municipal buildings and facilities are maintained in a healthy, safe and sanitary manner.
<b>Labourer/ Trades Helper</b>	Performs various light and heavy manual duties usually in support of trade's people.
<b>Municipal Service Worker</b>	Performs minor repairs and maintains buildings, roads, mobile equipment or the environment around buildings. May perform routine construction tasks such as installing shelves. Other similar jobs include Building Maintainer.
<b>Truck Driver</b>	Operates trucks, other equipment and tools to provide water, sewage, fuel and garbage services to community residents.



## SEMI-SKILLED JOBS

*Semi-skilled jobs require some skills, related training or work experience. Related training may be acquired through a one or two year college certificate, training through the School of Community Government or participation in on-the-job training activities.*

*\* Community Government Occupations approved for occupational certification under the NWT Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act.*

***By-Law Officer*** Responsible for enforcing municipal bylaws and providing public education and awareness programs and services in order to ensure the protection of residents, property and employees.

***\*Recreation Facility Operator*** Responsible for maintaining recreation facilities in order to ensure clean, safe and healthy facilities are available.

***Water Treatment Plant Operator*** Responsible for the water plant in order to ensure that residents have safe and clean water in accordance with federal, territorial and municipal legislation, policies and standards.

***Youth Coordinator*** Responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating youth programs in the community.

## SKILLED JOBS

*Skilled jobs usually require a college certificate/diploma or a university degree and relevant work experience. Occupational training can be obtained from MACA's School of Community Government.*



*\* Community Government Occupations approved for occupational certification under the NWT Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act.*

**\*Community Works Foreman** Responsible for the management, administration and delivery of all municipal works programs and services in order to ensure that residents receive effective and appropriate services. This includes public buildings, roads and mobile equipment.

**Economic Development Officer** Responsible for facilitating, promoting and ensuring community and economic development in order to secure opportunities for economic and business development and increase local employment.

**Community Energy/ Sustainability Coordinator** Responsible for organizing and assisting with the development and implementation of Community Energy Plans. Responsible for assisting community members to initiate and implement strategies of attaining improved energy efficiency and employing effective renewable energy programs.

**\*Finance Officer** Responsible for maintaining financial, accounting, administrative and personnel services in order to meet legislative requirements and support municipal operations.

## SKILLED JOBS

*Continued...*

<i>Human Resource Officer</i>	Responsible for providing support in the various human resource functions, which include recruitment, staffing, training and development, performance monitoring and employee counseling.
<i>Information Communications &amp; Technology Officer</i>	Solves computer problems and ensures that computer technology meets the specific needs of the community government.
<i>Land Administration Officer</i>	Responsible for managing land administration and maintaining lands records in order to ensure that community land is used in an appropriate manner.
<i>*Recreation Coordinator</i>	Responsible for management of all recreation facilities in order to provide clean and safe opportunities for sport and recreation and promote a healthy lifestyle for all community residents.

## TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY

*Trades and technical jobs require you to have some skills, related training or work experience. Related training may be acquired through a one or two year college certificate or diploma program, involvement in an apprenticeship program, or participation in on-the-job training activities. Journeyman positions with community governments require the completion of both apprenticeship and technical training.*

<i>Electrician</i>	Repairs, maintains and installs electrical wiring and equipment at a journey tradesperson level.
<i>Carpenter</i>	Renovates and repairs structures and fixes wood, plywood and wallboard using carpenter's hand and power tools conforming to local building codes at a journeyman level.
<i>Utilities Mechanic</i>	Service and repair heating systems in buildings such as oil fired burners, and utilidor systems at a journeyman level.
<i>Heavy Duty Mechanic</i>	Repairs, rebuilds and maintains mobile heavy equipment at a journeyman level.
<i>Heavy Equipment Operator</i>	Operates gasoline and diesel powered mobile heavy equipment used in snow removal, road maintenance or earth moving equipment at a journeyman level.

## MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISORY

*These jobs require a college/university degree or equivalent education and work experience. Occupational training can be obtained from MACA's School of Community Government.*

*\* Community Government Occupations approved for occupational certification under the NWT Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act.*

***\*Senior Administrative Officer/Band Manager/First Nation Administrator*** Plans, organizes, directs and takes responsibility for all overall activities of the community government.

***Comptroller/ Director of Finance*** Responsible for planning, directing and controlling financial, human resources and administrative functions for the municipality by following municipal policies and procedures and in accordance with Federal and Territorial legislation.

***\*Housing Manager*** Responsible for the administration, management and delivery of all public social housing programs, services and properties within the community

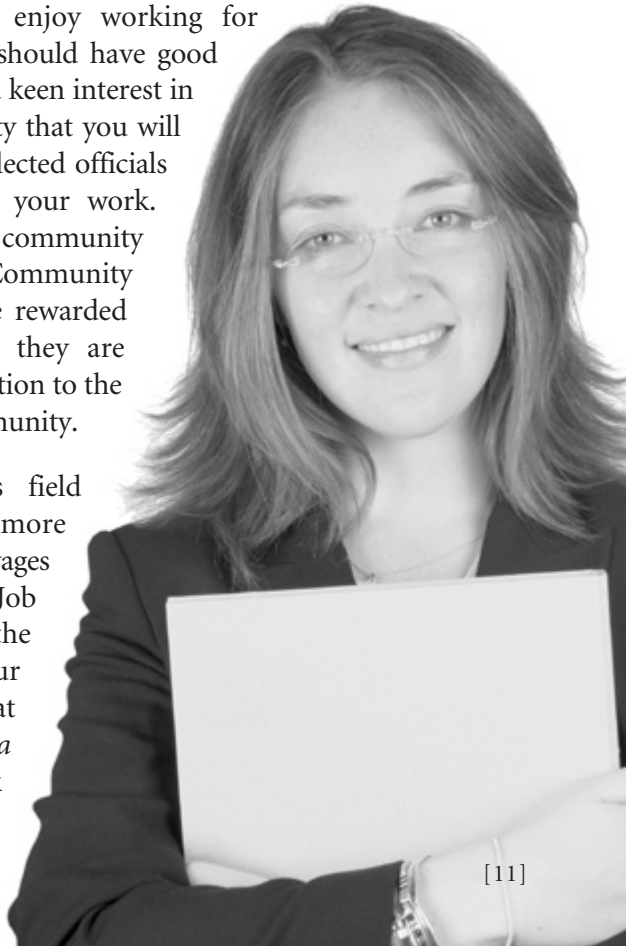
## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Community government employees work in public facilities such as a band or hamlet, town or city hall, village garage, water treatment plant or community arena. They serve the public and often have daily contact with community members. Some employees may deal regularly with contractors and suppliers. Most jobs in community government are from Monday to Friday. People employed to provide essential services such as water delivery, fire protection, or access to public facilities may be on call in the evenings and on weekends.

Most community government jobs require employees to have understanding, patience, lots of energy, and a sense of pride in their work. Some community government employees may have more routine or repetitive type jobs; others require physical stamina and agility.

If you are considering a career with a community government, you should enjoy working for and with the public. You should have good communication skills and a keen interest in the needs of the community that you will be serving. The public or elected officials on council may question your work. This can cause stress for community government employees. Community government employees are rewarded with the knowledge that they are making a valuable contribution to the quality of life in their community.

Wages for jobs in this field are competitive. For more information on current wages and demand see NWT Job Futures available at the Career Centre in your community or online at [www.jobfutures.stats.gov.nt.ca](http://www.jobfutures.stats.gov.nt.ca) and talk to people at work in the field.



## **WHERE TO GET TRAINING**

If you want to take charge of your career and make a difference in your community, choose a career in local government in the NWT by researching the following:

### **AURORA COLLEGE**

Aurora College offers a variety of programs and courses that can help you get a job with a community government. These programs and courses include: Office Administration, Management Studies, Recreation Leadership, Pre-trades and Apprenticeship Programs. Student Services at Aurora College will explain current course offerings. Although these courses and programs are a good introduction to many jobs in community government, some jobs will require additional schooling or on-the-job training.

Call your local campus or visit [www.auroracollege.nt.ca](http://www.auroracollege.nt.ca) to find out about current programs and courses being offered.

### **SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT – DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, GNWT**

The School of Community Government (SCG) provides occupational specific training opportunities to community governments, their staff and organizations that support community governments. The SCG is an integrated approach to community government training that involves partnerships with various GNWT and federal departments, Aboriginal organizations, professional associations, community governments, educational institutions and the private sector. Training is based on the specific needs of community government employees and the positions available. The areas of specific training offered include: Governance, Management and Finance, Emergency Preparedness, Fire Protection, Land Administration, Public Safety, Recreation Facility Operations, Recreation Leadership, Water and Waste Services, Airports and Infrastructure Maintenance. The School also oversees the Community Government Occupational Certification Program. Go to [www.maca.gov.nt.ca](http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca) for more information.

## **UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE**

Canadian universities and colleges offer professional programs for Engineering, Law, Architecture, Commerce, Business Administration, Public Administration, Urban and Regional Planning, Political Science, Recreation Administration, Community Development, Engineering and Computer Science, all of which can assist an individual in getting a community government job. Universities also offer academic programs for professions that are common to most large businesses, such as human resources, industrial and labour relations, business and management and accounting. Programs such as these can also lead to employment in a community government. Check with your regional Career Centre for information on the universities, look on the Internet for online course calendars or consult with staff at your regional MACA office.

## **PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS**

Some professions, such as architecture and law, require individuals who have graduated from a university program to work for a specified amount of time with a certified professional and pass an exam for certification. Accountants must complete a university program or a recognized professional accounting program, and have job experience in order to obtain an accounting designation such as CGA (Certified General Accountant), CA (Certified Accountant) or CMA (Certified Management Accountant) and a territorial license.

## **APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING & OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION**

Apprenticeships are generally three to four year programs during which you take short term formal training for part of the year and get paid to train on the job with a certified journeyperson. When you're finished, you become certified in that trade. With certification, you can make more money, work on your own, train others, and find jobs more easily.

To start an apprenticeship, you must pass the Trades Entrance Exam, and either find an employer to hire you or take a pre-employment or trades access program through Aurora College. There is no set level of education you need to take an apprenticeship, but many employers

want apprentices to have a high school diploma and the more education you have, the greater your chance is of passing the exam and being successful in your trade.

Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP) is a program that allows students to begin apprenticeships while continuing their high school courses. By the time that they graduate from high school, students who enrolled in SNAP may be several months into their apprenticeship.

Community Government Occupational Certification is a self-guided program, which certifies that individuals have the required skills, knowledge and attitude to be considered competent in their occupation. MACA administers certification for community government employees in the NWT. Candidates can pursue certification through:

- on the job and in your home community with a Study Guide;
- SCG courses where certification tests will be offered; and
- annual review and testing sessions.

Occupational Certification is based on industry-developed standards, which require an individual to complete a work experience component, knowledge examinations and a demonstration of workplace skills prior to being certified.

In total, there are nine community government occupations available for certification including:

- Senior Administrative Officer;
- First Nations Administrator/Band Manager;
- Housing Manager;
- Assistant Housing Manager;
- Community Works Foreman;
- Finance Officer;
- Tenant Relations Officer;
- Recreation Coordinator; and;
- Recreation Facility Operator.

Occupational Certification provides employees with greater mobility, increased opportunities, a sense of pride and transferable skills, enabling them to aspire to further career opportunities.

Talk to a Career Development Officer at your Regional ECE Service Centre or a representative at your MACA Regional office for more information or help you start an apprenticeship or occupational certification program.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

To find out if you qualify for financial help while you study, contact the following:

### **NWT Student Financial Assistance**

Department of Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT

P.O. Box 1320 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

For further information call: (867) 873-7190

24-Hour Toll-Free Line: 1-800-661-0793

*[www.nwtsfa.gov.nt.ca](http://www.nwtsfa.gov.nt.ca)*

## **HOW TO APPLY FOR A JOB IN A COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT**

The most common way of applying for a job is to send your resume and a cover letter to all of the community governments you would like to work for. Some employers will accept an electronic application, which can be accessed and completed on the community government's website, or by mail and fax. Make sure you indicate which job or jobs you are interested in, and why you think you are qualified for those jobs.



If you are interested in getting a job with a community government you should talk to people who are working in the field or to people in the regional MACA offices to see if it is right for you. The regional MACA offices are located at:

- Inuvik (867) 777-7121
- Sahtu (867) 587-7105
- Dehcho (867) 695-7220
- North Slave (867) 920-8084
- South Slave (867) 872-6525

As well, you can contact the following organizations representing community governments in the NWT:

Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT)  
(867) 765-5630

- LGANT is a non-governmental, professional organization comprised of senior administrative staff of community governments in the NWT.

NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) (867) 873-8359

- NWTAC is a non-governmental organization comprised of elected officials that represents the interests of community governments in the NWT.

Look for community government jobs advertised in the newspapers, on government websites or the following websites:

*[www.lgant.com](http://www.lgant.com)*

*[www.nwtac.com](http://www.nwtac.com)*

*[www.jobsnorth.ca](http://www.jobsnorth.ca)*

Career Centers can help you to prepare for your job search and to write your resume and cover letter.

## **WORKPLACE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employers and workers have responsibilities to each other. The *Employment Standards Act* sets out the general rules, minimum requirements, and principles of employment standards in the NWT. The *Act* covers such areas as hours of work, minimum wage, termination of employment, annual vacation and general holidays, and pregnancy and parental leave. It is up to you to know what rights and responsibilities you have as an employee.

For more information, contact Employment Standards at (867) 873-7486 or toll free at 1-888-700-5707 or visit the Department of Education, Culture and Employment website at: <http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/Divisions/Labour/index.ht>.

## **CAREER PLANNING**

Career planning is an ongoing process that can start in your youth and can continue throughout adulthood. When you think about making changes in your working life, try to make decisions based on your personality, passions, aptitudes, skills and commitments. Also consider what training and education you want and what opportunities are available to you. By finding the best fit between your interests, skills, values and available jobs, you'll have more control over your life and you'll find greater satisfaction in your work.

For more information or assistance with career planning and decision-making, contact your local ECE Service Centre, adult educator, or school counselor. For specific community government occupations you can call your regional MACA office, contact the NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC), Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT), or speak to staff at your local community government office.

Put effort into your career today, to make the most of your work. Always continue creating new opportunities for yourself.

## **REGIONAL ECE SERVICE CENTRES**

Your Regional ECE Service Centre can help you to do the following:

- learn about your skills, interests and values;
- find career, training and employment information;
- Search for jobs;
- write resumes;
- apply for jobs;
- prepare and practice for a job interview; and
- make a personal career or education plan.

The Regional ECE Service Centers are located in the following communities:

- Fort Simpson Deh Cho Regional  
Education Centre: (867) 695-7338
- Fort Smith Sweetgrass Building: (867) 872-7425
- Hay River Courthouse Building: (867) 874-5050
- Inuvik Mack Travel Building: (867) 777-7365
- Norman Wells Ed Hodgson Building: (867) 587-7157
- Yellowknife Nova Coast Plaza: (867) 766-5100





Other booklets in the Career Opportunities Series include:

- Jobs in Arts, Heritage and Culture
- Jobs in Mining
- Jobs in Construction
- Jobs in Oil and Gas
- Jobs in Tourism
- Jobs in Health Services
- Jobs in Aviation
- Jobs in Diamond Manufacturing
- Jobs in Social Sciences
- Jobs in the Service Sector
- Jobs in Information and Communications Technology

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