

Jobs in

the SERVICE SECTOR



career opportunities series



Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment

Canada

Cette publication peut aussi être disponible en français sous le titre:
Emplois dans le secteur des services

Cover Photos

*Main: Hamilton and Dust, Fran Hurcomb/GNWT, Top: Firefighters, Yellowknife, NT/GNWT
Bottom: Skills Canada, Chef-in-Training, Fran Hurcomb/GNWT*

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JOBS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

INTRODUCTION

In the early days, the trading posts scattered throughout the Northwest Territories were centres for trade and service. This was the beginning of the service sector in the North. Today, businesses in every community are involved in the sale of products and services. People of all skill levels work in this industry. The work is both interesting and rewarding.

The service sector is part of the every day life of Northerners. Every time you buy something from a store, receive a service, or go to the bank, you are using the service sector. Expediting companies, video stores, restaurants, law firms, grocery stores, and day care centres are just some of the many businesses that make up the service sector. We all depend on these businesses to meet many of our personal, family and business needs. By training Northerners to fill positions in the service sector, we can improve the quality of the sales and service businesses available to us.

WHAT IS THE SERVICE SECTOR?

The service sector provides businesses with the products and services they need to operate and people with the products and services they need to live. The sector is an important part of our northern economy. More than half of all people working in the Northwest Territories are employed in the service sector.

Businesses provide goods and services to other industries. The mining industry, for example, relies on the service sector to supply exploration camps and mines with the materials they need to operate. Governments purchase the services of engineers and architects to design and manage the construction of roads, office buildings and

airports. Transportation businesses buy vehicles, fuel and maintenance products and services. The tourism sector relies on the service sector to meet the personal needs of travellers.

Some of the different areas in the service sector include:

FINANCE, INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE

Banks and other financial institutions provide the services people and businesses need to help them manage their money. In smaller communities, banks sometimes have agreements with the Co-op or the Northern Store to provide banking services.

People buy insurance to cover possible losses. Real estate companies help people buy and sell land, buildings and property. They also manage rental properties in some NWT communities. Most insurance and real estate companies are located in larger centres. People who work for finance, insurance and real estate companies include: bank tellers, bookkeepers, insurance clerks, insurance agents, real estate agents, insurance adjusters, financial planners, accountants and managers.

BUSINESS AND PERSONAL SERVICES

Every day, businesses may purchase expediting, communication and interpreting, computer, engineering, legal or accounting services. The general public may purchase personal services from beauty salons, dry cleaners, travel agents, garages, dentists, optometrists or hotels/motels. The people who provide business and personal services may be expeditors, travel agents, clerks, mechanics, hairdressers, estheticians, computer technicians, lawyers, dentists, engineers or architects.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

People who work in community services provide protection, fire fighting and education services which contribute to the safety, security and well-being of Northerners. Jobs in community services include RCMP, corrections officers and bylaw officers, firefighters, lifeguards and librarians.

RETAIL TRADE

Grocery and clothing stores, furniture and appliance stores, boat and snowmobile dealerships, and gas stations are some of the businesses involved in the retail trade. People who work in retail buy products to sell to other businesses and the general public. Jobs in the retail trade include: cashiers, bakers, cooks, sales clerks, bookkeepers, service station attendants and store managers.

There are a wide range of sales and service opportunities in the Northwest Territories. Some of the jobs described in other booklets in this series are also available in the service sector. Please refer to Jobs in Health Services, Jobs in Construction, Jobs in Tourism and Jobs in the Social Sciences for more information.

WILL THERE BE JOBS IN THE SERVICE SECTOR?

Many new jobs have been created in the service sector. This trend is expected to continue.

The economic sectors in the Northwest Territories are closely connected. The strength of various industries has a big influence on the service sector. For instance, if the mining and oil and gas industries are active and employing Northerners, the service sector will benefit because people will have money to spend on products and services. The more money people, businesses and governments spend on products and services, the more the service sector will grow. Because the Northwest Territories continues to grow and people are working, there will be growth in the service sector. A growing population and increased demand for products and services not currently available in the Northwest Territories also strengthens the sector.

WHAT JOBS WILL THERE BE IN THE SERVICE SECTOR?

Job opportunities in the service sector will depend on the types of products and services in demand by businesses and the general public; the health of the NWT economy; and technological changes. Skills and

education required for jobs in the service sector will continue to be as varied as the sector itself, ranging from basic literacy to university level education.

ENTRY LEVEL JOBS

Most entry level jobs in the service sector are frontline positions where you meet and respond to the needs of customers. Entry level jobs require that you have a high school education, basic math skills, good reading and writing skills, and enjoy meeting and working with people.



Office Clerk Performs office duties such as copying, recording, gathering and processing information.

Insurance Clerk Processes claims, policy changes and premium payments; calculates premiums; and performs other clerical activities.

Courier Picks up and delivers letters, parcels and other items using a car/truck, bicycle or on foot.

Bank Teller Processes bank transactions including deposits, withdrawals, bill payments, transfers and credit card payments.

Sales Clerk Helps customers make purchases; operates a cash register; and wraps or bags purchases.

Hotel Clerk Makes room reservations; answers questions about the hotel; checks guests in and out; and processes payments.

Cashier Operates a cash register; handles payments by credit, debit card, cash or cheque; and gives customers appropriate change.

**Janitor/
Housekeeper** Cleans offices/rooms, halls and bathrooms.

ENTRY LEVEL JOBS

Continued...

- Food and Beverage Server*** Greets customers; takes orders from customers to kitchen; serves completed orders and drinks; calculates amount of bill; and operates a cash register.
- Service Station Attendant** Operates a gas pump; fills the tanks of cars, trucks, skidoos and other motorized vehicles; checks engine oil levels and refills oil if necessary; and operates a cash register.
- Security Officer*** Protects people and property from loss and damage, patrols assigned areas, monitors electronic security systems and keeps records of security-related activities.
- Expediter** Picks up people, groceries and other materials and delivers them to transportation companies for travel to camps, mines and tourist operations.
- Shipper/Receiver** Ships and receives goods; maintains records; and oversees the loading and unloading of goods.
- Tourism Visitor Information Counsellor*** Advises clients on travel options and tour packages, plans itineraries, makes reservations and sells tickets.

** Occupations in the Service Sector that have been approved for Occupational Certification.*



SKILLED JOBS

Skilled jobs in the service sector may also be referred to as operations jobs. These jobs require some training and/or related experience. Most skilled jobs require college courses, a college certificate or diploma, on-the-job training and/or specialized courses. These jobs also require good organizational and strong math skills.



<i>Bookkeeper</i>	Keeps records of financial transactions; prepares financial statements; calculates and prepares cheques for payment of accounts.
<i>Purchasing Agent</i>	Purchases needed equipment, materials and services; and makes sure that items purchased are delivered on time.
<i>Insurance Agent</i>	Sells automobile, fire, health, life, property, marine, aircraft and other types of insurance to people, businesses and governments and other organizations.
<i>Real Estate Agent</i>	Helps people and businesses sell and purchase land, homes and/or commercial buildings.
<i>Lifeguard</i>	Makes sure that people using pools and swimming areas are safe.
<i>Dental Hygienist</i>	Cleans teeth; and educates clients on the prevention of decay and diseases of the teeth and mouth.
<i>Interpreter/Translator</i>	Provides simultaneous translation from one language to another; and translates written information from one language to another.

APPRENTICESHIP TRADES

These jobs require that you be a journeyperson, tradesperson, or an apprentice.

<i>Aircraft Maintenance Engineer</i>	Performs scheduled maintenance and repair on all fixed wing aircraft systems and equipment, electrical systems and brakes; and installs landing gear (wheels, skis, floats).
<i>Appliance Service</i>	Installs, services, repairs and rebuilds household appliances such as washers, dryers, stoves and dishwashers.
<i>Automotive Service Technician</i>	Checks, maintains and repairs engines, transmissions, steering, brakes and electrical systems of cars and light trucks.
<i>Baker</i>	Orders and maintains an inventory of baking supplies; prepares and bakes bread, buns, cakes, cookies, pies and other desserts using recipes and mixes; decorates cakes and other pastries.
<i>Hairstylist</i>	Shampoos hair and massages scalp; cuts, colours and perms and styles hair; and shaves and trims beards and mustaches.
<i>Cook</i>	Orders and maintains an inventory of supplies; develops menus; prepares meats, soups, vegetables, pastas, and desserts for hotels, restaurants and other dining rooms; and makes sure food is prepared safely and economically.
<i>Heavy Duty Equipment Technician</i>	Examines, tests, repairs and maintains heavy mobile equipment such as cranes, paving equipment, off-road haulers and earth movers.

<i>Locksmith</i>	Installs and services all types of locking units and security systems.
<i>Motor Vehicle Body Repairer</i>	Repairs and refinishes car and truck frames, bodies, bumpers and trims.
<i>Oil Burner Mechanic</i>	Installs, services, adjusts and repairs oil fired heating systems in buildings.
<i>Parts Person</i>	Orders, receives, stores and retrieves automotive, small equipment and heavy equipment parts; calculates discounts; and prepares invoices.
<i>Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic</i>	Installs, checks and repairs refrigeration and air conditioning systems.
<i>Small Equipment Mechanic</i>	Checks, maintains and repairs small engines (eg. snowmobiles, motor cycles, outboard motors and chainsaws).

TECHNICAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL JOBS

Technical and semi-professional positions usually require specialized training at a college or university. Some technical and semi-professional jobs require that individuals are physically fit, strong, and agile and have no visual impairments.

<i>Insurance Adjuster</i>	Investigates insurance claims and determines the amount of loss or damages covered by insurance policies; examines records and reports; and consults with claimants, accident witnesses or medical professionals.
<i>Police Officer/ By-law Officer</i>	Maintains public safety; investigates crimes and accidents; and assists in the prosecution of individuals who have broken federal, territorial or municipal laws.

TECHNICAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL JOBS

Continued...

Fire fighter

Controls and puts out fires using specialized fire fighting equipment; helps individuals threatened by fire; and performs first aid as required.

Computer Programmer/ Technician

Writes, tests and installs computer programs and/or software packages; and solves computer and network problems for users.

Engineering/Architectural Technologist

Provides support to engineers and architects in the preparation of engineering or architectural designs, cost estimates and project specifications.

PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT JOBS

For most professional jobs you will need a university degree. In addition to university, some professional and management jobs require certification by a territorial association, for example, Certified General Accountant or Professional Engineer. Certification may be obtained after several years of work experience. Management jobs usually require a college diploma, specialized college/university courses or many years of experience.

Financial Manager

Plans, organizes, directs and controls the operation of accounting, audit and other financial departments.

Accountant

Plans, sets up and administers accounting systems; and prepares financial information for individuals, companies and other organizations.

<i>Bank Manager</i>	Plans, organizes, directs, and controls the operations of a bank or other financial institution.
<i>Retail Store Manager</i>	Plans, directs and controls the operations of a retail store; hires, schedules and supervises staff; buys and prices stock; and develops marketing plans. In smaller stores, the Manager may also perform accounting and bookkeeping related duties.
<i>Food Service/ Accommodation Manager</i>	Makes sure the restaurant, hotel, motel and/or bar offer quality and reasonably priced products and services; develops and implements policies and procedures for the operation; prepares budgets; hires, schedules and supervises staff; manages inventories; and sets prices.
<i>Lawyer</i>	Provides legal advice and represents clients; and prepares contracts, wills and other legal documents.
<i>Engineer</i>	Plans, designs, evaluates, and manages large and small construction projects (e.g. buildings, roads, bridges, dams, water and sewage reservoirs and treatment facilities). There are four main engineering designations: civil, mechanical, electrical/electronic, and chemical.
<i>Architect</i>	Plans for and develops designs for the construction of buildings; and manages construction projects.
<i>Optometrist</i>	Checks patients' eyes, and prescribes and fits eyeglasses and contact lenses.
<i>Veterinarian</i>	Checks and treats diseases and disorders in animals; advises owners on the general care and feeding of their animals; and performs surgery on animals.

CREATE YOUR OWN JOB

There are many opportunities in the service sector to start your own business. If you have a good business idea, if you have confidence in your abilities and if you are willing to take a risk then starting your own business might be a very good option. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment provides supports such as the Self Employment Option Program to individuals who would like to start a small business. Contact your regional Career Centre or Canada/NWT Service Centre to see if you qualify or for more information on the Self Employment Option Program. For more information on how to start a business in the NWT, you may also go to the Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) home page at www.iti.gov.nt.ca and hit the “Starting a Business” button.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Working conditions for jobs in the service sector vary widely. Some jobs operate on regular, eight hour schedules, five days a week. Other jobs such as trades and management positions may have long irregular hours. People working in community services jobs such as bylaw officers and fire fighters may be required to do shift work.

Working with and serving people are a big part of jobs in the service sector. To work in the service sector you should like people. Entry-level positions may be routine and monotonous, but contact with the public usually makes the work interesting. Challenging and interesting are the most common descriptions that people working in the service sector use to describe their jobs.

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 and talk to people who work in the field.

WHERE TO GET TRAINING

AURORA COLLEGE

Aurora College offers a variety of programs that can help you get a job in the service sector. These programs and services include: Office Administration, Management Studies, Recreation Leadership, Certificate in Criminal Justice, Natural Resources Technology, Early Childhood Education, Fine Arts and Crafts, Introductory Cooking, Community Office Procedures, Homemaker/Personal Care Attendant, Long Term Care Aide, Home & Community Support Worker, Computing & Information Systems, Diamond Cutting & Polishing, and 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 the service sector, some jobs will require additional schooling or on-the-job training.

Call your local campus or visit www.auroracollege.nt.ca to find out about current programs and courses being offered.

COLLEGES IN SOUTHERN CANADA

Other courses and programs available at colleges in southern Canada that can lead to jobs in the service sector include the following: Pre-trades and Trades, Bookkeeping and Accounting, Real Estate, Business Administration, Enforcement, Computer Systems Technology, Hotel and Restaurant Management, Dental Hygiene, Marketing, and Office Administration. Check with your regional Career Centre for college information or look on the Internet for online school/course calendars.

UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

For professional jobs in the service sector, you need a university degree. There are many Canadian universities that offer professional programs for Engineering, Law, Architecture, Commerce, Business Administration, Dentistry, Marketing and Computer Science. Universities also offer academic programs for professions that are common to most large businesses, such as human resources, industrial and labour relations, business, management and accounting.

Programs such as these can also lead to employment in the service sector. Check with your regional Career Centre for information on the universities, or look on the Internet for online course calendars.

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 licence.

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 journeyman. 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 they graduate from high school, students enrolled in SNAP may be several months into their apprenticeship.

Certification in any of the 24 designated occupations in the NWT is recognition that an employee has the knowledge, skills and attitude required to work in that occupation. Certification is administered

through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and is recognized across the NWT. Certification requires a minimum number of work hours, on-the-job training, an examination and a demonstration of skills.

Your regional Career Centre or Canada/NWT Service Centre can give you more information or help you start an apprenticeship or occupational certification program.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

Some service sector businesses such as accounting firms, banks and insurance companies offer on-the-job training programs that combine hands-on work experience with industry sponsored courses. RCMP, by-law officers, firefighters and accountants usually attend training programs sponsored by their employers. If you are interested in finding out about on-the-job training opportunities in the service sector, talk to a Career Development Officer at your nearest Career Centre.

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 – Tel.: 1-800-661-0793

www.nwtsfa.gov.nt.ca



HOW TO APPLY FOR A JOB IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

The most common way of applying for a job is to send your resume and a cover letter to all of the companies where you would like to work. However, because of the very strong interest in jobs, some employers only accept an electronic application, which can be accessed and completed on the company's website. 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 in the service sector you should talk to people who are working in the field to see if it is right for you. Look for service sector jobs advertised in the newspapers, on company websites or on *www.jobsnorth.ca*.

Your local Career Centre 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 *Labour Standards Act* sets out the general rules, minimum requirements, and principles of employment standards in the Northwest Territories. 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 Labour Services 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.htm*

CAREER PLANNING

Career planning is an ongoing process that starts in your youth and continues 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 Career Centre, adult educator, or school counsellor.

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



NWT CAREER CENTRES, CANADA/NWT SERVICE CENTRE

Your regional Career 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
- Make a personal career or education plan

The regional Career Centres, Canada/NWT Service Centre are located in the following communities:

Fort Simpson	Deh Cho Hall	(867) 695-7333
Fort Smith	Sweetgrass Building	(867) 872-7425
Hay River	Courthouse Building	(867) 874-5050
Inuvik	Mack Travel Building	(867) 777-7365
Norman Wells	Town Square	(867) 587-7120
Yellowknife	Greenstone Building	(867) 766-5100

Other booklets in the Career Opportunities Series include:

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

