

## Standardizing the rank and pay of security professionals

The security industry currently has minimal standards to obtain and maintain a security license.

In six provinces, a prospective security guard must complete a 32 to 54 hour conceptual training program (all theory; no practical) to obtain a security license. The security license must be renewed every one to three years, depending on jurisdiction. In the remaining four provinces and territories, no training is required.

There is no requirement for recertification and continuing education to retain a security license.

There is no recognition for the training and experience of senior security professionals.

The lack of training results in security professionals being woefully unprepared for the challenging, dangerous, and litigious situations they are increasingly being assigned and expected to engage in.

The lack of training and recognition (status and compensation) results in an industry with a demoralized workforce, reduced work ethic, high turnover, and poor service to the client and society. These are antithetical to a professional association.

### Current pay range

A common belief amongst security professionals, and promoted by some security employers, is that security professionals are paid poorly. The table at right shows the distribution of security professional wages at the 10<sup>th</sup> (low), 50<sup>th</sup> (median), and 90<sup>th</sup> (high) percentile.

The low end is close to the minimum wage for that jurisdiction. Additionally, the low and median wages are close, indicating a large number of low wages.

However, there is an average 71 % increase from the low to high ends of the wage range.

	low	median	high
BC	17.40	21.00	31.25
Alberta	15.00	20.00	36.06
Saskatchewan	15.00	19.00	27.00
Manitoba	15.80	16.44	25.88
Ontario	17.20	19.00	31.45
Quebec	18.00	20.49	30.00
New Brunswick	15.65	17.00	22.50
Nova Scotia	15.70	16.40	23.00
Prince Edward Island	16.00	17.00	23.85
Newfoundland & Labrador	16.00	18.00	27.00
Yukon	—	—	—
Nunavut	19.00	23.62	34.00
Northwest Territories	18.00	21.00	28.00
<b>Canada</b>	<b>16.56</b>	<b>19.08</b>	<b>28.33</b>

Source: Government of Canada wage report, December 2024.

***Informing security professionals of the wage range is a start to appropriately compensating them for their work.***

## Continuing education

In consultation with the security industry, CA\*SP identified numerous topics for advanced training. CA\*SP is working with subject matter experts to develop interesting and engaging online courses. These courses are available at [training.CASP.ca](http://training.CASP.ca)

Understanding that many concepts cannot be taught in an online modality, CA\*SP provides a directory where third-party trainers can promote themselves and their courses. This directory is available at [www.CASP.ca](http://www.CASP.ca)

***CA\*SP proposes that a minimum of 30 hours of annual continuing education, calculated on a three-year rolling average, be required to advance and retain a rank.***

CA\*SP calculates that adding 1 \$/hr more to an employment contract would pay for at least 30 hours of training, and pay the security professional to take the training.

## Standardized rank

Many professions have a formalized rank structure: the military and university professoriate, for example. Many other professions have a natural and accepted hierarchy: engineering, physicians, business executives, administrators, etc. Advancement in rank or moving up the hierarchy results in greater responsibility, greater recognition, and increased pay.

The Canadian security industry has no formalized rank structure. Some security companies treat all security professionals the same, until they become a supervisor. Same pay. Same responsibilities. Other security companies have adopted a rank structure. These companies often take their ranks from the military or police.

It is not possible for CA\*SP to propose named ranks, because some Canadian jurisdictions prevent the use of terminology that might confuse the public. These jurisdictions prohibit the use of terms including “officer”, “detective”, and military ranks.

As such, CA\*SP proposes generic terms for the levels a security professional could attain with years of service and continuing education. Individual security companies can assign ranks to these levels using terms permitted in their jurisdiction.

The table below presents three levels of security professional, and the roles and responsibilities that each level can accept. To advance to a level, and to retain that level, a security professional must complete the stated minimum term at the lower rank, plus 30 hours of training annually (calculated on a three-year rolling average).

The statement, “all roles require training and employer approval” is important. In all companies, management is responsible for assigning roles. Security professionals should work with management to ensure that their training interests and the company’s needs align.

<u>level</u>	<u>service</u>	<u>responsibilities</u>
Security Management	5 years	company and account management
Security Professional 3	5 years	can qualify for <i>advanced</i> roles
Security Professional 2	2 years	can qualify for <i>intermediate</i> roles
Security Professional 1	initial	front-line security professional

Intermediate roles

- field training officer
- K9 handler
- tactical security
- ...

Advanced roles

- security trainer
- security supervisor
- security consultant
- executive protection
- client liaison
- ...

*all roles require training and employer approval*

**Responsibilities and internal checks**

To ensure capable and competent security services,

- *security professionals* are responsible for identifying and requesting training
- *security employers* are responsible for providing them with time to complete the training
- *clients* are responsible for spot-checking training by requiring security professionals provide copies of their training certificates

**Standardized pay**

Noted previously was the 2024 distribution of security professional wages. Some security companies already pay higher wages. This article establishes a standard for all security companies, and for all security professionals to expect.

**CA\*SP proposes that a security professional's wage be tied to their level and responsibilities.**

Quebec is already doing this, in their *Decree respecting security guards*. CA\*SP has adapted the *Decree* to create the following premium-based wage scale, and created a structured wage calculation. There is still flexibility in the structure for considerations not listed, to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

The sample wage assumes a minimum wage of 16 \$/hr, which was the Canadian average in 2024.

Base wage		new	FTO	tactical	supervisor
Security Professional 3	min. + 8.00				•
Security Professional 2	min. + 4.00		•	•	
Security Professional 1	min. + 2.00	•			

  

Additional responsibilities*	premium				
first-aid response team	0.50			•	•
fire or hazmat response team	0.50			•	•
required to wear civilian clothes	0.50				
authorized to physically intervene	2.00			•	•
working in an <i>intermediate</i> role (SP2 or SP3)	2.00		•	•	
working in an <i>advanced</i> role (SP3 only)	4.00				•
required to use their personal vehicle (plus 70 ¢/km)	2.00				
law enforcement liaison; video retrieval	0.50			•	•
authorized to issue bylaw citations	3.00				
required bilingual	0.50				
required to carry firearm	6.00				
evening shift (1800 to 2359)	2.50				
night shift (0000 to 0800)	5.00				
location premium (remote, expensive, travel, etc.)	varies				
other considerations (danger, duration, profile, etc.)	varies				

  

*. Training and recertification paid by employer.	<b>Hourly wage:</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>22.00</b>	<b>25.50</b>	<b>31.50</b>
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Source: adapted from the Quebec *Decree respecting security guards* .

Also shown on the wage scale are examples of a security professional who is new, working as a field-training officer, working as a tactical security professional, and working as a supervisor. These wages are minimum for the positions. For example, the new security professional could be the site first-aid attendant. The FTO will very likely have other responsibilities. For example, any of these security professionals could be authorized to issue bylaw citations, or they could be working an evening or night shift. All of these increase their wage.

The evening and night shift premiums integrate the increased risk associated with working with fewer people around and working at night. Both factors lead to increased criminal activity. Please note that these evening and night shift premiums are those set by the province of Alberta for all government employees.

Comparing the wage scale to the current distribution of security professional wages, the wage scale starts slightly higher because the proposed Security Professional 1 wage is above the provincial minimum wage. On the high end, the wage scale is higher than most current jurisdictions. Security professionals earning the higher wages will have significantly more experience, training, and regular recertification.

## **Adoption benefits**

Adopting a standard for rank and pay is part of professionalizing the security industry, and has significant benefits for security professionals, security employers, their clients, and society.

*Security professionals* will be better trained, more comfortable, and more confident in their roles. They can focus their learning into a specific area of the security industry, and have credentials to show their progression. Security professionals will be recognized for their experience, and can be assigned roles and responsibilities based on their experience and training. All this will result in better service to the client and a safer environment for workers and the public. Over time, this will translate into greater respect from clients and workers.

Regular increases in rank and pay, plus recognition, will result in greater job satisfaction and are an incentive to stay in the security industry.

That said, some people may not want to stay or advance in the security industry. Nothing prevents them from staying at Security Professional level 1 indefinitely. If they do decide they want to advance, they begin taking continuing education courses to advance to level 2.

***A person choosing not to take continuing education would stay as a Security Professional level 1. This benefits those who are temporarily working as a security professional.***

*Security employers* will have quantitative metrics on their security employees, so can better assign them to client posts. Security employers can assess the growing capabilities and limitations of their employees through their success in continuing education. Giving employees the opportunity to advance through continuing education, and assigning them to posts that align with their training, benefits the client, thereby strengthening that relationship. It also shows respect for employees, which will be reciprocated as employee retention (lower turnover) and greater willingness of employees to contribute to client and company longevity.

To ensure commitment to training from their security employees, an employer could choose to pay for a given course once, or to only reimburse an employee after they pass the course.

*Clients* will better understand the potential capabilities of the security services, and understand the contract pricing. They will be able to select the number of level 1, 2, and 3 security professionals for their worksite, and dictate the required training of these security professionals. The increased cost of level 2 and 3 security professionals is offset by their knowledge, experience, and training, which creates a safer environment. The client can assign posts by level. Similarly, insurance providers may reduce premiums knowing that the security professionals have advanced training.

Clients can request confirmation of training, which verifies contractual obligations.

*Society* is safer and receives better service. Over time, the reputation of security professionals increases.