

Canadian Forces



Requirements

You must be a Canadian citizen, of good character, and able to meet the physical fitness standards to enter the Canadian Forces (CF). You must also meet the minimum requirement on CF aptitude tests and CF medical enrolment standards.

To join the Primary Reserve, you must be at least 16 years old. To join the Regular Force, you must be at least 17 years old.

To be a non-commissioned member (NCM), you must have successfully completed a minimum of grade 10. To become a Regular Force officer, you must have successfully completed a minimum of a three-year university bachelor's degree or have completed an officer training program. You may be admitted to the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP) or Continuing Education Officer Training Plan (CEOTP) if you hold a grade 12 diploma with courses in English, mathematics, and chemistry or physics. There are also opportunities to serve as an officer in the reserves.

In addition to these basic requirements, there might be other age and education requirements specific to an occupation or entry plan. There are approximately 80 different occupations for NCMs and officers in the CF.

Training Paths

Regular Forces: When you join the CF, you must complete basic training at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in Saint-Jean, Quebec. Basic training is tough. It is designed to introduce you to the military, get you in top physical shape, and teach you basic military skills and discipline. It is recommended that you start a fitness program before entering basic training. The type and amount of further training will depend on the occupation you choose and will be provided at one or more of the many military teaching units throughout Canada. The time it takes to become qualified in the basics of an occupation can vary from a couple of months to several years.

The CF offer fully subsidized education to certain outstanding applicants. Entry plans include

- Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP): subsidized education for up to five years to complete a bachelor's degree at the Royal Military College of Canada or, occasionally, at a civilian university. Following this education, you will receive a commission as a CF officer and be employed in the CF for five or more years.

Individuals studying, or planning to study, nursing, pharmacy, or physiotherapy might be eligible for subsidized training through the civilian option of the ROTP. Applicants must have at least one full year of study left in their programs.

Applications for ROTP are submitted by the end of February for processing in time for September.

- Medical Officer Training Plan (MOTP): subsidized education for the last three years of medical school and a one- or two-year residency. When this is completed, you will be employed as a medical officer (doctor) in the CF.
- Dental Officer Training Plan (DOTP): subsidized education for four years of dental school. Following dental school, you will be employed as a dental officer (dentist) in the CF.

For information on these and other subsidized education programs, contact the nearest Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre.

Reserves

The part-time component of the CF is the Primary Reserve (PRes). People in the Reserves train part-time on nights and weekends from fall to spring and full-time for several weeks during the summer months. Often this training is done together with Regular Force (full-time) members. You may be a member of the PRes while a full-time student or in the workforce.

The Component Transfer program allows working members of the Reserves to transfer to a full-time job in the Regular Force. Landed immigrants may apply to the Reserves.

Skills and Aptitudes

You must be able to work in demanding situations, sometimes for long periods. Self-motivation, discipline, and the ability to perform under stress are essential. You must be able to take direction but also have leadership skills. The CF is a team, and its members have to work together to accomplish tasks. Therefore, you should be able to cooperate and communicate well with others. Candidates must always be willing to accept a challenge, physical or mental.

You may discuss the skills and aptitudes needed for specific occupations with CF recruiting personnel. PRes experience is considered an asset when you apply to join the Regular Force.

Employment

Nationally, the Canadian Forces comprise approximately 60,000 Regular Force members and 35,000 Primary Reserve members.