

Living in Alberta



Alberta

Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Child Care | Housing |
| Cost of Living | Quality of Life |
| Education | Taxes |
| Entertainment | Transportation |
| Gasoline | Wages |
| Grocery Items | Weather |
| Health Care | Utilities |



Alberta is home to the prairies, Rocky Mountains, four glorious seasons and people with an entrepreneurial spirit. As our population grows, so does our need for skilled professionals in our rural and urban communities. You can expect a fulfilling career with time to truly enjoy life. Our overall cost of living including housing, entertainment and taxes is one of the lowest in Canada, giving you more disposable income to enjoy.



Alberta's opportunities, your future

Albertans from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds have worked together to build a strong, diverse province with an exceptionally high standard of living. Alberta's stable economy and innovative business spirit make it an ideal place to work.

The official Immigrate to Alberta website has detailed information for you to explore on immigrating to, living and working in Alberta.

www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration

Sign up to receive up-to-date information that is relevant to you. www.AlbertaCanada.com/subscribe



Cost of Living

Living in Alberta is affordable. In an international study ranking the most expensive cities around the world, New York City ranked #32, London ranked #18 and Sydney ranked #14. In comparison, Calgary, Alberta ranked very affordable at #96.

Source: Mercer Human Resource Consulting Cost of Living Survey for 2011

Housing

Average rent per month for a two-bedroom apartment

Calgary	\$1,040
Edmonton	\$1,030
Grand Prairie	\$866
Lethbridge	\$859
Medicine Hat	\$692
Red Deer	\$820

Average price of a newly constructed single-detached or semi-detached house

Calgary	\$554,527
Edmonton	\$482,162
Grande Prairie	\$342,880
Lethbridge	\$353,854
Medicine Hat	\$401,893
Red Deer	\$405,988

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2011

Child Care

Average child care costs for a daycare in Alberta range from \$950 - \$1,200/month.

Source: Edmonton area daycare quotes, September 2011

Utilities

The utilities industry in Alberta includes: electric power generation, transmission and distribution; natural gas distribution; and water, sewer and irrigation systems. Whether you rent or own, you will likely be responsible for paying for your utilities.

Regulated residential natural gas and electricity yearly costs in Edmonton were estimated at \$427.45 and \$932.62 respectively.

Other residential household costs may include

Digital cable TV	\$26.00 upwards/month
Phone	\$30.00 upwards/month
Water	\$40.00 upwards/month
High speed Internet	\$30.00 upwards/month

Source: Utilities Consumer Advocate, September 2011

Health Care

Most people living and working in Alberta get universal access to hospital and medical services under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP). AHCIP is free and is covered by the Government of Alberta. Most temporary foreign workers and their families are also eligible.

Patients are responsible for the cost of prescription medication; however, most people have benefit plans which cover these costs in addition to physiotherapy, chiropractic care and massage therapy.

Grocery Items

Albertans spend an average of \$7,778/year on groceries.

Source: 2010 Survey of Household Spending, Statistics Canada



Education

Albertans are among the highest educated people in North America. In 2008, 62 per cent of the labour force, 25 years of age and older, held a post-secondary education certificate, diploma or degree.

Children living in Alberta must attend school from ages six to 16. Public education is free for children and people under 20 years of age, up to the end of secondary school.

Kindergarten to Grade 12

- **Kindergarten** (optional): under age 5
- **Elementary** (Grades 1 to 6): age 6 to 11
- **Junior High** (Grades 7 to 9): age 12 to 15
- **Senior High** (Grades 10 to 12): age 16 to 18

Students attend school from early September to late June. A wide range of schools are available (public, Catholic, Francophone, charter, private) offering innovative programs (home education, online/virtual schools, outreach programs, alternative programs).

After completing the required high school courses, students must pass provincial examinations to qualify for an Alberta High School Diploma. Students are expected to find out which courses are required to enter the post-secondary institution they wish to attend and select their high school courses accordingly.

The high school completion rate in Alberta is 72.6 per cent, up from 71.5 in 2009.

Post-secondary

Alberta's post-secondary system has 26 publicly funded institutions, including six universities, two technical institutes, 11 public colleges, five private university colleges, and two arts and culture institutions. Many private vocational training institutions also serve Alberta.

Canadians and landed immigrants pay tuition fees that are subsidized through the provincial government. The cost of attending universities and colleges varies according to program and location.

Average full-time tuition by institution

Universities (undergraduate degree)	\$5,429
Public Colleges	\$4,108
Polytechnics	\$4,445
Private Colleges	\$8,169

International student fees for publicly funded institutions are calculated based on the actual cost of post-secondary education. Every institution posts tuition information on their websites.

Source: Advanced Education and Technology, June 2010

Transportation

Alberta's road systems are extensive. To operate a car, truck or van you need a driver's licence, plus insurance and registration on your vehicle. Canada uses the metric system to represent speed limits (kilometers versus miles).

In major cities buses and light rail transit run frequently. A monthly pass for unlimited access to the public transportation system in a larger city will cost approximately \$90, and \$50 – \$75 for a smaller city.

Both Edmonton and Calgary international airports offer direct non-stop flights to many international destinations.

Gasoline

Alberta has the lowest gasoline tax in Canada which leads to lower prices at the pump: \$1.05 CAD per litre for unleaded gasoline.

Information correct as of September 2011



Weather

Alberta is Canada's sunniest province with more than 2,000 hours of sunshine each year and four distinct seasons.

Despite the cold, the winter sun is often shining, and days are spectacularly bright. You can go skiing and skating with the family or stay indoors and spend the day shopping. Main roads and highways are cleared of snow to ensure that travel in the communities and to the main centres is safe and easily accessible. Houses and office buildings are well insulated and have excellent heating systems. Even when it is cold outside, we stay warm inside.

Average summer temperature range
(June to August)
15° C to 23° C (60° F to 73° F)

Average winter temperature range
(November to February)
-8° C to -25° C (18° F to -13° F)

Source: *Travel Alberta*

Quality of Life

Calgary, Alberta ranked 28th out of the top 50 cities worldwide with the highest quality of life, and ranked first out of eco-cities. New York City ranked #49, London ranked #39, and Sydney ranked #10.

Source: *Mercer Human Resource Consulting Quality of Living Survey for 2010*

Entertainment

Bottle of wine	\$16.00
Bowling	\$6.50
Movie admission	\$12.50
Museum entrance	\$11.00
Pint of beer	\$6.00
Theatre ticket	\$85.00
Hockey ticket (NHL)	\$40.00 and up
Golf	\$38.00
Ski lift ticket	\$76.00

Average prices, September 2011

Taxes

Alberta has a personal tax advantage due to a low single-rate tax system. This includes the highest basic and spousal exemptions in the country, no provincial sales tax, the lowest gasoline tax rate and low property taxes.

Two income family of four earning \$75,000 CAD

Alberta provincial and federal taxes \$12,786 CAD
Ontario provincial and federal taxes \$15,386 CAD

Two income family of four earning \$125,000 CAD

Alberta provincial and federal taxes \$28,801 CAD
Ontario provincial and federal taxes \$32,761 CAD

Albertans also have access to the Canada Child Tax Benefit to help offset the expense of raising children aged 18 and under. This tax benefit is determined based on family income and residency requirements.

Alberta businesses have the lowest business taxes in Canada. Alberta's business tax advantage is a result of low corporate income tax rates, no capital tax and no payroll tax.

Source: *Alberta Finance and Enterprise, March 2011*





Wages

Salaries for professions in Alberta vary depending on the employer, hours worked and educational qualifications, as well as experience and responsibilities that the job requires. The following list is a snapshot of jobs in Alberta and the average salary that a typical person could earn.

Accountant	\$66,923
Advertising Account Executive	\$89,927
Chemical Engineer	\$101,379
Child and Youth Care Worker	\$32,093
Cook	\$26,576
Computer Programmer	\$78,029
Emergency Medical Personnel	\$54,597
Farm Worker/Technician	\$35,448
Financial Analyst	\$79,287
Fitness Instructor	\$22,578
Gasfitter	\$60,515
Industrial Designer	\$73,930
Machinist	\$55,232
Nurse	\$72,290
Receptionist	\$31,214
Retail Salesperson	\$27,623
Secondary School Teacher	\$68,391
Social Worker	\$65,627
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	\$72,715

Source: Alberta Learning Information Service, 2009 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey

*Please note: All currency is in Canadian Dollars.
Currency converter available at: www.bankofcanada.com*



Archived