

OTTAWA JOURNAL: Are You Interested in Becoming a CBSA Officer?

By David Tilson, MP

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has a wide range of responsibilities as a federal agency.

Their responsibilities range from: enforcing laws, facilitating trade entering Canada, assisting visitors to Canada, to securing our borders.

The broad range of services and programs performed by the CBSA requires skilled and professional individuals to carry out these responsibilities.

Becoming a CBSA officer can be an exciting and rewarding career opportunity to help ensure Canada's borders remain safe and secure.

In order to apply to be a CBSA officer, there are some basic requirements that you must meet, which include: successful completion of a secondary school education; holding a valid driver's license; and the successful completion of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (CFSC), as well as the Canadian Restricted Firearms Safety Course (CRFSC). You must also pass the tests.

More information on these courses may be found on the Canadian Firearms Program website (www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca). It is also important to know you are responsible for all of the costs associated with these requirements and that you may be asked to show proof that you've met them at any point during the assessment process.

Another important factor to consider if you're contemplating a career with the CBSA is that you must be fully prepared and committed to relocating anywhere within Canada for an assigned posting.

For example, this could mean accepting a posting in a rural or remote area of the country.

There is, of course, a range of locations available, as well as a process where you may express your preference of location, but at the end of the day, it is highly possible that you will be assigned and you must be prepared to move yourself and your family to another area of Canada that may be completely unfamiliar to you.

Another consideration is that you will be required to become familiarized with CBSA's mission, vision, and the Agency's Code of Conduct. All employees of the CBSA, including those in training, must adhere to the Code and policy.

Any breaches of the policy are sternly addressed, which may include: discipline, release from the training or development programs, termination (for public servants), and/or legal action.

In addition to the other requirements, all applicants wishing to apply to the CBSA Officer Trainee ? Developmental Program must read and understand the requirements as shown in the job advertisement.

During the training period in Rigaud, Quebec, CBSA will provide coverage of the following costs: room, board, food, uniforms, one return trip from the trainee's home to the college, and a stipend of \$125 per week for minor personal expenses that may be incurred.

Once you've applied to the CBSA and it has decided you've met the basic requirements and you've accepted the personal decision point on mobility from the job advertisement, there are several remaining steps to take before becoming a border services officer:

- 1) Pass written standardized test(s), interview(s), medical, and psychological tests
- 2) Complete CBSA's physical abilities standard, the Physical Abilities Requirement Evaluation in 4:45 minutes or less
- 3) Obtain and be able to maintain a secret security clearance as per CBSA security standards
- 4) Complete the Officer Induction Training Program
- 5) Meet and be able to maintain the Conditions of Employment as outlined in the job advertisement
- 6) Complete the Officer Induction Development Program as an officer trainee. After successfully completing these steps, you are then eligible to be appointed as a border services officer.

The road to becoming a CBSA officer may be a very involved process and require a great deal of commitment, but is very worthwhile, as it can be a very interesting and gratifying career opportunity. If you would like to learn more about becoming a border services officer, please visit the CBSA website at www.cbsa.gc.ca.