

BLE Officer

Duties

Bylaw enforcement officers' responsibilities vary considerably from one municipality to another. In smaller jurisdictions, a bylaw enforcement officer may look after a wide range of bylaws including traffic control, animal control, business licensing and weed control. In large urban centres, bylaw enforcement officers may specialize in checking and enforcing specific bylaws.

In general, bylaw enforcement officers may:

- respond to complaints from local citizens, elected officials and businesses
- discuss bylaw requirements with the people involved and attempt to reach an understanding and obtain voluntary compliance with the bylaw
- enforce bylaws by issuing orders to correct problems such as unsightly property
- correct problems when orders are not obeyed by arranging for required work to be done and invoicing the property owner
- enforce bylaws by issuing violation tickets, traffic tags or summonses and subpoenas, and prepare related legal documents
- keep records
- use specialized equipment related to specific bylaws (for example, weights and measures, noise level instruments, auto samplers for taking chemical samples)
- investigate bylaw offences to prepare for court proceedings
- appear in court and give testimony related to the prosecution of bylaw offenders.

The municipalities that hire bylaw enforcement officers define the powers they may use on the job. A municipality may apply to Alberta Justice to have a bylaw enforcement officer appointed as a special constable.

Working Conditions

Bylaw enforcement officers may work shifts that include evenings and weekends. Other working conditions vary depending on which bylaws they enforce. For example, bylaw enforcement officers may have to deal with hazardous goods or aggressive animals. In some circumstances, they are required to lift items weighing over 20 kilograms.

Personal Characteristics

Bylaw enforcement officers need the following characteristics:

- strong oral and written communication skills
- the ability to handle potential conflict situations
- good observation, problem-solving and decision-making skills
- the ability to work with a minimum of supervision
- the ability to react quickly and with good judgement.

They should enjoy having established policies and procedures to guide their work, enforcing regulations and dealing with people.

Educational Requirements

section revised AUGUST 2008

Municipalities may hire bylaw officers and train them on the job. Job applicants should have:

- at least a high school diploma
- up to two years of related experience
- a working knowledge of the provincial court system
- knowledge of proper investigative and interviewing techniques
- a valid driver's licence with a clean driving record
- a current Standard First Aid certificate
- computer skills for inputting and retrieving data.

Most employers prefer to hire bylaw enforcement officers who have a related post-secondary diploma or degree. Before enrolling in a post-secondary program, prospective bylaw enforcement officers should discuss their education options with potential employers.

In Alberta, education programs related to law enforcement are offered by the following post-secondary institutions