

Participant Profiles

Officers usually move through the salary range by increments based on their performance. The average length for an officer to move from minimum salary range to the next is five years or more. Salaries of Foreign Service Officers are similar to the salaries found in the Civil Service.

Spousal Compensation/Assistance. Foreign Service Officers are provided with an allowance that includes an amount for spouses. Accompanying spouses are provided with supplemental pension benefits, and continue to accrue pension entitlement under the social security program while being on foreign posting. Furthermore, spouses can be employed at foreign/home location as a local staff member if suitable position is available. The Foreign Ministry will also canvass other organizations for available jobs and assist spouses in obtaining a work permit on posting.

Relocation and Incentives. The objective of the assignment policy is to maintain home country living standards. The Foreign Service pays for shipment of household goods, but with weight and/or volume limits. Officers are not required to pay a portion of housing costs, and are reimbursed for utilities costs. Private school fees are paid for at the elementary and secondary levels if the public schools are deemed inadequate.

Hardship premiums are provided in the normal pay cycle and a flat amount is provided to all officers. Cost-of-living allowances are paid out as a fixed amount and are adjusted twice a year.

Home Leave/R&R Leave. Home leave travel is offered once per posting year. Rest and Recreation trips are provided only to officers who are in hardship locations. The number of R&R trips varies based on the level of hardship.

Assignments. Foreign postings average four years in length. Foreign Service officers typically return home after two or more foreign postings. Decisions other than personal choice generally override the decision regarding posting location. Officers are usually provided with nine months notice before leaving for a posting. Foreign Service Officers are not obligated to accept a hardship posting in their career.

The primary reason for turning down a posting are personal responsibilities, local conditions, and the inability of the spouse or partner to work at the posting location. Because officers bid for postings and are appointed by a selection board, it is very rare for an officer to turn down a posting. When they do, most of the assignments have already been taken into account and do not feature regularly. The attrition rate is 4-5% at all levels and has been falling. Officers tend to leave for promotion and career prospects elsewhere, better compensation, and a career change. The Foreign Ministry is looking into the development of a flexible benefits package to improve retention.

Compensation. Compensation is shown in Canadian dollars in the following table:

Title	Job Match	Minimum	Maximum	Average Annual
2 nd Secretary	Job A Match -			
2 nd Secretary	Job A Match	\$45,000	\$60,000	\$54,000
1 st Secretary	Job B Match +	\$75,000	\$110,000	\$95,000