ESQUIMALT
Military Family Resource Centre
Your community. Your resource centre. Get connected.

MFSP PSFM

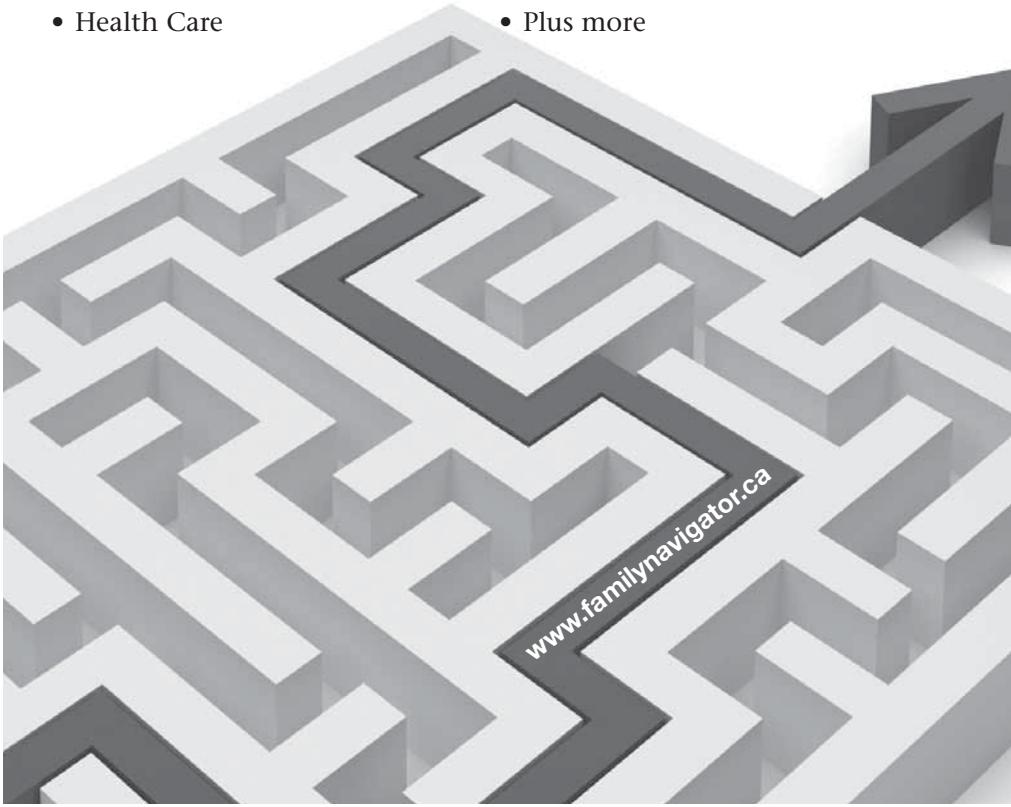
Newcomer's Guide
2013 - 2014

MFRC 24-Hour
Information Line: 250.363.2640
Toll free: 1.800.353.3329
mfrc@shawcable.com
www.esquimaltmfrc.com

Family Navigator

Your one-stop community resource for military family lifestyle information.

- Relocation
- Special Needs
- Eldercare
- Health Care
- Mental Health
- Childcare
- Employment and Education
- Plus more



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West Coast Welcome

FREE EVENT

SATURDAY

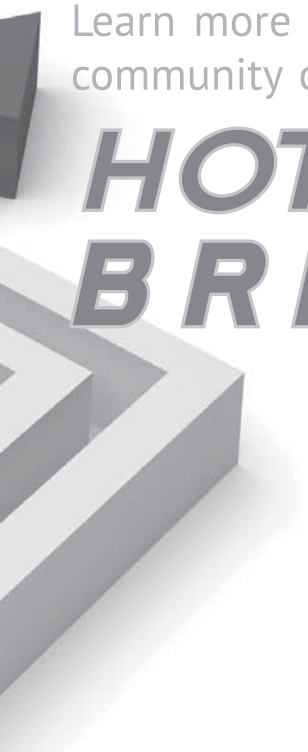
September 14
9 a.m.- Noon

NADEN DRILL HALL

BE A TOURIST IN YOUR OWN BASE!

Learn more about CFB Esquimalt, the MFRC & community organizations from Greater Victoria

HOT PANCAKE BREAKFAST



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MFSP MILITARY FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM
PSFM PROGRAMME DES SERVICES AUX FAMILLES DES MILITAIRES

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WELCOME

On behalf of the Defence Team, I would like to welcome you to the Greater Victoria area. We live in a vibrant community that offers everything families could wish for in a place to call home. I urge you to get out and explore the fantastic restaurants, the peaceful parks and green spaces, as well as the wide range of sites and services available for local residents. This region has truly found the balance between having the comfortable feel of a small town while providing every entertainment, educational or leisure opportunity you may be seeking as a family.

Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt offers a similar range of choices and is home to numerous clubs, services and great facilities. I encourage you and your family to get involved and discover the extensive services available at the Base, from Personnel Support Programs to the array of support offered by the Military

On behalf of everyone at the Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre, I would like to welcome you and your family to Greater Victoria. West Coast life can be truly spectacular. It's a wonderful place to raise a family. There are plenty of reasons to love this area: a dynamic arts community, the mild climate, and the year-round outdoor life. You'll find it a place rich in history with modern shops, recreation facilities and schools. In Greater Victoria, you are never too far from a great restaurant, a beautiful park or a walk by the ocean. We hope that you and your family have a great time here.

Moving can definitely be a challenge. So, we hope that this Welcome Booklet can provide you with valuable information before, during and after your move. On the following pages, you'll get an idea of the many resources available to you and your family at CFB

Table of Contents

Family Resource Centre. The collection of information contained in this package will be an invaluable tool for learning about how you and your family can take advantage of the many opportunities.

I hope that your time spent in the Greater Victoria area is rewarding and memorable and I look forward to you joining our Defence Team here on Canada's West Coast.

Sincerely,
Capt(N) Bob Auchterlonie
Base Commander
Canadian Forces Base
Esquimalt

Esquimalt and in the surrounding communities.

I encourage you to connect with the Military Family Resource Centre at any time. If you have a question, call our toll-free 24-Hour Information Line at 1-800-353-3329. We are happy to assist you in any way that we can. Drop in and visit us, the coffee is always on!

Sincerely,
Gaynor Jackson
MFRC Executive Director

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Disclaimer: The information compiled in this document is for resource listing purposes only. The MFRC does not advise individuals to use any particular service. The MFRC will not accept any liability in respect of any damages or other liability arising from the use of any of the services listed on our resource listings. It is the individual's responsibility to research the referrals given to assess their suitability.

Introduction

Relocating to a new area can be both an exciting and stressful experience. This Welcome Booklet provides you with important information to assist you with the transition into a new community.

There are three main sections in this booklet and a handy relocation checklist has been included for your convenience:

SECTION 1: GETTING TO KNOW VICTORIA

Now that you know you have been posted to CFB Esquimalt, you would probably like to know about your new community. This section contains a brief introduction along with facts and figures of the communities that comprise Greater Victoria as well as the communities north of the Malahat in the Cowichan Valley. It also includes a brief description of CFB Esquimalt.

SECTION 2: GETTING SETTLED INTO YOUR COMMUNITY

Once you have moved, the process of registering, and filling out paperwork begins. Section 2 discusses how to register your vehicle, obtain a BC driver's license, how to access health care and other important information to ease the transition to our area.

SECTION 3: GETTING CONNECTED

As you are settling into your new place, your thoughts may turn to connecting with new people and to discovering what your new community has to offer. What does my new Military Family Resource Centre offer in terms of services? These questions are answered in section 3, which contains a brief summary of MFRC services, tips on how to build your social networks and a brief tour of some of Vancouver Island's favourite tourist destinations.

Relocation Checklist

Moving to a new area often requires completing necessary paperwork and obtaining new documents. This checklist is designed to help you keep track of what tasks need to be done when moving to B.C.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR BASE OR COMMUNITY

1. Contact your local MFRC to obtain information about your new location. Details on page 47.
2. Register yourself for MFRC Second Language Training - Free of charge (if you are experiencing a language barrier).
3. Contact your car insurance company and get a detailed letter in the language of your new insurance company. Details on page 31.
4. Get the passports renewed for family members. (Being new to a community makes it more difficult to find long term references)
5. Ask for a copy of your medical chart and/or inform yourself about the process if you need to have medical charts transferred.
6. Keep all your insurance papers with you. (Not packed away)
7. Go to www.familynavigator.ca. This website provides tools and resources to support you in your relocation. These tools include a "Road Map" of your relocation with tips, resources, and contacts that guide you through the relocation process.

IF YOU HAVE CHILDREN

1. Visit the DEM website:
   The Dependent Education Management is to assist, provide information and authorize military education allowance entitlements to assist CF members with the transition from one province/territory to another. Details on page 39.

2. Visit the school of your children and get the contact information for your new school (fax and phone number, address and contact name for transferring schools).

3. Obtain all the immunization records for your children (in English, if possible).

AFTER YOU GET YOUR POSTING MESSAGE AND UPON ARRIVAL:

ACTION	TIME FRAME	DETAILS
Vehicle safety inspection	Within 30 days of your arrival date	Page 31
Get a Military Family Identification Card* at any MFRC location	Upon arrival or during your house hunting trip	Page 47
Register for medical coverage in B.C.	Within 3 months of your arrival (Should apply ASAP)	Page 34
Get driver's license for B.C. (at Motor Vehicle Branch)	Within 3 months of your arrival date	Page 32
Visit Employment Insurance Office	As soon as you get your Record of Employment	Page 44
Register yourself on the waiting list for daycare (at MFRC daycare and Child Care Resource Referral)	As soon as you receive your posting message (limited spaces)	Page 38
Enroll in free second language training at the MFRC (if you haven't already)	Upon arrival or during your house hunting trip	Page 46
Subscribe to the newcomer's mailing list with the MFRC	Upon arrival or during your house hunting trip	

* A Military Family Identification Card (MFID) is available to immediate military family members of Regular and Reserve Force members. Family members include: spouse/common-law partners and children who are 13 years of age and older. To obtain this card, the CF member must be present. This card will give you access to Base facilities and will entitle you to benefits from the Military Discount Program.

QUICK REFERENCE

B.C. driver's license and vehicle insurance ..... Page 31-32
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Getting to Know Victoria

GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Victoria is located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island. In order to get to Victoria by car, you will need to take a ferry from Vancouver (Tsawwassen Ferry Terminal). The trip is approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes. The unique location of Victoria gives the area a temperate climate with warm summers (the average temperature is 22 Celsius) and with more hours of sunshine than other regions on the mainland of the province.

A warm coat and umbrella are sufficient for winters in the Victoria region since they are usually the mildest in Canada with an average January temperature of 6 Celsius. When it does snow, it often does not stay long. The area is a haven for motorcyclists, cyclists and golfers. However, if you do prefer traditional winter activities such as skiing, you can visit Mount Washington, which is a 3 hour drive north of Victoria. This ski resort is located near the 19 Wing Comox Canadian Air Force Base.

LANGUAGE

While the primary language in Victoria is English, you will hear a variety of languages spoken through the area. French can be heard in some parts of the downtown areas close to government offices and around CFB Esquimalt. If your primary language is French, there is a French language school system, a Francophone society and free second language training available through the MFRC. Victoria has one of the highest levels of registrations in French immersion programs in Canada.

CULTURAL HERITAGE/TOURISM

Victoria is a city rich in its diverse cultural heritage: you can immerse yourself in the "British feel" of the area by going to the Empress Hotel for afternoon tea or explore the legacy of the First Nations people by visiting one of their many cultural centres. Victoria is also world-renowned for its majestic Butchart Gardens. The city is a favoured tourist destination, and the streets during the summer season are full of visitors exploring the city and all of its attractions.

PACE OF CITY LIFE

The rhythm of life in Victoria is slow paced, charming and peaceful. Nature trails and bicycle lanes abound in the area, making the city very pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

NATURE

While Victoria is a city, it is unique in the fact that nature and wildlife surround you at every turn. Most neighbourhoods have elaborate green space, and it is not uncommon to see deer along the sides of roads near these park areas. This is especially true for military members and DND civilian workers who work in one of the CFB Esquimalt locations.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Greater Victoria region is subject to the risk of earthquakes, severe winter wind and rain storms, and summer fire hazards. There is information available from the B.C. government at www.pep.bc.ca to help you gain awareness of the hazards and how to respond. Preparing for emergencies is everyone's responsibility.

Greater Victoria Quick Facts and Stats

People

Overall population of Greater Victoria: 359,991
Average age: 45 years old
Language spoken: English
Accessibility for disabled people: Cross walks for the blind, bus transit wheel chair accessible, special transportation available (HandyDart).
Access Victoria: Accessible Transit Services at www.busonline.ca/regions/vic/accessible/default.cfm
Legal age of the majority: 19 years old

Usage Of Phone

Phone: Need to dial 10 digits (including the 250 or 778 area code)

Home Prices (Data from Dec 2012)

For more information about housing market, visit www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca
Average price for House: $591,580
Average price for Townhouse: $408,559
Average price for Condo: $313,989
Average price for a Manufactured House: $115,749
Price range for Townhouse rentals: $708 (1 bdrm) to $1,504 (3 bdrm+)
Price range for Apartment rentals: $647 (bachelor) to $1,232 (3 bdrm+)
Vacancy rate for apartments: 1.4%
Duration of a lease: Monthly basis (normally)
Legal: Landlord may refuse tenants who smoke or have pets

Utility Providers

Electricity: B.C. Hydro
Gas: FortisBC
Oil: Columbia Fuel and others
Cable: Shaw and TELUS
Telephone: TELUS and Shaw (for land lines)
Internet: Shaw and TELUS

Health

B.C. Provincial Medical Coverage: monthly premium paid by each citizen (see page 34)
Hospitals: 3 in the Greater Victoria Area (Capital Regional District)
Family Doctors: Visit a Walk-in Clinic to inquire about doctors accepting new patients (see page 36-37)

Work

Main language: English proficiency required
Minimum wage: general minimum wage: $10.25 per hour
Unemployment rate: 7.0% (see page 42)

Child Care

Child care facilities (average prices): $500 to $1,105 per month
Vacancy rate: Varies (consult the facilities in your area) Esquimalt MFRC has two daycare facilities 12 months-5 yrs. Call to be put on waitlist.
In-home daycare (average prices): From $30-$50 a day/per child
Babysitters (average price per hour): Range from $6 to $10 per hour

School

K-12: Available in both official languages and French immersion
University/College: Only in English
School Age: 5 years old by Dec. 31
All day kindergarten available in all public schools.
Education Allowances: The CF Dependent Education Management (DEM) program provides useful information on education allowances, considerations and preparations in conjunction with a posting. Visit www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dem-epcg (see page 39)

Vehicle

Gas Prices: visit www.gasbuddy.com

Faith/Religion

Numerous denominations are available in the Greater Victoria Region
Services in French (Roman Catholic: 1 Paroisse St-Jean-Baptiste)
Canadian Forces Base: 3 Churches (2 Roman Catholic and 1 Protestant)

Provincial Laws

Smoking laws: Legal age (19) required to purchase tobacco product; smoking forbidden in all indoor public spaces and workplaces, as well as within three metres of public and workspace doorways, open windows or air intakes.
Cellular laws: Illegal to use a cellular phone while driving
Liquor providers: Private and government owned stores
Bicycle helmet: Mandatory
Speed limits: 30-60 km/h in town and 70-100 km/h on highways
Right turn on red light: Permitted
Green flashing light does not mean advanced turn, it means the intersection is pedestrian controlled.
Car seat: www.icbc.com/road-safety/safer-drivers/child-seats
Seat belt: Mandatory
Sales Tax: Effective April 1, 2013, HST will be removed and replaced with 7% PST and 5% GST

CFB Esquimalt

HMC Dockyard Esquimalt, at the end of Esquimalt Road, hosts a large ship repair unit for maintaining naval vessels.

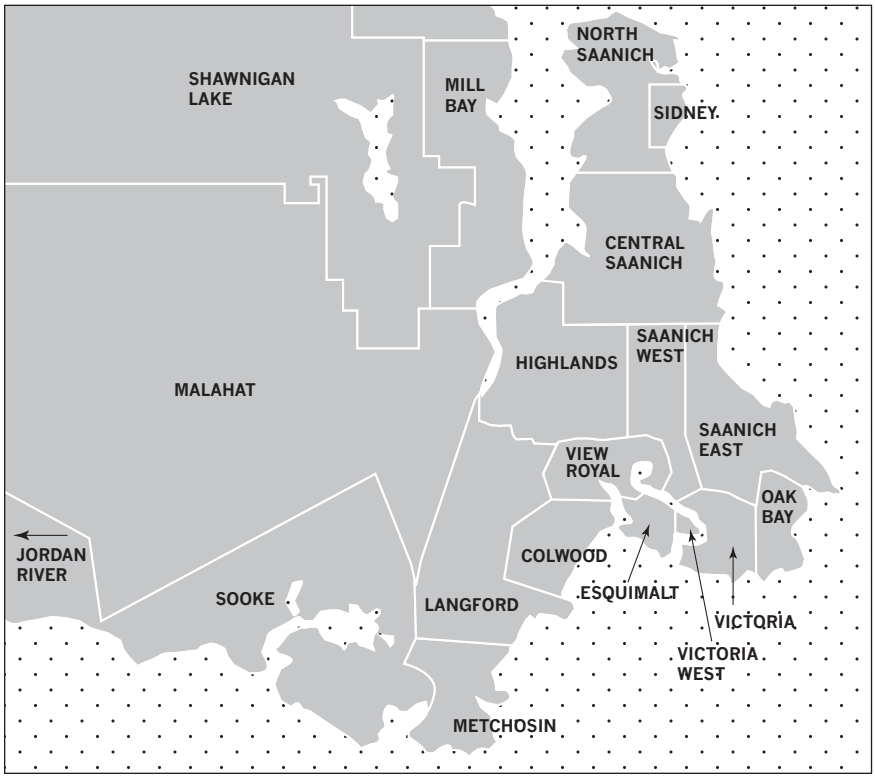
CFB Esquimalt is primarily a naval base with an English language designation. The Base employs around 4,300 military members and 2,000 civilian personnel. Approximately 10-15% of its military population is Francophone.

The Base has several locations spread over 25 kilometers in different communities surrounding Victoria. Most of the CFB Esquimalt facilities are located in the Esquimalt community approximately 4 kilometers from downtown Victoria.

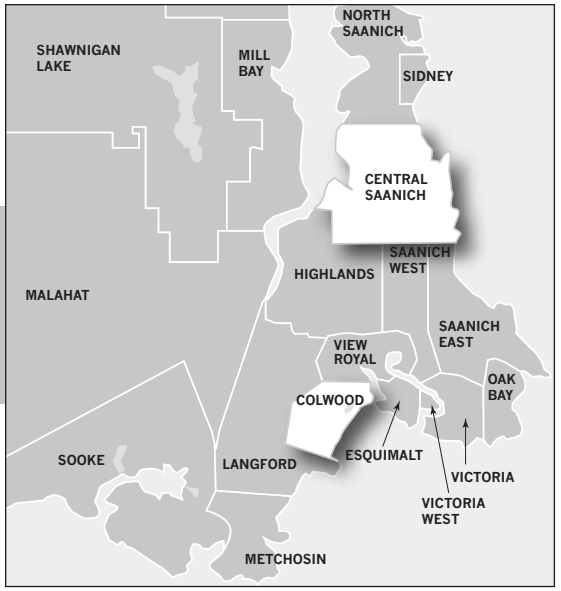
If you would like to learn more about CFB Esquimalt, please refer to the Base Information Guide (you should have received one with this booklet). This guide, produced in both official languages, will give you the history of CFB Esquimalt, and the different Integral and Lodger's units. It will also provide you with maps of the Base and important phone numbers.

CFB Esquimalt offers guided tours to CF members and their families during the summer. To schedule a tour, contact 250-363-5291.

Greater Victoria - 13 Municipalities



Municipality	Kilometers to Base	More information
Esquimalt	0.8	Page 14–15
View Royal	4.9	Page 25
Victoria	5.8	Page 24
Saanich	7.9	Page 21
Oak Bay	9.2	Page 20
Colwood	11.1	Page 13
Langford	12.1	Page 17
Metchosin	19.1	Page 18
Central Saanich	20	Page 12
Highlands	20.9	Page 16
North Saanich	26.5	Page 19
Sidney	29.5	Page 22
Sooke	33.4	Page 23



Central Saanich is about 20 km from downtown Victoria. This community has a rich agricultural heritage with easy access to transportation facilities. One of the major attributes of this community is its 20 km of shoreline. Central Saanich enjoys the benefits of being located close to Victoria but still possesses a rural ambience.

Central Saanich

Central Saanich Neighbourhoods:

Brentwood Bay, Island View, Saanichton

Quick Facts for Central Saanich

Population: 15,936
Prices of Single Family/Townhouse/Condo:
$562,645/$404,328/$269,250
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $637-$1,261
Rental vacancy rate: 1.3%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Hospital: 1 (Saanich Peninsula Hospital)
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: No (closest is in North Saanich) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/schedules
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (monthly visits to 443 Squadron in nearby Sidney)

www.centralsaanich.ca

Colwood

Colwood is the first community on the West Shore. This municipality offers a wide range of attractions and activities for people of all ages. You can play golf in the morning and go fishing in the afternoon. This community is family oriented and is one of the fastest growing communities in B.C.

Colwood is located 12 km from Dockyard and contains other sections of CFB Esquimalt. In this community, you will find the largest proportion of Residential Housing Units in an area called Belmont Park, adjacent to Royal Roads University. Belmont Park has a CANEX convenience store, a school and 2 churches (one Roman Catholic and one Protestant).

There is also a facility provided by the Base called the Colwood Pacific Activity Centre (CPAC), which is a 10 minute walk from Belmont Park. This facility is home to a MFRC location and one of the two MFRC day-cares. It also houses a PSP office. The MFRC also operates an out of school care program at the Youth Activity Centre in Belmont Park.

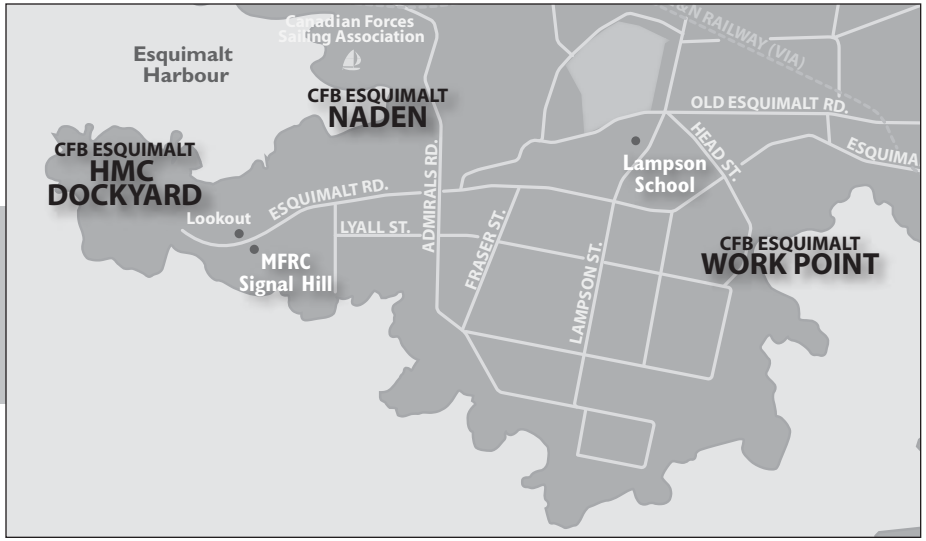
Colwood Neighbourhoods:

Belmont Park, Hatley Park, Mill Hill, Royal Roads, Triangle Mountain

Quick Facts for Colwood

Population: 16,093
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo:
$476,425/$391,051/$252,942
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $589-$1,157
Rental vacancy rate: 1.0%
Residential Housing Units (RHU): Yes
Single Quarters (SQ): No
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes MFRC and in communities
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes (1) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: Yes (CPAC)

www.colwood.ca



Esquimalt

This community is situated on 72 acres that offer a mix of commercial, residential and industrial development. This community contains scenic parkland, waterfront walkways, beaches, and a golf course. This area of town hosts the largest portion of CFB Esquimalt and is the home of Canada's Pacific Naval Fleet. Here, you will be able to find the Dockyard, Naden, Work Point and the Base Language Training School as well as one of the two MFRC offices.

Dockyard

The Dockyard is the largest part of the Base and is located at the end of Esquimalt Road about 7 km from downtown Victoria. In this part of the Base, you will find all the Messes, all the Single Quarters for Chiefs and Petty Officers' (sergeants and above) and a portion of Single Quarters for Commissioned Members in the Wardroom.

You can also find some Residential Housing Units (formerly known as PMQs) and one of the MFRC locations near the Dockyard entrance.

Naden

The second largest part of the Base is in Naden, which is located approximately 2 km from the Dockyard. Here, you will find the CANEX, the SISIP office, a barbershop, a travel agent and the CFHA office. This area also has PSP recreational facilities, which includes a gym and an ice rink.

Naden also has Single Quarters for members with a rank Master Seaman and below (Master Corporals and below). Instructional facilities such as the Canadian Forces Fleet School and the Learning and Career Centre, along with Personnel Support Programs are also located here. Other no-

table facilities include: the Base Orderly Room, Base Personnel Support Office, the Base Chaplain's Office, a Chapel and Military Police. Across the street from Naden are some Residential Housing Units and the Base Hospital.

Work Point

The third area of the Base within the Esquimalt community is Work Point, approximately 2 km from Naden.

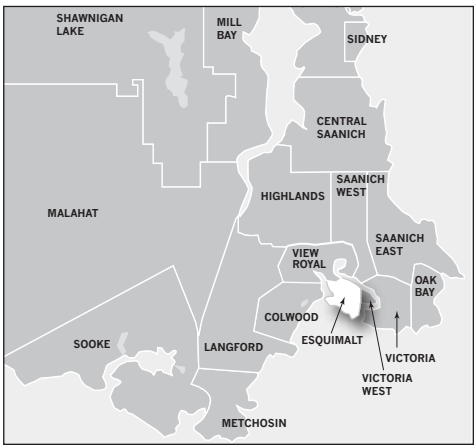
This part of the Base contains the second largest area of Residential Housing Units. In addition, you will find instructional facilities for recruits, specializing in training for First Nations personnel and Venture (the Naval Officer Training Centre) where all MARS Officers are trained. There are also Single Quarters for Commissioned Members and for transient CF members of all ranks here. Work Point is located by the ocean and offers a breathtaking view of the Olympic Mountains in Washington State.

Esquimalt Neighbourhoods:

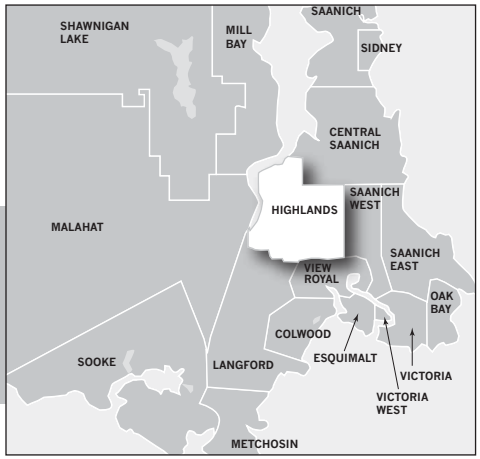
Craigflower, Gorge Vale, Rockheights, Songhees, Work Point

Quick Facts for Esquimalt

Population: 16,209
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo: $469,503/$360,213/$230,137
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $607-$1,055
Rental vacancy rate: 1.0%
Residential Housing Units: Yes
Single Quarters: Yes
Schools: Yes
French School: Yes (1) École Victor Brodeur School
Child care facilities:
MFRC and in communities
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres:
Yes (1) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: Yes



www.esquimalt.ca



The Highlands are located further north and provide a quiet rural setting. Small hobby farms and large residential acreage co-exist. There are beautiful scenic parks with extensive walking and hiking trails. This area is also home to unique wild life.

Highlands

Highlands Neighbourhoods:

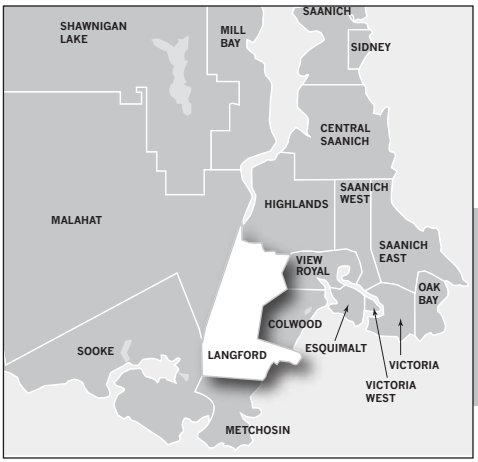
Durrance Lake, East Highlands, West Highlands

Quick Facts for The Highlands

Population: 2,120
House/Price for Lots and Acreage: $643,500/$242,500
Price range for apartment rentals: No data
Rental vacancy rate: No data
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: No
Recreational centres: No (closest is in Langford/Colwood) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: No
Dental offices: No
MFRC location: No (CPAC is the closest location)

www.highlands.bc.ca

The community of Langford is adjacent to Colwood. It is a young, growing community that offers affordable housing and a wide range of services and amenities. Residents enjoy a wealth of recreational activities.



Langford

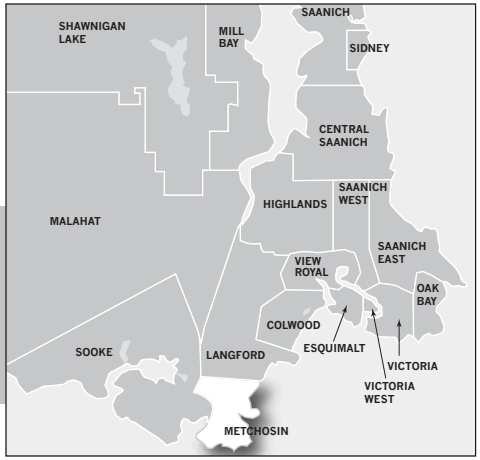
Langford Neighbourhoods:

Bear Mountain, Florence Lake, Glen Lake, Goldstream, Luxton, Millstream, Ravenwood

Quick Facts for Langford

Population: 29,228
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo: $494,176/$324,038/$262,720
Affordable Housing Program: www.cityoflangford.ca
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $589-$1,157
Rental vacancy rate: 1.0%
Single Quarters: No
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes (1) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes, www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (short distance to CPAC in Colwood)

www.cityoflangford.ca



Metchosin is a picturesque, semi-rural community. Nature trails, scenic marinas, and sandy beaches are some of the natural beauties that this community offers. Metchosin has a farmer's market where you can purchase local fruits and vegetables, homemade bread, jams and pickles, and "free range" eggs.

Metchosin

Metchosin Neighbourhoods:

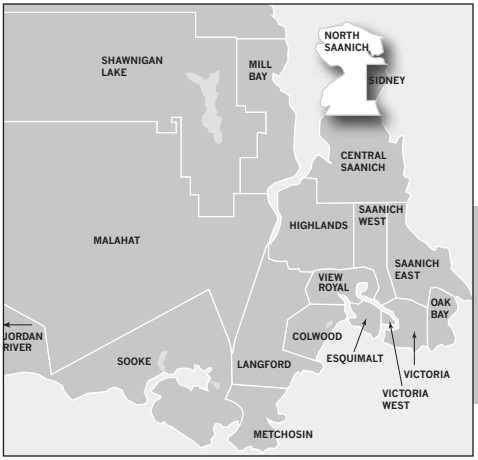
Happy Valley, Matheson Lake, Rocky Point, William Head

Quick Facts for Metchosin

Population: 4,803
Price of Single Family: $627,097
Price range for apartment rentals: No data
Rentals vacancy rates: No data
Residential Housing Units: Yes in the Rocky Point part of Metchosin
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Recreational centres: No (closest is in Colwood) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: No
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (CPAC is the closest location)

www.district.metchosin.bc.ca

North Saanich is located on the Saanich Peninsula, approximately 25 km north of Victoria. The area is surrounded on three sides by 20 km of ocean shoreline. The long coastlines here offer local homes an unparalleled view of the ocean, distant islands and mountains.



North Saanich

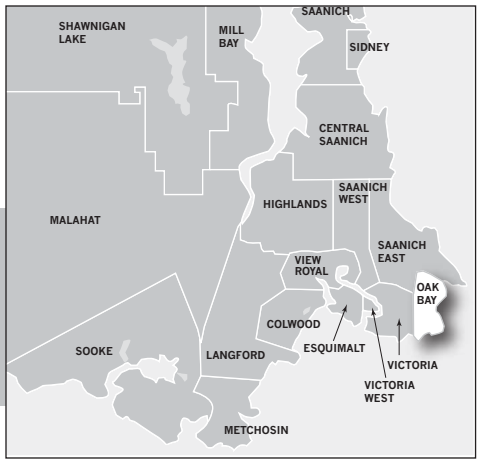
North Saanich Neighbourhoods:

Cloak Hill, Dean Park, Deep Cove, Lands End, Patricia Bay (“Pat Bay”), Swartz Bay

Quick Facts for North Saanich

Population: 11,089
Prices of Single Family: $690,354
Price range for apartment rentals: No data
Rental vacancy rates: No data
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: No
Recreational centres: Yes (1) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: No
Dental offices: No
MFRC location: No (monthly visits to 443 Squadron in nearby Sidney)

www.northsaanich.ca



Oak Bay offers its English manner through Tudor style homes, tearooms and picturesque gardens. Walks are delightful along both the sandy Willows Beach and along the ocean boulevard known as the Scenic Drive.

Oak Bay

Oak Bay Neighborhoods:

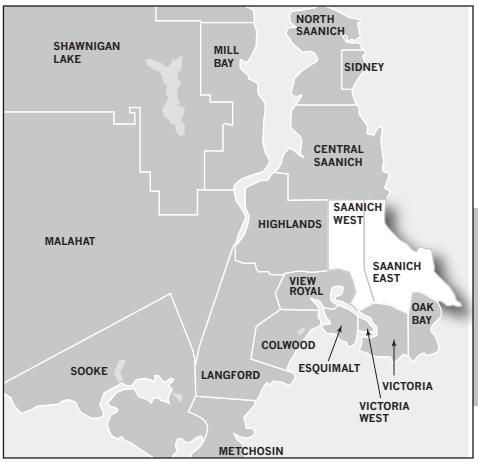
Gonzales, South Oak Bay, Uplands, Willows Beach, Windsor Park

Quick Facts for Oak Bay

Population: 18,015
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo:
$878,905/$524,200/$371,535
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $665-$1,406
Rental vacancy rate: 1.4%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Recreational centres: Yes (2) www.fitinfitness.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (short distances from both Esquimalt locations)

www.oakbaybc.org

Saanich is a major residential area in the Capital Regional District. This part of Greater Victoria has an important agricultural base. This community has provincial parks, public beaches and picturesque waterfalls at Beaver Lake and Swan Lake. If you enjoy beautiful views, you will be delighted when you will reach the top of Mount Douglas and contemplate the City of Victoria below.



Saanich

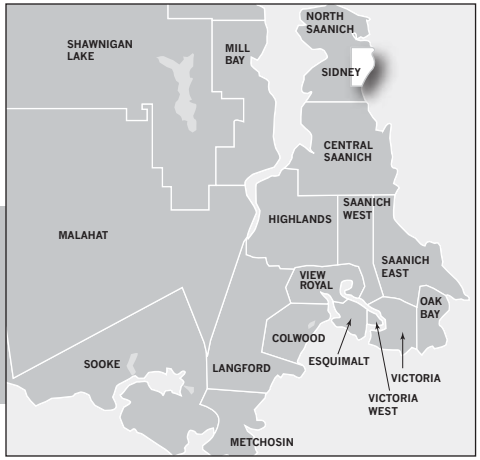
Saanich Neighbourhoods:

Beaver Lake, Broadmead, Cadboro Bay, Cedar Hill, Cordova Bay, Elk Lake, Glanford, Gordon Head, The Gorge, Interurban, Lake Hill, Marigold, Mayfair, Mt. Douglas, Mt. Tolmie, Prospect Lake, Royal Oak, Strawberry Vale, Ten Mile Point, Tillicum, West Burnside, West Saanich

Quick Facts for Saanich

Population: 109,752
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo:
$529,817/$385,989/$266,495
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $637-$1,261
Rental vacancy rate: 1.3%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Recreational centres: Yes (4) www.fitinfitness.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (short distances to all MFRC facilities)

www.saanich.ca



Approximately 40 minutes from downtown Victoria along Highway 17 is the town of Sidney. This community is the home of the Air Force Detachment's 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron. This squadron is located adjacent to the Victoria airport and is only a few kilometers from the ferry terminal.

This scenic coastal community offers romantic seaside walks, countless sandy beaches and picturesque marinas. The waters off Sidney's shores are a favourite for scuba divers to explore both surrounding marine life and two artificial ship reefs.

Sidney

Sidney Neighbourhoods:

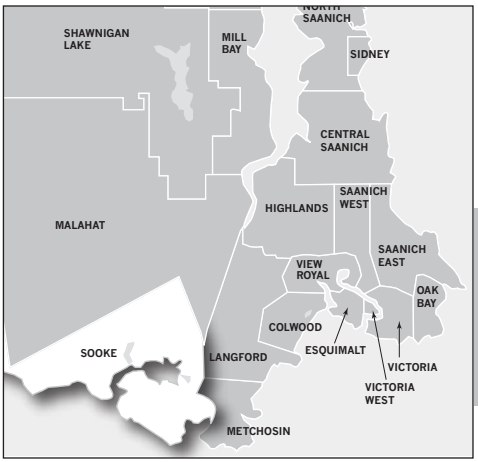
Sidney is broken into four quadrants listed as north, south, east, and west.

Quick Facts for Sidney

Population: 11,178
Prices of Single Family/Townhouse/Condo:
$465,318/$383,514/$270,535
Price range for rentals (1 bdr/2 bdr): $776-$1,018
Rental vacancy rate: 2.3%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes, www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes, www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (monthly visits to 443 Squadron)

www.sidney.ca

Sooke is located west of Esquimalt and is about a 40-minute car ride from downtown Victoria. Scenic oceanviews and the grandeur of the Olympic Mountains are common vistas in this community. Several members of the military community have chosen this family-oriented community for their home. Sooke is home to many provincial parks, scenic beaches and rainforests.



Sooke

Sooke Neighbourhoods:

Broom Hill, East Sooke, Kemp Lake, Otter Point, Saseenos, Whiffen Spit

Quick Facts for Sooke

Population: 11,435
Prices of Single Family/Manufactured:
$384,811/$137,327
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $589-$1,157
Rental vacancy rate: 1.0%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes www.sfrc.ca
Grocery stores: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes (1) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Shopping centre: Yes
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Ride sharing: www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No, however, regular visits and volunteer opportunities
Facebook Group: Military Families in Sooke

www.sooke.ca

Victoria is the capital city of British Columbia and home to the provincial government. Office buildings, shopping districts and heritage buildings dominate this area. The second oldest Chinatown in North America can be found here, and the Inner Harbour is alive with street buskers, visual artists, craftsmen and singers during the summer season.

Victoria

Victoria Neighbourhoods:

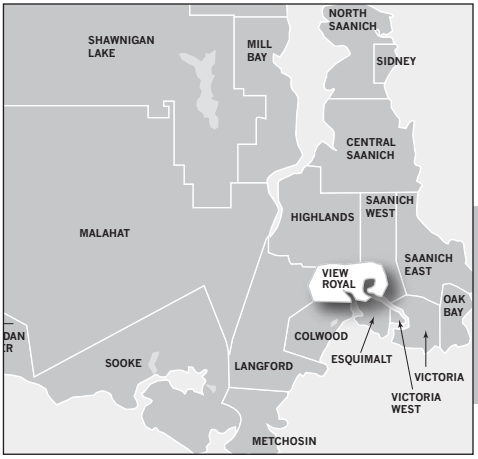
Chinatown, Cook Street Village, Downtown, East Burnside-Gorge, Fairfield, Fernwood, Harris Green, Hillside-Quadra, Humboldt Valley, James Bay, Jubilee, North Park, Rock Bay, Rockland, Vic West

Quick Facts for Victoria

Population: 80,017
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo: $621,980/$468,471/$307,067
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/ 3 bdr+): $650-$1,294
Rental vacancy rate: 1.4%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes (3) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (short distances from Esquimalt locations)

www.victoria.ca

Adjacent to Esquimalt is the community of View Royal. You may travel through this quaint little community if you commute to the Dockyard from the West Shore communities. View Royal envelopes a tranquil bay and sits at the doorstep of the Greater Victoria's urban core.



View Royal

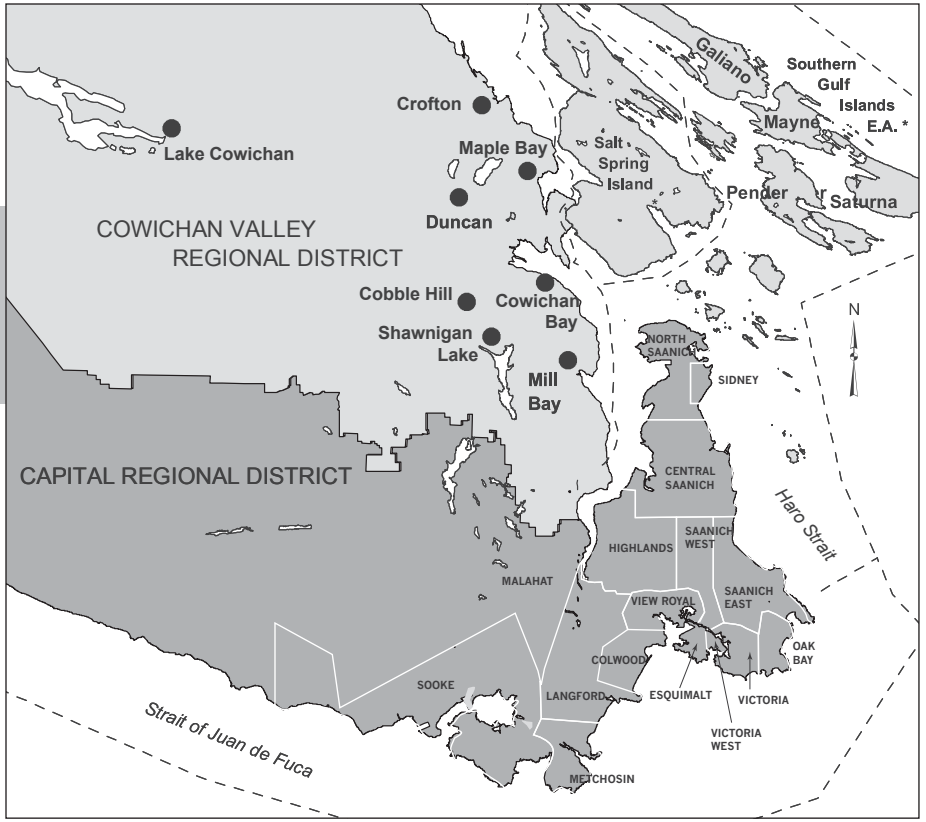
View Royal Neighbourhood:

Shoreline

Quick Facts for View Royal

Population: 9,381
Prices for Single Family/Townhouse/Condo: $544,519/$338,514/$282,079
Price range for apartment rentals (bachelor/3 bdr+): $589-$1,157
Rental vacancy rate: 1.0%
Schools: Yes
Child care facilities: Yes
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: No (the closest is in Colwood) www.fitinfitness.ca
Library: Yes www.gvpl.ca
Bus transit: www.transitbc.com
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No (short distances from Esquimalt and Colwood locations)

www.viewroyal.ca



Outside Greater Victoria

Communities outside Greater Victoria are also home to members of the Defense Community. In recent years, the Cowichan Valley has become an attractive place for CF members to live.

The communities within the Cowichan Valley Regional District are about 60 km north of Victoria along Highway 1. This area generally offers fewer services that cater to the military community; however, the Cowichan Valley has its own advantages: housing in this district is more affordable than Greater Victoria.

Even though the MFRC does not have a facility in the Cowichan Valley, the organization conducts regular visits in these communities, and works with local community members and partners to enhance the quality of life for military community members who reside here. To address the challenges of servicing the military community in this area, the MFRC has made numerous services accessible online at www.esquimaltmfrc.com. If you live in the Cowichan Valley and need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the MFRC toll-free at 1-800-353-3329.

Cowichan Valley

The Cowichan Valley is located north of the Malahat Mountain on Highway 1. This mountain has an elevation of 310 meters. Its caves were used by First Nations ancestors for spiritual enhancement and are one of their most sacred sites on southern Vancouver Island. The Malahat Drive climbs through imposing mature forests and over rugged mountainside before dropping down into the Cowichan Valley. Despite its beauty, the drive over the Malahat Mountain can, at times, be challenging and dangerous during winter months. To view the Malahat Mountain drive you can consult this website: images.drivebc.ca/bchighwaycam.

The Cowichan Valley is comprised of mostly rural communities with pulp and paper, forestry, fishing, farming, tourism and wineries being the main industries of the area. Recreational activities are abundant here: fishing, kayaking, hiking and golfing are just some of the year-round activities that you can do.

Surrounding areas:

Chemainus, Cobble Hill, Cowichan Bay, Cowichan Station, Crofton, Duncan, Honeymoon Bay, Ladysmith, Lake Cowichan, Maple Bay, Mesachie Lake, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Westholme, Youbou

Quick Facts for Cowichan Valley

Population: 76,929
Prices of Single Family/Townhouse/Condo: $441,317/$256,000/$215,800
Prices for apartments rentals: No data
Prices for townhouse entals: No data
Vacancy rental rate: No data
Schools: Yes (District #79)
Child care facilities: Yes, www.islandfamilyinfo.ca (see page 38)
Grocery stores: Yes
Shopping centre: Yes
Recreational centres: Yes (4) located in Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake
Hospital: 1 (located in Duncan) www.viha.ca/finding_care
Library: Yes (in Duncan) www.youseemore.com/duncan/
Bus transit: www.busonline.ca/regions/cow/?p=2.list
Ride sharing: Yes www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/transitplus/vanpools.cfm
Walk-in medical clinics: Yes
Dental offices: Yes
MFRC location: No, however, regular visits and volunteer opportunities

FINDING A PLACE TO LIVE

Housing Affordability

The Department of National Defence (DND) addresses housing affordability issues through the pay and benefits package. This approach is complemented by the Post Living Differential Allowance, which compensates members who are posted to locations with a higher cost of living such as Esquimalt. All members posted to these areas receive the allowance, whether they choose to live in DND housing or not.

Military Housing

The regulatory basis for setting DND housing units rent specifies that rents paid by occupants of government housing should be fair, equitable, and comparable to those paid for a dwelling of similar size and condition in the surrounding market. This level playing field ensures that rents paid by the 16% of CF personnel who choose to live in DND housing units are comparable to the rents paid by the 84% of CF personnel who live in civilian housing units.

Residential Housing Units

(formerly known as Permanent Married Quarters PMQ's)

The Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA) gives you the option of residing in Military Residential Housing Units. The number of units available is limited to 709 within a 25 km radius of CFB Esquimalt. Eligibility is based on a priority system and a first-come, first-served basis. If no Residential Housing Units are available, the CF member may have their names placed on an active wait list 60 days prior to their change-of-strength date. It is recommended that you apply as soon as possible through the Brookfield Relocation Services (BGRS) formerly known as Intergrated Relocation Program (IRP). Visit www.rp-pri.com for more information or by contacting CFHA directly by either filling out an application in person at the housing management office located in Naden, or online at www.cfha-alfc.forces.gc.ca. The CFHA phone number is 250-363-4163.

Base Accommodations (Single Quarters)

Single Quarters are also offered at CFB Esquimalt. The following is a list of rooms available according to rank:

- Officers: 134 single rooms
- Chief and Petty Officers (sergeant and above): 74 single rooms
- Master Seaman and below (Master Corporal and below): 282 spaces (including, single and double occupancy)
- Junior Officers: 254 spaces
- Transient members of all ranks: 68 single rooms

The quarters available to CF members are divided amongst the following locations located in the Esquimalt community: Dockyard, Naden, and Work Point. For more information, please contact the Base accommodations at 250-363-4087.

Renting

In B.C., you have the opportunity to rent a house, a condo, an apartment or a room and board. To obtain additional information about rental rules and regulations, check the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation website: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca. (To obtain information on rental accommodations, please contact the MFRC)

Security deposit

The maximum security deposit for residential premises allowed is half a month's rent. If tenants pay more than half a month's rent, they can deduct this overpayment from any rent owing; however, if the landlord allows pets they can also ask for an additional half a month's rent. This is called a "pet damage deposit." In this situation, the total combined deposits can be up to one month's rent.

A signed moved in/moved out condition is required.

It is mandatory for landlords and tenants to conduct an incoming and outgoing inspection report. If the reports are not complete, the landlord or tenant runs the risk of jeopardizing their security deposit.

Pets and Smoking

In B.C., a landlord may refuse to rent to a tenant who is a smoker or who has pets.

Buying a house in B.C.

(Ensure to contact your Relocation Program office formerly known as IRP)

For further information on buying and if you have special needs related to disabilities, please consult the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Website: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca. Phone: 1-800-668-2642. If you are outside Canada, call 613-748-2000 or fax 613-748-2098.

For general inquiries you can also email at chic@cmhc-schl.gc.ca.

Vehicle Registration, Licensing and Transportation

Vehicle Registration

Vehicle registration rules differ from province to province. The following section will provide you with information on the rules that apply in British Columbia. The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) is a provincial crown corporation that provides universal auto insurance in B.C. as well as licensing and registration. Check out their website at www.ICBC.com for the most current information or phone 1-800-663-3051 if you have any questions.

You are required to register your vehicle within 30 days of moving to B.C. Before registration, you must have your vehicle inspected by a designated inspection facility in British Columbia. Please refer to the ICBC website to get the most up-to-date list of facilities. Once you have successfully passed the safety inspection, you can proceed to one of the many Autoplan Brokers listed on their website.

You will need to bring:

- Your current registration
- Completed safety inspection
- Your vehicle
- Proper ID (you will need to refer to the ICBC website for accepted ID)

Vehicle Insurance

ICBC provides insurance discounts if you can provide a claim-free insurance history. You will need to have a "Claim History" letter from your previous insurer on official letterhead with the driver's name, policy number, and period of coverage and the dates of any fault claims. If this letter is not in English, you will need to get a certified, ICBC-approved translator to translate the letter. A list of translators is available online.

Driver's License

You must get a B.C. Drivers License within 90 days of moving to B.C. To get a full privilege driver's licence, you must provide proof of having held a driving record for two years (not a learner's license). If you cannot provide proof, you will be required to complete the B.C. graduated licensing system outlined in detail on the ICBC website.

Storage of recreational vehicles

There is a storage facility provided by PSP in the Fleet Dive Unit area located in Colwood and at Work Point. Space is severely limited with precedence being given to deployed members, so military members are encouraged to call PSP Recreation PO at CPAC at 250-363-2648 to be placed on a waitlist. There will be a monthly charge of $20/month plus applicable taxes for boats, RV's, etc.

ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION IN GREATER VICTORIA

Vanpooling and Park and Ride

This is a specialized transportation service that serves longer-distance commuter trips to and from areas which are not served by conventional transit. Vanpooling is more efficient and economical than commuting alone.

If you are interested in joining a vanpool, you should contact the Jack Bell Foundation at 250-380-RIDE or www.ride-share.com.

For more information regarding transportation, visit the B.C. Transit website for their Park and Ride program:
www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/schedules/park_and_ride.cfm.

Baseline Ferry

BASELINE passenger ferry runs between Colwood, Dockyard, Naden and the Esquimalt Graving Dock. You can catch the ferry at D Jetty in Colwood, the Seamanship Training Centre in Naden or the MLF floats in Dockyard. You must have proper Military ID to use the ferry. Tickets can be purchased at the tent on the jetty or on board the ferry. Daily, monthly and yearly passes available.

Captain Cell: 250-208-4682 or 250-812-0870

Biking, Walking, Jogging

The Galloping Goose Trail moves through urban, rural and wilderness settings. The trail is 60 km long and begins at the south end of the Selkirk Trestle, at the foot of Alston Street in Vic West and goes both out to Sooke and Sidney. Access points and parking are found along the entire trail route.

Visit www.gallopinggoosetrail.com for additional information or call 250-478-3344.

Medical Coverage

In most cases, the medical coverage from your province of origin will continue for 3 months after you relocate.

As of July 2008, an agreement has been made that "British Columbia will waive the Medical Service Plan (MSP) wait period for all Canadian Soldiers and their families who move to B.C. from elsewhere in Canada," including the Province of Québec for family members of CF members (spouse and common law partners and children.) Families will need to contact MSP directly to request waving the three-month wait period. If you need further assistance navigating the medical system, please contact the Esquimalt MFRC.

B.C. Medical Coverage

For spouses/common law partners and children of CF members

The medical coverage application is made by the CF Members through his or her employer, which is DND. The military member can obtain application forms at his/her Base Orderly Room (BOR) or ship's office. Monthly premiums vary according to the number of family members. For more information, contact your BOR or ship's office or Health Insurance BC Contact Centre at 1-800-663-7100 or online at www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp.

As soon as you arrive in the province, the military member fills out the forms and submits them to the Base Orderly Room or his or her ship's office. Application forms require:

1. The Member's signature.
2. Social Insurance Number.

For partners that are not common law

If you are applying for a self-administered MSP account, complete an application for enrollment form online (see www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp) and send it to MSP. Copies of documents to support the name and Canadian citizenship or immigration status of the persons listed on your application may be required. Visit this website for additional information: www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoben/eligible.html#enroll

B.C. Care Cards will be mailed to your residence. If you have not received your cards within three months, contact the Health Insurance BC Contact Centre at 1-800-663-7100 or where the application has been made through DND. The CF member can check the status of his/her application with the Base Orderly Room or ship's office.

Once you have received your B.C. Care Card all British Columbians are required to register for Fair Pharmacare. You may apply online or by contacting Health Insurance BC 1-800-663-7100. You will need to have the personal health card number and date of birth for each member of your family, and for yourself and your spouse (if applicable) you will need your social insurance number and your Net Income (Line 236) from your Income Tax Return or from your Notice of Assessment from two years ago.

Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP)

PSHCP is an optional extended health care benefit plan administrated by Sun Life. This coverage does not change as you move from province to province. If your family members (spouse/common law partner and children) are not covered by this plan, the military member can go to his or her Base Orderly Room or ship's office to fill out and submit the application form. This coverage is designed to help pay for some of the health services that are not covered by the provincial health insurance plan. You can find more information about eligibility and obtain application forms by visiting their website at:

www.tbs-sct.gc.ca

or by calling the Sunlife PSHCP Call Centre at 1-888-757-7427.

Dental

In B.C., there is no dental coverage. DND offers a dental plan for family members (spouse/common law partner and children) that is administered by Great West Life. This coverage does not change as you move from province to province. If your family members (spouse/common law partner and children) are not covered by this plan, the military member can go to his or her Base Orderly Room or ships' office to fill out the application form. You can find more information on the Great West Life website at: www.tbs-sct.gc.ca or by calling them at 1-800-957-9777.

Accessing Medical Services

As in other provinces, it is difficult to secure a family doctor in British Columbia. However, some services have been put in place to help you find doctors who are accepting new patients.

Needing Medical Attention

If you do or do not have a family doctor in B.C., you can visit a walk-in clinic for your non-emergency medical needs. There are walk-in clinics in most municipal areas. For all emergencies, visit the local hospital or dial 911.

Finding a new physician

The Victoria Medical Society (VMS) website provides an up-to-date list of physicians in the Greater Victoria and surrounding areas who are accepting new patients. Contact the MFRC for a complete updated list of doctors accepting new patients. This list is updated monthly.

Call 250-598-6021 or visit www.victoriamedicalsociety.org.

College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

The College's interest is the protection and safety of patients, and the quality of care they receive from licensed physicians in B.C. This website provides a list of physicians who are taking new patients sorted by area and in the language of choice.

Telephone: 604-733-7758
Toll free: 1-800-461-3008
Website: www.cpsbc.ca

B.C. Nurse Line

This service gives you the opportunity to speak with a nurse about your symptoms, consult with a pharmacist about your medication questions, or get good nutritional advice from a dietitian. You can also inquire about publicly funded health services and resources that you might need.

You can access this service by dialing 811 and it is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for non-urgent medical questions. You can also visit their website at:
www.healthlinkbc.ca or contact them by phone at 1-866-215-4700.

Deaf and hearing-impaired dial 711 or toll free at 1-866-889-4700. This service is available in 130 languages upon request.

Vancouver Island Health Authority

The Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) provides health care on Vancouver Island. This organization will help you find health care providers, facilities, and programs across the region. You will also be able to access the B.C. Health Guide as well as other services.

Telephone: 250-370-8699
Toll Free: 1-877-370-8699
Website: www.viha.ca/finding_care

Hospitals

Victoria General, 1 Hospital Way
(located in View Royal) 250-727-4212

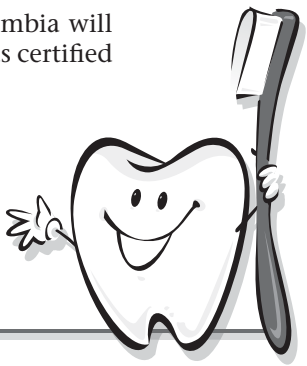
Royal Jubilee Hospital, 1900 Fort Street
(located in Victoria) 250-370-8000

Saanich Peninsula Hospital, 2166 Mt Newton X Rd
(located in Central Saanich) 250-544-7676

Cowichan District Hospital, 3045 Gibbins Road
(located in Duncan) 250-737-2030

Finding a new dentist

The College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia will help you find registered, licensed dentists as well as certified dental assistants (CDAs).



Call toll-free in B.C.: 1-800-663-9169
Fax toll-free in B.C.: 1-866-734-9448
Website: www.cdsbc.org

You will need to call individual clinics to see if they will do direct billing to Great West Life.

Special Needs

If you have a family member with a health concern, disability or mental health concern, please note that the services differ from province to province. In British Columbia, there can often be very long waitlists, and the eligibility and delivery of services might be different than other provinces. For more information on how to navigate these systems, visit www.familynavigator.ca or call 1-800-353-3329 to speak to the Family Navigator Coordinator.

Finding Child Care for Kids Under 5

This section details information about child care programs and resources available for children under the age of five. If after reviewing these resources you still have questions, please contact the Military Family Resource Centre.

Finding child care

There is a significant shortage of child care, particularly for children under 3 years of age. Please start your search as soon as possible after you receive your posting message. There are two ways you can obtain information about child care in B.C.:

1. Parents can search for licensed child care facilities by city, by postal code and by license category by using the new Child Care Search tool at childcareinfo.gov.bc.ca/childcaresearch
2. Contact the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) program in your community. This service provides guidance, support, funding information, resources and referral services for child care providers and parents in all communities within the province of B.C. at www.ccrr.bc.ca.

Please note: child care providers listed in the government database and the CCRR are voluntary. You may want to connect with other parents to enhance your research.

Check out the tips on the Family Navigator website (www.familynavigator.ca) on how to find the best child care for you and your family.

Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre

The MFRC has 2 licensed daycares for infant-toddlers, 2 licensed daycares for 3 to 5 year olds, 2 preschools, a licensed kindercare, and out of school care. In addition to this, the MFRC offers Casual Child Care services and programs designed to support families dealing with unique lifestyle issues (long-term separations due to military operational requirements, etc). The MFRC also provides assistance with developing a child care plan for military families, and emergency child care services for unforeseen events.

Please note: Contact us as soon as possible if you are interested in adding your child to the MFRC waitlist (due to limited spaces available.)

Ministry of Children and Family Development

You can obtain a copy of Parents' Guide to Selecting Child Care via their website at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare. Brochures pertaining to this topic are also available in multiple languages on their website at www.gov.bc.ca/mcf.

Funding Information

The Child Care Subsidy is a monthly payment that helps British Columbia families meet the costs of child care. Eligibility is calculated based on your income and family size. The Child Care Subsidy can be used to help pay for the eligible types of care. To learn more about the program, visit www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare.

Special Needs Supplement

If you are eligible for a child care subsidy and have a child with special needs, you may be eligible for the Special Needs Supplement (SNS). This program may entitle you up to $150 per month towards the cost of the child care space fee. The total amount of the subsidy and the SNS may not exceed the child care space fee. If your child has special needs and you want to apply for the SNS, complete the special needs form available at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/application.htm.

For more information regarding all the topics above, please contact:
If you reside in the Greater Victoria district: 250-382-7000
If you reside in the Cowichan Valley district: 250-746-4135
If you live in the Sooke area: 250-642-5152
If you live in the West Shore area: 250-391-8653
Elsewhere in B.C. toll free: 1-800-750-1868
Child Care Resource and Referral: www.ccrr.bc.ca

School and Out of School Programs (5 to 18 years)

Did you know?
The Dependent Education Management (DEM) manages the education compensation and benefits programs for Department of National Defence members to ensure that their dependent children obtain elementary and secondary education.
Visit the DEM website to learn about their compensation and benefits program: www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dem-epcg

Please note: that all school districts (except # 93) offer French immersion and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs.

Victoria, Esquimalt and surrounding areas

Greater Victoria School District #61 provides education for approximately 20,000 students in the municipalities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, Victoria, View Royal and a portion of Saanich and the Highlands. They have 26 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, 7 secondary schools and 4 alternative schools.

Telephone: 250-475-3212
Website: www.sd61.bc.ca

Colwood, Sooke and surrounding areas

Sooke School District #62 provides education to approximately 8,200 students in the West Shore municipalities of Sooke, Port Renfrew, Metchosin, Langford, Colwood and the Highlands. They have 19 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 3 secondary schools and 1 alternative school.

Telephone: 250-474-9800
E-mail: info@sd62.bc.ca
Website: www.sd62.bc.ca

Central Saanich, North Saanich, Sidney and surrounding areas

Saanich School District #63 provides education to 7,724 students in the municipalities of Royal Oak to Swartz Bay including 8 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 3 secondary schools, and 5 alternative schools.

Telephone: 250-652-7300
Website: www.sd63.bc.ca

Cowichan Valley and surrounding areas

Cowichan Valley School District #79 provides education to 8,300 students in the municipalities from the north in Saltair, down south to Spectacle Lake on the Malahat, and west to the Lake Cowichan region, including Honeymoon Bay and Youbou. They have 31 schools: 18 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 4 secondary schools, and 5 alternative schools.

Telephone: 250-748-0321
Website: www.sd79.bc.ca

Conseil Scolaire Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique

School District #93 is responsible for the French education in Greater Victoria. Victoria has one school for children whose primary language is French. This school offers instruction from Kindergarten to grade 12 as well as a full-day kindergarten in French. This school has approximately 610 students. It is located in Esquimalt close to the Base and serves students all over the Greater Victoria area. For more information regarding eligibility criteria, please contact École Victor-Brodeur.

Telephone: 250-220-6010
Website: brodeur.csf.bc.ca

Out of School Care Programs

Out of School Care programs are offered at some schools and recreational centres (check www.ccrr.bc.ca and www.fitinfitness.ca) and one MFRC location in Belmont Park, contact us at 250-363-2640 for more information.

Post-Secondary Education

University of Victoria
3800 Finnerty Road, Victoria, B.C. V8P 5C2
Telephone: 250-721-7211
Fax: 250-721-7212
Website: www.uvic.ca

Royal Roads University
2005 Sooke Road, Victoria, B.C. V9B 5Y2
Telephone: 250-391-2511
Toll Free: 1-800-788-8028
Fax: 250-391-2500
Website: www.royalroads.ca

Vancouver Island University - Cowichan Campus
222 Cowichan Way, Duncan, B.C. V9L 6P4
Telephone: 250-746-3500
Toll Free: 1-888-920-2221
Fax: 250-746-3529
Website: www.viu.ca

Camosun College - Lansdowne Campus
3100 Foul Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8P 5J2
Telephone: 250-370-3000
Toll Free: 1-877-554-7555
Fax: 250-370-3551
Website: www.camosun.ca

Camosun College - Interurban Campus
4461 Interurban Road, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X1
Telephone: 250-370-3000
Toll Free: 1-877-554-7555
Fax: 250-370-3750
Website: www.camosun.ca

The Base Personnel Selection Office (BPSO)

For more information on educational opportunities in French, long distance learning, continuing adult learning and funding opportunities, contact the BPSO. Educational counselling and support is available to military members and their family members. The BPSO provides assistance with accreditation, programs, course selection and educational reimbursement. Contact their office at 250-363-4091.

Employment

This section describes the main employment and education resources available in your community to support your job search. The Esquimalt MFRC has established working relationships with various community employment assistance agencies to ensure you have the best resources available to find employment. These professional agencies are well positioned in the greater community and know the employment field well.

Job Search Resources

The following local organizations can assist military spouses/partners and youth with the following services: one-on-one and group career counselling, job search support, resume and cover letter writing assistance, interview tips and practices, Employment Insurance information, home based business support, education and training information, career resource library, assessment tools, and local labour market information. Check out the employment section of the Esquimalt MFRC website for the following links and more.

To find your local agency:
www.workbc.ca

Victoria and Saanich
GT Hiring Solutions
250-388-0858
www.gthiringsolutions.com

Saanich Peninsula/Sidney
Beacon Community Services
250-656-0134
www.beaconcs.ca

Colwood, Langford, Metchosin, the Highlands and Sooke
Worklink
250-478-9525 (West Shore)
250-642-3685 (Sooke)
www.worklink.bc.ca

Cowichan Valley

Lake Cowichan
Cowichan Lake Community Services
250-749-6822
www.comserv.org

Duncan
Cowichan Career Centre
250-748-9880
www.globalvocationalservices.com

Checkout the Family Navigator website (www.familynavigator.ca) and view the Navigating Your Move e-tool on how to start your job search.

FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS OR BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Special needs

Victoria Disability Resource Centre
250-595-0044 ext. 101
www.drcvictoria.com

Independent living (Duncan)
250-746-3930
www.cvilrc.bc.ca

Other Languages (than English)

Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)
250-361-9433
www.vircs.bc.ca

Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria (ICA)
250-388-4728
www.icavictoria.org

Francophones

La Société Francophone de Victoria (SFV)
250-388-7350
1-888-388-7350
www.francocentre.com

Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC)

If after reviewing these resources you still have some questions, please visit www.esquimaltmfrc.com for more resources or phone us at 250-363-2640 (toll free 1-800-353-3329).

Individuals who have special needs

Connect with the MFRC Family Navigator program at www.familynavigator.ca.

Community members who need services in a language other than English

MFRC offers a second language training program to help you enhance your language capabilities in English or French. (see page 46)

Employment Resources

There are education and employment resources available to you in the Career Centre Library located at the Colwood Pacific Activity Centre. (see page 47)

Victoria Service Canada Centre

595 Pandora Avenue Victoria, British Columbia V8W1N5
Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4pm (Pacific Time)
General Inquiries: 1-800-206-7218
Language of service: English and French
Website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Cowichan Service Canada Centre

211 Jubilee Street, Duncan, British Columbia V9L1W8
Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4pm (Pacific Time)
General Inquiries: 1-800-206-7218
Language of Service: English
Website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Employment Insurance

The number of weeks for which you are entitled to receive employment insurance is based on the unemployment rate of the community to which you are moving and the amount of insurable hours you have accumulated in the qualifying period. Please consult your Employment Insurance Office to learn about the current unemployment rate of your new community.

Job Market

If you are looking for facts and figures about the labour market, salaries and wages, jobs and skills requirement, to compare occupations, potential employers etc., please visit www.bcjobsplan.ca.

Employment Standard Act in B.C.

Information about the rules and regulations in B.C. pertaining to employment can be found at www.labourmarketinformation.ca.

Reimbursements of some expenses related to job search

The relocation program formerly known as IRP reimburses the cost of some expenses related to the job search of the military spouse/partner when relocating in a new community. Contact the IRP office to obtain further details about the expenses that you can claim.

Phone 250-363-4243 or visit www.irp-pri.com for more information.

Getting Connected

Finding a new home requires a lot of decision making. The information contained in this Welcome Booklet is a starting point for you. However, if you have any questions after reading through this package, please contact the MFRC. We are here to make this transition as smooth as possible. Fax and Internet services are available in all MFRC locations and are free of charge.

MFRC SERVICES

The following is a brief overview of some of the services and programs offered at the Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre.

Information and Referral

The MFRC is your one-stop source for information and referrals to Base and community resources. Our trained staff and volunteers are ready to answer your questions about the Base and the community. This service is available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Be sure to get your Military Family ID Card - see page 6 for details.

Child and Youth

The MFRC has 2 licensed daycares for infant-toddlers, 2 licensed daycares for 3 to 5 year olds, 2 preschools, a licensed kindercare, and out of school care. These services are offered Monday through Friday at various times depending on the location. There is a variety of parent and tot programs to help you and your child get to know other families. The MFRC has connections with schools and agencies that support children and youth.

Deployment

Deployment is an ongoing reality at CFB Esquimalt not only with naval deployments but in supporting other operations around the world. Deployment is one of the most stressful challenges of military life, for the person going away and for those remaining behind. The MFRC knows firsthand the physical and emotional demands placed on partners, children and extended family as a result of deployment or extended duty. We believe deployment support doesn't begin when a member leaves and doesn't end when a member comes home — it's an ongoing process. Deployment services range from mailing services to assistance arising from family emergencies while a member is away.

Francophone

Most of the service providers in Victoria offer their services in English, which can be challenging when you are in the process of settling in and need to gather information about your new community. A dedicated staff member at the MFRC can provide you with assistance if you or a member of your family is experiencing some challenges communicating in English and can also help by providing referrals to agencies offering their services in French. Interpretation services can be made if your primary language is not French. The MFRC offers a second language training program to help you enhance your language capabilities in English.

Second Language Training – English and French

If you need to learn or improve your second language skills, the MFRC offers free courses to individuals who meet the criteria established by the Military Family Services Program.

Families with Special Needs and Responsibilities

If you or a member of your family has special needs and responsibilities, the MFRC can help you navigate your way to community resources during relocation, help you put a support plan in place for upcoming deployments, and give support and direction when you're not sure who to call. Check the Navigator website at www.familynavigator.ca before you move to find services in your new community.

Prevention, Support and Intervention

You don't have to go through a crisis alone. Our professional, caring staff offer support with deployment, relationship issues, and relocation. They also offer support during emergency situations and a variety of short-term crisis situations, such as illness or coping with pregnancy when your partner is away. We are also your source for quality referrals to outside counselling resources and specialized counsellors. At the MFRC, we respect your privacy and we do not provide any information of a confidential or personal nature to any other person or organization without your explicit permission.

MFRC LOCATIONS AND HOURS

Located in Esquimalt

MFRC Signal Hill

(located near Dockyard)
1505 Esquimalt Road
Monday to Friday
8:30am to 4:30pm
Closed on statutory holidays

Lampson School

670 Lampson Street
(Daycare, Casual Child Care and Preschool only)

Located in Colwood

MFRC CPAC

(Colwood Pacific Activity Centre)
2610 Rosebank Road (off Ocean Blvd)
Monday to Thursday 7:30am to 9pm
Friday 7:30am to 6pm
Saturday 8:30am to 4:30pm
Closed on Sundays and statutory holidays
(Has daycare facility)

MFRC 24-Hour Information Line: 250-363-2640
Toll free: 1-800-353-3329
Website: www.esquimaltmfrc.com
Email: mfrc@shawcable.com

Connecting with New People

One of the challenges with moving is saying goodbye to important people in your life, whether they be friends or family. Rebuilding your social network is one of the challenges of relocating to a new area. Here are some tips to help you build new relationships:

- Look around you: the first step to creating connections is to look outside ourselves. Look for someone with similar interests.
- Join in: you can join in by volunteering or joining a club based on your interests.
- Be a good neighbour: if you see a new family moving in, you could go over and say hello. You know what it's like to be the "new kid." You can be that welcoming friend.
- Try a new interest: you can step outside your own comfort zone and try something new. This gives you the opportunity to do something new and meet new people along the way.
- Register for the MFRC newcomer's monthly email and you will receive information about MFRC events, workshops, etc.
- Share your talents: if you have a talent to share, others might want to join you in learning.

Annual Events

- Father Daughter Sweetheart Dance (February-March)
- Formation Fun Day (July)
- West Coast Welcome (September)
- Pacific Women's Day (March)

Base Clubs

Amateur Radio, Aquarius Dive Club, Auto Hobby, Camping, Cyber Café, Dragon Boat, Golf, Karate, Medieval Club, Model Railroad, Motorcycle Safety Programs, Ranch Point Boat, Sailing, Squash, Tai Chi & Kung Fu, Work Point Boat. Visit www.pspesquimalt.ca for contact information.

Special and Period Events

Activities organized by each of the messes.
Visit www.fleetclub.net, www.cpomess.ca and www.wardroom.ca for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Help support your community! Ongoing volunteer opportunities are available to you through the MFRC and PSP (Personnel Support Programs). Volunteering can help you develop a routine, as well as meeting other people, share your talents, learn new skills (computer skills, language skills), build local references for your resume and enrich your community in a meaningful way.

Volunteer Feedback

"People are happy to see you... It is always fun to see people that are in a good mood. I help, and at the same time I have a lot of fun. We feel somewhat important; it is really gratifying; it brings the morale up... It is not always easy to stay home, especially when you always worked. With my volunteer work I have met people and made some friends."

"First [when you are a newcomer] it is a bit overwhelming. You feel that it is difficult at first, and as I said, with the MFRC it is easier. You have somewhere to go and something to do, just getting back kind of a sense of normalcy. I think that the MFRC has just been really good. I am enjoying volunteering, and even if only folding flyers, it is getting me out of the house. Because of my job that I was doing before, I stayed at home with my kids. I used to be busy, busy, busy. So I think that turning into a stay-at- home mom can be very isolating if you don't get yourself out and involved and doing stuff."

Military Discount Program

Being a member of the Defense Community in CFB Esquimalt entitles you to a discount at select businesses in the area or around the country if you present them with your Military Family Identification Card. A list of these businesses can be found at www.cfappreciation.ca.

Exploring Vancouver Island

Enjoying Island Life

The unique location of Vancouver Island offers numerous opportunities to its residents and visitors. We have highlighted a few of them and hope that it will encourage you to explore. More details can be found at www.vancouverisland.com/information/details.asp?id=45.

Extraordinary Trees!

Cathedral Grove – West of Nanaimo on Highway 4 (Pacific Rim Highway) and about 2.5 hours from Victoria, you will find the 157-hectare MacMillan Provincial Park also known as Cathedral Grove. This park has one of the most accessible stands of giant Douglas fir trees in British Columbia. Some of these towering ancient Douglas firs are more than 800 years old and one tree measures over 9 metres in circumference. Visit www.britishcolumbia.com/parks/?id=286 for more information.

Storm and Surf

Tofino – Further west on Highway 4 is the town of Tofino. The town has a population of 1,655 people and sits on a narrow peninsula bordered by the Pacific Rim National Park to the south and the Pacific Ocean to the west. During the winter months (November to March) visitors can view waves as high as 18 m (59 ft). This area is a haven for both surfers and beach enthusiasts. Visit www.britishcolumbia.com/regions/towns/index.asp?townID=3970.

Gulf Islands

The Gulf Islands offer a unique relaxing experience. There are more than 225 Gulf Islands of varying sizes. Trips to these islands can make for a beautiful weekend getaway or daytrip. Most people use B.C. Ferries to reach the main Gulf Islands. Government docks and private marinas are ready for boaters year-round. Alternate ways to get around vary from island to island. Salt Spring has both a taxi and a van shuttle service. The Gulf Islands are popular destination for cyclists. Bicycles offer a great way to see the islands up close, but caution should be observed on the mostly narrow and sometimes hilly roads. To learn more about what each island can offer you, visit www.gulfislands.net.

Butchart Gardens

The Butchart Gardens is one of the world's premier floral show gardens. Jennie Butchart began to shape this magnificent landscape in 1904. The public area of Butchart Gardens covers 22ha (55 acres) and offers floral beauty for all seasons. Visit their website at www.butchartgardens.com. Free admission for military members with a valid ID.

Contact Information

B

Base Gym
Personnel Support Programs
250-363-5677
www.pspesquimalt.ca

Base Operator
CFB Esquimalt
250-363-2000
www.navy.forces.gc.ca

Bike trails
Galloping Goose
250-478-3344
www.gallopinggoosetrail.com

Buses
B.C. Transit
250-382-6161
www.bctransit.com

Buses
(Accessible transit for individuals with special needs)
Accessible Transit Services
250-385-2551
www.busonline.ca/regions/vic/accessible/default.cfm

Buying a home
Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation
1-800-668-2642
1-613-748-2000
www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

C

Cable TV
Shaw Cable
250-475-5655
www.shaw.ca

Telus
250-310-2255
www.telus.com

Car inspection
Commercial Vehicle Enforcement
250-952-0577
www.th.gov.bc.ca/cvse

Car insurance
Insurance Corporation of B.C.
250-978-8300
1-800-663-3051
www.icbc.com

Central Saanich community
Municipal Hall
250-652-4444
www.centralsaanich.ca

Child Care
Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR)
250-382-7000 (Greater Victoria)
250-746-4135 (Cowichan Valley)
www.islandfamilyinfo.ca

Church
Chaplain's Office CFB Esquimalt
250-363-4030
www.navy.forces.gc.ca/marpac

Church (Paroisse)
Paroisse St-Jean- Baptiste
250-598-0944
301 Richmond Avenue, Victoria, BC

Clubs on the base
Personal Support Program
250-363-1009
www.pspesquimalt.ca

College
Camosun College
250-370-3000
www.camosun.ca

Colwood community
Municipal Hall
250-478-5541
www.colwood.ca

Cowichan Valley community
Municipal Hall
250-746-2500
www.cvrd.bc.ca

D

Dental insurance
Great West Life
1-800-957-9777
www.tbs-sct.gc.ca

Dentists
College of Dental Surgeons of B.C.
1-800-663-9169
www.cdsbc.org

Driver's license
ICBC
250-978-8300
1-800-950-1498
www.icbc.com

E

Education allowances
Dependant Education Management
www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dem-epcg/ade-sep

Employment
Employment Insurance Office
1-800-206-7218
www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Employment (Local agency)
Greater Victoria Locator
www.labourmarketservices.gov.bc.ca

Employment
Cowichan Lake community services
250-749-6822
www.comserv.org/employment.html

Employment
Cowichan Career Centre, Duncan
250-748-9880
www.globalvocationalservices. com

Employment (Special needs)
Victoria Disability Resource Centre
250-595-0044 ext. 101
www.drcvictoria.com

Employment (other languages)
Victoria Immigrant & Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)
250-361-9433
www.vircs.bc.ca

Employment (Special needs)
Independent living (Duncan)
250-746-3930
www.cvilrc.bc.ca

Employment (other languages)
Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria (ICA)
250-388-4728
www.icavictoria.org

Employment (francophone)
La Société Francophone de Victoria (SFV)
250-388-7350
1-888-388-7350
www.francocentre.com

Esquimalt community
250-414-7100
www.esquimalt.ca

F

Family Information Line
1-800-866-4546
www.familyforce.ca

Ferry
Baseline Ferry
Captain 250-208-4682 or 250-812-0870
www.baselineconnector.com

Financial services
SISIP
250-363-3301
1-800-267-6681
www.sisip.com

G

Garbage
Contact a local contractor

Gas
FortisBC
1-888-224-2710
www.fortisbc.com

H

Health Insurance
Sunlife
1-888-757-7427
www.tbs-sct.gc.ca

Highlands community
Municipal Hall
250-474-1773
www.highlands.bc.ca

Hospital in Duncan (Cowichan Valley district)
Cowichan District Hospital
250-737-2030
www.viha.ca

Hospital in Saanich (Greater Victoria district)
Saanich Peninsula Hospital
250-544-7676
www.viha.ca

Hospital in Victoria (Greater Victoria district)
Victoria General Hospital
250-727-4212
www.viha.ca

Hospital in Victoria (Greater Victoria district)
Royal Jubilee Hospital
250-370-8000
www.viha.ca

Hydro
B.C. Hydro
1-800-224-9376
www.bchydro.com

L

Langford community
Municipal Hall
250-478-7882
www.cityoflangford.ca

M

Medical Card
MSFP
1-800-663-7867
www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/msp

Medical Facilities
VIHA
250-370-8699
1-877-370-8699
www.viha.ca/finding_care

Medical Information
B.C. Nurse Help Line
1-866-215-4700
Dial 8-1-1
www.healthlinkbc.ca

Members Assistance Program
1-800-268-7708

Metchosin community
Municipal Hall
250-474-3167
www.district.metchosin.bc.ca

MFRC
Military Family Resource Centre
250-363-2640
1-800-353-3329
www.esquimaltmfrc.com

N

Neighbourhood Research Tool
Homezilla
www.homezilla.ca

North Saanich community
Municipal Hall
250-656-0781
www.northsaanich.ca

O

Oak Bay community
Municipal Hall
250-598-3311
www.oakbaybc.org

P

Personnel Support Programs
250-363-5677
www.pspesquimalt.ca

Physicians
Victoria Medical Society
250-598-6021
www.victoriamedicalsociety.org

Physicians
College of Physicians of BC
1-800-461-3008
www.cpsbc.ca

Post-Secondary Education (Military)
BPSO
250-391-4091

R

Recreation centres
www.fitinfitness.ca

Relocation services
Brookfield Global Relocation Services
250-363-4243
www.irp-pri.com

Renting a home
CMHC
1-800-668-2642
1-613-748-2003
www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Residential Housing Units
CFHA
250-363-4163
www.cfha-alfc.forces.gc.ca

S

Saanich community
Municipal Hall
250-475-1775
www.saanich.ca

Schools Francophone
School district #93
250-220-6010
brodeur.csf.bc.ca

Schools in Central Saanich
School district #63
250-652-7300
www.sd63.bc.ca

Schools in Cowichan
School district #79
250-748-0321
www.sd79.bc.ca

Schools in Sooke
School district #62
250-474-9800
www.sd62.bc.ca

Schools in Victoria
School district #61
250-475-3212
www.sd61.bc.ca

Sidney community
Municipal Hall
250-656-1184
www.sidney.ca

Single Quarters
Base Accommodation
250-363-4087
www.navy.forces.gc.ca/marpac

Sooke community
Municipal Hall
250-642-1634
www.sooke.ca

Storage of Vehicle
Commisionnaire
250-363-4933

T

Telephone Service
Telus
1-888-811-2828
250-310-2255
www.telus.com

U

University (Greater Victoria)
University of Victoria
250-721-7211
www.uvic.ca

University (Greater Victoria)
University of Royal Roads
250-391-2511
1-800-788-8028
www.royalroads.ca

University (Cowichan Valley)
Vancouver Island University - Cowichan Campus
250-746-3500
1-888-920-2221
www.viu.ca

V

Van pooling
Jack Bell Foundation
1-250-380-RIDE
www.ride-share.com

Victoria community
Municipal Hall
250-385-5711
www.victoria.ca

View Royal community
Municipal Hall
250-479-6800
www.viewroyal.ca

W

Welcome services
Welcome Wagon
www.welcomewagon.ca

Important Phone Numbers

Base Duty Officer	250-389-0603 (pager)
	250-812-0603 (cell)
Base Operator	250-363-2000
Base Orderly Room	250-363-4288
BC Nurse Line	1-866-215-4700
Colwood Pacific Activity Centre (PSP)	250-363-1009
Help Line for Children	250-310-1234
Member Assistance Program (24/7)	1-800-268-7708
Military Police (Non-emergency)	250-363-4032
PSP Naden Athletic Centre Kiosk	250-363-5677
Ship Information Line	250-363-2121
Vancouver Island Crisis Line	1-800-494-3888

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