

## **Frequently Asked Questions about the Property Management Profession**

### ***What is property management?***

Property management involves the administration, operation, marketing, maintenance, and financial management of income-producing real estate or property assets to maximize the investment value to the owner. Property Management is a service industry, where professionals are expected to work closely with the owners of the building, as well as the tenants and/or residents.

There are primarily two tracks to follow: either residential (where people live) or commercial (where people work and conduct business) property management. Common income-producing properties that involve property management include apartments, office buildings, retail centers, medical facilities, and industrial warehouses.

### ***What type of work does a property manager do?***

The work performed by a property manager varies greatly depending on the position they hold, the type of organization or company they work for, and the type of asset they manage. A property manager's primary responsibilities fall, generally, into five areas:

1. Management of the physical property, including maintenance, inspections, operations, capital improvements, and sustainability
2. Human resources, including interacting with tenants, managing and leading the people who maintain and support the property's operations, and working with property owners
3. Financial management, including budgeting, accounting, financial and investment analysis, leverage, and financing
4. Marketing and leasing, including developing marketing plans and strategy, advertising and preparing the space for rent, showing the property, negotiating leases, and establishing rents
5. Legal and risk management, including insurance, emergency planning, government regulations, contracts and leasing.

### ***What kind of career opportunities are there?***

Across the residential and commercial spectrums there are opportunities that range from front-line site managers to company executives and a range of other positions in between, including technicians, portfolio managers, investors, developers, and appraisers. Additionally, there are a variety of staff level positions in accounting, marketing, leasing, maintenance, and human resources.

The Seattle region is experiencing a population and construction boom, and the Property Management profession is projected to reflect the regional building activity and growth. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of property, real estate, and community association managers is projected to grow nationally at 11 percent from 2016 to 2026, faster than the average for all occupations. In the Seattle area there were almost 11,000 unique online job postings for property managers in 2016. According to EMSI, Inc. the demand in the Seattle-Bellevue-Tacoma area is forecast to grow by 17% in the years leading up to 2024 and 21% statewide.

Current estimates are that 42% of existing property managers are 55 and older. The anticipated retirement of existing property managers in addition to booming new property development is increasing regional demand for skilled property and asset managers.

### ***What kind of technical skills will I need to perform successfully in this occupation?***

Property management is a sophisticated industry that is becoming more and more reliant on technology. Generally, it requires the use of the latest technology to increase operating efficiencies, maximize revenue streams, and monitor property performance, especially in high-performance buildings certified to LEED or other building certification standards. Successful managers need to use industry-specific programs to generate financial reports, and to track marketing, maintenance, insurance, payments, and tenant services data for the property portfolio.

Managers must also be able to:

- Provide complex financial reports
- Develop emergency procedures to protect people and property
- Comply with changing governmental regulations
- Understand new lease provisions and terms
- Operate properties in an environmentally sustainable and cost-efficient way

As enterprise leaders, managers must learn to operate in an environment of change characterized by shifting demographics, emerging technologies, and heightened economic pressures.

### ***Why is this industry expanding?***

Overall regional growth is increasing Seattle's urban density, leading to the construction of residential and mixed commercial/residential properties in close proximity to downtown locations. Increased urban density tends to drive the development of larger properties that require specialized professionals skilled and knowledgeable in property development, asset management, valuation, funds management and investment, and sustainability. The prospect of continued development of high density properties and ongoing need for property managers is not only for the Seattle region, but also throughout the United States and across the globe.

### ***Is this a career I can depend on?***

A career in property management is considered as extremely stable and rewarding with a strong employment outlook. Since employment levels typically do not fall during downturns in the economy and people need places to live and work, this profession generally withstands the pressures usually brought on by recessions.

For more information and data on employment growth and median salaries, please see our employment webpage: <https://northseattle.edu/programs/bas-property-management/employment>