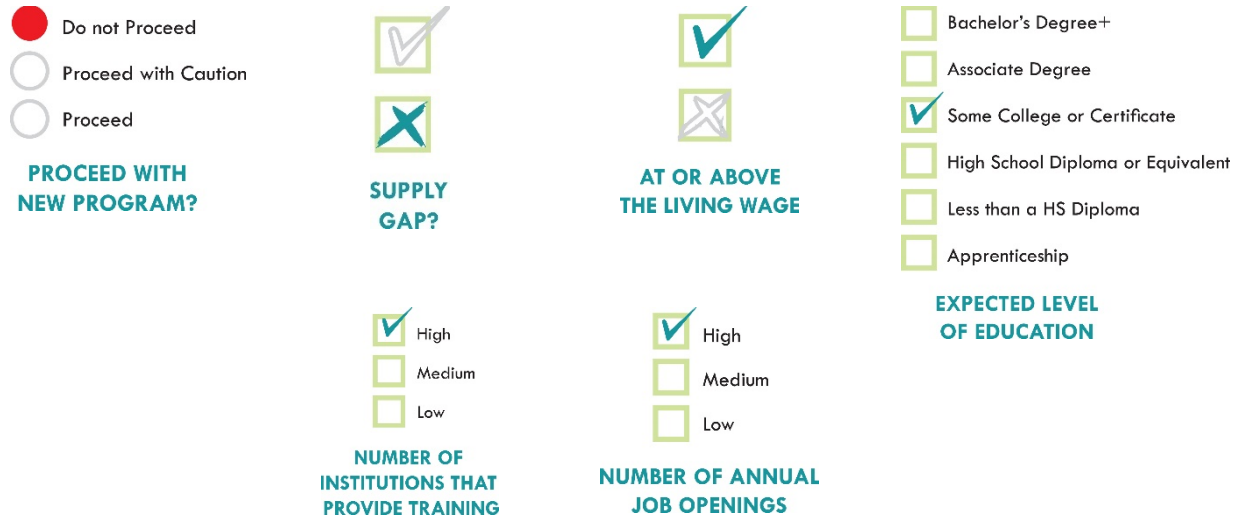


Medical Assistants

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

November 2020

Summary



The San Diego-Imperial Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) developed this brief to assist the region's community colleges with strategic planning and program development. According to available labor market information, *Medical Assistants* have a labor market demand of 1,266 annual job openings. Fourteen educational institutions in San Diego County supply 1,346 awards for this occupation, suggesting that there is an oversupply in the labor market or that employment demand has been met with current programs. This occupation's entry-level and median earnings are above the living wage; however, according to the California Community Colleges' outcomes data, 23 to 46 percent of students in the region who completed a related program (e.g., Medical Assisting) earned a living wage, compared to 52 percent of students who completed Career Education programs in general. The San Diego-Imperial COE does not recommend developing a **new** program because 1) of an estimated oversupply in the region; 2) a high number of institutions provide training for this occupation; and 3) the percentage of students earned a living wage after completing related programs is at or **below** the state average for students who complete Career Education programs in general. While a large number of online job postings for *Medical Assistants* with the terms "front desk" do not exist, there have been more job postings with "front desk" recently. Colleges should also review the report on [Patient Care Coordinators](#) for front desk opportunities.

Introduction

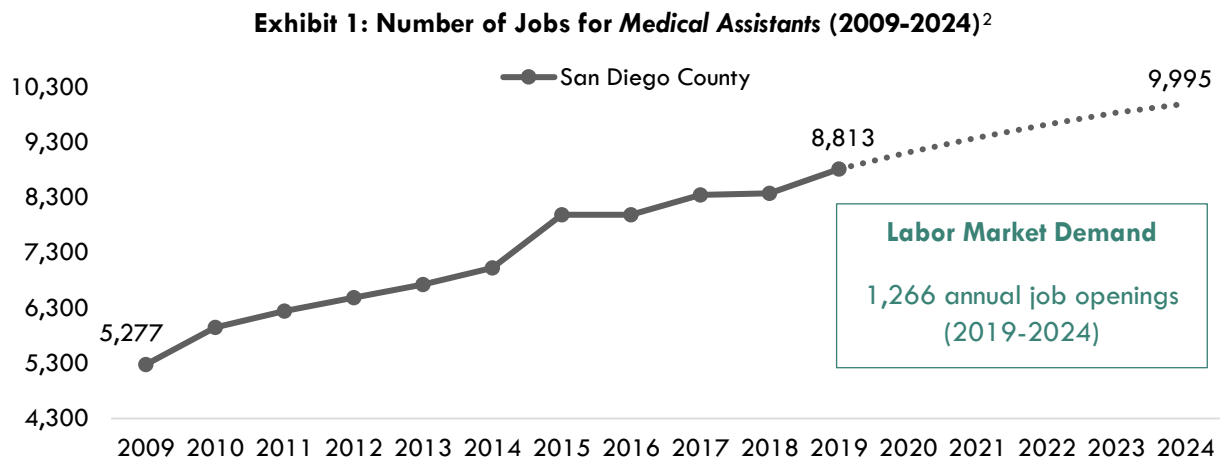
This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational code in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)¹ system:

Medical Assistants (SOC 31-9092): Perform administrative and certain clinical duties under the direction of a physician. Administrative duties may include scheduling appointments, maintaining medical records, billing, and coding information for insurance purposes. Clinical duties may include taking and recording vital signs and medical histories, preparing patients for examination, drawing blood, and administering medications as directed by physician. Sample reported job titles include:

- Chiropractor Assistant
- Certified Medical Assistant
- Medical Office Assistant
- Registered Medical Assistant
- Optometric Assistant
- Ophthalmic Technician
- Doctor's Assistant
- Clinical Assistant

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2019 and 2024, *Medical Assistants* is projected to increase by 1,182 net jobs or 13 percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 1,266 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.



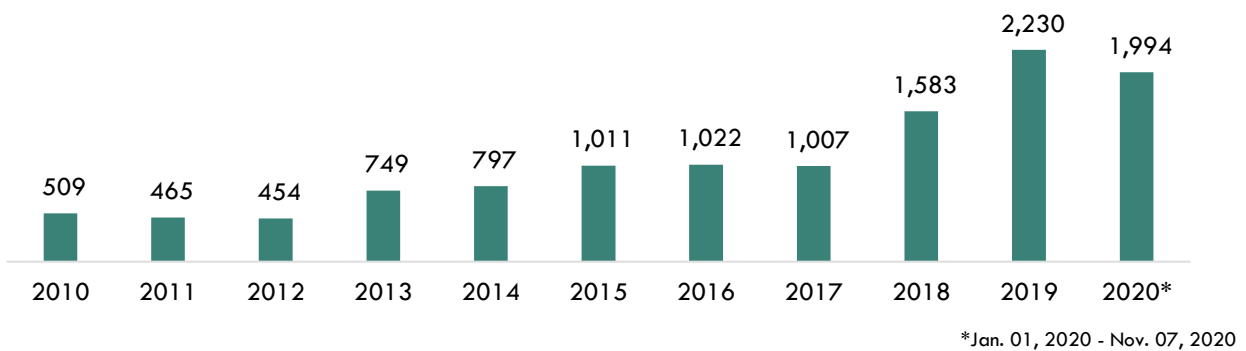
¹ The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc/).

² Emsi 2020.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Online Job Postings

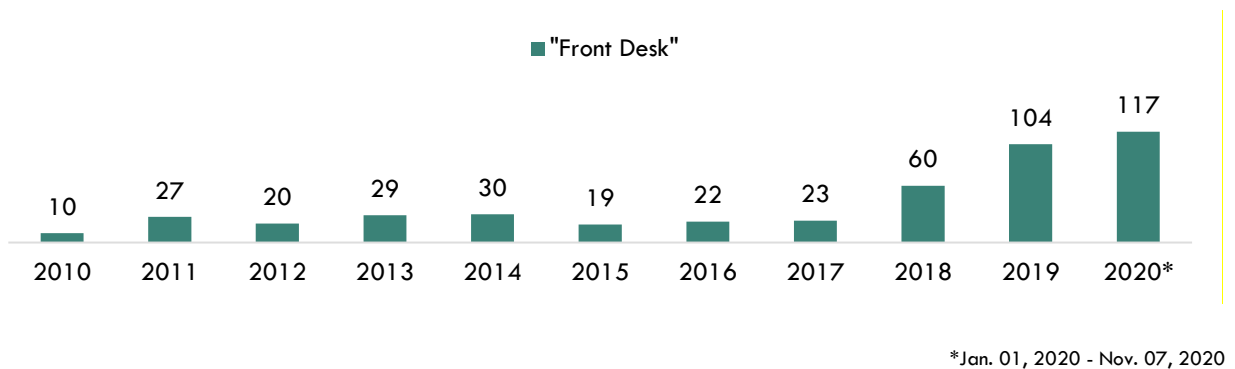
This report analyzes not only historical and projected (traditional LMI) data, but also recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight about recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical data. Between 2010 and 2019, there was an average of 983 online job postings per year for *Medical Assistants* in San Diego County (Exhibit 2). Please note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (Exhibit 1). Employers may post a position multiple times for various reasons, such as increasing the pool of applicants, for example.

Exhibit 2a: Number of Online Job Postings for *Medical Assistants* in San Diego County (2010-2019)³



While this brief primarily focuses on *Medical Assistants*, it also provides additional information from online job postings to determine if employers demand more “front desk” skills from job applicants for *Medical Assistants*. Between 2010 and 2019, there was an average of 42 online job postings for *Medical Assistants* with the keywords “front desk” (Exhibit 2b).

Exhibit 2b: Number of Online Job Postings for *Medical Assistants* with Keywords “Front Desk” in San Diego County (2010-2019)⁴



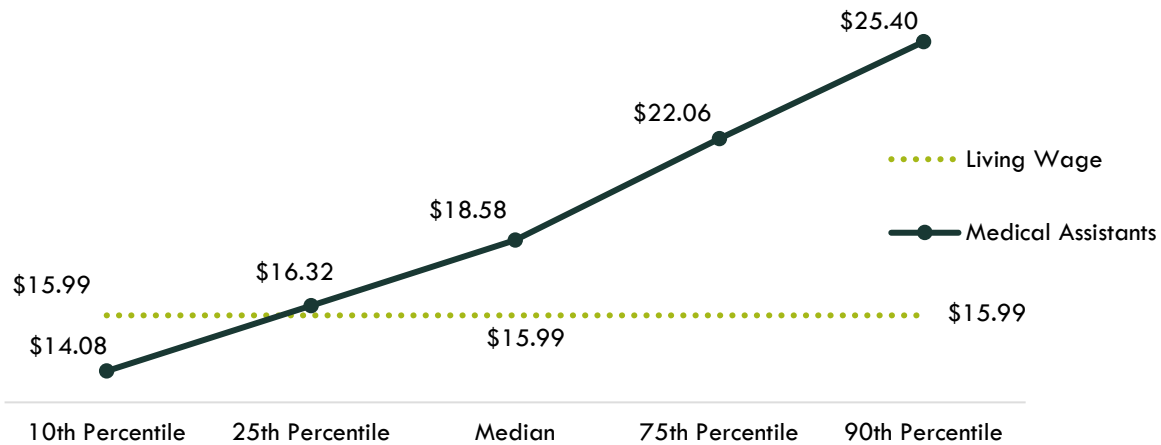
³ Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2010-2019.

⁴ Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2010-2019.

Earnings

Medical Assistants receive entry-level hourly earnings of **\$16.32**; this is more than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is **\$15.99** per hour (Exhibit 3).⁵

Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings⁶ for Medical Assistants in San Diego County⁷



Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.⁸ There are **four** TOP codes and **six** CIP codes related to *Medical Assistants* (Exhibit 4).

⁵ "California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2018. insightccd.org/2018-self-sufficiency-standard.

⁶ 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.

⁷ Emsi 2020.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

⁸ TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart (datamart.cccco.edu) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data).

Exhibit 4: Related TOP and CIP Codes for *Medical Assistants*

<i>Medical Assistants</i>
TOP 051420: Medical Office Technology
TOP 120800: Medical Assisting
TOP 120810: Clinical Medical Assisting
TOP 120820: Administrative Medical Assisting
CIP 51.0710: Medical Office Assistant/Specialist
CIP 51.0712: Medical Reception/Receptionist
CIP 51.0714: Medical Insurance Specialist/Medical Biller
CIP 51.0716: Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary
CIP 51.0801: Medical/Clinical Assistant
CIP 51.0802: Clinical/Medical Laboratory Assistant

According to TOP data, **four** community colleges supply the region with awards for this occupation: **MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego Mesa College, and Southwestern College**. According to CIP data, **10** non-community colleges supply the region with awards (Exhibit 5).

**Exhibit 5: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions
(Program Year 2014-15 through PY2018-19 Average)**

TOP6 or CIP	TOP6 or CIP Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY16-17 to PY18-19)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY14-15 to PY16-17)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY14-15 to PY18-19)
051420	Medical Office Technology	12	0	12
	• Palomar	12	0	
120800	Medical Assisting	33	0	33
	• San Diego Mesa	31	0	
	• Southwestern	2	0	
120810	Clinical Medical Assisting	7	0	7
	• Southwestern	7	0	

TOP6 or CIP	TOP6 or CIP Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY16-17 to PY18-19)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY14-15 to PY16-17)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY14-15 to PY18-19)
120820	Administrative Medical Assisting	50	0	50
	• MiraCosta	36	0	
	• Southwestern	14	0	
51.0710	Medical Office Assistant/Specialist	0	19	19
	• Concorde Career College-San Diego	0	12	
	• United Education Institute-Chula Vista	0	2	
	• United Education Institute-UEI College San Marcos	0	5	
51.0716	Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary	0	53	53
	• Pima Medical Institute-Chula Vista	0	53	
51.0801	Medical/Clinical Assistant	0	1,172	1,172
	• Advanced Training Associates	0	66	
	• Brightwood College-Chula Vista	0	146	
	• Brightwood College-San Diego	0	137	
	• Brightwood College-Vista	0	230	
	• California College San Diego	0	88	
	• CET-San Diego	0	30	
	• Concorde Career College-San Diego	0	135	
	• Pima Medical Institute-Chula Vista	0	170	
	• United Education Institute-Chula Vista	0	105	
	• United Education Institute-UEI College San Marcos	0	65	
			Total	1,346

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply⁹ suggests that there is an **oversupply** for this occupation in San Diego County, with **1,266** annual openings and **1,346** awards. Comparatively, there are **13,988** annual openings in California and **14,163** awards, demonstrating that there is a oversupply across the state¹⁰ (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

Community Colleges and Other Postsecondary Educational Institutions	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Total Annual Average Supply)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
San Diego	1,266	1,346	80
California	13,988	14,163	175

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

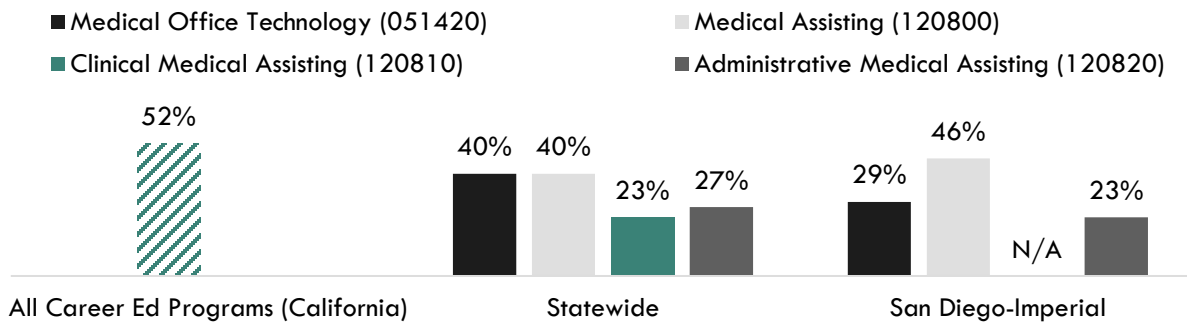
⁹ Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

¹⁰ "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coecc.net/Supply-and-Demand.aspx.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

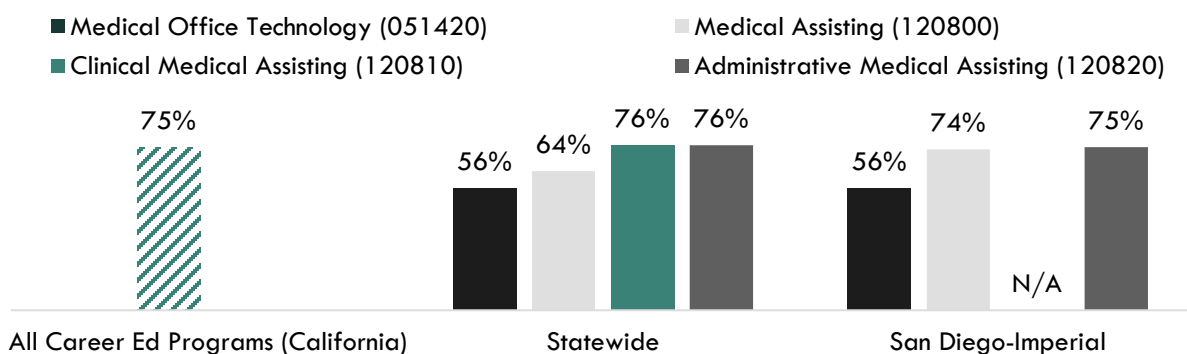
According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, between 23 and 46 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a program related to *Medical Records and Health Information Technicians*, compared to 23 to 40 percent statewide and 52 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 7a).¹¹

Exhibit 7a: Proportion of Students Who Earned a Living Wage, PY2016-17¹²



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, between 56 and 75 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a related program, compared to 56 to 76 percent statewide and 75 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 7b).¹³

Exhibit 7b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study, PY2015-16¹⁴



¹¹ "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.

¹² Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage.

¹³ "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.

¹⁴ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2014-15. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.

Top Employers

Between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were [Scripps Health](#), [University of California San Diego](#), [Humana](#), [Neighborhood Healthcare](#), and [Rady Children's Hospital](#) (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Top Employers in San Diego County for Medical Assistants¹⁵

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripps Health • University of California San Diego • Humana • Neighborhood Healthcare • Rady Children's Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graybill Medical Group • Sharp Healthcare • Banfield Pet Hospital • Kaiser Permanente • Providence Health & Services

Education and Skills

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for the occupation found currently in the national labor force. The typical entry-level education is a [post-secondary nondegree award](#).¹⁶

Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of Medical Assistants¹⁷

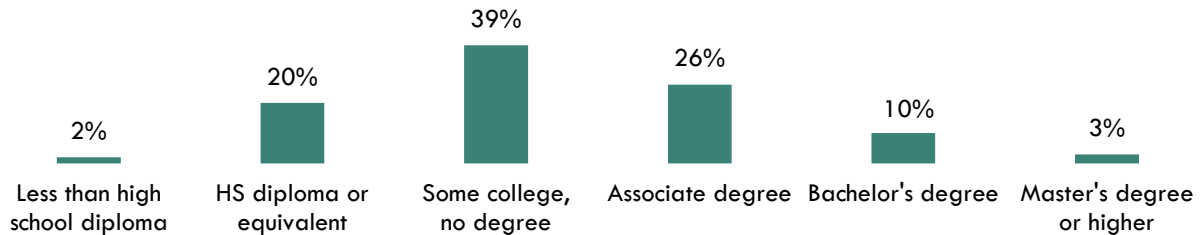


Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized, soft and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2019

¹⁵ Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2017-2019.

¹⁶ Emsi 2020.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

¹⁷ "Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation," Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified September 4, 2019. bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills for Medical Assistants in San Diego County¹⁸

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient Care • Scheduling • Appointment Setting • Medical Assistance • Patient Preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Bilingual • English • Spanish • Organizational Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Excel • Microsoft Word • Microsoft Access • Microsoft PowerPoint • EPIC software

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Important Disclaimers

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data that was developed before the economic impact of COVID-19. The COE is monitoring the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. Please consult with local employers to understand their current employment needs.

¹⁸ Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2017-2019.