

# Occupational Therapy Assistants Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

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May 2018

## Summary

The following list summarizes findings from the labor market analysis below for *Occupational Therapy Assistants*:

- Between 2017 and 2022, *Occupational Therapy Assistants* are projected to increase by 124 jobs or 29 percent.
- Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 84 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition such as retirement or turnover.
- Between 2010 and 2017, there was an average of 145 online job postings per year for *Occupational Therapy Assistants* in San Diego County.
- *Occupational Therapy Assistants* earn median hourly earnings of \$34.80; this is higher than the Self-Sufficiency Standard for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$13.09 per hour.
- According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS) Data Mart, there is one Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) code associated with this occupation: 121800: Occupational Therapy Technology.
- Between 2014 to 2016, Grossmont College reported an average of 20 graduates from its Occupational Therapy Assistant associate degree program. Based on the number of graduates from the program, 100 percent passed the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) and 100 percent found employment.
- Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply suggests that there is a supply gap for this occupation in San Diego County, with 84 annual openings and 20 awards. Comparatively, there are 481 annual openings in California and 186 completions.
- Between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2017, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were Genesis Healthcare Corporation, HCR ManorCare, Aegis Therapies, Reliant Rehabilitation and Golden Living Centers.
- The typical entry-level education is an associate degree.

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

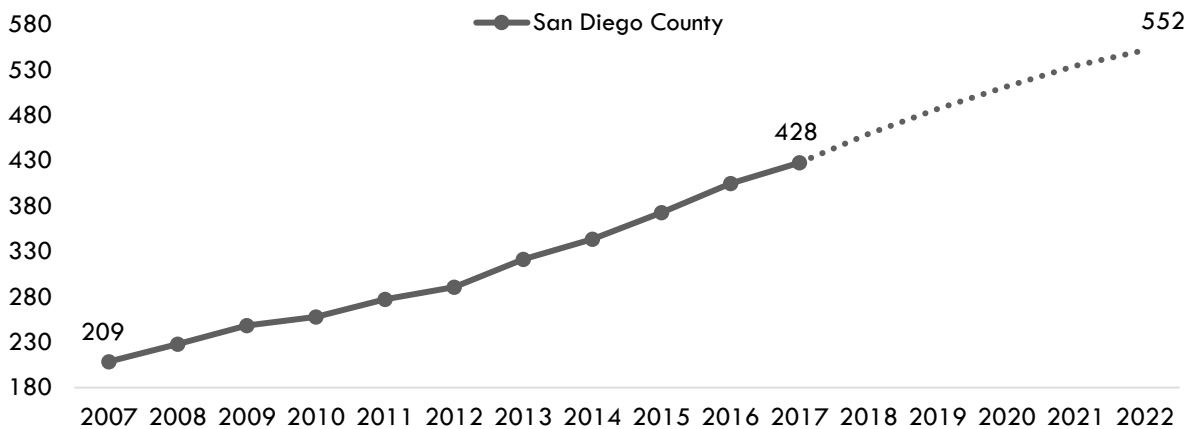
**Occupational Therapy Assistants (SOC 31-2011):** Assist occupational therapists in providing occupational therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with State laws, assist in development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, direct activity programs, and document the progress of treatments. Generally requires formal training. Sample reported job titles include:

- Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)
- Licensed Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)
- Staff Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant/Licensed (Staff COTA/L)
- School Based Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Occupational Therapist Assistant
- Occupational Therapist
- Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant-Licensed (COTA-L)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant/Licensed (COTA/L)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)

## Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2017 and 2022, *Occupational Therapy Assistants* are projected to increase by 124 jobs or 29 percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 84 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition such as retirement or turnover.

**Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for Occupational Therapy Assistants (2007-2022)<sup>2</sup>**



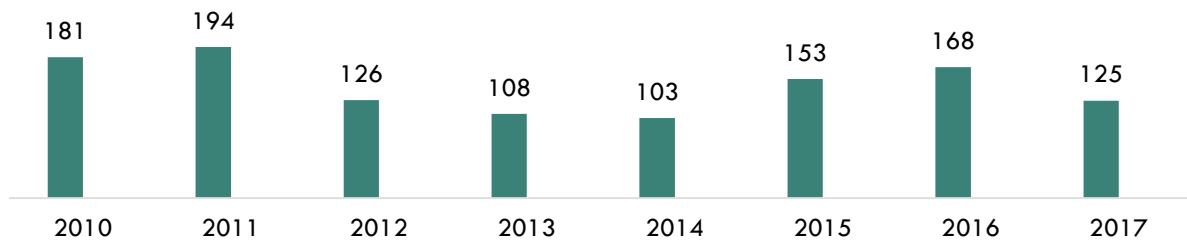
<sup>1</sup> The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc/).

<sup>2</sup> Economic Modeling Specialists, Int'l. (EMSI). San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2007-2022.

## Online Job Postings

Between 2010 and 2017, there was an average of 145 online job postings per year for *Occupational Therapy Assistants* in San Diego County (Exhibit 2).

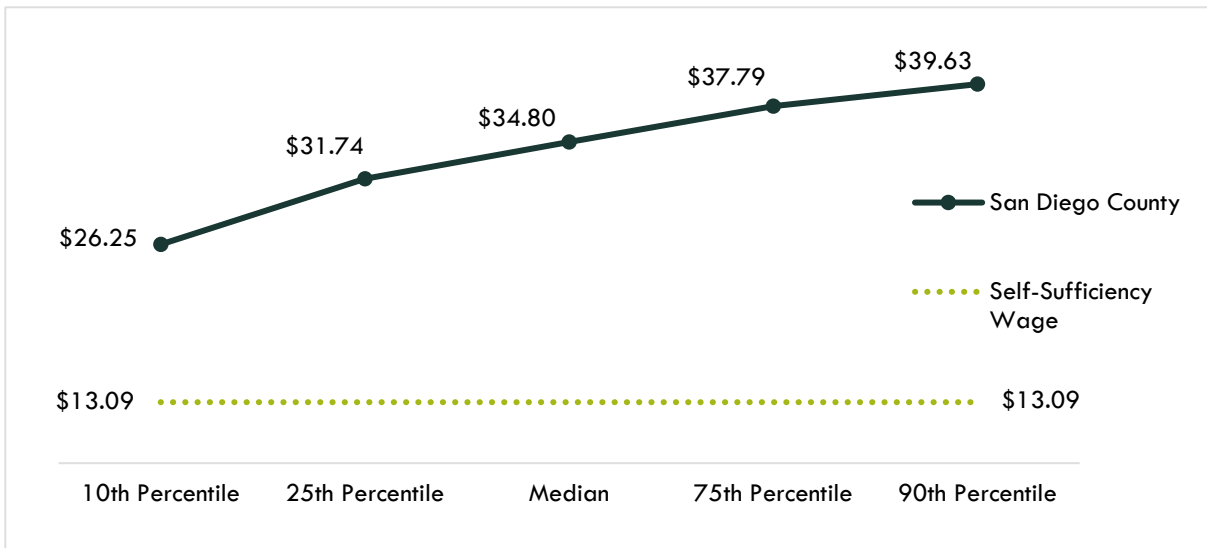
**Exhibit 2: Number of Online Job Postings for Occupational Therapy Assistants in San Diego County (2010-2017)<sup>3</sup>**



## Earnings

*Occupational Therapy Assistants* earn median hourly earnings of \$34.80; this is higher than the Self-Sufficiency Standard for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$13.09 per hour (Exhibit 3).<sup>4</sup>

**Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings for Occupational Therapy Assistants in San Diego County<sup>5</sup>**



<sup>3</sup> Labor Insight Jobs. Burning Glass Technologies. San Diego, CA. Full years 2010-2017.

<sup>4</sup> The self-sufficient wage in San Diego for one adult is \$13.09 ([insightcced.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california](https://insightcced.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california)).

<sup>5</sup> EMSI. San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2017-2022.

## Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of related program completers/graduates/awards in San Diego County. According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information System (MIS) Data Mart, there is **one** Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) code associated with this occupation: 121800: Occupational Therapy Technology (Exhibit 4).

### Exhibit 4: Related TOP Codes in San Diego County

#### SOC 31-2011: Occupational Therapy Assistants

TOP 121800: Occupational Therapy Technology

According to TOP data, **Grossmont College has a program for Occupational Therapy Technology, but the college did not report supplying any awards for this TOP code in Data Mart (Exhibit 5a). The college, however, does provide information about its associate degree program for Occupational Therapy Assistants on its website (Exhibit 5b).**<sup>6</sup>

#### Exhibit 5a: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions by Occupation (Program Year 2013-14 through PY2016-17 Average)

TOP6	TOP6 Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY14-15 to PY16-17)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY13-14 to PY15-16)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY13-14 to PY16-17)
121800	Occupational Therapy Technology	0	0	0
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grossmont</li> </ul>	0	0	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>

Between 2014 to 2016, Grossmont College reported an average of **20** graduates from its Occupational Therapy Assistant associate degree program. Based on the number of graduates from the program, 100

<sup>6</sup> [grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx](http://grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx)

percent passed the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) and 100 percent found employment (Exhibit 5b).<sup>7</sup>

**Exhibit 5b: Outcomes Data for Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Grossmont College<sup>8</sup>**

Grad Year	Number of Students on First Day	Number of OTA Program Graduates	Graduation Rate	NBCOT Exam Pass Rate	Employment Rate*
2014	24	18	75%	100%	100%
2015	26	23	88%	100%	100%
2016	26	18	69%	100%	100%
2017	27	21	81%	100%	100%

**Demand vs. Supply**

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply<sup>9</sup> suggests that there is a **supply gap** for this occupation in San Diego County, with **84** annual openings and **20** awards. Comparatively, there are **481** annual openings in California and **186** completions<sup>10</sup> (Exhibit 6).

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

Community Colleges and Other Postsecondary Educational Institutions	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Total Annual Average Supply)	Supply Gap or <b>Oversupply</b>
San Diego	84	20	<b>64</b>
California	481	186	<b>295</b>

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

<sup>7</sup> Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Graduates. [grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx](http://grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx).

<sup>8</sup> Grossmont College Occupational Therapy Assistant Graduates. [grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx](http://grossmont.edu/academics/programs-departments/health-professions/ota/default.aspx).

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> EMSI. San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2017-2022.

## Student Outcomes

Based on the information available in the CTE LaunchBoard, students who took courses in the related TOP codes exhibited the following outcomes (Exhibit 7).

**Exhibit 7: Strong Workforce Program Metrics for  
TOP 121800: Occupational Therapy Technology in the San Diego-Imperial Region (PY2015-16)**

Metric	San Diego-Imperial	California
Median earnings in the second fiscal quarter after exit <sup>11</sup>	\$7,815	\$8,840
Median change in earnings <sup>12</sup>	13%	45%
Attained a living wage <sup>13</sup>	N/A	56%
Employed in the second fiscal quarter after exit <sup>14</sup>	63%	71%
Employed in the fourth fiscal quarter after exit <sup>15</sup>	84%	84%
Job closely related to field of study <sup>16</sup>	N/A	N/A
Completed 48+ CTE Contact Hours in One Year <sup>17</sup>	0	N/A
Number of students who got a degree or certificate <sup>18</sup>	N/A	80
Number of students who transferred <sup>19</sup>	N/A	11

## Top Employers and Work Locations

Between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2017, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were [Genesis Healthcare Corporation](#), [HCR ManorCare](#), [Aegis Therapies](#), [Reliant Rehabilitation](#) and [Golden Living Centers](#) (Exhibit 8).

<sup>11</sup> Among exiting students, the median second-quarter earnings one year after the year in which they exited California Community Colleges.

<sup>12</sup> Among exiting students with a valid SSN, the percentage change in earnings one year before and one year after exiting California Community Colleges.

<sup>13</sup> Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage.

<sup>14</sup> Among all exiters with a valid SSN, the percentage who were employed two quarters after exiting California Community Colleges.

<sup>15</sup> Among exiting students with a valid SSN, the percentage who were employed four quarters after exiting California Community Colleges.

<sup>16</sup> Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.

<sup>17</sup> The number of students who completed 48 or more noncredit CTE instructional contact hours.

<sup>18</sup> The number of unduplicated students who earned a locally-issued certificate, Chancellor's Office approved certificate, associate degree, and/or California Community Colleges bachelor's degree in the selected TOP code.

<sup>19</sup> Students who took non-introductory courses or completed a California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office award in the selected TOP code in selected year who subsequently enrolled for the first time in a four-year institution the following year.

## Exhibit 8: Top Employers in San Diego County for Occupational Therapy Assistants

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genesis Healthcare Corporation</li> <li>• HCR ManorCare</li> <li>• Aegis Therapies</li> <li>• Reliant Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Golden Living Centers</li> <li>• Life Care Centers of America</li> <li>• Infinity Rehab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Healthcare</li> <li>• Healthsouth</li> <li>• Amedisys</li> <li>• Universal Health Services, Inc.</li> <li>• LHC Group</li> <li>• Select Medical</li> <li>• Kindred Healthcare Incorporated</li> </ul>

## Skills, Education and Certifications

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for the occupation found currently in the national labor force. There is no typical on-the-job training for this occupation. The typical entry-level education is an [associate degree](#).<sup>20</sup>

Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of Occupational Therapy Assistants <sup>21</sup>

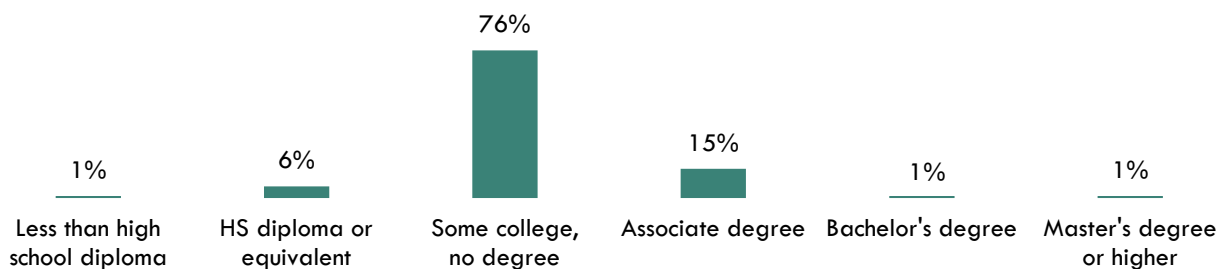


Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized and soft skills that appeared in online job postings for between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2017.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills for Occupational Therapy Assistants in San Diego County<sup>22</sup>

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational Therapy</li> <li>• Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Treatment Planning</li> <li>• Therapy</li> <li>• Patient Care</li> <li>• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Work Area Maintenance</li> <li>• Fine Motor Skills</li> <li>• Organizational Skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Excel</li> <li>• Microsoft Office</li> <li>• Microsoft Word</li> <li>• Microsoft PowerPoint</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Word Processing</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> EMSI. San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2017-2022.

<sup>21</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, Educational attainment for workers 25 years and older by detailed occupation. [bls.gov/emp/ep\\_table\\_111.htm](https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_111.htm).

<sup>22</sup> Labor Insight Jobs. Burning Glass Technologies. San Diego, CA. Full years 2015-2017.

Tina Ngo Bartel, Director  
John Edwards, Research Analyst  
Center of Excellence, San Diego-Imperial Region  
[tngobartel@miracosta.edu](mailto:tngobartel@miracosta.edu)  
[jedwards@miracosta.edu](mailto:jedwards@miracosta.edu)

