

**Program Endorsement Brief: 1402.00/Paralegal  
Paralegal Certificate**

Orange County Center of Excellence, August 2021

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**Summary Analysis**

<b>Program Endorsement:</b>	<b>Endorsed: All Criteria Met</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Endorsed: Some Criteria Met</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Not Endorsed</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Program Endorsement Criteria</b>			
<b>Supply Gap:</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25<sup>th</sup>)</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Education:</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging Occupation(s)</b>			
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) prepared this report to provide Los Angeles/Orange County regional labor market supply and demand data related to 2 middle-skill occupations: *Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)*, and *Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)*. Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor’s degree.<sup>1</sup> This report is intended to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from community college programs that align with the relevant occupations.

Based on the available data there appears to be a supply gap for this program in the region. Furthermore, the majority of annual openings for the occupations in this report typically require an associate degree, and entry-level wages exceed the living wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties. **Therefore, due to all the criteria being met, the COE endorses this proposed program.** Detailed reasons include:

**Demand:**

- **Supply Gap Criteria** – Over the next five years, there is projected to be **3,149 jobs available annually** in the region due to retirements and workers leaving the field, **which is more than the 259 awards conferred annually** by educational institutions in the region.
  - Over the past 12 months, there were **1,984 online job postings related to these paralegal occupations**. The highest number of job postings were for Legal Assistants, Paralegals, and Legal Secretaries.

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<sup>1</sup> The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor’s degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

- **Living Wage Criteria** –In Orange County, **all annual job openings** for these legal occupations have **entry-level wages above the county’s living wage** (\$17.36/hour).<sup>2</sup>
- **Educational Criteria** –Within the LA/OC region, **59% of the annual job openings** for occupations related to paralegal **typically require an associate degree**.
  - Furthermore, the national-level educational attainment data indicates **between 43.2% and 52.3% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree**.

**Supply:**

- There are **11 community colleges** in the LA/OC region that issue awards related to paralegal programs, conferring an average of **206 awards annually** between 2017 and 2020.
- Between 2016 and 2019, there was an average of **53 awards conferred annually** in related training programs by non-community college institutions, all of which were generated by **six individual institutions** throughout the region.

**Occupational Demand**

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these two legal occupations. In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to decrease by 2% through 2024. However, there is projected to be nearly 3,150 annual job openings due to retirements and workers leaving the field.

*This report includes employment projection data by Emsi which uses EDD information. Emsi’s projections are modeled on recorded (historical) employment figures and incorporate several underlying assumptions, including the assumption that the economy, during the projection period, will be at approximately full employment. To the extent that a recession or labor shock, such as the economic effects of COVID-19, can cause long-term structural change, it may impact the projections. At this time, it is not possible to quantify the impact of COVID-19 on projections of industry and occupational employment. Therefore, the projections included in this report do not take the impacts of COVID-19 into account.*

**Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Geography</b>	<b>2019 Jobs</b>	<b>2024 Jobs</b>	<b>2019-2024 Change</b>	<b>2019-2024 % Change</b>	<b>Annual Openings</b>
Los Angeles	22,912	22,438	(474)	(2%)	2,488
Orange	7,196	7,048	(237)	(3%)	767
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,109</b>	<b>29,399</b>	<b>(710)</b>	<b>(2%)</b>	<b>3,149</b>

<sup>2</sup> Living wage data was pulled from California Family Needs Calculator on 8/20/2021. For more information, visit the California Family Needs Calculator website: <https://insightcced.org/2018-family-needs-calculator/>.

<sup>3</sup> Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

## **Wages**

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these paralegal occupations in Orange County as they relate to the county's living wage. Los Angeles County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the LA/OC region. Detailed wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

**Orange County**—All annual openings for these paralegal occupations have entry-level wages above the living wage for one adult (\$17.36 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$19.30 and \$19.50. Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$34.25 and \$34.77, which are higher than the living wage estimate. Orange County's average wages are above the average statewide wage of \$24.79 for these occupations.

**Los Angeles County**—All annual openings for these paralegal occupations have entry-level wages above the living wage for one adult (\$15.04 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$21.56 and \$21.91. Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$38.19 and \$39.07, which are higher than the living wage estimate. Los Angeles County's average wages are above the average statewide wage of \$24.79 for these occupations.

## **Job Postings**

There were 1,984 online job postings related to paralegal occupations listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings were for Legal Assistant, Paralegals, and Legal Secretaries. The top skills were: litigation, legal documentation, and administrative support. The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were: APC, Legal Network Inc, and APLC Inc.

*It is important to note that the job postings data included in this section reflects online job postings listed in the past 12 months and does not yet demonstrate the impact of COVID-19. While employers have generally posted fewer online job postings since the beginning of the pandemic, the long-term effects are currently unknown.*

## **Educational Attainment**

In the LA/OC region, the majority of annual job openings (59%) typically require an associate degree. Furthermore, the national-level educational attainment data indicates between 43.2% and 53.2% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. Of the 31% of paralegal job postings listing a minimum education requirement in Los Angeles/Orange County, 62% (383) requested a Bachelor's degree and 12% (77) requested an associate degree.

## **Educational Supply**

**Community College Supply**—Exhibit 2 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP codes: Legal Office Technology (0514.10) and Paralegal (1402.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are: Cerritos, Coastline, and Pasadena. Over the past 12 months, there were three other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

**Exhibit 2: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2017-2020**

TOP Code	Program	College	2017-2018 Awards	2018-2019 Awards	2019-2020 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0514.10	Legal Office Technology	Cerritos	0	2	0	1
		East LA	3	0	0	1
		Glendale	1	0	0	0
		LA Pierce	4	0	0	1
		Long Beach	1	0	0	0
		Santa Monica	1	2	12	5
		West LA	8	2	5	5
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>
		Santa Ana	0	0	1	0
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>
1402.00	Paralegal	Cerritos	58	58	60	59
		Compton	2	3	0	1
		East LA	0	0	41	14
		El Camino	34	39	31	35
		LA City	30	25	34	30
		LA Mission	35	35	24	31
		LA Southwest	0	1	0	0
		LA Trade	13	2	7	7
		Mt. San Antonio	25	43	42	37
		Pasadena	61	69	49	60
		West LA	28	30	24	27
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>301</b>
		Coastline	75	58	60	64
		Fullerton	0	39	49	29
		Irvine Valley	16	16	32	21
		Santa Ana	39	62	72	58
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>173</b>
		<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>416</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>434</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>487</b>

**Non-Community College Supply**— For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for these legal occupations. Exhibit 3 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by these institutions in the related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Codes:

Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary (22.0301) and Legal Assistant/Paralegal (22.0302). Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2016 to 2019. Between 2016 and 2019, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 53 awards annually in related training programs.

**Exhibit 3: Regional non-community college awards, 2016-2019**

<b>CIP Code</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>2016-2017 Awards</b>	<b>2017-2018 Awards</b>	<b>2018-2019 Awards</b>	<b>3-Year Award Average</b>
22.0301	Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary	South Coast College	1	0	0	0
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
22.0302	Legal Assistant/Paralegal	Abraham Lincoln University	0	2	5	2
		Downey Adult School	3	0	6	3
		Fremont College	41	26	21	29
		Platt College - Los Angeles	5	8	0	4
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>39</b>
		Brandman University	0	1	8	3
		South Coast College	13	14	4	10
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>62</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>63</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>53</b>

Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 4. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)	4,086	4,101	15	0%	439	\$19.30	\$25.70	\$34.25
Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)	3,110	2,859	(251)	(8%)	305	\$19.50	\$27.26	\$34.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,197</b>	<b>6,960</b>	<b>(237)</b>	<b>(3%)</b>	<b>744</b>			

Exhibit 5. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)	12,801	13,021	220	2%	1,408	\$21.56	\$28.68	\$38.19
Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)	10,111	9,417	(694)	(7%)	997	\$21.91	\$30.63	\$39.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,912</b>	<b>22,438</b>	<b>(474)</b>	<b>(2%)</b>	<b>2,405</b>			

**Exhibit 6. Los Angeles and Orange Counties**

<b>Occupation (SOC)</b>	<b>2019 Jobs</b>	<b>2024 Jobs</b>	<b>5-Yr Change</b>	<b>5-Yr % Change</b>	<b>Annual Openings</b>
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)	16,887	17,122	235	1%	1,847
Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)	13,222	12,277	(945)	(7%)	1,302
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,109</b>	<b>29,399</b>	<b>(710)</b>	<b>(2%)</b>	<b>3,149</b>

**Appendix B: Sources**

- O\*NET Online
- Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- California Family Needs Calculator, Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

For more information, please contact:

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