

# Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

January 2021

## 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, *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 485 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 277 annual job openings). With four community colleges and several non-community-college providers offering certification for lifeguards in San Diego County, creating another program may affect those programs. However, no colleges reported supplying any awards (e.g., certificates, degrees) for this occupation. Entry-level wages are below the living wage and median wages for this occupation are above the living wage. This brief recommends proceeding with a program modification because 1) a high number of annual openings exist and 2) a supply gap exists for these positions. The brief, however, recommends proceeding with caution in developing a new program because 1) it may impact existing programs at the region's community colleges and 2) entry-level wages are below the living wage.

## Introduction

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:

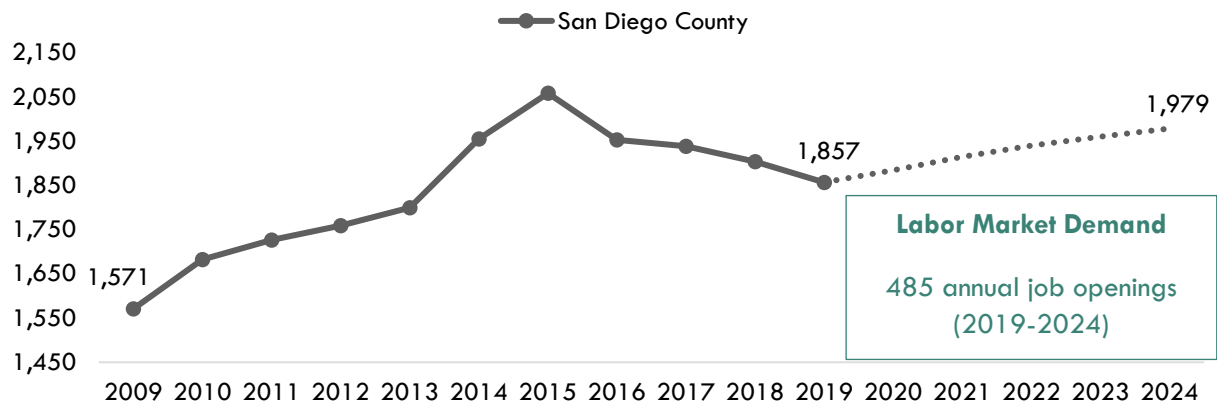
**Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers (SOC 53-2012):** Monitor recreational areas, such as pools, beaches, or ski slopes, to provide assistance and protection to participants. Sample reported job titles include:

- Beach Lifeguard
- Ski Patroller
- Pool Lifeguard
- Ski Patrol Paramedic
- Pool Attendant
- Ocean Lifeguard Specialist
- Ocean Lifeguard
- Marine Safety Officer
- Beach Attendant

## Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2019 and 2024, *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* are projected to increase by 122 net jobs or seven percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 485 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.

**Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* (2009-2024)<sup>2</sup>**



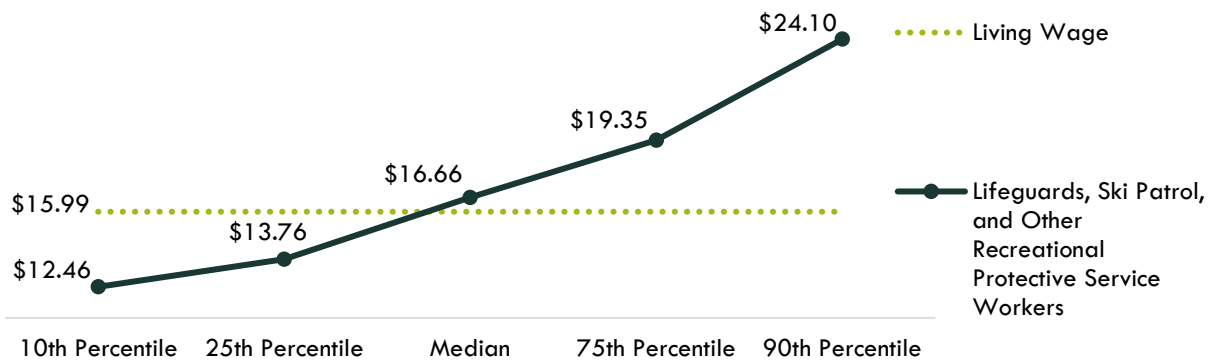
<sup>1</sup> The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc).

<sup>2</sup> Emsi 2020.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

## Earnings

*Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* receive entry-level hourly earnings of **\$13.76**; this is less than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is **\$15.99** per hour (Exhibit 2).<sup>3</sup> Online job postings for just “Lifeguards” had similar wages; however, “Beach Lifeguards” had higher earnings posted than “Pool Lifeguards.” Refer to Appendix A at the end of this brief for more information.

**Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings<sup>4</sup> for *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* in San Diego County<sup>5</sup>**



## 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.<sup>6</sup> There is **one** TOP code and **one** CIP code related to *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* (Exhibit 3).

**Exhibit 3: Related TOP and CIP Codes for *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers***

### *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers*

TOP 0835.70: Aquatics and Lifesaving

CIP 31.9999: Parks, Recreation, Leisure, and Fitness Studies, Other

<sup>3</sup> “California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard),” Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2018. [insightccd.org/2018-self-sufficiency-standard](https://insightccd.org/2018-self-sufficiency-standard).

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Emsi 2020.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>6</sup> TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office MIS Data Mart ([datamart.cccco.edu](https://datamart.cccco.edu)) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data)).

Grossmont College, Palomar College, San Diego Miramar College, and Southwestern College offer certification programs for lifeguards, but no awards have been reported. Non-community college providers such as the YMCA, Red Cross and City of San Diego also offer lifeguard certifications in San Diego (Exhibit 4).

**Exhibit 4: 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)
0835.70	Aquatics and Lifesaving	0	0	0
			Total	0

## Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply<sup>7</sup> suggests that there is a **supply gap** for this occupation in San Diego County, with **485** annual openings and **zero** awards. Comparatively, there are **4,455** annual openings in California and **one** award, suggesting that there is a supply gap across the state<sup>8</sup> (Exhibit 5).

**Exhibit 5: 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	485	0	<b>485</b>
California	4,455	1	<b>4,454</b>

**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.

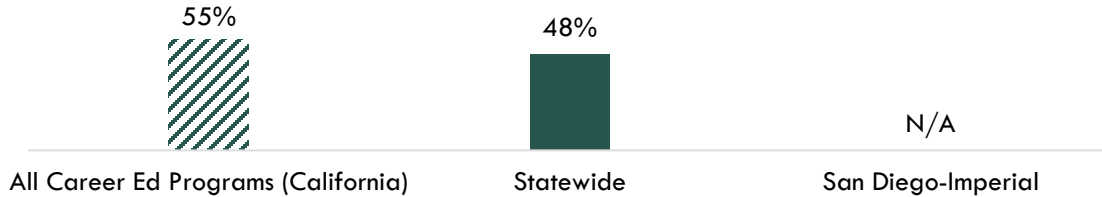
<sup>7</sup> Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

<sup>8</sup> "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coecc.net/Supply-and-Demand.aspx.

## Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

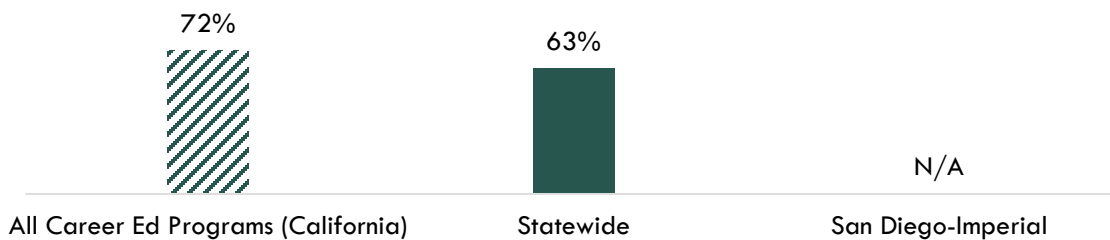
According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 48 percent of students statewide earned a living wage after completing an Aquatics and Lifesaving (TOP 0835.70) program, compared to 55 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6a).<sup>9</sup>

**Exhibit 6a: Proportion of Students Who Earned a Living Wage (Aquatics and Lifesaving, PY2017-18)<sup>10</sup>**



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 63 percent of students statewide obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing an Aquatics and Lifesaving (TOP 0835.70) program, compared to 72 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6b).<sup>11</sup>

**Exhibit 6b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study (Aquatics and Lifesaving, PY2016-17)<sup>12</sup>**



<sup>9</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>10</sup> Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage.

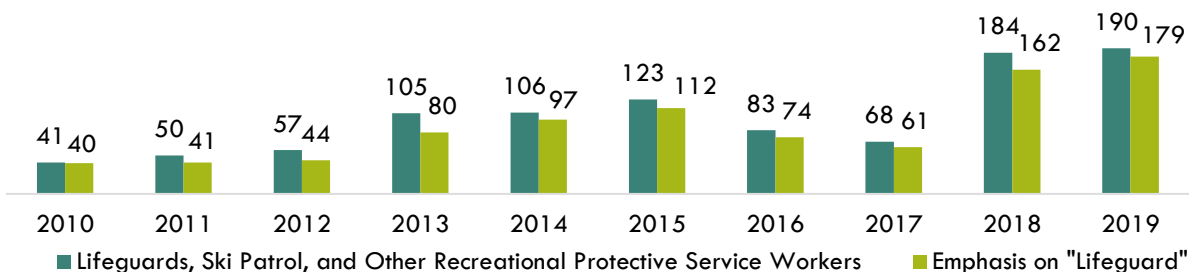
<sup>11</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>12</sup> Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2016-17. 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.

## 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 101 online job postings per year for *Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers* in San Diego County (Exhibit 7). Of those postings, there was an average of 89 online job postings per year that emphasized, “Lifeguard.” Note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (see Exhibit 1). Employers may post a position multiple times for various reasons, such as increasing the pool of applicants, for example.

**Exhibit 7: Number of Online Job Postings for Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers in San Diego County (2010-2019)<sup>13</sup>**



## Top Employers

Between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were *YMCA, City of Coronado, Omni Hotel Corporation, Salvation Army, City of San Diego* based on online job postings (Exhibit 8).

**Exhibit 8: Top Employers in San Diego County for Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers<sup>14</sup>**

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YMCA</li> <li>• City of Coronado</li> <li>• Omni Hotel Corporation</li> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• City of San Diego</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merlin Entertainments Group</li> <li>• City of Carlsbad</li> <li>• Hyatt</li> <li>• San Diego Community College District</li> <li>• City of La Mesa</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2010-2019.

<sup>14</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, “Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool.” 2018-2020.

## Education, Skills and Certifications

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for the occupation found currently in the national labor force. The typical entry-level education is a [bachelor's degree](#).<sup>15</sup>

**Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers<sup>16</sup>**

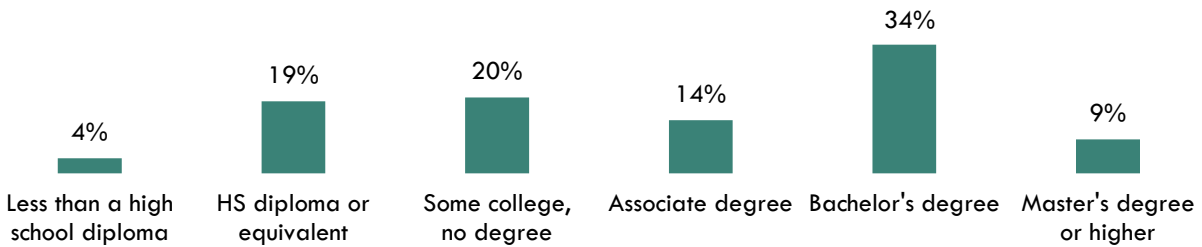


Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized, soft and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020.

**Exhibit 10: Top Skills for Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers in San Diego County<sup>17</sup>**

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</li> <li>• Public Health and Safety</li> <li>• Record Keeping</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Surveillance</li> <li>• Teaching</li> <li>• Emergency Care</li> <li>• Guest Services</li> <li>• Repair</li> <li>• Staff Management</li> <li>• Performance testing</li> <li>• First Aid</li> <li>• Pathology</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> <li>• Automated External Defibrillator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Abilities</li> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Building Effective Relationships</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Preparing Reports</li> <li>• Teamwork / Collaboration</li> <li>• Typing</li> <li>• Organizational Skills</li> <li>• Work Area Maintenance</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Preventive Maintenance</li> <li>• Energetic</li> <li>• Positive Disposition</li> <li>• Written Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Microsoft Office</li> <li>• Peoplesoft</li> <li>• Public administration</li> <li>• Salesforce</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> Emsi 2020.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>16</sup> "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](https://bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm).

<sup>17</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

Exhibit 11 lists the top certifications that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020.

**Exhibit 11: Top 15 Certifications for Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers in San Diego County<sup>18</sup>**

Top Certifications in Online Job Postings

1. First Aid CPR AED
2. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
3. Water Safety Instructor
4. Public Safety Certificate
5. Bio-Hazard Certification
6. CDL Class C
7. Certified Pool/Spa Operator
8. American Red Cross Certified Lifeguard
9. American Heart Association Certification
10. Food Handler Certification
11. Nauti Certified
12. Cash Handling Certification
13. Microsoft Certified Application Specialist (MCAS)
14. CDL Class B
15. Alcohol Awareness Certification

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<sup>18</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.



Prepared by:

Tina Ngo Bartel, Director

John Edwards, Research Analyst

San Diego-Imperial Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research

[tn gobartel@miracosta.edu](mailto:tn gobartel@miracosta.edu)

[jedwards@miracosta.edu](mailto:jedwards@miracosta.edu)



### **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.

## Appendix A: Online Training Providers, Cost, and Website

The following table lists the employer, hourly wage, and website that posted online job postings or job description and salaries for lifeguards. Employers' names with "\*" indicate that the position was posted for a "Beach Lifeguard." "N/A" indicates no information was found for the listed employer.

Employer	Hourly Wage	Site
City of Coronado*	\$19.97	<a href="https://bit.ly/3orUGFT">https://bit.ly/3orUGFT</a>
City of San Diego*	\$17.32	<a href="https://bit.ly/391JBo9">https://bit.ly/391JBo9</a>
City of Carlsbad*	\$17.00	<a href="https://bit.ly/3pHTFJM">https://bit.ly/3pHTFJM</a>
City of Imperial Beach*	\$16.07	<a href="https://bit.ly/38VRefY">https://bit.ly/38VRefY</a>
City of Solana Beach*	\$15.00	<a href="https://bit.ly/3rSAILU">https://bit.ly/3rSAILU</a>
City of Oceanside*	\$14.50	<a href="https://bit.ly/38bZYzm">https://bit.ly/38bZYzm</a>
City of Coronado	\$14.32	<a href="https://bit.ly/3b6xd94">https://bit.ly/3b6xd94</a>
City of Poway	\$14.25	<a href="https://bit.ly/358icjx">https://bit.ly/358icjx</a>
City of San Diego	\$14.09	<a href="https://bit.ly/38bp0i2">https://bit.ly/38bp0i2</a>
City of La Mesa	\$14.00	<a href="https://bit.ly/2XgQgoZ">https://bit.ly/2XgQgoZ</a>
City of Chula Vista	\$13.82	<a href="https://bit.ly/2XbsT0g">https://bit.ly/2XbsT0g</a>
City of Escondido	\$12.61	<a href="https://bit.ly/2LkbTCe">https://bit.ly/2LkbTCe</a>
City of Oceanside	\$11.74	<a href="https://bit.ly/38bZYzm">https://bit.ly/38bZYzm</a>
Aquatica San Diego	N/A	N/A
Legoland	N/A	N/A
YMCA	N/A	N/A