C·O·E CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

Medical Assistants

Labor Market Analysis: Imperial County

June 2021

Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL OF EDUCATION
Proceed with Caution	☑	☒	☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Associate Degree ☑ Some College or Certificate ☐ HS Diploma or Equivalent ☐ Less than a HS Diploma ☐ Apprenticeship
SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS	
☑ ☒	MEDIUM	HIGH	

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* in Imperial County have a labor market demand of 40 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in Imperial County is 14 annual job openings), and one educational institution in Imperial County supplies 22 awards for this occupation, suggesting that there is a supply gap in the labor market. Entry-level wages are slightly below the living wage for this occupation. This brief recommends that the colleges proceed with caution when developing a new program for this occupation and supports a program modification because 1) there is a supply gap and 2) entry-level wages are slightly below the living wage. The colleges should note that expected level of education for this occupation is a postsecondary non-degree award and Imperial Valley College is the only institution that provides awards in the region. The colleges should also note that the percentage of students who complete a related program and earn a living wage is lower than the percentage of students who complete Career Education programs in general across the state.

Introduction

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

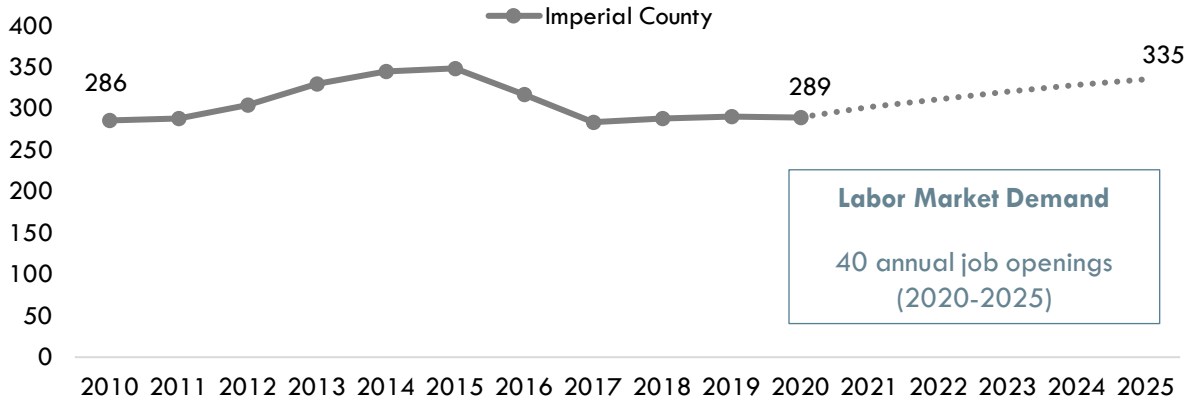
Medical Assistants (SOC 31-9092): Perform administrative and certain clinical duties under the direction of a physician. Administrative duties may include scheduling appointments, maintaining medical records, billing, and coding information for insurance purposes. Clinical duties may include taking and 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 Technician
- Optometric Assistant
- Ophthalmic Technician
- Doctor's Assistant
- Clinical Assistant

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2020 and 2025, *Medical Assistants* are projected to increase by 46 net jobs or 16 percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in Imperial County will need to hire 40 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 *Medical Assistants* (2010-2025)[2]

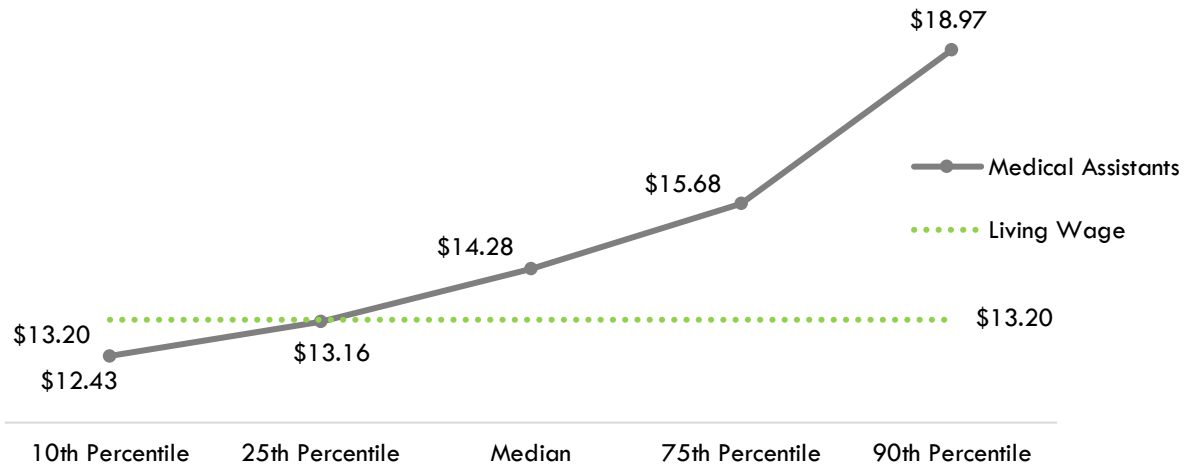


[1] The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. bls.gov/soc.
[2] EMSI 2021.1; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Earnings

Medical Assistants receive entry-level hourly earnings of $13.16; this is slightly less than the living wage for a household of two adults and two school-age children in Imperial County, which is $13.20 per hour (Exhibit 2).[3]

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings[4] for *Medical Assistants* in Imperial County[5]



[3] "California Family Needs Calculator (formerly the Self-Sufficiency Standard)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2018. insightcced.org/2018-self-sufficiency-standard.
[4] 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.
[5] EMSI 2021.1; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

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.[6] There are four TOP codes and six CIP code related to *Medical Assistants* (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Related TOP and CIP Codes for *Medical Assistants*

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 0514.20	Medical Office Technology
TOP 1208.00	Medical Assisting
TOP 1208.10	Clinical Medical Assisting
TOP 1208.20	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, one community college supplies the region with awards for this occupation: Imperial Valley College. According to CIP data, no non-community-college institution supplies the region with awards (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions (Program Year 2014-15 through PY2018-19 Average)

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program 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)
1208.00	Medical Assisting	**22**	**0**	**22**
	• Imperial Valley	22	0	
			Total	**22**

[6] 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).

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply[7] suggests a supply gap for this occupation in Imperial County, with 40 annual openings and 22 awards. Comparatively, there are 12,334 annual openings in California and 13,285 awards, suggesting that there is an oversupply across the state[8] (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**
Imperial	40	22	**18**
California	12,334	13,285	**951**

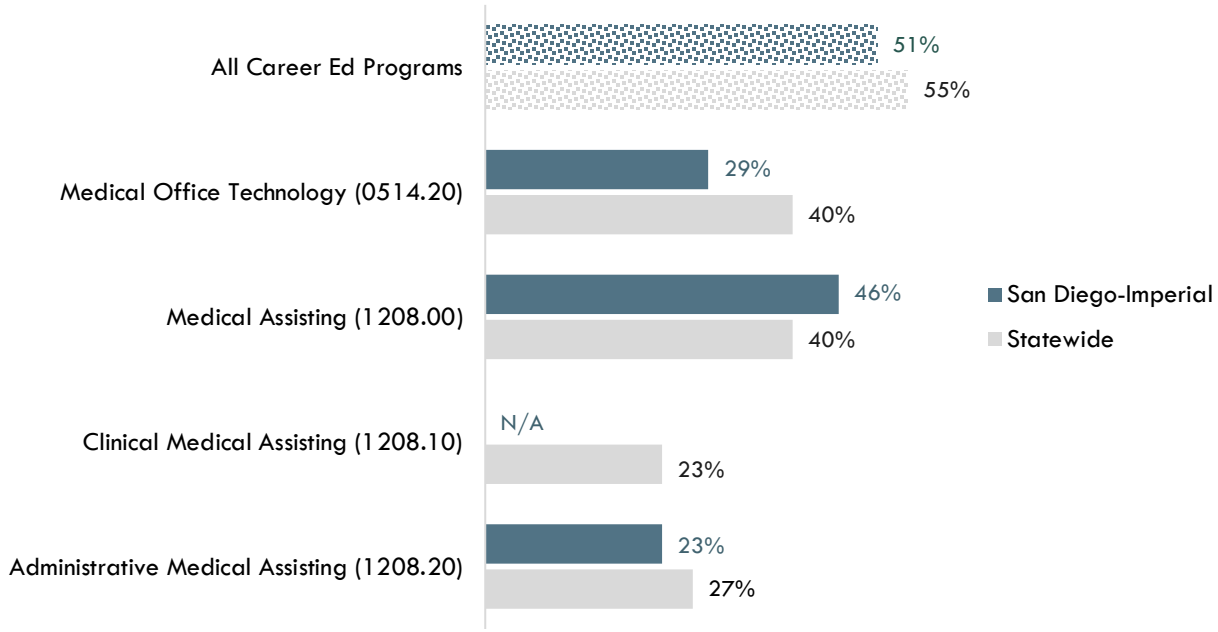
Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers;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

[7] 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.
[8] "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coeccc.net/Supply-and-Demand.aspx.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 23 to 46 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a program related to *Medical Assistants*, compared to 23 to 40 percent statewide and 55 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6a).[9]

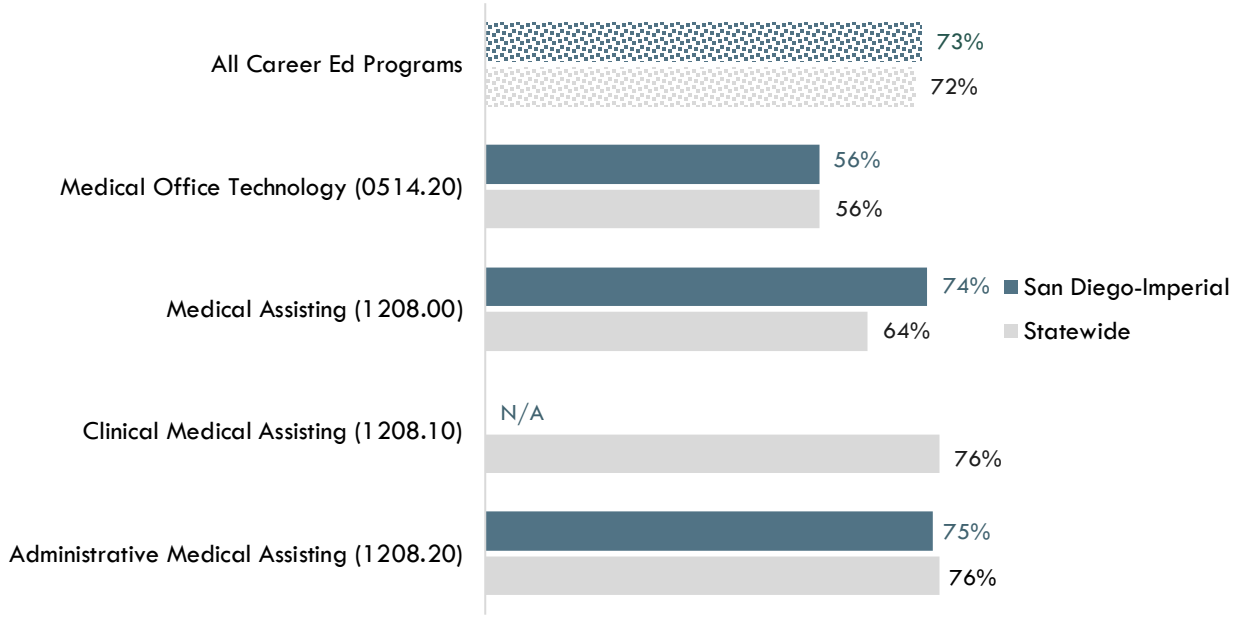
Exhibit 6a: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program, PY2017-18[10]



[9] "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.
[10] Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage.

According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 56 to 75 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a program related to *Medical Assistants*, compared to 56 to 76 percent statewide and 72 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6b).[11]

Exhibit 6b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program, PY2016-17[12]

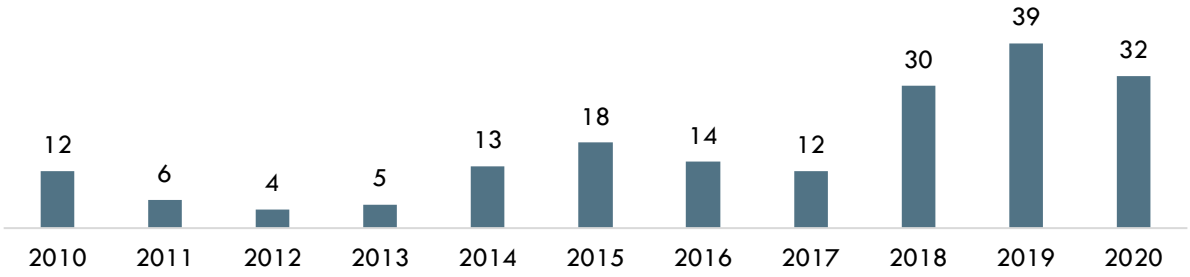


[11] "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.
[12] Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2016-17. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the 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 2020, there was an average of 17 online job postings per year for *Medical Assistants* in Imperial County (Exhibit 7). Please 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 *Medical Assistants* in Imperial County (2010-2020)[13]



Top Employers

Between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020, the top five employers in Imperial County for this occupation were El Centro Regional Medical Center, Loyal Source, Indian Health Service, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District, and Department of Health and Human Services based on online job postings (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Top Employers in Imperial County for *Medical Assistants*[14]

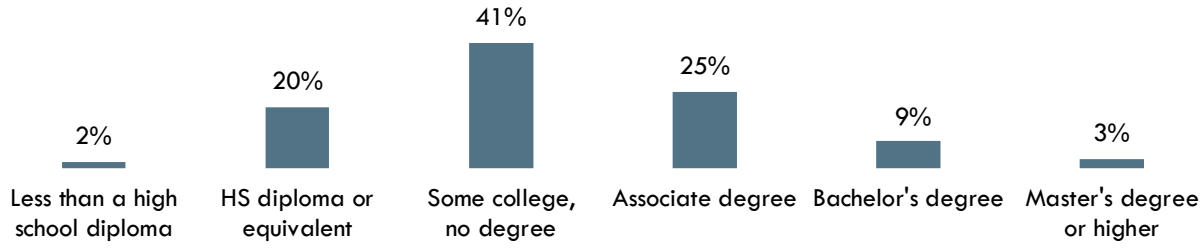
Top Employers	
• El Centro Regional Medical Center	• State of California
• Loyal Source	• County Imperial
• Indian Health Service	• NextCare Urgent Care
• Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District	• MWIDM Inc.
• Department of Health and Human Services	• HonorHealth

[13] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2010-2020.
[14] 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 postsecondary non-degree award.[15]

Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of *Medical Assistants*[16]



*numbers may not equal to 100 percent due to rounding

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 *Medical Assistants* in Imperial County[17]

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
• Appointment Setting • Scheduling • Medical Assistance • Vital Signs Measurement • Life Support • Front Office • Medical Records Preparation • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation • Influenza • Influenza Immunization • Occupational Health and Safety • Phlebotomy • Patient Care • Record Keeping • Surgery	• Telephone Skills • Typing • Bilingual • English • Spanish • Communication Skills • Building Effective Relationships • Research • Organizational Skills • Physical Abilities • Problem Solving • Writing • Written Communication • Chinese • Computer Literacy	• Facebook • HCPCS Coding • ICD-10 • Speech Recognition

[15] EMSI 2021.1; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.
[16] "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.
[17] 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 Certifications for *Medical Assistants* in Imperial County[18]

Top Certifications in Online Job Postings
1. Certified Medical Assistant
2. First Aid CPR AED
3. AAMA Certified Medical Assistant
4. Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner
5. Basic Life Saving (BLS)
6. Basic Cardiac Life Support Certification
7. Security Clearance
8. Registered Medical Assistant
9. American Heart Association Certification
10. Certified Residential Medication Aide
11. Certified Nursing Assistant
12. Phlebotomy Certification
13. Home Health Aide
14. Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA)
15. Certified Medication Aide

[18] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

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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.