










# Administrative Medical Assisting

## Labor Market Analysis for San Diego College of Continuing Education

September 2021

### Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL OF EDUCATION
 <b>Proceed with Caution</b>	 	 	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree+ <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Some College or Certificate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HS Diploma or Equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a HS Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship
SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS	
 	<b>LOW</b> 	<b>HIGH</b> 	

This report provides labor market information for an occupation selected by San Diego College of Continuing Education for its *Administrative Medical Assisting* program. The training provided by this program is likely to lead to employment as *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants*. According to available labor market information, *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 1,240 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 242 annual job openings). On average, two institutions supply 69 for-credit awards and one institution supplies one noncredit award in San Diego County for this occupation. In short, the region supplies 70 for-credit and noncredit awards for 1,240 annual job openings, suggesting that there is a supply gap in the labor market. Entry-level wages for this occupation are below the living wage, but median earnings are above the living wage. This brief recommends proceeding with caution when developing a new program and supports a program modification because 1) there is a supply gap; 2) a high number of annual job openings exist; and 3) entry level earnings are below the living wage, but median wages are above the living wage. Colleges should note that the percentage of students who complete a related program and earn a living wage is **below** the statewide percentage of students who complete Career Education programs in general.

## Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for an occupation related to the six-digit Taxonomy of Programs (TOP)<sup>1</sup> code, Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20). The purpose of this brief is to assist noncredit program providers in the region, such as San Diego College of Continuing Education (SDCCE), with program development and review. SDCCE identified one occupation from the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)<sup>2</sup> system for *Administrative Medical Assisting*, which will be the focus of this report:

**Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (SOC 43-6013):** Perform secretarial duties using specific knowledge of medical terminology and hospital, clinic, or laboratory procedures. Duties may include scheduling appointments, billing patients, and compiling and recording medical charts, reports, and correspondence. Sample reported job titles include:

- Medical Office Specialist
- Unit Clerk
- Receptionist
- Unit Secretary
- Front Office Coordinator
- Scheduler
- Medical Receptionist
- Ward Clerk
- Unit Support Representative

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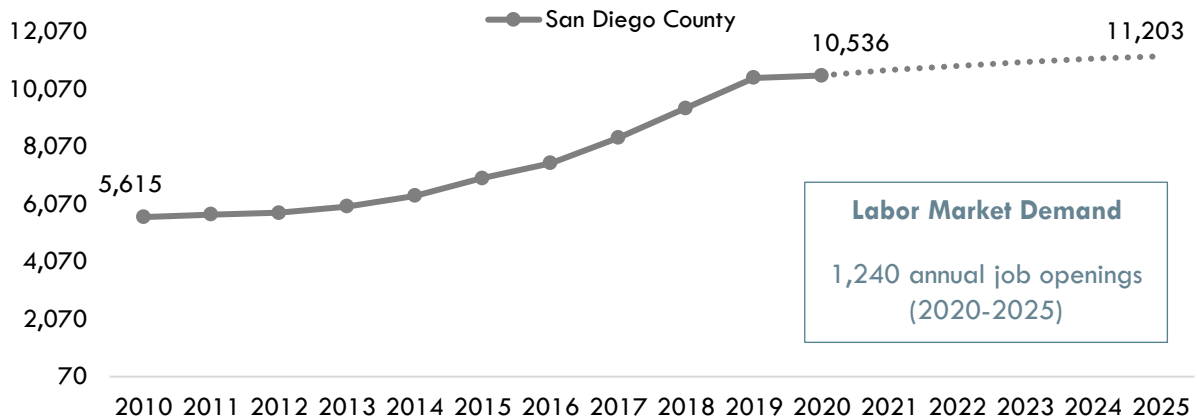
<sup>1</sup> Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) is a system of codes used by the California Community Colleges for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data about similar training programs.

<sup>2</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).

## Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2020 and 2025, *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* are projected to increase by 667 net jobs or six percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 1,240 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 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (2010-2025)<sup>3</sup>**

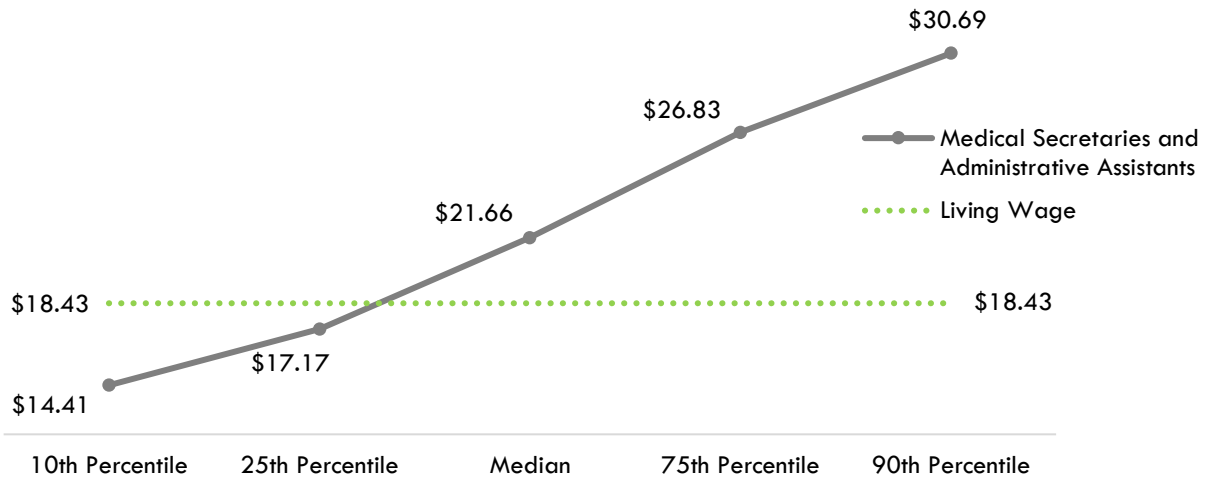


<sup>3</sup> EMSI 2021.2; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

## Earnings

Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants receive entry-level hourly earnings of \$17.17; this is less than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$18.43 per hour (Exhibit 2).<sup>4</sup>

**Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings<sup>5</sup> for Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants in San Diego County<sup>6</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> "Family Needs Calculator (formerly the California Family Needs Calculator)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2021. [insightccd.org/family-needs-calculator/](https://insightccd.org/family-needs-calculator/).

<sup>5</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>6</sup> EMSI 2021.2; 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.<sup>7</sup> According to TOP and CIP<sup>8</sup> data, two community colleges supply the region with for-credit awards for Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20): [MiraCosta College](#) and [Southwestern College](#) (Exhibit 3a).

**Exhibit 3a: Number of For-Credit Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions (Program Years 2017-18 through 2019-20)**

College	Award Type	PY 17-18	PY 18-19	PY 19-20	3-Yr Total Average
MiraCosta	Associate Degree	12	18	27	19
	Certificate 18 to < 30 units	29	32	0	20
	Certificate 16 to < 30 units	0	0	37	12
	Certificate 6 to < 18 units	12	6	6	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60*</b>
Southwestern	Associate Degree	18	1	0	6
	Certificate 30 to < 60 units	4	1	3	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>69</b>

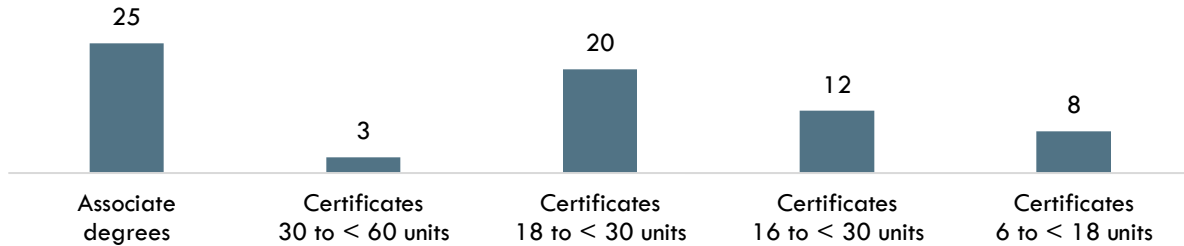
*Note: The numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding.*

<sup>7</sup> TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart ([datamart.cccco.edu](http://datamart.cccco.edu)) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data)).

<sup>8</sup> There are five CIP codes related to Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20): Medical Office Management/Administration (CIP 51.0705), Medical Office Assistant/Specialist (CIP 51.0710), Medical Reception/Receptionist (CIP 51.0712), Medical Insurance Specialist/Medical Biller (CIP 51.0714), and Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary (CIP 51.0716).

By for-credit award type, the colleges supplied the most awards for **associate degrees** based on the three-year average (program years 2017-18 through 2019-20) (Exhibit 3b).

**Exhibit 3b: Total Number of For-credit Awards by Type for Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20) in San Diego County (3-Yr Average)**



In terms of noncredit awards, only San Diego College of Continuing Education provides noncredit awards for Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20), with a three-year average of **one** noncredit award (program years 2017-18 through 2019-20) (Exhibit 4).

**Exhibit 4: Number of Noncredit Awards Conferred by SDCCE (Program Years 2017-18 through 2019-20)**

Program Title	Award Type	PY 17-18	PY 18-19	PY 19-20	3-Yr Total Average
Health Unit Coordinator	Noncredit	0	0	3	1

## Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply<sup>9</sup> suggests that there is a **supply gap** in San Diego County, with **1,240** annual openings and **70** for-credit and noncredit awards supplied by the region (Exhibit 5).

**Exhibit 5: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)**

TOP6 Program	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Total Annual Average Supply)		Supply Gap or Oversupply
		Noncredit	For-Credit	
Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20)	1,240	1	69	<b>1,170</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.

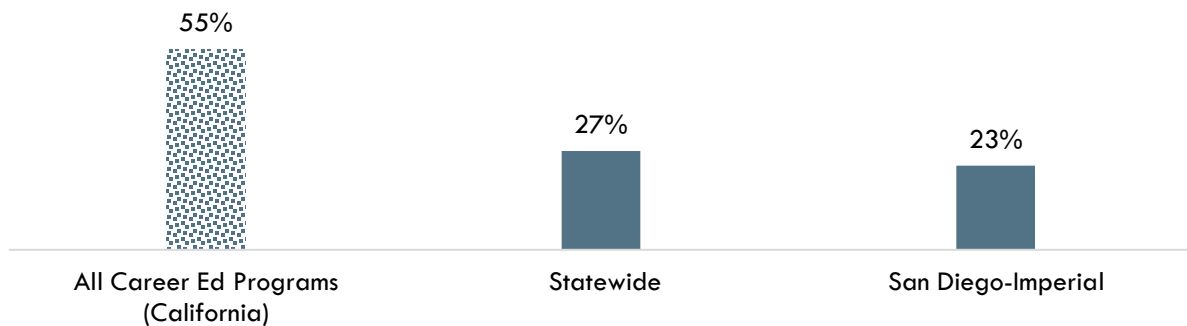
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<sup>9</sup> Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply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

## Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

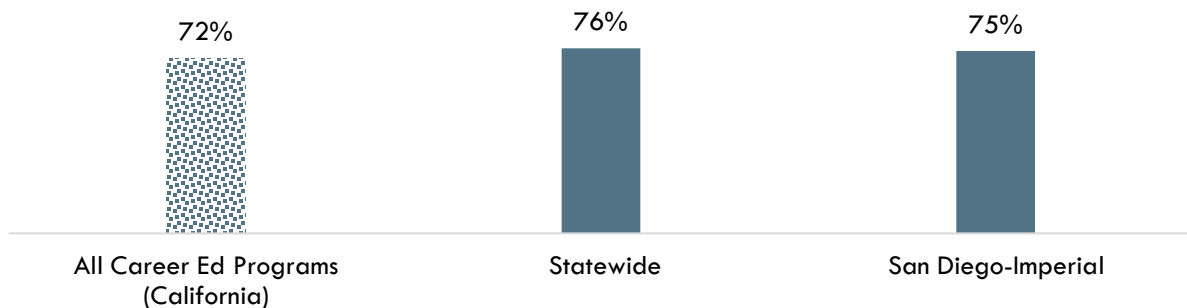
According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 23 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing an Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20) program, compared to 27 percent statewide and 55 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6a).<sup>10</sup>

**Exhibit 6a: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program  
(Administrative Medical Assisting, PY 2017-18)<sup>11</sup>**



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 75 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing an Administrative Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.20) program, compared to 76 percent statewide and 72 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6b).<sup>12</sup>

**Exhibit 6b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program  
(Administrative Medical Assisting, PY 2016-17)<sup>13</sup>**



<sup>10</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>11</sup> Among completers and skills builders who exited, the proportion of students who attained a living wage.

<sup>12</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

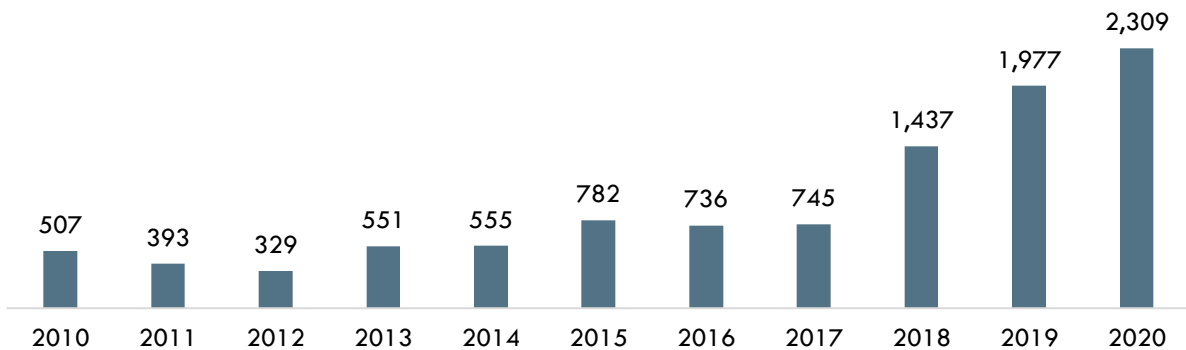
<sup>13</sup> Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2016-17. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.



## 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 2020, there was an average of 938 online job postings per year for *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* in San Diego 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 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* in San Diego County (2010-2020)<sup>14</sup>**



<sup>14</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2010-2020.

## Top Employers

Between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020, the top five employers in San Diego County for this occupation were Pacific Dental Services, University of California San Diego, Sharp Healthcare, Providence Health & Services and Prime Healthcare Services based on online job postings (Exhibit 8).

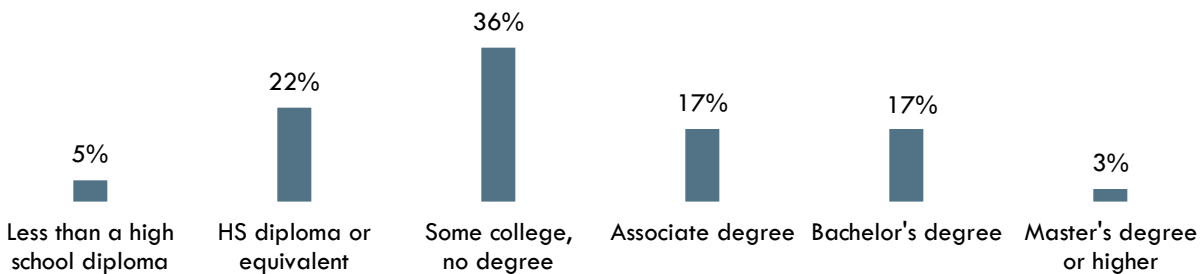
**Exhibit 8: Top Employers for Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants in San Diego County<sup>15</sup>**

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pacific Dental Services, Inc.</li> <li>• University of California San Diego</li> <li>• Sharp Healthcare</li> <li>• Providence Health &amp; Services</li> <li>• Prime Healthcare Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripps Health</li> <li>• G6 Hospitality</li> <li>• Rady Children's Hospital</li> <li>• The Super Dentists</li> <li>• Medical Professionals</li> </ul>

## Education, Skills, and Certifications

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for this occupation found currently in the national labor force. The typical entry-level education is a high school or equivalent.<sup>16</sup>

**Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants<sup>17</sup>**



<sup>15</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

<sup>16</sup> EMSI 2021.2; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>17</sup> "Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation," Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified April 4, 2021. [bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm](https://bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm).

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 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* in San Diego County<sup>18</sup>**

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative Support</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Appointment Setting</li> <li>• Front Office</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Customer Billing</li> <li>• Patient Care</li> <li>• Data Entry</li> <li>• Treatment Planning</li> <li>• Electronic Medical Records</li> <li>• Customer Checkout</li> <li>• Medical Terminology</li> <li>• Dentistry</li> <li>• Patient Assistance</li> <li>• Dentrix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Telephone Skills</li> <li>• Organizational Skills</li> <li>• Multi-Tasking</li> <li>• Detail-Oriented</li> <li>• Spanish</li> <li>• Computer Literacy</li> <li>• Bilingual</li> <li>• Teamwork / Collaboration</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Typing</li> <li>• Written Communication</li> <li>• Positive Disposition</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Time Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Excel</li> <li>• Microsoft Word</li> <li>• Dentrix</li> <li>• Microsoft PowerPoint</li> <li>• Microsoft Outlook</li> <li>• ICD-10</li> <li>• ICD-9-CM Coding</li> <li>• Practice Management Software</li> <li>• QuickBooks</li> <li>• Speech Recognition</li> <li>• Microsoft Access</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• EPIC software</li> <li>• Social Media Platforms</li> <li>• HCPCS Coding</li> </ul>

<sup>18</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 Certifications for *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* in San Diego County<sup>19</sup>**

Top Certifications in Online Job Postings

1. Basic Life Saving (BLS)
2. Certified Medical Assistant
3. Basic Cardiac Life Support Certification
4. First Aid CPR AED
5. Medical Terminology Certification
6. Certified Unit Secretary
7. Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)
8. American Heart Association Certification
9. Medical Billing and Coding Certification
10. Certified Professional Coder
11. Certified Coding Specialist
12. Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor
13. Board Certified/Board Eligible
14. Security Clearance
15. Social Work License

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<sup>19</sup> 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.