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

Medical Assisting

Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside and San Bernardino counties combined)

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data 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.

Summary

- Community colleges medical assisting programs lead to two distinct middle-skill occupations, collectively referred to as the medical assisting occupational group in this report. Both occupations in this group are considered **essential critical infrastructure occupations**.

- Employment for the medical assisting occupational group is expected to **increase by 13% between 2019 and 2024**. A total of **2,583 annual job openings** will be available each year over the five-year timeframe.

- The **median-level, 50th percentile, hourly wages** for occupations in this group are between **$16.00 and $17.76 per hour. These wages are below the $19.94 per hour self-sustainable hourly wage** estimate for a single adult with one child in the region.

- There were **42 awards issued** from regional community college programs related to medical assisting over the last three academic years.

Introduction

This report provides data on programs and occupations related to medical assisting; the related California Community College programs are:

- Medical Assisting (TOP 1208.00)
- Clinical Medical Assisting (1208.10)
- Administrative Medical Assisting (1208.20)

The **medical assisting** program prepares students for employment through instruction of the administrative, clerical, or technical support services for a licensed physician, podiatrist, or health care services plan, and related support function in a health care facility. The **clinical medical assisting** program prepares students for employment through the principles and techniques used to assist with patient care and examination in healthcare offices and clinics. Includes taking vital signs, preparing patients, assisting with physical exams, collecting specimens, performing basic laboratory tests, and maintaining examination rooms. May include administration of oral or injectable medications under the direction of a nurse or physician. The **administrative medical assisting** program prepares students for employment through the principles and techniques to assist with the administration in health care offices and clinics. Includes receptionist duties,

maintaining patient records, billing, insurance, bookkeeping, appointments, and scheduling (Taxonomy of Programs, 2012). The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by medical assisting programs lead to the occupations listed below collectively referred to as the medical assisting occupational group in this report. Both occupations in the medical assisting occupational group are considered essential critical infrastructure occupations as identified by the Public Policy Institute of California. This classification of occupations is vital in supporting the basic economic and safety needs of California (Bohn et al.). Despite the ongoing pandemic, employment demand should continue due to this occupation's critical nature and social distance ability.

- Medical Assistants (SOC 31-9092)
- Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6013)

Job Opportunities

In 2019, there were 18,120 jobs in the medical assisting occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert region (IEDR). This occupational group is projected to increase employment by 13% through 2024. Employers are expected to have 12,914 job openings over the next five years to fill new jobs and backfill jobs that workers are permanently vacating (includes occupational transfers and retirements). Exhibit 1 displays five-year projected job growth, and Exhibit 2 displays historical (2014 to 2019) and projected (2019-2024) jobs for the medical assisting occupational *group*.

Exhibit 1: Five-year projections for each occupation in the medical assisting occupational group

Occupation	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change (New Jobs)	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
Medical Assistants	9,833	11,079	13%	6,972	1,394	9%
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	8,287	9,315	12%	5,942	1,188	28%
Total	**18,120**	**20,395**	**13%**	**12,914**	**2,583**	**17%**

Source: EMSI 2020.3

Exhibit 2: Historical and projected jobs for the medical assisting occupational group, 2014 – 2024
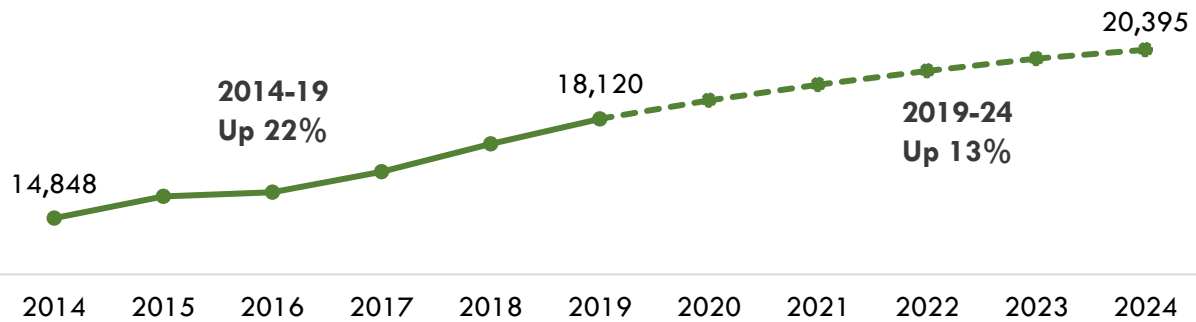
Source: EMSI 2020.3

Job Postings

Exhibit 3 displays the number of job ads posted during the last 12 months, along with the regional and statewide average time to fill for the medical assisting occupational group. On average, local employers fill online job postings for the medical assisting occupational group within 27 days. This regional average is five days shorter than the statewide average of 32 days, indicating that it may be easier for local employers to fill open positions than other employers in California as a whole.

Exhibit 3: Job ads and time to fill, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

| Occupation	Job Ads	Regional Average Time to Fill (Days)	California Average Time to Fill (Days)
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1,564	24	36
Medical Assistants	1,445	31	28
Total	**3,009**	**27**	**32**

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Earnings and Benefits

Community colleges should ensure their training programs lead to employment opportunities that provide a self-sustainable level of income. The Brookings Institute, Advancing Opportunity in California's Inland Empire report found that a "good job" wage in the region is above the $18.00 per hour, or $37,440 per year (Shearer, Shah & Gootman, p. 25). The Family Needs Calculator estimates that a self-sustainable wage for a single adult with one school-age child is $19.94 per hour, or $41,475 annually (Pearce & Manzer, 2018).

The medical assisting occupational group's median wages are below the Family Needs Calculator self-sustainability rate and the Brookings Institute's "good job" wage. Wages for *medical secretaries and administrative assistants* surpass the self-sustainability wage and good job wage at the experienced-level.

Wages for medical assistants surpass the good job wage at the experienced-level but do not surpass the self-sustainability rate at any level of experience. Exhibit 4, on the next page, displays the hourly earnings for each occupation in the IEDR.

Exhibit 4: Hourly earnings for the medical assisting occupational group
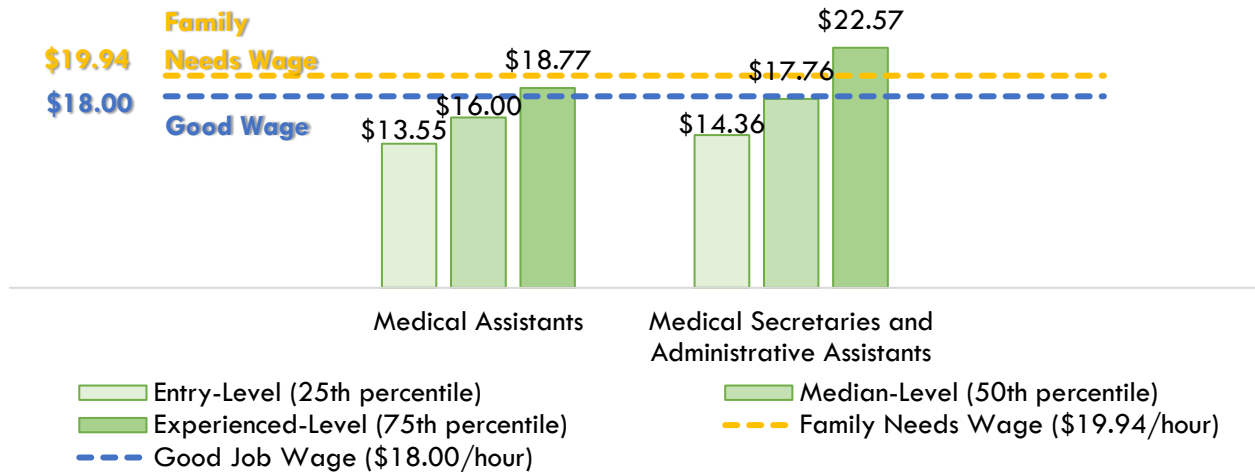
Source: EMSI 2020.3

According to occupational guides developed by the California Labor Market Information Division, benefits for the medical assisting occupational group typically include employer-paid health and dental insurance and retirement plans (Detailed Occupational Guides, 2020).

Employers, Skills, Education, and Work Experience

Exhibit 5 displays the employers posting the most job ads for the *medical assisting occupational group* during the last 12 months in the IEDR. Exhibit 5 displays employers who posted more than 20 advertisements for medical assisting occupations.

Exhibit 5: Employers posting the most job ads for medical assisting occupations, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

Occupation	Employers	
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (n=1,564)	• Pacific Dental Services, Inc. • Smile Brands • RadNet • St. Mary High Desert Medical Group • Arrowhead Orthopaedics • West Coast Dental	• Loma Linda University Medical Center • Gentle Dental • Eisenhower Medical Center • Children's Dental FunZone • Temecula Valley Hospital • Menifee Valley Medical Center
Medical Assistants (n=1,445)	• Loma Linda University Medical Center • Eisenhower Medical Center	• Arrowhead Orthopaedics • Department of Veterans Affairs

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 6, on the next page, displays a sample of specialized and employability skills that employers are seeking when looking for workers to fill positions in the medical assisting occupational group. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills that employers are requesting for industry or job competency. Employability skills are foundational skills that transcend industries and occupations; this category is often referred to as "soft skills." The skills requested in job postings may be utilized as a helpful guide for curriculum development.

Exhibit 6: Sample of in-demand skills from employer job ads, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

Occupation	Specialized Skills	Employability Skills
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (n=1,473)	• Scheduling • Customer Service • Appointment Setting • Treatment Planning	• Communication Skills • Bilingual (English and Spanish) • Telephone Skills • Computer Literacy
Medical Assistants (n=1,346)	• Scheduling • Patient Care • Vital Sign Measurement • Injections	• Bilingual (English and Spanish) • Communication Skills • Telephone Skills • Detail-Oriented

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 7 displays the entry-level education typically required to enter each occupation according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), educational attainment for incumbent workers with "some college, no degree" and an "associate degree" according to the U.S. Census (2016-17) and the real-time minimum advertised education requirement from employer job ads.

Exhibit 7: Typical entry-level education, educational attainment, and minimum advertised education requirements for the medical assisting occupational group, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

Occupation	Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement	CC-Level Educational Attainment*	Real-Time Minimum Advertised Education Requirement			
			Number of Job Ads	High school diploma or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	High school diploma or equivalent	47%	884	95%	2%	3%
Medical Assistants	Postsecondary nondegree award	65%	698	99%	1%	-

Source: EMSI 2020.3, Burning Glass – Labor Insights
*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework

Exhibit 8 displays the work experience typically required to enter each occupation and the real-time work experience requirements from employer job ads.

Exhibit 8: Work experience required and real-time work experience requirements, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

Occupation	Work Experience Typically Required	Real-Time Work Experience			
		Number of Job Ads	0 – 2 years	3 – 5 years	6+ years
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	None	688	83%	17%	-
Medical Assistants	None	682	88%	10%	2%

Source: EMSI 2020.3, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Certifications

Exhibit 9 displays the certifications most frequently required by employers seeking medical assisting occupations. Approximately 35% of job advertisements for *medical assistants* were seeking certified medical assistants. The California Certifying Board for Medical Assistants (CCBMA), the certifying agency for medical assistants, requires that individuals provide proof of current CPR certification and a certificate of completion from an accredited medical assisting course. For more information regarding medical assisting certification, please visit the CCBMA website (CCBMA, 2020).

Exhibit 9: Certifications required by employer job ads for medical assisting occupations, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

Occupation	Certifications
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (n=296)	Basic Life Support (BLS)
Medical Assistants (n=850)	Certified Medical Assistant First Aid CPR AED Basic Life Support (BLS)

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Advertised Salary

Exhibit 10 displays advertised salary data from *medical assisting* job postings over the last 12 months. Advertised salary information reveals that employers are willing to pay *medical secretaries and administrative assistants* $36,000 annually and *medical assistants* $34,000 annually. Advertised wages for these occupations are below the $37,440 per year established as a "good job" wage by the Brookings Institute in their Advancing Opportunity in California's Inland Empire report (Shearer, Shah & Gootman, p. 25). Please note that salary figures are prorated to reflect full-time, annual wage status.

Exhibit 10: Advertised salary information, Oct 2019 – Sep 2020

	Real-Time Salary Information					
Job Title	*Number of job postings*	Less than $35,000	$35,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	More than $75,000	Average Annual Salary
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	624	61%	34%	3%	2%	$36,000
Medical Assistants	604	76%	19%	4%	1%	$34,000

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Student Completions and Program Outcomes

There were no regional completions recorded in the clinical medical assisting (1208.10) or administrative medical assisting (1208.20) programs. Exhibit 11 displays annual average completion data for the California Community College *medical assisting*, based on the most recent three academic years.

Exhibit 11: 2016-19, Annual average community college awards for the medical assisting programs in the IEDR

1208.00 – Medical Assisting	Associate degree	Certificate requiring 18< 30-semester units	CCC Annual Average Awards, Academic Years 2016-19
Moreno Valley	12	17	29
Victor Valley	7	6	13
Total	19	23	42

Source: MIS Data Mart

California program outcome data may provide a useful insight into the likelihood of success for the proposed program. Community college student outcome information based on the selected TOP codes and region is provided in Exhibit 12. The outcome methodology is available in the appendix section of this report.

Exhibit 12: 1208.00 – Medical assisting strong workforce program outcomes

Strong Workforce Program Metrics: 1208.00 – Medical Assisting Academic Year 2017-18, unless noted otherwise	Inland Empire/Desert Region	California
Unduplicated count of enrolled students (2018-19)	139	9,497
Completed 9+ career education units in one year (2018-19)	41%	22%
Perkins Economically disadvantaged students (2018-19)	93%	82%
Students who attained a noncredit workforce milestone in a year (2018-19)	-	53%
Students who earned a degree, certificate, or attained apprenticeship (2018-19)	25	773
Transferred to a four-year institution (transfers)	-	351
Job closely related to the field of study (2016-17)	-	64%
Median annual earnings (all exiters)	$20,490	$28,832
Median change in earnings (all exiters)	-	41%
Attained a living wage (completers and skills-builders)	-	40%

Sources: LaunchBoard Community College Pipeline and Strong Workforce Program Metrics

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Appendix: Occupation definitions, sample job titles, five-year projections for medical assisting occupations

Occupation Definitions (SOC) code), Education and Training Requirement, Community College Educational Attainment

Medical Assistants (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 a physician.

Sample job titles: Certified Medical Assistant (CMA), Chiropractor Assistant, Clinical Assistant, Doctor's Assistant, Medical Assistant (MA), Medical Office Assistant, Ophthalmic Technician, Optometric Assistant, Optometric Technician, Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Postsecondary nondegree award

Training Requirement: None

Incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 65%

Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (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 job titles: Admissions Coordinator, Billing Coordinator, Health Unit Coordinator, Medical Office Specialist, Medical Secretary, Patient Coordinator, Physician Office Specialist, Unit Secretary, Unit Support Representative, Ward Clerk

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent

Training Requirement: Between one and twelve months on-the-job training

Incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 47%

Appendix: Program Completion and Outcome Methodology

Exhibit 11 displays the average annual California Community College (CCC) awards conferred during the three academic years between 2016 and 2019, from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart. Awards are the combined total of associate degrees and certificates issued during the timeframe, divided by three in this case to calculate an annual average. This is done to minimize the effect of atypical variation that might be present in a single year.

Community college student outcome information is from LaunchBoard and based on the selected TOP code and region. These metrics are based on records submitted to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) by community colleges, which come from self-reported student information from CCC Apply and the National Student Clearinghouse. Employment and earnings metrics are sourced from records provided by California's Employment Development Department's Unemployment Insurance database. When available, outcomes for completers are reported to demonstrate the impact that earning a degree or certificate can have on employment and earnings. For more information on the types of students included for each metric, please see the web link for LaunchBoard's Strong Workforce Program Metrics Data Element Dictionary in the References section (LaunchBoard, 2020a). Finally, employment in a job closely related to the field of study comes from self-reported student responses on the CTE Employment Outcomes Survey (CTEOS), administered by Santa Rosa Junior College (LaunchBoard, 2020a).

Job postings data is limited to the information provided by employers and the ability of artificial intelligence search engines to identify this information. Additionally, preliminary calculations by Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce found that "just 30 to 40 percent of openings for candidates with some college or an associate degree, and only 40 to 60 percent of openings for high school diploma holders appear online" (Carnevale et al., 2014). Online job postings often do not reveal the hiring intentions of employers; it is unknown if employers plan to hire one or multiple workers from a single online job posting, or if they are collecting resumes for future hiring needs. A closed job posting may not be the result of a hired worker.

Table 1: 2019 to 2024 job growth, wages, education, training, and work experience required for the medical assisting occupational group, IEDR

Occupation (SOC)	2019 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Entry-Experienced Hourly Wage Range (25th to 75th percentile)	Median Hourly Wage (50th percentile)	Average Annual Earnings	Typical Entry-Level Education & On-The-Job Training Required	Work Experience Required
Medical Assistants (31-9092)	9,833	1,246	13%	1,394	$13.55 to $18.77	$16.00	$35,200	Postsecondary nondegree award & None	None
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6013)	8,287	1,028	12%	1,188	$14.36 to $22.57	$17.76	$38,700	High school diploma or equivalent & 1-12 months	None
Total	**18,120**	**2,275**	**13%**	**2,583**	-	-	-	-	-

Source: EMSI 2020.3