

**Program Endorsement Brief: 1223.10/Health Information Coding  
Medical Coding Specialist Certificate**  
Orange County Center of Excellence, April 2021

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**Summary Analysis**

<b>Program Endorsement:</b>	<b>Endorsed: All Criteria Met</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Endorsed: Some Criteria Met</b> <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" 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 two middle-skill occupations: *medical records specialists (29-2072)*, and *medical transcriptionists (31-9094)*. 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 these medical coding specialist occupations in the region. While the majority of annual openings for the occupations in this report typically require a postsecondary non-degree award, entry-level wages are lower than the living wage in Orange County. **Therefore, due to some of 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 **1,883 jobs available annually** in the region due to new job growth and replacements, **which is more than the 766 awards conferred annually** by educational institutions in the region.
  - Medical records specialists (29-2072) is included within the dataset for medical dosimetrists, medical records specialists, and health technologists and technicians, all other (29-2098). Since the latter is an aggregate SOC code and

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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.

includes a variety of medical occupations, including medical records specialists, **the number of annual job openings is overstated.**

- Over the past 12 months, there were **1,051 online job postings related to medical coding specialist occupations.** The highest number of job postings were for medical records clerks, medical records technicians, medical records assistants, medical transcriptionists, and medical records coordinators
- **Living Wage Criteria** – Within Orange County, *all of the annual job openings* for these medical coding specialist occupations have **entry-level wages below the county's living wage** (\$17.36/hour).<sup>2</sup>
- **Educational Criteria** – The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a **postsecondary non-degree award as the typical entry-level education** for both medical coding specialist occupations.
  - Furthermore, the national-level educational attainment data indicates **between 44.7% and 50.2% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree.**

#### Supply:

- There are **7 community colleges** in the LA/OC region that issue awards related to health information coding and/or health care administration, conferring an average of **94 awards annually** between 2016 and 2019.
- Between 2014 and 2017, there was an average of **672 awards conferred annually** in related training programs by non-community college institutions throughout the region.

#### Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for medical coding specialist occupations. In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 8% through 2024. There will be nearly 1,900 job openings per year through 2024 due to job growth and replacements. It is important to note that the *medical dosimetrists, medical records specialists, and health technologists and technicians, all other (29-2098)* is an aggregate SOC code and includes a variety of health occupations and not solely *medical records specialists*. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is overstated for *medical records specialists*.

*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.*

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<sup>2</sup> Living wage data was pulled from California Family Needs Calculator on 3/22/2021. For more information, visit the California Family Needs Calculator website: <https://insightcced.org/2018-family-needs-calculator/>.

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

Geography	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2019-2024 Change	2019-2024 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	13,951	15,083	1,132	8%	1,414
Orange	4,535	4,895	360	8%	469
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,486</b>	<b>19,978</b>	<b>1,492</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>1,883</b>

### Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for medical coding specialist 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 of the annual openings for medical coding specialist occupations have entry-level wages below the living wage for one adult (\$17.36 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$12.50 and \$16.91. Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$21.13 and \$28.87, which are higher than the living wage estimate. Orange County’s average wages are below the average statewide wage of \$24.68 for these occupations.

**Los Angeles County—** The majority (74%) of annual openings for medical coding specialist 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 \$12.45 and \$17.56. Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$20.77 and \$29.94, which are higher than the living wage estimate. Los Angeles County’s average wages are below the average statewide wage of \$24.68 for these occupations.

### Job Postings

There were 1,051 online job postings related to medical coding specialist occupations listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings were for medical records clerks, medical records technicians, medical records assistants, medical transcriptionists, and medical records coordinators. The top skills were: medical records, electronic medical records, medical coding, medical terminology, and health insurance portability and accountability act (HIPPA). The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were: Episource Incorporated, Anthem Blue Cross, and MemorialCare Health System.

*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

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a postsecondary non-degree award as the typical entry-level education for both medical coding specialist occupations in this report. Furthermore, the

<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.

national-level educational attainment data indicates between 44.7% and 50.2% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. Of the 55% of medical coding specialist job postings listing a minimum education requirement in Los Angeles/Orange County, 75% (438) requested a high school diploma, 16% (92) requested a bachelor's degree and 9% (52) 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: Medical Office Technology (0514.20) and Health Information Coding (1223.10). The colleges with the most completions in the region are: East LA, LA City, Glendale, and Santa Monica. Over the past 12 months, there were no other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

**Exhibit 2: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2016-2019**

TOP Code	Program	College	2016-2017 Awards	2017-2018 Awards	2018-2019 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0514.20	Medical Office Technology	East LA	1	-	-	0
		Glendale	9	10	11	10
		LA City	40	-	3	14
		LA Harbor	4	1	1	2
		LA Trade	11	16	1	9
		Santa Monica	8	14	14	12
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>73</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>48</b>
1223.10	Health Information Coding	East LA	53	23	54	43
		Glendale	-	3	4	2
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>46</b>
		Saddleback	-	-	1	0
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Supply Subtotal/Average</b>			<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>126</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>94</b>

**Non-Community College Supply**—For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is also important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for medical coding specialist 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: Health Information/Medical Records Administration/Administrator (51.0706) and Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder (51.0713). Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2014 to 2017. Between 2014 and 2017, four-year colleges in the region conferred an average of 672 awards annually in related training programs.

**Exhibit 3: Regional non-community college awards, 2014-2017**

<b>CIP Code</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>2014-2015 Awards</b>	<b>2015-2016 Awards</b>	<b>2016-2017 Awards</b>	<b>3-Year Award Average</b>
51.0706	Health Information/ Medical Records Administration/ Administrator	University of Phoenix-California	16	27	13	19
51.0713	Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/ Coder	American Career College-Anaheim	99	96	110	102
		American Career College-Long Beach	89	66	79	78
		American Career College-Los Angeles	124	125	109	119
		American Career College-Lynwood	11	62	44	39
		California Healing Arts College	9	11	12	11
		Eagle Rock College	57	55	-	37
		Fremont College	1	6	9	5
		InterCoast Colleges-Anaheim	8	7	1	5
		PCI College	2	3	1	2
		Pomona Unified School District Adult and Career Education	-	11	19	10
		Southern California Health Institute	-	21	56	26
		UEI College-Gardena	68	63	53	61
		United Education Institute-Anaheim	79	60	53	64
		United Education Institute-Encino	68	43	56	56
		United Education Institute-West Covina	41	44	29	38
<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>672</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>672</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)
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other (29-2098)	3,451	3,803	352	10%	315	\$16.91	\$21.59	\$28.87
Medical Transcriptionists (31-9094)	1,084	1,092	8	1%	154	\$12.50	\$14.68	\$21.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,535</b>	<b>4,895</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>469</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)
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other (29-2098)	11,293	12,518	1,225	11%	1,048	\$17.56	\$22.41	\$29.94
Medical Transcriptionists (31-9094)	2,658	2,566	(93)	(3%)	366	\$12.45	\$14.56	\$20.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,951</b>	<b>15,083</b>	<b>1,132</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>1,414</b>			

### Exhibit 6. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other (29-2098)	14,744	16,321	1,577	11%	1,363
Medical Transcriptionists (31-9094)	3,742	3,657	(85)	(2%)	520
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,486</b>	<b>19,978</b>	<b>1,492</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>1,883</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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