

Automotive Trim and Upholstery

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

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

- The community college upholstery repair - automotive programs provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities that lead to the upholsterers occupation.
- This occupation is projected to have 34 annual job openings. Employment is expected to decrease by 6% through 2025, indicating that all job openings are replacement jobs.
- This occupation's 50th percentile hourly earnings are \$15.34 per hour, below the regional \$24.36 per hour self-sustainable earnings standard for a single adult with one child.
- A regional college's automotive trim and upholstery program has issued eight annual average awards over the last three academic years.
- The Centers of Excellence does not recommend further developing upholstery repair - automotive programs. For more information, see the [recommendation section](#).

Introduction

This report aims to quantify regional supply and demand related to upholsterers in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. California Community College upholstery repair - automotive (TOP 0949.10) programs prepare students for employment as upholsterers through training related to the repair and replacement of automotive interiors (Taxonomy of Programs, 2012). The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by upholstery repair – automotive programs lead to the upholsterer occupation.

Upholsterers (51-6093)

Make, repair, or replace upholstery for household furniture or transportation vehicles.

Sample job titles: Automotive Upholsterer, Automobile Upholsterer, Box Spring Upholsterer, Car Seat Upholsterer, Furniture Upholsterer, Inside Upholsterer, Sofa Back Upholsterer, Stapler, Trimmer, Upholstered Goods Crafter, Upholsterer, Upholstery Cutter, Upholstery Trimmer

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent

Work Experience Required: None

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

Incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 23%

While community college programs train upholsterers for automotive interior repair, this occupation may find employment in various industries. For example, approximately 53% of upholsterers in the region worked in the personal and household goods repair and maintenance (NAICS 8114) and household and institutional furniture and kitchen cabinet manufacturing (NAICS 3371) industries in 2020. However, the automotive repair and maintenance (8111) industry accounted for only 10% of employment for this occupation.

Job Counts and Projections

In 2020, there were 441 upholsterer jobs in the region. Despite employment for upholsterers decreasing by 6% through 2025, this occupation is projected to have 34 annual job openings to backfill jobs that workers are permanently vacating (includes occupational transfers and retirements). Exhibit 1 displays the job counts, five-year projected job growth, job openings, and the share of incumbent workers age 55 years and greater in the region.

Exhibit 1: Five-year projections, 2020-2025

2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	5-Yr % Change (New Jobs)	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
441	413	(6%)	172	34	38%

Source: Emsi 2021.3

A search of online job advertisements over the last 12 months for upholsters jobs was conducted to reveal the details about the employers seeking these workers, including the time it takes to fill positions, earnings information, and in-demand skills. Upholster online job ads were limited to "automotive," "aircraft," and "watercraft" jobs to ensure program-relevant results. "Furniture upholster" jobs were excluded from the final results. Over the previous 12 months, three job advertisements for upholsterers were posted in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. This search was expanded to all of California to ensure sufficient job ads to obtain information. A total of 55 results were identified.

Exhibit 2 shows the number of job ads posted during the last 12 months in California and the average time to fill this job. On average, California employers fill online job advertisements for upholsters within 39 days.

Exhibit 2: Job ads and time to fill

Job Ads	Statewide Average Time to Fill (Days)
55	39

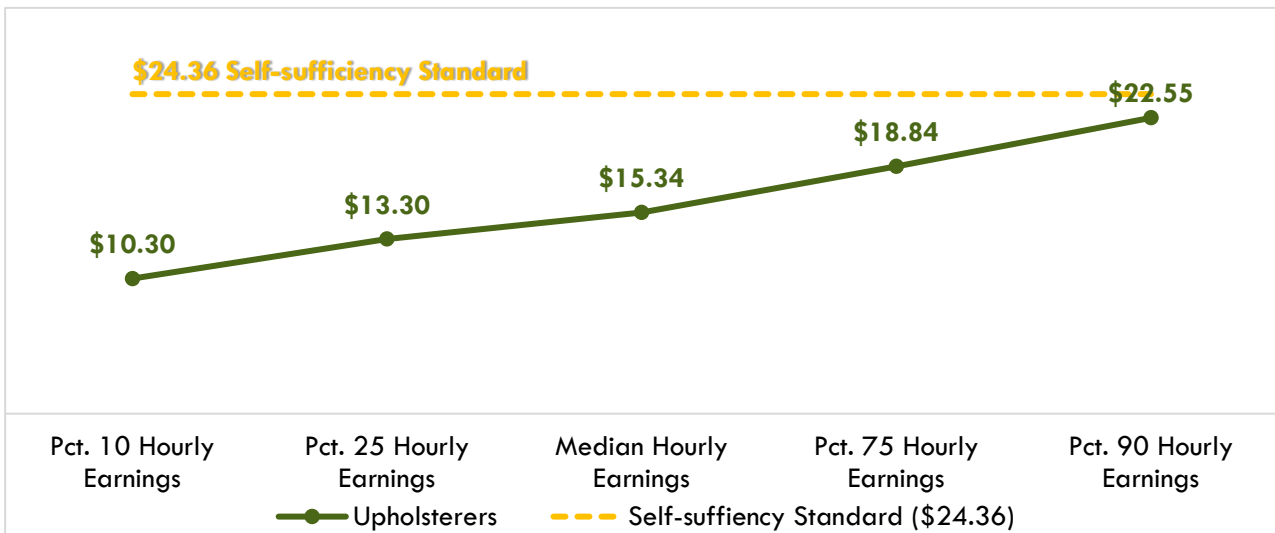
Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Earnings and Benefits

Community colleges should ensure their training programs lead to employment opportunities that provide self-sustainable income. The University of Washington estimates that a self-sufficient hourly rate for a single adult with one school-age child is \$24.36 per hour or \$51,452 annually in Riverside County; \$23.73 per hour or \$50,119 annually in San Bernardino County (Pearce, 2021). For this study, the higher hourly earnings requirement in Riverside County is adopted as the self-sufficiency standard for the two-county region.

The 90th percentile hourly earnings for upholsterers fall short of the self-sustainability standard, indicating that most workers do not earn a self-sustainable hourly rate. Exhibit 3 displays the hourly earnings for upholsterers.

Exhibit 3: Hourly earnings by percentile



Source: Emsi 2021.3

Benefits information, typically provided by the California Labor Market Information Division's occupational guides, is not available for upholsterers (Detailed Occupational Guides, 2021).

Advertised Salary from Online Job Ads

Exhibit 4 displays online job ad salary data for upholsterers over the last 12 months. Online job ad salary information reveals that employers are willing to pay upholsterers a median annual salary of \$36,000 annually, below the region's \$51,452 annual (\$24.36 hourly) self-sufficiency standard. Consider the salary information with caution since only 75% (47 out of 63) of online job advertisements for this occupation provided salary information. The salary figures are prorated to reflect full-time, annual earnings status.

Exhibit 4: Advertised salary information

Number of job ads	Real-Time Salary Information				Average Annual Salary
	Less than \$35,000	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	More than \$75,000	
44	36%	46%	14%	4%	\$36,000

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Employers, Skills, Education, and Work Experience

Exhibit 5 displays the employers that posted five or more job ads for upholsterers in California over the last 12 months. Showing employer names provides some insight into where students may find employment after completing a program. San Manuel Casino posted the most job advertisements for upholsterers in the region.

Exhibit 5: Employers posting the most job ads for upholsterers

Top Employers	Job Ads
Reliance Aerotech Services Incorporated	4
Mikes Auto Tops and Upholstery	4
Clerprem USA	4
All other employers	43
Total	55

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 6 lists a sample of specialized and employability skills employers' seek when looking for workers to fill upholsterer positions. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills that employers request 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 ads may be utilized to guide curriculum development.

Exhibit 6: Sample of in-demand skills from employer job ads

Specialized skills (n=169)	Employability skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewing • Repair • Cleaning • Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) • Power Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail-Oriented • Organizational Skills • English • Work Area Maintenance • Multi-Tasking

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately 23% of incumbent workers in this field hold a community college-level of educational attainment; "some college, no degree" and an "associate degree." Online job advertisements indicate that the vast majority (98%) of employers seeking upholsterers sought candidates with a high school diploma or vocational training. Exhibit 7 displays the typical entry-level education, educational attainment, and minimum advertised education requirements for upholsterers.

Exhibit 7: Typical entry-level education, educational attainment, and minimum advertised education requirements

Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement	CC-Level Educational Attainment*	Number of Job Ads	Real-Time Minimum Advertised Education Requirement		
			High school or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
High school diploma or equivalent	23%	25	100%	1%	1%

Source: Emsi 2021.3, 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 and the real-time work experience requirements from employer job ads for upholsterers. While half of the job advertisements sought candidates with zero to two years of work experience, it should be noted that 43% of employers sought candidates with three to five years of previous work experience. Job advertisements indicate that employers may value work experience.

Exhibit 8: Work experience required and real-time work experience requirements

Work Experience Typically Required	Real-Time Work Experience			
	Number of job ads	0 – 2 years	3 – 5 years	6+ years
None	23	48%	48%	4%

Source: Emsi 2021.3, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Student Completions for Programs

Exhibit 9 displays completion data for local community college upholstery repair – automotive (TOP 0949.10) programs between 2017 and 2020. Over the last three academic years, Riverside City College issued eight annual average awards annually in its automotive trim and upholstery program. The student completion and outcome methodology are available on page 8.

Exhibit 9: 2017-20, Annual average community college awards for upholstery repair – automotive programs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

TOP 0949.10 – Upholstery Repair - Automotive (Local Program Title)	Associate Degree	Certificate requiring 18< 30-semester units	Certificate requiring 16< 30-semester units	Total CC Annual Average Awards, Academic Years 2017-20
Riverside (Automotive Trim & Upholstery)	1	5	2	8

TOP 0949.10 – Upholstery Repair - Automotive (Local Program Title)	Associate Degree	Certificate requiring 18< 30- semester units	Certificate requiring 16< 30- semester units	Total CC Annual Average Awards, Academic Years 2017-20
San Bernardino Valley (Automotive Interiors)	-	-	-	0
Total	1	5	2	8

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 code and region is provided in Exhibit 10. The outcome methodology is available in the appendix section of this report.

Exhibit 10: 0949.10 – Upholstery repair - automotive strong workforce program outcomes

Strong Workforce Program Metrics: 0949.10 – Upholstery Repair – Automotive Academic Year 2017-18, unless noted otherwise	Inland Empire/Desert Region	California
Unduplicated count of enrolled students (2018-19)	48	119
Completed 9+ career education units in one year (2018-19)	50%	20%
Perkins Economically disadvantaged students (2018-19)	90%	82%
Students who attained a noncredit workforce milestone in a single year (2018-19)	-	97%
Students who earned a degree, certificate, or attained apprenticeship (2018-19)	-	55
Median annual earnings (all exiters)	-	\$23,130

Sources: LaunchBoard Community College Pipeline and Strong Workforce Program Metrics

Recommendation for Automotive Trim and Upholstery Programs

Upholsters employment is expected to decrease by 6% through 2025, with 34 annual job openings to backfill jobs that workers are permanently vacating (includes occupational transfers and retirements). This occupation's 90th percentile hourly earnings fall short of the regional self-sustainability rate, indicating these workers may struggle to support themselves in the region.

The upholster repair – automotive (0949.10) program offered at Riverside City college has issued eight awards annually over the last three academic years. The median annual earnings for upholsterer program completers in California is \$23,130.

The Centers of Excellence does not recommend developing an upholsterer program due to the low number of annual job openings for this occupation and earnings that fall below the self-sustainability rate in the region.

Colleges considering this program should partner with applicable employers to document their demand for upholsterers and the skills needed for students to earn self-sustainable earnings after exiting the program.

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Appendix: Methodology

Exhibit 9 displays the average annual California Community College (CCC) awards conferred during the three academic years between 2017 and 2020 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 variations 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 California's Employment Development Department's Unemployment Insurance database records. 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 in each metric, please see the web link for LaunchBoard's Strong Workforce Program Metrics Data Element Dictionary in the References section (LaunchBoard, 2021 a). 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, 2021 a).

Job advertisement 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 advertisements often do not reveal employers' hiring intentions; it is unknown if employers plan to hire one or multiple workers from a single online job ad or collect resumes for future hiring needs. A closed job ad may not be the result of a hired worker.

Table 1. 2020 to 2025 job growth, wages, entry-level education, training, and work experience required for upholsterers in the Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside and San Bernardino counties combined)

Occupation (SOC)	2020 Jobs	5-Year Change (New Jobs)	5-Year % Change (New Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Entry-Experienced Hourly Wage (10 th to 90 th percentile)	Median Hourly Wage (50 th percentile)	Average Annual Earnings	Entry-Level Education & On-The-Job-Training	Work Experience Required
Upholsterers (51-6093)	441	(28)	(6%)	34	\$10.30 to \$22.55	\$15.34	\$38,581.51	High school and vocational training & 1-12 months	None

Source: Emsi 2021.3