

**Labor Market Assessment: 1217.00 – Surgical Technician**  
***Surgical Technician; Surgical Technologist; Central Sterile Processing (Operating Room);***  
***Sterile Processing Technicians; Medical Equipment Preparers***  
 Los Angeles County Center of Excellence, March 2022

**Summary**

<b>Program Endorsement:</b>	<b>Endorsed:</b> All Criteria Met	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Endorsed:</b> Some Criteria Met	<input 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:</b> (Entry-Level, 25 <sup>th</sup> )	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Education:</b>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Emerging Occupation(s)</b>						
	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The Los Angeles 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: *surgical technologists* (29-2055) and *medical equipment preparers* (31-9093), and one emerging occupation: *surgical assistants* (29-2099.07).

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 in the region for the occupations of interest. In addition to both middle-skill occupations having entry-level wages that exceed the self-sufficiency standard wage in Los Angeles County, between 42% and 73% of incumbent workers have completed some college or an associate degree. **Due to all 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 **664 jobs available annually** in the region due to job growth and replacements, **which is more than the 347 awards conferred annually** by educational institutions in the region.
- **Living Wage Criteria** – In Los Angeles County, both occupations have entry-level wages **above** the self-sufficiency standard wage (\$18.10/hour).<sup>2</sup>

<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.

<sup>2</sup> Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

- **Educational Criteria** – Within the LA/OC region, 57% of the annual job openings for the occupations in this report typically require a high school diploma or equivalent.
  - National-level educational attainment data indicates that between 42% and 73% of incumbent workers have completed some college or an associate degree.

#### Supply:

- Between 2017 and 2020, no community colleges in the LA/OC region have issued awards in Hospital Central Service Technician (1209.00) or Surgical Technician (1217.00) programs.
- Between 2016 and 2019, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of **347 awards in relevant programs**.

### Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for the two occupations of interest. In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 6% through 2025. There will be more than 650 job openings per year through 2025 due to job growth and replacements.

*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 full impact of COVID-19 on projections of industry and occupational employment. Therefore, the projections included in this report do not take the full impacts of COVID-19 into account.*

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

Geography	2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	2020-2025 Change	2020-2025 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	4,716	5,019	303	6%	518
Orange	1,325	1,408	83	6%	146
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,042</b>	<b>6,427</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>664</b>

### Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the hourly wages for both occupations in Los Angeles County, as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange 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.

<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.

**Los Angeles County** – Both occupations in this report have entry-level wages **above** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$19.66 and \$23.88, while experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$28.76 and \$35.37.

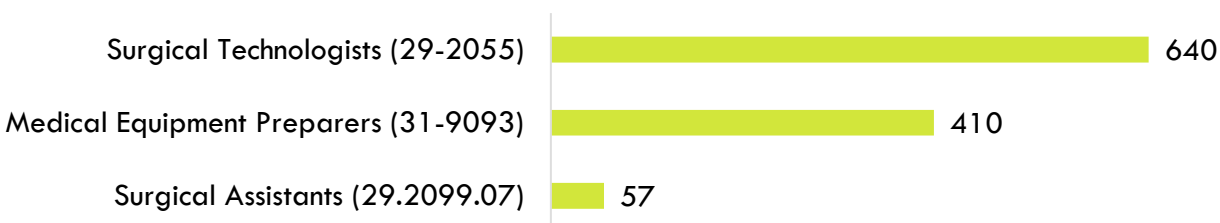
**Orange County** – The majority of annual openings (58%) for the occupations in this report have entry-level wages **below** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$18.59 and \$22.29. One occupation in this report has a typical entry-level wage above the county’s self-sufficiency standard wage: *surgical technologists* (\$22.29). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$27.21 and \$33.02, which are above the self-sufficiency standard wage estimate.

### Job Postings

Over the past 12 months, there have been 1,107 online job postings related to the two occupations of interest and the emerging occupation: *surgical assistants*. Exhibit 2 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The majority of job postings (58%) were for *surgical technologists*. The highest number of job postings were for surgical technicians, sterile processing technicians, surgical technologists, operating room technicians, and certified sterile processing technicians. The top skills were surgery, sterile procedures/techniques, patient care, aseptic technique, and surgical instruments. The top employers, by number of job postings, in the region were Providence Health & Services, Emerald Health Services, and University of California.

*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 full 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.*

**Exhibit 2: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months)**



### Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

- **Postsecondary nondegree award:** surgical technologists (29-2055)
- **High school diploma or equivalent:** medical equipment preparers (31-9093)

In the LA/OC region, the majority of annual job openings (57%) typically require a high school diploma or equivalent. National-level educational attainment data indicates that between 42% and 73% of incumbent workers have completed some college or an associate degree.

## Educational Supply

**Community College Supply** – Between 2017 and 2020, no community colleges in the LA/OC region have issued awards in Hospital Central Service Technician (1209.00) or Surgical Technician (1217.00) programs.

**Non-Community College Supply** – For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that may provide training programs for the occupations in this report. Exhibit 3 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2016 to 2019. Between 2016 and 2019, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 347 awards.

**Exhibit 3: Regional non-community college awards, 2016-2019**

CIP Code	Program	Institution	2016-17 Awards	2017-18 Awards	2018-19 Awards	3-Year Average
51.0909	Surgical Technology/ Technologist	Advanced College	-	-	2	1
		American Career College-Anaheim	49	30	32	37
		American Career College-Los Angeles	70	51	56	59
		American College of Healthcare and Technology	11	4	-	5
		California Healing Arts College	19	8	4	10
		Career Networks Institute	38	20	19	26
		CBD College	46	41	47	45
		Concorde Career College – North Hollywood	13	32	23	23
		Glendale Career College	61	66	66	64
		North-West College- Anaheim	8	6	12	9
		North-West College-Long Beach	15	17	10	14
		North-West College- West Covina	12	19	15	15
		Premiere Career College	35	34	23	31
		Valley College of Medical Careers	12	7	7	9
Supply Total/Average			389	335	316	347

## Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

### Exhibit 4. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2020 Jobs	2025 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)
Surgical Technologists (29-2055)	2,477	2,684	207	8%	222	\$23.88	\$29.58	\$35.37
Medical Equipment Preparers (31-9093)	2,240	2,334	94	4%	296	\$19.66	\$24.10	\$28.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,716</b>	<b>5,019</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### Exhibit 5. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2020 Jobs	2025 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)
Surgical Technologists (29-2055)	675	732	57	8%	61	\$22.29	\$27.61	\$33.02
Medical Equipment Preparers (31-9093)	650	676	26	4%	85	\$18.59	\$22.79	\$27.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,325</b>	<b>1,408</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### Exhibit 6. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Typical Entry-Level Education
Surgical Technologists (29-2055)	3,152	3,416	264	8%	283	Postsecondary nondegree award
Medical Equipment Preparers (31-9093)	2,890	3,010	120	4%	381	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,042</b>	<b>6,427</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>-</b>

## Appendix B: Sources

- O\*NET Online
- Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

For more information, please contact:

Luke Meyer, Director  
Los Angeles County Center of Excellence  
[lmeyer7@mtsac.edu](mailto:lmeyer7@mtsac.edu)

