

March 2022

# Labor Market

## Analysis

### Physical Education and Recreation



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California  
Community  
Colleges



Prepared by the Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence

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**COVID-19 Statement:** This report includes employment projection data by Emsi. 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 or potential output. To the extent that a recession or labor shock, such as the economic effects of COVID-19, can cause long-term structural change, they 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. Other measures such as unemployment rates and monthly industry employment estimates will reflect the most recent information on employment and jobs in the state and, in combination with input from local employers, may help validate current and future employment needs as depicted here.

*If for any reason this document is not accessible or if you have specific needs for readability, please contact us and we will do our utmost to accommodate you with a modified version. To make a request, contact Nora Seronello by phone at (209) 575-6894 or by email [seronellon@mjc.edu](mailto:seronellon@mjc.edu).*

# Summary

Please note the COVID-19 statement on page 2 when considering this report's findings.

This study conducted by the Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence examines labor market demand, wages, skills, and postsecondary supply for physical education and recreation. Four occupations related to physical education and recreation were identified for College of the Sequoias:

- 29-1125, Recreational Therapists
- 29-9091, Athletic Trainers
- 31-2022, Physical Therapist Aides
- 39-9031, Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors

## Key findings:

- **Occupational demand** — Nearly 1,900 workers were employed in jobs related to physical education and recreation in 2020 in the South Central Valley/Southern Mother Lode (SCV/SML) subregion. The largest occupation is exercise trainers and group fitness instructors with 1,163 workers in 2020, a projected growth rate of 1% over the next five years, and 196 annual openings.
- **Wages** — Recreational therapists earn the highest entry-level wage, \$31.56/hour in the subregion.
- **Employers** — Employers with the most job postings in the subregion are Planet Fitness, state of California, and Pro Pt.
- **Occupational titles** — The most common occupational title in job postings in the subregion is fitness trainers and aerobics instructors. The most common job title is physical therapy aide.
- **Skills and certifications** — The top baseline skill is communication skills, the top specialized skill is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the top software skill is Microsoft Office. The most in-demand certification is a first aid cpr aed.
- **Education** — A high school diploma or equivalent is typically required for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors and physical therapist aides. A bachelor's degree is typically required for recreational therapists and Athletic Trainers.
- **Supply** — Analysis of postsecondary completions shows that on average 21 awards were conferred in the Central Valley/Mother Lode region each year.

Based on a comparison of occupational demand and supply, there is an undersupply of 288 trained workers in the subregion and 454 workers in the region. The Center of Excellence recommends that College of the Sequoias work with the regional directors, the college's advisory board, and local industry in the expansion and development of programs to address the shortage of physical education and recreation workers in the region.

# Introduction

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence was asked by College of the Sequoias to provide labor market information for physical education and recreation. The geographical focus for this report is the South Central Valley/Southern Mother Lode (SCV/SML) subregion, but regional demand and supply data has been included for broader applicability and use. The average living wage for a single adult in the SCV/SML subregion is \$13.67/hour.<sup>1</sup> Analysis of the program and occupational data related to physical education and recreation resulted in the identification of applicable occupations. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System codes and titles used in this report are:

- 29-1125, Recreational Therapists
- 29-9091, Athletic Trainers
- 31-2022, Physical Therapist Aides
- 39-9031, Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors

The occupational titles, job descriptions, sample job titles, and knowledge and skills from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and O\*NET OnLine are shown below.

## **Recreational Therapists**

**Job Description:** Plan, direct, or coordinate medically-approved recreation programs for patients in hospitals, nursing homes, or other institutions. Activities include sports, trips, dramatics, social activities, and crafts. May assess a patient condition and recommend appropriate recreational activity.

**Knowledge:** Psychology, Therapy and Counseling, Customer and Personal Service, English Language, Education and Training

**Skills:** Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness, Active Listening, Coordination, Speaking

## **Athletic Trainers**

**Job Description:** Evaluate and treat musculoskeletal injuries or illnesses. Provide preventive, therapeutic, emergency, and rehabilitative care.

**Knowledge:** Medicine and Dentistry, Customer and Personal Service, Psychology, Therapy and Counseling, English Language

**Skills:** Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Judgment and Decision Making, Monitoring, Speaking

## **Physical Therapist Aides**

**Job Description:** Under close supervision of a physical therapist or physical therapy assistant, perform only delegated, selected, or routine tasks in specific situations. These duties include preparing the patient and the treatment area.

**Knowledge:** Customer and Personal Service, Therapy and Counseling, Education and Training, English Language, Medicine and Dentistry

**Skills:** Active Listening, Social Perceptiveness, Coordination, Monitoring, Service Orientation

## **Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors**

**Job Description:** Instruct or coach groups or individuals in exercise activities for the primary purpose of personal fitness. Demonstrate techniques and form, observe participants, and explain to them corrective measures necessary to improve their skills. Develop and implement individualized approaches to exercise.

**Knowledge:** Customer and Personal Service, English Language, Education and Training, Psychology

**Skills:** Instructing, Service Orientation, Speaking, Active Listening, Learning Strategies

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<sup>1</sup> The term "living wage" in Center of Excellence reports is calculated by averaging the self-sufficiency wages from the Insight Center's California Family Needs Calculator for each county in the subregion: <https://insightcced.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/>.

# Occupational Demand

The SCV/SML subregion employed 1,898 workers in physical education and recreation occupations in 2020 (Exhibit 1). The largest occupation is exercise trainers and group fitness instructors with 1,163 workers in 2020. This occupation is projected to grow by 1% over the next five years and has the greatest number of projected annual openings, 196.

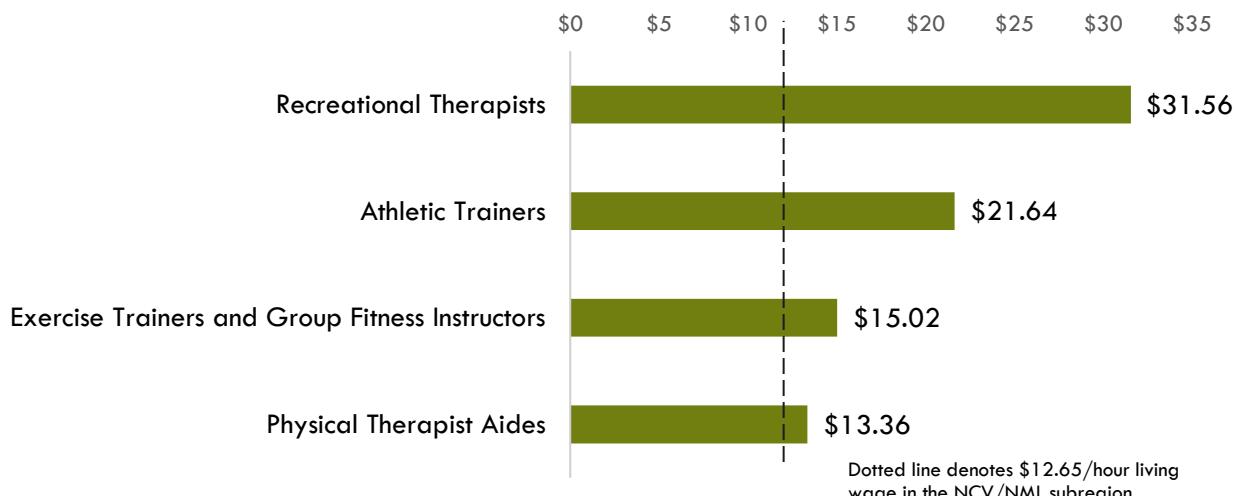
**Exhibit 1. Physical education and recreation employment and occupational projections in the SCV/SML subregion**

Occupation	2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	1,163	1,175	12	1%	196
Physical Therapist Aides	480	542	62	13%	72
Recreational Therapists	150	173	23	15%	17
Athletic Trainers	106	116	10	10%	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>2,005</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>295</b>

# Wages

Exhibit 2 shows the entry-level hourly wages of the physical education and recreation occupations. Recreational therapists earn the highest entry-level wage, \$31.56/hour in the subregion. Entry-level wages are derived from the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**Exhibit 2. Physical education and recreation entry-level wages in the SCV/SML subregion**



# Job Postings

There were 185 job postings for the four occupations in the SCV/SML subregion from September 2021 to February 2022.<sup>2</sup> The employers with the most job postings are listed in Exhibit 3.

<sup>2</sup> Other than occupation titles and job titles, the categories below can be counted one or multiple times per job posting, and across several areas in a single posting. For example, a skill can be counted in two different skill types, and an employer can indicate more than one education level.

**Exhibit 3. Top employers of physical education and recreation by number of job postings**

Employer	Job Postings	% Job Postings
Planet Fitness	9	6%
State of California	8	5%
Pro Pt	7	5%
State Center Community College District	6	4%
In Shape Health Clubs	5	3%
Best Buy	4	3%
Golden Bear Physical Therapy And Sports	4	3%
Xponential Fitness	4	3%
Adventist Health	3	2%
Hume Lake Christian Camp	3	2%

Exhibit 4 shows how job postings for the targeted occupations in the SCV/SML subregion are distributed across six O\*NET OnLine occupations. The occupational title fitness trainers and aerobics instructors is listed in 79 job postings. Note how this occupational title dominates the job posting results. Common job titles in postings include Physical Therapy Aide in 31 job postings, Fitness Trainer in nine job postings, and Athletic Trainer in eight job postings.

**Exhibit 4. Top occupational titles in job postings for physical education and recreation**

Occupational Title	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	79	43%
Physical Therapist Aides	52	28%
Athletic Trainers	29	16%
Recreational Therapists	21	11%
Art Therapists	2	1%
Music Therapists	2	1%

**Salaries**

Exhibit 5 shows the “Market Salaries” for physical education and recreation occupations that are calculated by Burning Glass which uses a machine learning model built off of millions of job postings every year, and accounts for adjustments based on locations, industry, skills, experience, education requirements, among other variables.

**Exhibit 5. Salaries for physical education and recreation occupations**

Market Salary Percentile	Salary Amount
10th Percentile	\$23,261
25th Percentile	\$26,724
50th Percentile	\$36,071
75th Percentile	\$48,371
90th Percentile	\$54,017

## **Education**

Of the 185 job postings, 106 listed an education level preferred for the positions being filled. Among those, 72% requested high school or vocational training, 32% requested a bachelor's degree and 9% requested an associate degree (Exhibit 6). A job posting can indicate more than one education level. Hence, the percentages shown in the chart below may total more than 100%.

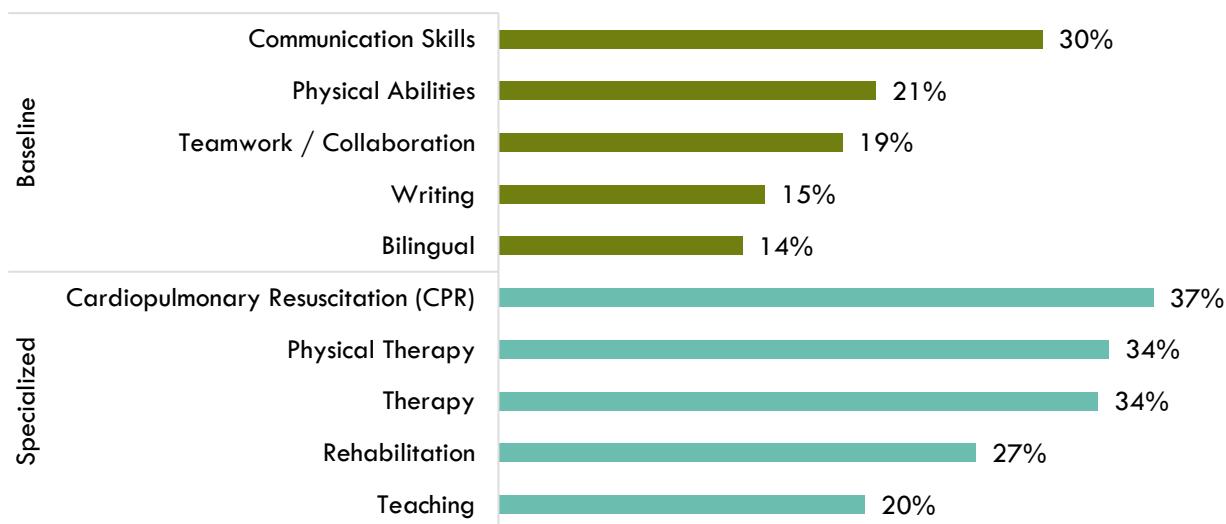
**Exhibit 6. Education levels requested in job postings for physical education and recreation**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Job Postings</b>	<b>% of Job Postings</b>
High school or vocational training	76	72%
Bachelor's degree	34	32%
Master's degree	10	9%
Associate's degree	1	1%

## **Baseline and Specialized Skills**

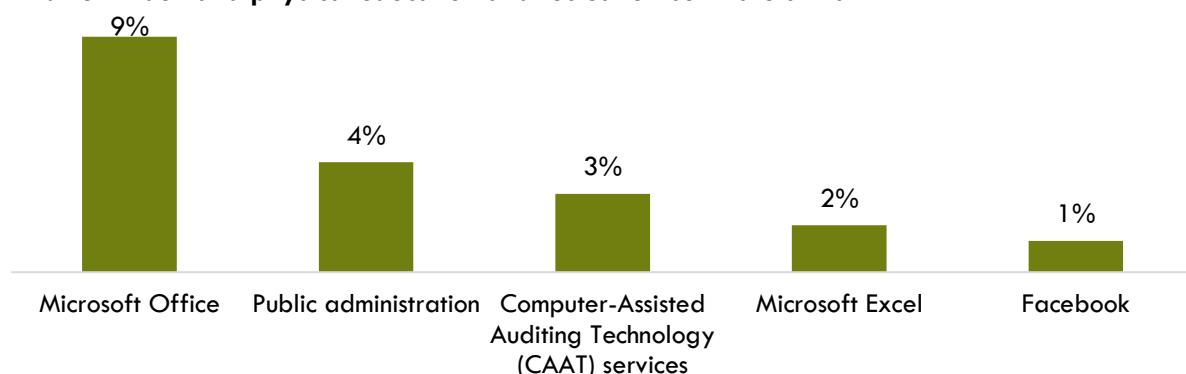
Exhibit 7 depicts the top baseline and specialized skills for the targeted occupations. The three most important baseline skills are communication skills, 30% of job postings, physical abilities, 21%, and teamwork / collaboration, 19%. The top three specialized skills are cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), 37% of job postings, physical therapy, 34%, and therapy, 34%.

**Exhibit 7. In-demand physical education and recreation baseline and specialized skills**

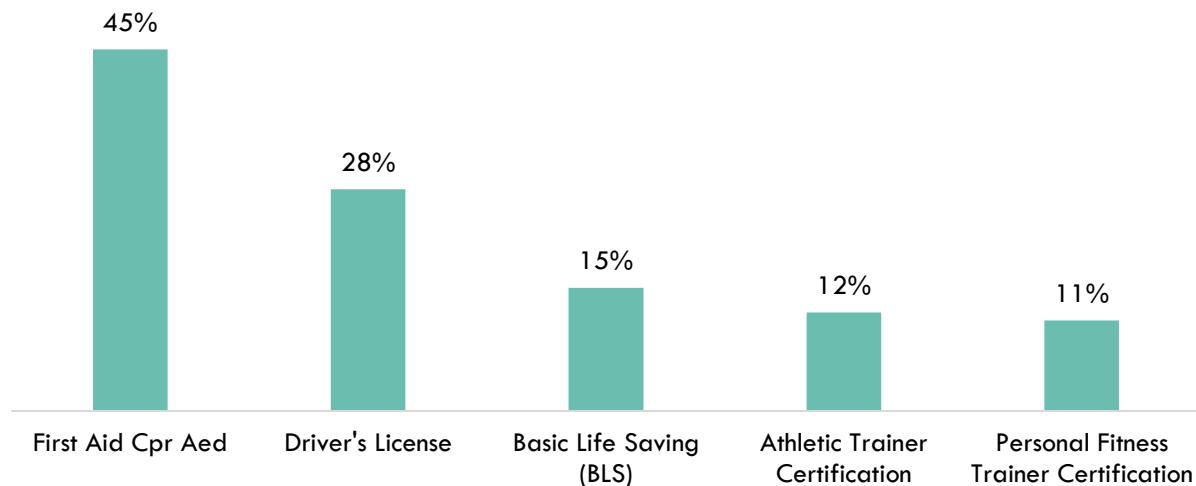


## **Software Skills**

Analysis also included the software skills most in demand by employers. Microsoft Office and Public administration were the top two software skills identified in job postings (Exhibit 8).

**Exhibit 8. In-demand physical education and recreation software skills****Certifications**

Of the 185 job postings, 98 contained certification data. Among those, 45% indicated a need for a first aid cpr aed. The next top certifications are a driver's license and Basic Life Saving (BLS) (Exhibit 9).

**Exhibit 9. Top physical education and recreation certifications requested in job postings**

## Education, Work Experience & Training

A high school diploma or equivalent is typically required for exercise trainers and group fitness instructors and physical therapist aides. A bachelor's degree is typically required for recreational therapists and Athletic Trainers (Exhibit 10).

**Exhibit 10. Education, work experience, training, and Current Population Survey results for physical education and recreation occupations<sup>3</sup>**

Occupation	Typical Entry-level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training	CPS
Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term	28.6%
Physical Therapist Aides	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term	60.2%
Recreational Therapists	Bachelor's degree	None	None	16.0%
Athletic Trainers	Bachelor's degree	None	None	20.2%

## Supply

Analysis of program data from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart included the TOP codes and titles: 083520 - Fitness Trainer and 122800 - Athletic Training and Sports Medicine. Analysis of the last three years of data shows that, on average, 21 awards were conferred in the Central Valley/Mother Lode region each year (Exhibit 11).

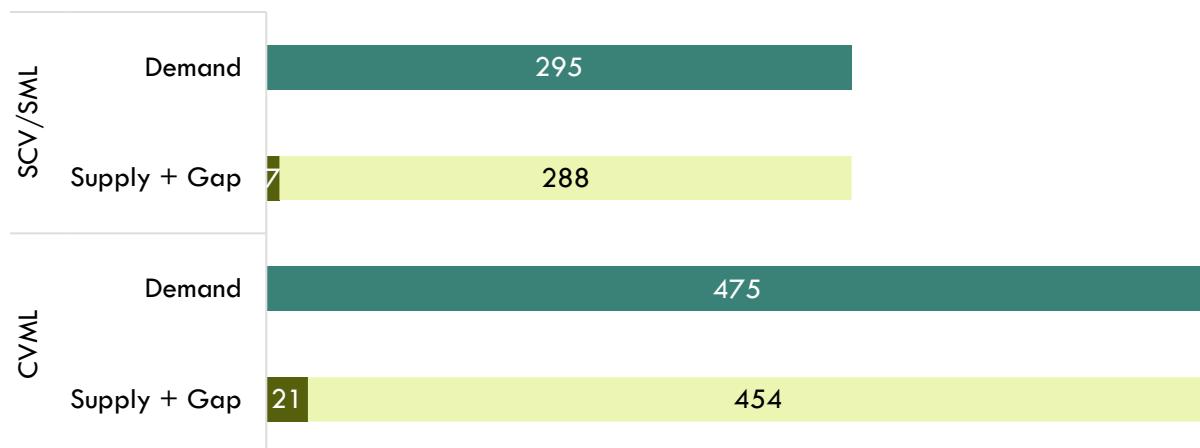
**Exhibit 11. Postsecondary supply for physical education and recreation occupations in the region**

TOP/CIP Code- Title	College	Associate Degree	Certificate 18 < 30 Semester Units	Certificate 30 < 60 Semester Units	Subtotal
083520 - Fitness Trainer	San Joaquin Delta		3	2	5
122800 - Athletic Training and Sports Medicine	Modesto Junior	9			9
	Sequoias	7			7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>

There is an undersupply of 288 physical education and recreation workers in the SCV/SML subregion and 454 workers in the region (Exhibit 12).

**Exhibit 12. Physical education and recreation workforce demand (annual job openings), postsecondary supply of students (awards), and additional students needed to fill gap in the SCV/SML subregion and region**

<sup>3</sup> "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/>.



## Student Outcomes

Exhibit 13 summarizes employment and wage outcomes from the California Community College Chancellor's Cal-PASS Plus LaunchBoard for the TOP code related to physical education and recreation. Of note, 15 athletic training and sports medicine students transferred.

**Exhibit 13. Subregional metrics for the TOP code related to physical education and recreation**

Metric	Fitness Trainer	Athletic Training and Sports Medicine
	083520	122800
Students Who Got a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	*	*
Number of Students Who Transferred	*	15
Job Closely Related to Field of Study	*	*
Median Change in Earnings	*	*
Attained a Living Wage	*	*

\* denotes data not available.

## Conclusion

The entry-level wages of the four occupations exceed the SCV/SML subregion's average living wage. There were 185 job postings in the past six months for occupations related to physical education and recreation in the subregion. Analysis of skills and certification requirements in job postings indicates:

- The top baseline skill is communication skills, and the top specialized skill is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- The top software skill is Microsoft Office.
- The top certification is a first aid cpr aed.

There is an undersupply of trained workers, a shortage of 288 in the SCV/SML subregion and 454 in the region.

## Recommendation

Based on these findings, it is recommended that College of the Sequoias work with the regional directors, the college's advisory board, and local industry in the expansion and development of programs to address the shortage of physical education and recreation workers in the region.

# Appendix A: Methodology & Data Sources

## Data Sources

Labor market and educational supply data compiled in this report derive from a variety of sources. Data were drawn from external sources, including the Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems Data Mart and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Below is the summary of the data sources found in this study.

Data Type	Source
Labor Market Information/Population Estimates and Projections/Educational Attainment	Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (EMSI). EMSI occupational employment data are based on final EMSI industry data and final EMSI staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (Self-Employed and Extended Proprietors). Occupational wage estimates also affected by county-level EMSI earnings by industry: <a href="http://economicmodeling.com">economicmodeling.com</a> .
Typical Education Level and On-the-job Training	Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data: <a href="https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm">https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm</a> .
Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Estimates	California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division: <a href="http://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov">labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov</a> .
Job Posting and Skills Data	Burning Glass: <a href="http://burning-glass.com/">burning-glass.com/</a> .
Additional Education Requirements/ Employer Preferences	The O*NET Job Zone database includes over 900 occupations as well as information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities and interests associated with specific occupations: <a href="http://onetonline.org">onetonline.org</a> .

## Key Terms and Concepts

**Annual Job Openings:** Annual openings are calculated by dividing the number of years in the projection period by total job openings.

**Education Attainment Level:** The highest education attainment level of workers age 25 years or older.

**Employment Estimate:** The total number of workers currently employed.

**Employment Projections:** Projections of employment are calculated by a proprietary Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (EMSI) formula that includes historical employment and economic indicators along with national, state and local trends.

**Living Wage:** The cost of living in a specific community or region for one adult and no children. The cost increases with the addition of children.

**Occupation:** An occupation is a grouping of job titles that have a similar set of activities or tasks that employees perform.

**Percent Change:** Rate of growth or decline in the occupation for the projected period; this does not factor in replacement openings.

**Replacements:** Estimate of job openings resulting from workers retiring or otherwise permanently leaving an occupation. Workers entering an occupation often need training. These replacement needs, added to job openings due to growth, may be used to assess the minimum number of workers who will need to be trained for an occupation.

**Total Job Openings (New + Replacements):** Sum of projected growth (new jobs) and replacement needs. When an occupation is expected to lose jobs, or retain the current employment level, number of openings will equal replacements.

**Typical Education Requirement:** represents the typical education level most workers need to enter an occupation.

**Typical On-The-Job Training:** indicates the typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the skills needed in the occupation.