

LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

FOR PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION



C·O·E

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS AND AIDES IN THE GREATER SACRAMENTO REGION

North (Greater Sacramento)
Center of Excellence

AUGUST 2022

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SUMMARY

The North (Greater Sacramento) of Excellence for Labor Market Research prepared this report to provide a labor market analysis of educational supply and occupational demand for middle-skilled career pathways in the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion. This report aims to determine if demand in the local labor market is unmet by the supply from existing community college programs and other postsecondary training providers.

This report primarily focuses on training that leads to jobs in middle-skilled occupations - jobs that typically require education beyond a high school diploma but less than a Bachelor's degree - but may include higher-skilled occupations for training pathways that lead to a bachelor's degree. Lowered skilled occupations are rarely considered in this analysis due to the lessened barriers for entry-level work, such as no formal education and on-the-job training requirements.

Key findings include:

- The North (Greater Sacramento) subregion held just over 750 jobs for physical therapist (PT) assistants and aides in 2020. PT assistant and aide jobs are projected to increase by 21% over the next five years, adding more than 150 new jobs to the subregion by 2025.
- Over the next five years, PT assistant and aide jobs are projected to have 130 annual openings in the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion.
- Analysis of wage data shows that PT assistants earn \$17 above the subregion's living wage of \$14.53 per hour. Wages for PT aides are below the living wage for a single adult.
- Awards data analysis shows that North (Greater Sacramento) training providers conferred an average of 15 associate degree physical therapy assistant programs over the last three academic years.

Recommendations include:

- The North (Greater Sacramento) Center of Excellence recommends that local community colleges interested in developing new physical therapist assistant training programs identify and work with local employers to substantiate the need for additional training.
- Community colleges should also consider offering bridge programs - from PT aide to PT assistant - to support incumbent workers transitioning from a lower wage job into one that pays a living wage.
- The North (Greater Sacramento) Center of Excellence recommends moving forward with new program development.

INTRODUCTION

The North (Greater Sacramento) Center of Excellence (COE) was asked to provide labor market information for a proposed program at a regional community college. This report focuses on the following Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) occupations and codes:

- These middle-skill occupations require more education and training beyond a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree:
 - Physical Therapist Assistant (31-2021)
 - Physical Therapist Aide (31-2022)

A review of related programs revealed the following Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) title(s) and code(s) are appropriate for inclusion in this report:

- Physical Therapist Assistant (1222.00)

The corresponding Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) title(s) and code(s) are:

- Physical Therapist Assistant (51.0806)
- Physical Therapist Technician/Aide (51.2605)

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

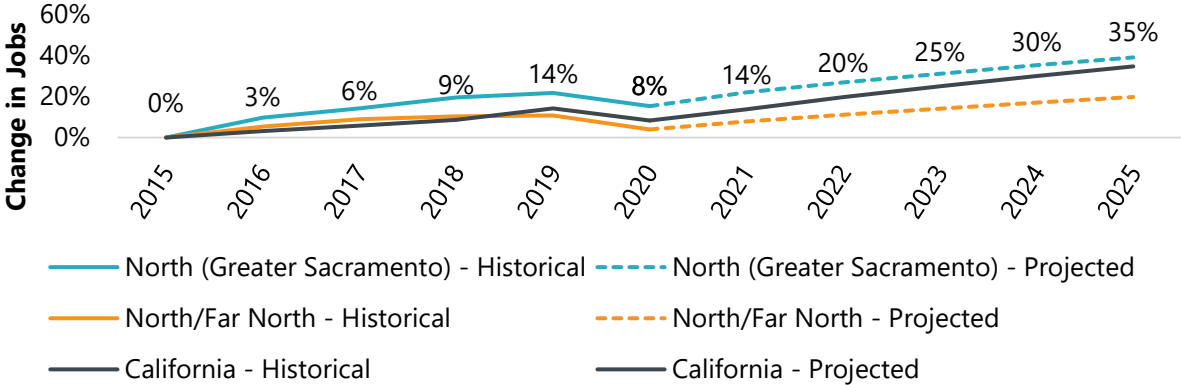
Exhibit 1 summarizes the five-year projected job growth for middle-skill and high-skill occupations in the North, North/Far North, and California.

Exhibit 1. Employment and projected demand, 2020-2025

Occupation	2020 Jobs	2025 Jobs	2020-2025 Change	2020-2025 % Change	2020-2025 Annual Openings
Physical Therapist Assistants	436	545	110	25%	80
Physical Therapist Aides	330	378	48	14%	51
North (Greater Sacramento)	766	923	157	21%	131
Physical Therapist Assistants	621	745	125	20%	106
Physical Therapist Aides	518	567	48	9%	82
North/Far North	1,139	1,312	173	15%	188
Physical Therapist Assistants	5,918	7,833	1,915	32%	1,177
Physical Therapist Aides	6,909	8,107	1,199	17%	1,121
California	12,826	15,940	3,114	24%	2,298

Exhibit 2 compares the percent change in jobs between 2015 through 2020 and the projected changes through 2025. The rate of change is indexed to the total number of jobs in 2015.

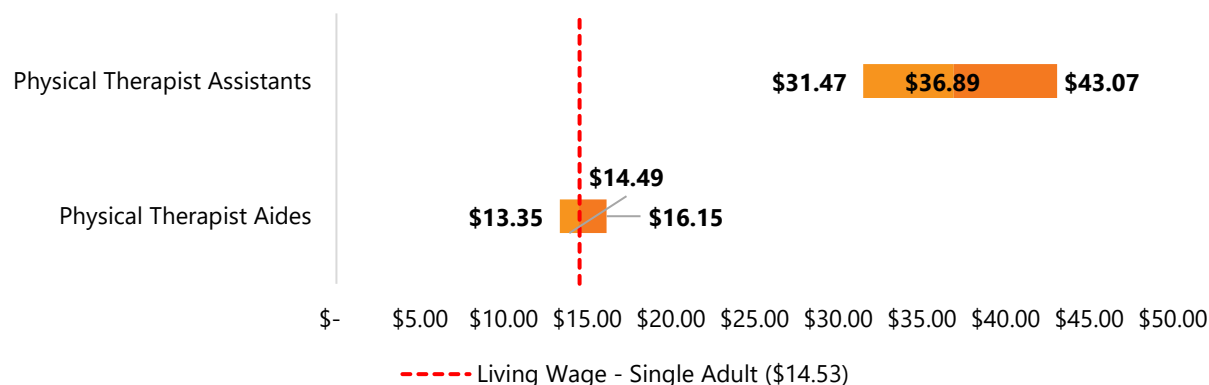
Exhibit 2. Changes in employment, 2015-2025



WAGES

Exhibit 3 compares the entry-level, median, and experienced wages for the selected occupations to the North (Greater Sacramento) living wage for a single adult - \$14.53 per hour.¹

Exhibit 3. Comparison of wages by occupation, 2020



JOB POSTINGS

This section analyzes recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight into recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical trends.

The North COE identified 479 online job postings for the selected occupations in the Greater Sacramento subregion. Job posting data comes from Burning Glass Labor Market Insights and represents new listings posted online within the last year, from August 1, 2021, to July 31, 2022.

Occupations and Job Titles

Exhibit 4 details the number of online job postings for the selected occupations.

Exhibit 4. Number of job postings by occupation

Occupation	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
Physical Therapist Assistants	359	75%
Physical Therapist Aides	120	25%
Total Job Postings	479	100%

¹ Living wage is defined as the level of income a single adult with no children must earn to meet basic needs, including food, housing, transportation, healthcare, taxes, and other miscellaneous basic needs. The 25th-percentile and 75th-percentile hourly wages are used as proxy for entry-level and experienced-level wages.

Exhibit 5 shows the top 10 job titles with the most job postings and the share. All job postings included a job title.

Exhibit 5. Top jobs titles by occupation

Top Job Titles for PT Assistants	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
Physical Therapist Assistant	113	31%
Physical Therapist Assistant Physical Therapist Assistant	18	5%
Physical Therapist Assistant Physical Therapist Assistant For Home Health	16	4%
Physical Therapist Assistant - Physical Therapist Assistant	11	3%
Physical Therapist Assistant Physical Therapist Assistant - Skilled Nursing Facility	9	3%
Physical Therapist Assistant/Physical Therapist Assistant	7	2%
Physical Therapist Assistant/Physical Therapist Assistant- PRN	6	2%
Physical Therapist Assistant - Skilled	5	1%
Physical Therapist Assistant, Physical Therapist Assistant	5	1%
Therapist/Physical Therapist Assistant/ /Physical Therapist Assistant/Physical Therapist Assistant	5	1%
Top Job Titles for PT Aides	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
Physical Therapy Aide	59	49%
Physical Therapy Aide/Clerk	15	13%
Physical Therapy Technician	14	12%
Physical Therapy Aide/Clerk-Front Desk	5	4%
Physical Therapy Aide/Patient Care	3	3%
Physical Therapy Technician/Aide	3	3%

PRN Physical Therapy Aide	3	3%
Physical Therapy Aide/Clerk, Pediatrics	2	2%
Physical Therapy Aide/Front Office Staff	2	2%
Physical Therapy Aide/Receptionist	2	2%

Employers

Exhibit 6 shows the top 10 employers with the most job postings for the selected occupations.

Exhibit 6. Employers with the most job postings

Employers for PT Assistants	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
Sutter Health	16	4%
FeldCare Connects	16	4%
Aegis Therapies	16	4%
Orthopaedic & Neurological Rehabilitation (ONR)	15	4%
Burger Rehabilitation Systems	14	4%
Genesis Rehab Services	13	4%
AccentCare	8	2%
ProHealth Home Care, Inc.	6	2%
Resource Center	5	1%
HealthPRO Heritage	5	1%

Employers for PT Aides	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
Burger Rehabilitation Systems	24	20%
VibrantCare Rehabilitation	8	7%
Sutter Health	4	3%
Schaack Physical Therapy	4	3%

Spine Sport Physical Therapy	3	3%
Rocklin Physical Therapy	3	3%
PT Solutions Physical Therapy	3	3%
Lincoln Physical And Occupational Therapy	3	3%
Golden Bear Physical Therapy And Sports	3	3%
Alves & Martinez Physical Therapy And Athletic Performance	3	3%

Certifications, Skills, and Experience

Exhibit 7 shows the most relevant certifications requested by employers by occupation.

Exhibit 7. Most in-demand certifications

Certifications for PT Assistants	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
First Aid/CPR/AED or Basic Life Saving or Basic Cardiac Life Support or American Heart Association Certifications	173	48%
American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Certification	42	12%
Registered Dietitian	6	2%
Continuing Education Units (CEUs) Certificates	3	1%
National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)	2	1%
Certified Physical Therapy Assistant	2	1%
Certifications for PT Aides	Job Postings	Share of Job Postings
First Aid/CPR/AED	6	5%
Basic Life Saving (BLS)	3	3%
Physical Therapy Aide	2	2%

Exhibit 8 shows the top 10 skills across three categories for the studied occupations: specialized, human-centered, and technical skills.

Exhibit 8. Most in-demand specialized skills

PT Assistants		
Top 10 Specialized Skills	Top 10 Human-Centered Skills	Top 10 Software Skills
Physical Therapy	Communication Skills	Word Processing
Rehabilitation	Problem Solving	PrognosIS
Patient Care	Writing	Microsoft Excel
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	Computer Literacy	Microsoft Office
Treatment Planning	Critical Thinking	Facebook
Patient/Family Education and Instruction	English	Microsoft Word
Patient Treatment	Written Communication	Google Docs
Home Health	Creativity	Microsoft Outlook
Therapy	Verbal / Oral Communication	Microsoft PowerPoint
Prosthetic	Organizational Skills	
PT Aides		
Top 10 Specialized Skills	Top 10 Human-Centered Skills	Top 10 Software Skills
Physical Therapy	Communication Skills	Microsoft Office
Therapy	Multi-Tasking	Microsoft Excel
Rehabilitation	Detail-Oriented	Microsoft Word
Customer Service	Energetic	Embarcadero Software
Therapeutic Exercise	Teamwork / Collaboration	Google Drive
Patient Assistance	Telephone Skills	PrognosIS

Patient Treatment	Listening	Word Processing
Cleaning	Organizational Skills	
Anatomy	Writing	
Data Entry	Preventive Maintenance	

Exhibit 9 shows employers' minimum level of education for job postings for the selected occupations. Between 43% and 83% of job postings did not include a preferred education level.

Exhibit 9. Employer-preferred minimum education levels

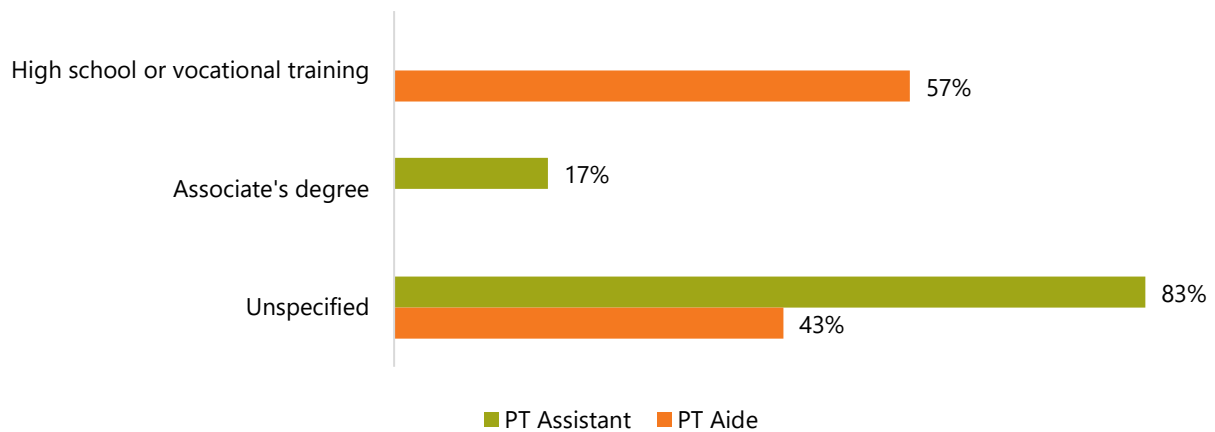
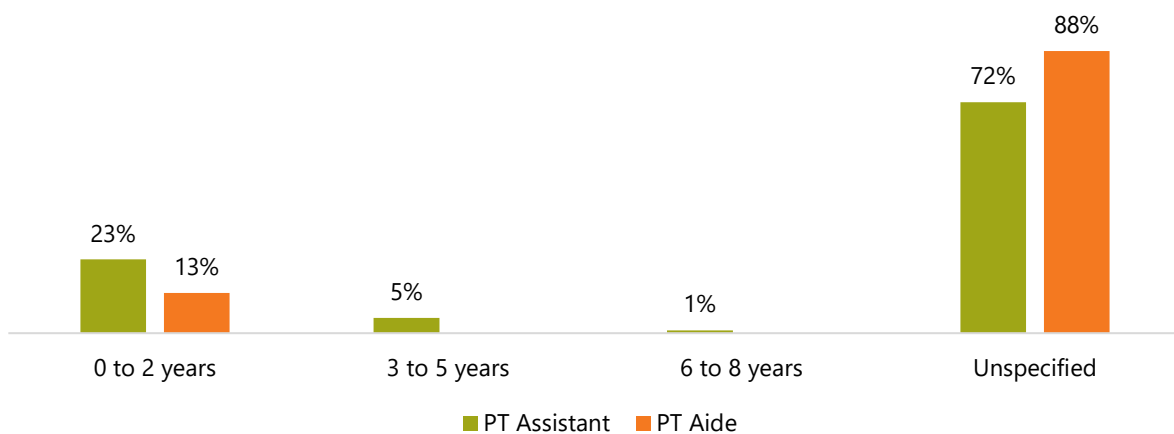


Exhibit 10 shows the experience levels required by employers for job postings for the selected occupations. Between 72% and 88% of job postings did not include a preferred education level.

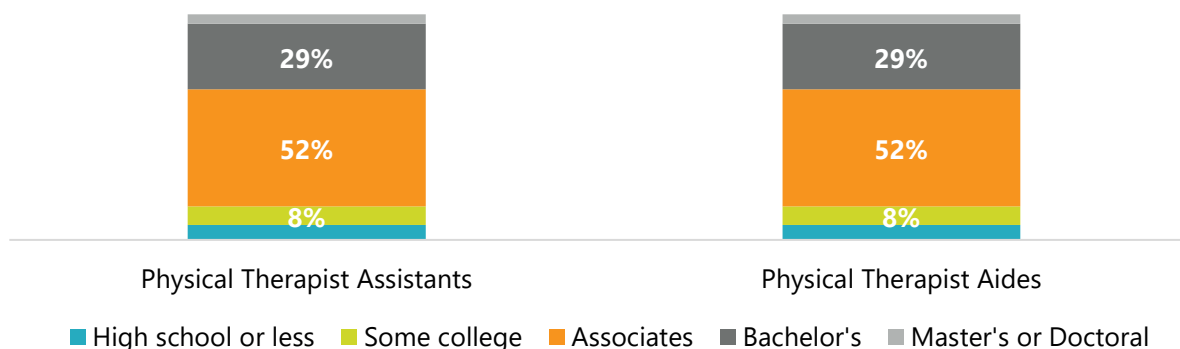
Exhibit 10. Employer-preferred experience levels



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics collected data on education achieved by workers employed in occupations. Exhibit 11 shows the national-level educational attainment of the current workforce in the selected occupations.

Exhibit 11. National worker educational attainment for selected occupations, 2019



The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which the BLS publishes projections data. Exhibit 12 shows the selected occupations' entry-level job requirements.

Exhibit 12. Typical education, work experience, and on-the-job training requirements

Occupation	Typical Entry-level Education	Work Experience Required	On-the-job Training Required
Physical Therapist Assistants	Associate's degree	None	None
Physical Therapist Aides	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training

Licensing and Certifications

Physical therapy assistant is a licensed occupation in the state of California. The [Physical Therapy Board of California](#) (or PTBC), under the Department of Consumer Affairs, oversees the licensing process for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in California.

The [Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education](#) (CAPTE) is the accreditation body for entry-level education programs for physical therapists and physical therapist assistants in the United States. CAPTE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards issued in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. Exhibit 13 shows the TOP and CIP codes for educational programs related to the selected occupations.

Exhibit 13. TOP and CIP codes for training programs related to the selected occupations

TOP Programs and Codes	Aligned CIP Programs and Codes
Physical Therapist Assistant (1222.00)	Physical Therapist Assistant (51.0806) Physical Therapist Technician/Aide (51.2605)

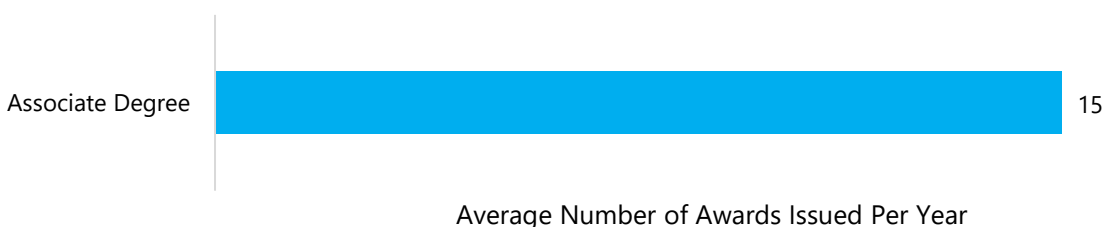
Community College Supply

Exhibits 14 and 15 compare the average number of certificates and degrees from selected community college programs over the last three academic years.

Exhibit 14. Annual average community college awards by program, 2018-19 through 2020-21

Program - TOP Code	College	Annual Awards 2018-19	Annual Awards 2019-20	Annual Awards 2020-21	3-Yr Annual Awards Average
Physical Therapist Assistant (1222.00)	Sacramento City	23	3	20	15
	Grand Total	23	3	20	15

Exhibit 15. Annual average community college awards by type, 2018-19 through 2020-21



FINDINGS

- This report focuses on two occupations in the physical therapy assistant training pathway: physical therapist assistants and physical therapist aides. Together, these occupations form the physical therapy, or PT, assistant job group.
- The North (Greater Sacramento) subregion held 766 PT assistant jobs in 2020. These jobs are projected to increase by 21% over the next five years, adding 157 new jobs to the subregion by 2025.
- PT assistant jobs are projected to grow similarly in the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion as in California.
- Over the next five years, PT assistant jobs are projected to have 131 annual openings in the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion.
- Wage data shows that physical therapist assistants earn \$17 above the subregion's living wage of \$14.53 per hour, and physical therapist aides earn slightly below the hourly living wage.
- According to real-time labor market information, there were about 479 online job postings for PT assistant occupations between August 1, 2021, and July 31, 2022. Three-quarters of the job postings (n = 359) were for physical therapy assistants.
- Sixty percent of incumbent workers in PT assistant jobs have educational attainment levels consistent with community college offerings (some college or associate degrees). Another 29% of workers in these occupations hold a bachelor's degree.
- Sacramento City College offers the subregion's only CAPTE-accredited physical therapist assistant entry-level training program in the North (Greater Sacramento) area. Sacramento City conferred an average of 15 associate degrees over the last three academic years (2018-19 through 2020-21).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on a comparison of occupational demand to postsecondary supply, there is an undersupply of trained physical therapy assistants and aides in the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion.
- The North (Greater Sacramento) Center of Excellence recommends that local community colleges interested in developing new physical therapist assistant training programs identify and work with local employers to substantiate the need for additional training.
- Community colleges should also consider offering bridge programs - from PT aide to PT assistant - to support incumbent workers transitioning from a lower wage job into one that pays a living wage.

- The North (Greater Sacramento) Center of Excellence recommends moving forward with new program development.

New Program Recommendation		
Move forward with the new program	Proceed with caution	A new program is not recommended
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Program Modification	
Move forward with program modifications	Program modifications are not recommended
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX A. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

This report identified Occupations using the Center of Excellence TOP-to-CIP-to-SOC crosswalk and O*Net OnLine. This report's findings were determined using labor market data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Census Bureau data from Emsi, and jobs posting data from Burning Glass.

Lightcast (Formerly EMSI/Burning Glass) 2022.3; QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed. <https://www.economicmodeling.com/>. *Note: 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).*

Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation, 2016-2017. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm#>.

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). National Center for Education Statistics. U.S. Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>.

Labor Market Information Division. California Employment Development Department. <https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/>.

Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. <https://datamart.cccco.edu/>.

O*NET OnLine. U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (DOL ETA). <https://www.onetonline.org/>.

Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. The University of Washington. <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/>

"Taxonomy of Programs." California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. June 2012, 6th Edition. <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/About-Us/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Academic-Affairs/What-we-do/Curriculum-and-Instruction-Unit/Files/TOPmanual6200909corrected12513pdf.ashx>

"TOP-CIP-SOC Crosswalk." Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research. June 2021 Edition. <http://coecc.net/>

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.

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

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FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CONTACT:

Ebony J. Benzing, Research
Manager

North (Greater Sacramento)
Center of Excellence

Ebony.Benzing@losrios.edu