










Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

March 2026

Summary

| NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION? | EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP? | AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE? | EXPECTED LEVEL(S) OF EDUCATION |
|---|--|--|--|
|  Proceed with Caution |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some College or Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> HS Diploma or Equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than a HS Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship |
| SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION? | NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING | NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS | |
|   | <p>HIGH</p>  | <p>HIGH</p>  | |

The San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) developed this brief to assist the region’s community colleges with strategic planning and program development. *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* include “Barbers” and “Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists.” According to available data, *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 1,009 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 289 annual job openings), and 12 institutions in San Diego County supply 580 awards for these occupations. Entry-level wages are below the living wage. This brief recommends that the colleges proceed with caution when developing a new program for these occupations and supports a program modification because 1) a high number of annual job openings exist for these occupations; 2) there is a supply gap in San Diego County, 3) there is a higher number of non-community-college institutions that provide training for these occupations, however 4) entry-level, median, and experienced wages are below the living wage. Additionally, colleges should note that the percentage of students who complete a related program and earn a living wage is generally lower than students who complete Career Education programs in general.

Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational codes in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)¹ system:

- **Barbers** (SOC 39-5011): Provide barbering services, such as cutting, trimming, shampooing, and styling hair; trimming beards; or giving shaves.
- **Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists** (SOC 39-5012): Provide beauty services, such as cutting, coloring, and styling hair, and massaging and treating scalp. May shampoo hair, apply makeup, dress wigs, remove hair, and provide nail and skincare services.

For the purpose of this report, these occupations are referred to as *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations*.

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2024 and 2029, businesses in San Diego County will need to hire 1,009 employees annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example (Exhibit 1). Most of this labor market demand comes from Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists, which are projected to have the most annual job openings with 889 openings each year between 2024 and 2029.

Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations (2024-2029)²

| Occupational Title | 2024 Jobs | 2029 Jobs | 2024 - 2029 Net Jobs Change | 2024 - 2029 % Net Jobs Change | Annual Job Openings (Demand) |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists | 6,130 | 6,479 | 349 | 6% | 889 |
| Barbers | 923 | 1,010 | 87 | 9% | 120 |
| Total | 7,053 | 7,489 | 436 | 6% | 1,009 |

¹ The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>.

² Lightcast 2025.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Earnings

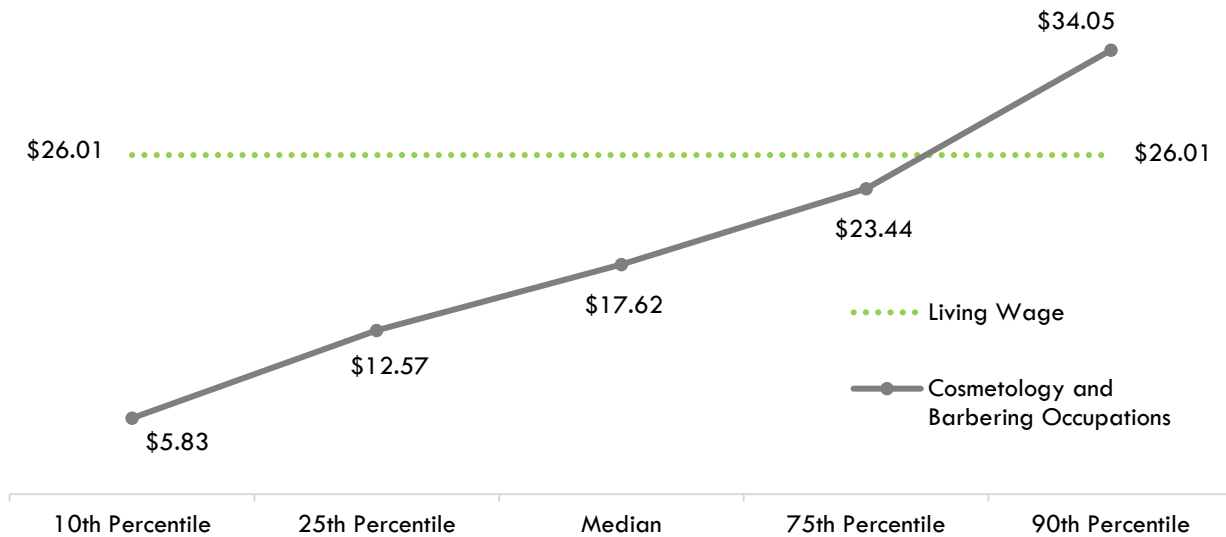
According to traditional³ labor market information (LMI), entry-level hourly earnings for *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* range from \$9.55 to \$15.59 (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations in San Diego County⁴

| Occupational Title | Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile) | Median Hourly Earnings | Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile) |
|--|---|------------------------|---|
| Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists | \$15.59 | \$17.65 | \$25.24 |
| Barbers | \$9.55 | \$17.60 | \$21.65 |

On average, the entry-level hourly earnings for employed *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* are \$12.57—or \$26,145.60 annual salary⁵; this is less than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$26.01 per hour (Exhibit 3).⁶

Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings⁷ for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations in San Diego County⁸



³ Traditional LMI is generally historical data captured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or the California Employment Development Department (EDD). It does not account for recent technological, economic, or legislative changes that may affect labor market demand and wages.

⁴ Lightcast 2025.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

⁵ Annualized salaries assume a full-time position with 2,080 hours. Multiplying the hourly wage with 2,080 yields the annual salary.

⁶ Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024.

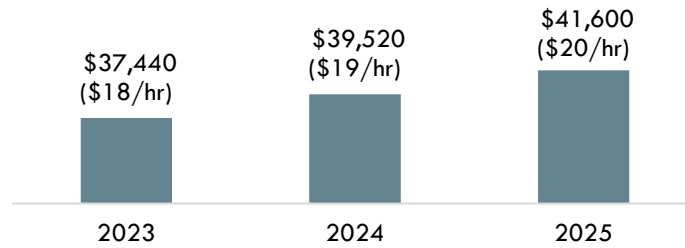
selfsufficiencystandard.org/California.

⁷ 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.

⁸ Lightcast 2025.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

In online job postings, employers advertised between \$18 to \$20 per hour between January 1, 2023 and December 30, 2025 for *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* in San Diego County (Exhibit 4).⁹ This suggests that employer-advertised wages in online postings are higher than entry-level wages reported in traditional labor market information.

Exhibit 4: Entry-Level Advertised Salaries in Online Job Postings for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations in San Diego County (2023-2025)



Expected Level of Education

According to traditional LMI (data reported to EDD and BLS), *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* have a national educational attainment of a [postsecondary non-degree award](#) (Exhibit 5).¹⁰

Exhibit 5: National Educational Attainment for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations¹¹

| Occupational Title | Typical Entry-Level Education |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Barbers | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists | Postsecondary non-degree award |

⁹ Lightcast 2025.04; "Job Posting Analytics." 2023-2025.

¹⁰ Lightcast 2025.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

¹¹ Lightcast 2025.04; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Online job postings between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025 in San Diego County had a [high school or GED](#) as the most requested educational requirement for *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations*; however, employers also expected the following certifications (Exhibit 6).¹²

**Exhibit 6: Top Certifications for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations
in San Diego County in Online Job Postings (2023-2025)¹³**

1. Barber License
2. Cosmetology License

Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. There is [one](#) TOP code and [five](#) CIP codes related to *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Related TOP and CIP Codes for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations¹⁴

| TOP or CIP Code | TOP or CIP Program Title |
|-----------------|---|
| TOP 3007.00 | Cosmetology and Barbering |
| CIP 12.0401 | Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General |
| CIP 12.0402 | Barbering/Barber |
| CIP 12.0407 | Hair Styling/Stylist and Hair Design |
| CIP 12.0412 | Salon/Beauty Salon Management/Manager |
| CIP 12.0499 | Cosmetology and Related Personal Grooming Arts, Other |

According to TOP data, [two](#) community colleges supply the region with awards for these occupations: [MiraCosta College](#) and [San Diego City College](#). According to CIP data, [10](#) non-community-college institutions supply the region with awards: [Associated Barber College of San Diego](#), [Bellus Academy-Chula Vista](#), [Bellus Academy-El Cajon](#), [Bellus Academy-Poway](#), [California Barber and Beauty College](#), [California Hair Design Academy](#), [Palomar Institute of Cosmetology](#), [Paul Mitchell the School-San Diego](#), [Riggins Urban Barber College](#), and [Southern California College of Barber and Beauty](#) (Exhibit 8).

¹² Lightcast 2025.04; "Job Posting Analytics." 2023-2025.

¹³ Lightcast 2025.04; "Job Posting Analytics." 2023-2025.

¹⁴ This brief uses a conservative estimate of program supply and only calculates awards from the TOP code listed in Exhibit 7.

**Exhibit 8: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions
(Program Year 2020-21 Through Program Year 2023-24 Average)**

| TOP6 or CIP Code | TOP6 or CIP Program Title | 3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24) | Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY20-21 to PY22-23) | Total Average Supply (PY20-21 to PY23-24) |
|------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 3007.00 | Cosmetology and Barbering | 51 | 0 | 51 |
| | MiraCosta | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificate 30 < 60 units | 0 | 0 | |
| | San Diego City | 51 | 0 | |
| | • Associate Degree | 6 | 0 | |
| | • Certificate 30 < 60 units | 11 | 0 | |
| | • Certificate 16 < 30 units | 34 | 0 | |
| 12.0401 | Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General | 0 | 243 | 243 |
| | Bellus Academy-Chula Vista | 0 | 25 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 25 | |
| | Bellus Academy-El Cajon | 0 | 13 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 13 | |
| | Bellus Academy-Poway | 0 | 41 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 41 | |
| | California Hair Design Academy | 0 | 29 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 29 | |
| | Palomar Institute of Cosmetology | 0 | 45 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 45 | |
| | Paul Mitchell the School-San Diego | 0 | 84 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 8 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 76 | |
| | Southern California College of Barber and Beauty | 0 | 6 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 6 | |

| TOP6 or CIP Code | TOP6 or CIP Program Title | 3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24) | Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY20-21 to PY22-23) | Total Average Supply (PY20-21 to PY23-24) |
|------------------|--|--|--|---|
| 12.0402 | Barbering/Barber | 0 | 248 | 248 |
| | Associated Barber College of San Diego | 0 | 57 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 57 | |
| | Bellus Academy-Chula Vista | 0 | 48 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 19 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 29 | |
| | Bellus Academy-El Cajon | 0 | 7 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 7 | |
| | Bellus Academy-Poway | 0 | 41 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 28 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 13 | |
| | California Barber and Beauty College | 0 | 26 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 26 | |
| | California Hair Design Academy | 0 | 15 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 15 | |
| | Paul Mitchell the School-San Diego | 0 | 14 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 14 | |
| | Riggins Urban Barber College | 0 | 26 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 25 | |
| | • Certificates 1 > year | 0 | 1 | |
| | Southern California College of Barber and Beauty | 0 | 14 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 11 | |
| | • Certificates 1 > year | 0 | 3 | |

| TOP6 or CIP Code | TOP6 or CIP Program Title | 3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24) | Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY20-21 to PY22-23) | Total Average Supply (PY20-21 to PY23-24) |
|------------------|---|--|--|---|
| 12.0407 | Hair Styling/Stylist and Hair Design | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Bellus Academy-Chula Vista | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 0 | |
| | Bellus Academy-El Cajon | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 0 | |
| | Bellus Academy-Poway | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificates 2 < 4 years | 0 | 0 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 0 | |
| 12.0499 | Cosmetology and Related Personal Grooming Arts, Other | 0 | 38 | 38 |
| | Bellus Academy-Chula Vista | 0 | 16 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 16 | |
| | Bellus Academy-El Cajon | 0 | 9 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 9 | |
| | Bellus Academy-Poway | 0 | 13 | |
| | • Certificates 1 < 2 years | 0 | 13 | |
| | | | Total | 580 |

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand with labor supply¹⁵ suggests that there is a **supply gap** for these occupations in San Diego County, with **1,009** annual openings and **580** awards. Comparatively, there are **11,844** annual openings in California and **6,850** awards, suggesting that there is a **supply gap** across the state (Exhibit 9).¹⁶

Exhibit 9: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

| | Demand (Annual Openings) | Supply (Annual Awards) | Supply Gap or Oversupply |
|------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| San Diego | 1,009 | 580 | 429 |
| California | 11,844 | 6,850 | 4,994 |

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

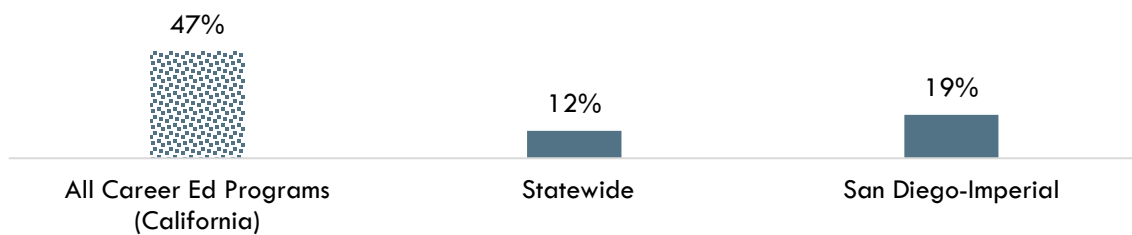
¹⁵ Labor supply can be found from two different sources: Lightcast or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. Lightcast uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

¹⁶ "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coecc.net/our-resources.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

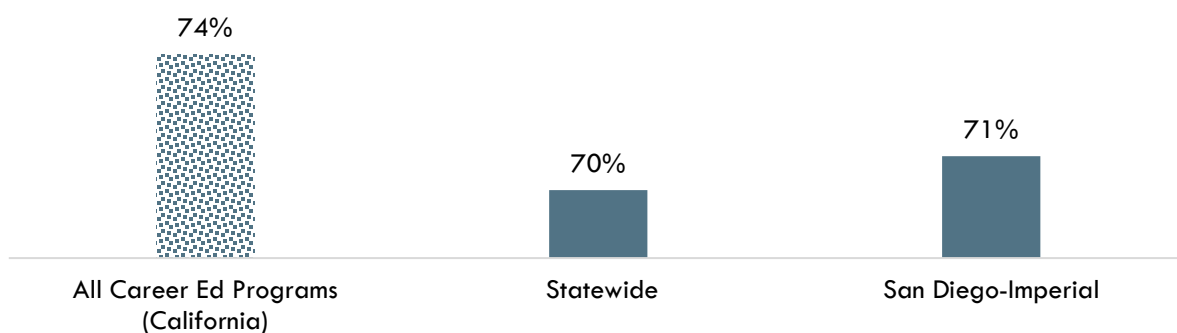
According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 19 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a Cosmetology and Barbering (TOP 3007.00) program, compared to 12 percent statewide and 47 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 10).¹⁷

**Exhibit 10: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage in
Cosmetology and Barbering (TOP 3007.00), PY2022-23¹⁸**



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 71 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a Cosmetology and Barbering (TOP 3007.00) program, compared to 70 percent statewide and 74 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 11).¹⁹

**Exhibit 11: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study in
Cosmetology and Barbering (TOP 3007.00), PY2021-22²⁰**



¹⁷ DataVista, California Community Colleges, datavista.cccco.edu/.

¹⁸ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2022-23. Among completers and skills builders who exited, the percentage of students who attained a living wage.

¹⁹ DataVista, California Community Colleges, datavista.cccco.edu/.

²⁰ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2021-22. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.

Employers

Between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025, the top employers in San Diego County for *Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations* were [Great Clips](#), [Ulta Beauty](#), [Supercuts](#), [Sport Clips](#), and [Regis Corporation](#) based on online job postings (Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12: Top Employers for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations in San Diego County²¹

| Top Employers | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Clips • Ulta Beauty • Supercuts • Sport Clips • Regis Corporation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glamsquad • Bellus Academy • PetSmart • Madison Reed • Navy Exchange Service Command |

Skills

Exhibit 13 lists the top specialized, soft, and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025.

Exhibit 13: Top Skills for Cosmetology and Barbering Occupations in San Diego County²²

| Specialized Skills | Soft Skills | Software Skills |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetology • Sanitation • Hairstyling • Professional Hair Care • Technical Training • Cosmetics • Ear Piercing • Hair Coloring • Marketing • Keratin Smoothing • Product Knowledge • Lifting Ability • Infection Control • Product Demonstration • Loss Prevention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service • Communication • Sales • Cleanliness • Professionalism • Multitasking • Organizational Skills • Telephone Skills • Coordinating • Management • Consulting • Interpersonal Communications • Detail Oriented • Leadership • Willingness To Learn | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A |

²¹ Lightcast 2025.04; "Job Posting Analytics." 2023-2025.

²² Lightcast 2025.04; "Job Posting Analytics." 2023-2025.

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