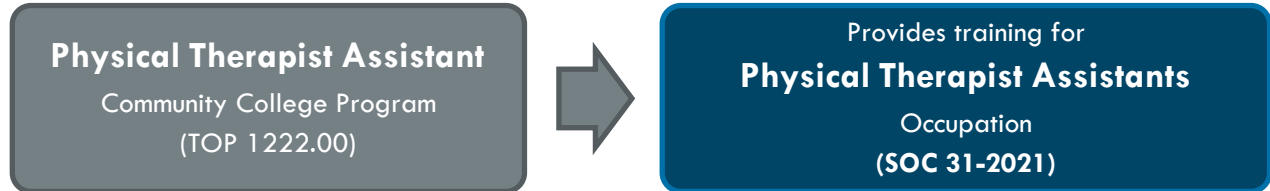


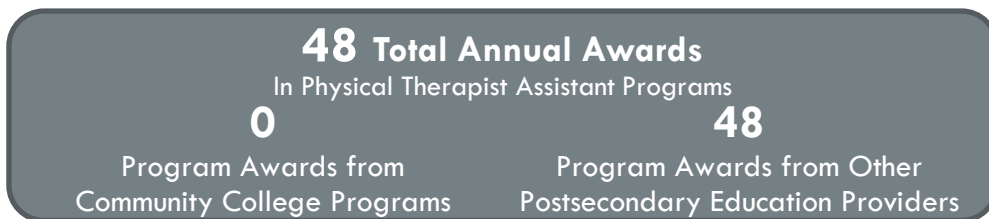
Physical Therapist Assistants

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

Summary



Over the next five years (2021-2026), employment for physical therapist assistants is projected to



The Inland Empire/Desert Centers of Excellence

 **Recommends**

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Expansion to meet the need for more workers in the region

Introduction

California Community College physical therapist assistant programs (TOP 1222.00) prepare students for employment through instruction related to the principles and procedures used to assist a physical therapist in implementing a prescribed plan of therapy for a patient, including patient instruction and administration of treatments (Taxonomy of Programs, 2012). The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by physical therapist assistant programs lead to employment as a physical therapist assistant.

Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021)

Assist physical therapists in providing physical therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with state laws, assist in the development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, document the progress of treatment, and modify specific treatments in accordance with patient status and within the scope of treatment plans established by a physical therapist. Generally requires formal training.

Sample job titles: Certified Physical Therapist Assistant (CPTA), Home Care Physical Therapy Assistant, Home Health Physical Therapist Assistant, Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (LPTA), Licensed Physical Therapy Assistant, Outpatient Physical Therapist Assistant, Per Diem Physical Therapist Assistant (Per Diem PTA), Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA), Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Associate degree

Training Requirement: None

Work Experience: None

Incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 61%

Job Counts and Projections

In 2021, there were 680 physical therapist assistant jobs in the region. Regional employment for this occupation is projected to increase by 24% through 2026; 136 job openings are projected annually. Exhibit 1 displays the job counts, five-year projected job growth, job openings, and the share of incumbent workers aged 55 years and greater in the region.

Exhibit 1. Five-year projections for physical therapist assistants, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2021-2026

Occupation	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
Physical Therapist Assistants	680	844	24%	682	136	12%

Source: Lightcast 2023.1

An online job ad search for physical therapist assistant jobs was conducted to reveal the employers seeking these workers, including the time it takes to fill positions, earnings information, and in-demand skills. Exhibit 2 shows the number of job ads posted in the region over the last 12 months, from February 2022 through January 2023.

On average, regional employers kept online job ads for physical therapist assistants open for 23 days. The average regional online job is open for 28 days, indicating that it may be easier for employers to fill physical therapist assistant jobs than other jobs.

Exhibit 2. Job ads and posting duration, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023

Occupation	Job Ads	Median Posting Duration (Days)
Physical Therapist Assistants	174	23

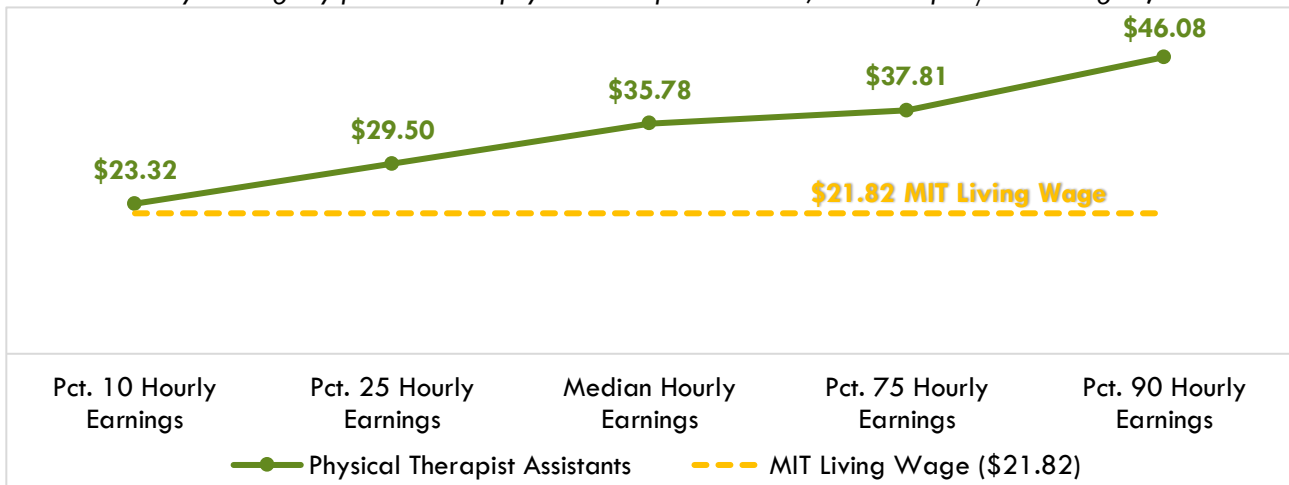
Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Earnings and Benefits

Community colleges should ensure their training programs lead to employment opportunities that provide a living wage. The MIT living wage calculator estimates that an individual must earn \$21.82 per hour or \$45,386 annually to be self-sufficient in California (Glasmeier, 2022).

Exhibit 3 displays the hourly earnings for physical therapist assistants. The 10th percentile hourly earnings for physical therapist assistants are above the living wage standard, indicating that at least the top 90% of workers earn a living wage.

Exhibit 3. Hourly earnings by percentile for physical therapist assistants, Inland Empire/Desert Region, 2021

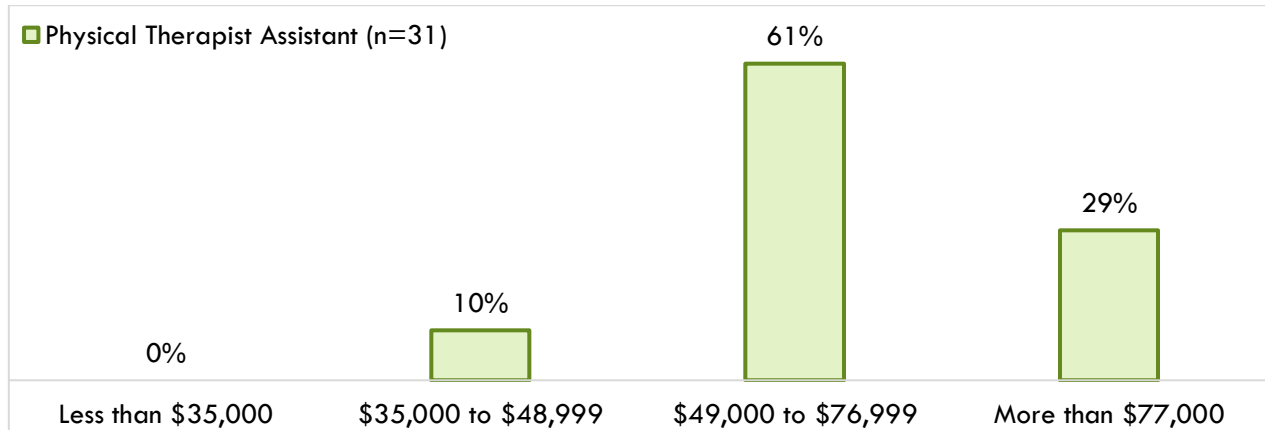


Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Advertised Salary from Online Job Ads

Exhibit 4 displays the regional online advertised salaries for physical therapist assistants over the last 12 months. Online job ad salary information reveals that employers are willing to pay physical therapist assistants an annual salary of \$68,869 or \$33.11 per hour, above the region's \$21.82 hourly living wage standard. Consider the salary information with caution since only 18% (31 of 174) of online job ads for this occupation provided salary information.

Exhibit 4. Online advertised salaries for physical therapist assistants, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023



Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Job Titles, Employers, Skills, Education, and Work Experience

Exhibit 5 displays the job titles most frequently used in job ads for physical therapist assistants during the last 12 months. Displaying advertised job titles may provide insight into the types of positions sought by employers posting ads. The most frequently requested job title in the region was physical therapy/therapist assistant.

Exhibit 5. Job titles most frequently used in physical therapist assistant job ads, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023

Job Titles	Unique Job Ads
Physical Therapy Assistants	94
Physical Therapist Assistants	72
Home Health Physical Therapy Assistants	6
Pediatric Physical Therapists Assistants	1
Hospital Physical Therapists Assistants	1

Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Exhibit 6 displays the employers posting the most job ads for physical therapist assistants during the last 12 months. Showing employer names provides insight into where students may find employment after completing a program. Kindred Hospitals posted the most job ads for physical therapist assistants in the region.

Exhibit 6. Employers posting the most job ads for physical therapist assistants, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023

Top Employer	Unique Job Ads
Kindred Hospitals	32
Loma Linda University	22
Prime Healthcare Services	10
Rancho Physical Therapy	10
Encompass Health	6

Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Exhibit 7 lists a sample of specialized and employability skills employers seek when seeking workers to fill physical therapist assistant positions. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills that employers request for industry or job competency. Common 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.

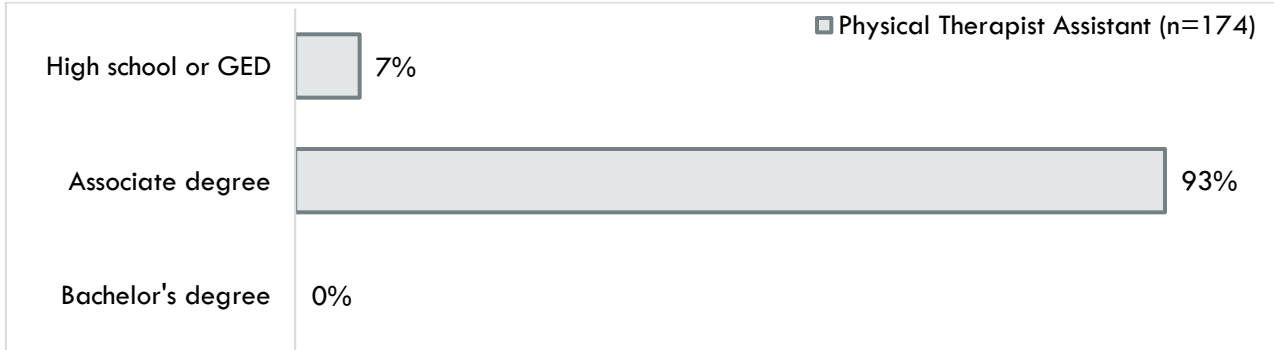
Exhibit 7. Sample of in-demand skills from employer job ads, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023

Specialized skills	Common skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation • Medical Records • Patient Assistance • Treatment Planning • Exercise Therapy • Functional Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Scheduling • Detail-Oriented • Compassion • Computer Literacy • English

Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Exhibit 8 displays the minimum advertised education requirements for physical therapist assistants. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 61% of incumbent workers in this field hold a community college-level of educational attainment; "some college, no degree," and an "associate degree." Most employers listing a minimum education level requested a candidate with at least an associate degree.

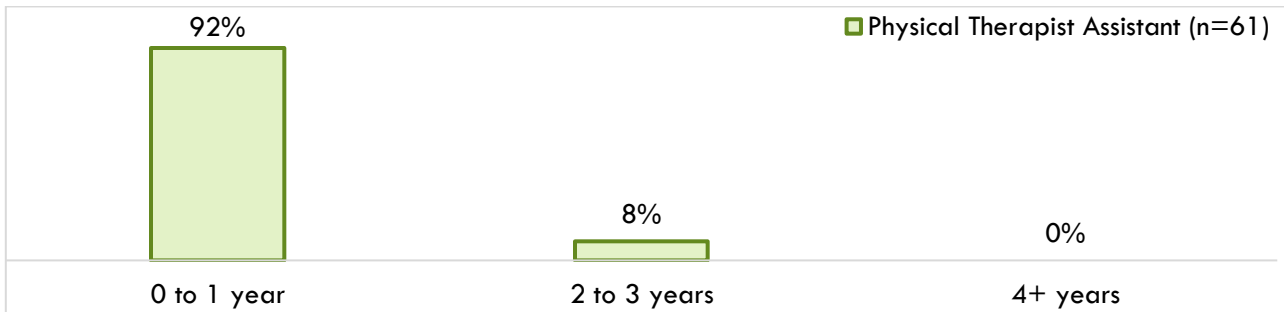
Exhibit 8. Minimum advertised education requirements, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023



Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Exhibit 9 displays the work experience typically required from employer job ads for physical therapist assistants. Approximately 92% of job ads with experience requirements sought a candidate with zero to one year of previous work experience.

Exhibit 9. Real-time work experience requirements, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023



Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Certifications

Exhibit 10 displays the most frequently requested certifications by employers in job ads. Half of employer job ads sought candidates with a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification. Approximately 29% of employer job ads sought candidates with the Basic Life Support (BLS) certification from the American Heart Association (AHA), which prepares individuals to recognize emergencies and respond with the necessary care (AHA, 2023). For more information regarding the BLS certification, please visit the AHA website. The Physical Therapist Assistant License, issued by the California Department of Consumer Affairs Physical Therapy Board of California (PTCB), was included in more than 21% of employer job ads. Individuals seeking licensure must complete the National Physical Therapist Assistant Examination and complete the requisite training and experience requirements (PTCB, 2023). For more information regarding physical therapist assistant licensure, please visit the PTCB website.

Exhibit 10: Certifications most frequently required by employers, Inland Empire/Desert Region, February 2022 through January 2023

Certification	Jobs Ads
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	87
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	51
Physical Therapy Assistant License	37

Source: Lightcast 2023.1

Student Completions and Programs Outcomes

Exhibit 11 displays student completions for physical therapist assistant (TOP 1222.00) programs over the last three academic years (2019-22). College of the Desert is the only regional community college offering a physical therapist assistant program. Over the last three academic years, the College of the Desert has not issued awards in its physical therapist assistant program. Program completion and student outcome methodologies are found in the appendix.

Exhibit 11. Annual average community college awards for physical therapist assistant programs, Inland Empire/Desert Region, Academic Years 2019-2022

TOP 1222.00 – Physical Therapist Assistant (Local Program Title)	Academic Year 2019-20	Academic Year 2020-21	Academic Year 2021-22	Total CC Annual Average Awards, Academic Years 2019-22
College of the Desert (Physical Therapist Assistant)				0
Associate Degree	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0

Source: MIS Data Mart, COCI

California program outcome data may provide 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 12.

Exhibit 12. 1222.00 – Physical therapist assistant strong workforce program outcomes, Inland Empire/Desert Region, Academic Year 2019-2020 (Unless Noted)

Strong Workforce Program Metrics: 1222.00 – Physical Therapist Assistant	Inland Empire/Desert Region	California
Unduplicated count of enrolled students (2020-21)	14	803
Completed 9+ career education units in one year (2020-21)	-	36%
Students who attained a noncredit workforce milestone in a year (2020-21)	-	40%
Students who earned a degree, certificate, or attained apprenticeship (2020-21)	-	147
Transferred to a four-year institution (transfers)	-	19
Job closely related to the field of study (2018-19)	-	94%
Median annual earnings (all exiters)	-	\$33,102
Median change in earnings (all exiters)	-	46%
Attained a living wage (completers and skills-builders)	-	52%

Sources: LaunchBoard Community College Pipeline and Strong Workforce Program Metrics

Exhibit 13 displays awards for other postsecondary education providers reported in physical therapy assistant (CIP 51.0806) programs. Completion data is compiled from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the most recent three years. Three other regional postsecondary education providers issued 48 awards annually over the last three academic years.

Exhibit 13. Other educational providers physical therapy assistant training programs, three-year annual average credentials, Inland Empire/Desert Region, Academic Years 2017-2020

51.0806 – Physical Therapy Assistant	Academic Year 2017-18	Academic Year 2018-19	Academic Year 2019-20	Other Educational Providers Annual Average Credentials, 2017-2020
California Baptist University				3
Associate Degree	0	0	9	3
Loma Linda University				44
Associate Degree	38	51	42	44
Summit College				1
Award < 1 academic year	0	4	0	1
Total	38	55	51	48

Source: IPEDS

Summary of Findings

The knowledge, skills, and abilities trained by physical therapist assistant (TOP 1222.00) programs prepare students for employment as physical therapist assistants. Physical therapist assistants are projected to have 136 annual job openings and increase employment by 24% over the next five years in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. The 10th percentile hourly earnings for physical therapist assistants are above the living wage standard, indicating that at least the top 90% of workers earn a living wage. Online job ad salary information reveals that employers are willing to pay physical therapist assistants an annual salary of \$68,869 or \$33.11 per hour, above the region's \$21.82 hourly living wage standard.

Over the last three academic years, regional community colleges have not issued awards in physical therapist assistant programs. Three other postsecondary education institutions in the region have issued 48 awards annually in physical therapy assistant (CIP 51.0806) programs.

The Centers of Excellence recommends expanding physical therapist assistant programs due to the increasing regional demand for physical therapist assistants. Colleges considering this program should partner with relevant employers and confirm the skills needed for students to obtain employment shortly after exiting the program.

Contact

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February 2023

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Appendix: Methodology

Exhibit 11 displays the average annual California Community College (CCC) awards conferred during the three academic years between 2019 and 2022 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. 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 for each metric, please see the web link for LaunchBoard's Strong Workforce Program Metrics Data Element Dictionary in the References section (LaunchBoard, 2023a). 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, 2023a).

Job ad 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 ads 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. 2021 to 2026 job growth, wages, entry-level education, training, and work experience required for physical therapist assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties combined)

Occupation	2021 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	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
Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021)	680	163	24%	136	\$23.32 to \$46.08	\$35.78	\$70,600	Associate degree & None	None

Source: Lightcast 2023.1