

Labor Market Analysis: 1240.30/Dental Laboratory Technician

Dental Laboratory Technology – Certificate requiring 60+ semester units

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, May 2023

Summary

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25th)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Education:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Emerging Occupation(s)			
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

The Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to one middle-skill occupation:

- **Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)** Construct and repair full or partial dentures or dental appliances.¹

Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree.² 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 for *dental laboratory technicians* in the region. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, more than half of the current workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. **Therefore, due to some of the criteria being met, the LA COE endorses this proposed program.** Detailed reasons include:

Demand:

- **Supply Gap Criteria** – Over the next five years, **480 jobs are projected to be available annually** in the region due to new job growth and replacements, **which is more than the three-year average of 19 awards conferred** by educational institutions in the region.

¹ [Dental Laboratory Technicians \(bls.gov\)](#)

² 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.

- **Living Wage Criteria** – Within Los Angeles County, **typical entry-level hourly wages** for *dental laboratory technicians* are **\$14.76, which is lower than the self-sufficiency standard** hourly wage (living wage) for one adult in the region (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County).³
- **Educational Criteria** – The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a **high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education** for *dental laboratory technicians*.
 - However, the national-level educational attainment data indicates **52% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree**.

Supply:

- There are **two community colleges** in the greater LA/OC region that issue awards related to dental laboratory technology, conferring an average of **19 awards annually** between 2018 and 2021.
- Currently, there are **no non-community college institutions** in the greater LA/OC region that have conferred awards for dental laboratory technology in the past three years.

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *dental laboratory technicians*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 12% through 2026. There will be 480 job openings per year through 2026 due to job growth and replacements.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties⁴

Geography	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2021-2026 Change	2021-2026 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	1,259	1,422	163	13%	210
Orange	1,582	1,812	230	15%	270
Total	2,841	3,234	393	14%	480

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* 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 greater LA/OC region. Detailed wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* are \$14.76, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$31.48, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

³ Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

⁴ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

Exhibit 2: Earnings for Occupations in LA County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)	\$14.76	\$19.59	\$31.48	\$40,700

*rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *dental laboratory technicians* are \$14.27, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$28.49, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

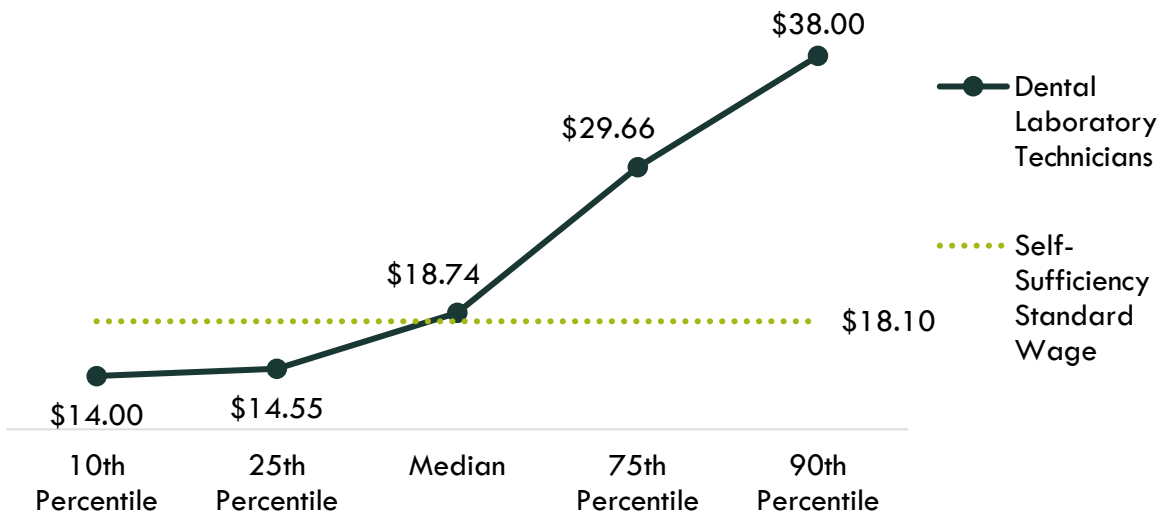
Exhibit 3: Earnings for Occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)	\$14.27	\$18.23	\$28.49	\$37,900

*rounded to the nearest \$100

On average, the entry-level earnings for the occupations in this report are \$14.55; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$18.10). Exhibit 4 shows the average wage for the occupations in this report, from entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 4: Average Hourly Earnings for Dental Laboratory Technicians in LA/OC



Job Postings

There were 369 online job postings for *dental laboratory technicians* listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings were for dental laboratory technicians, sterilization technicians, dental technicians, dental ceramists, and denture technicians. The top skills were sterilization, dentures, dental prosthetics fabrication, dental technology, and laboratory experience. The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were Dr. Zak Dental Care, Beverly Hills Orthodontics, and Esthetics by Design.

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *dental laboratory technicians*. However, the national-level educational attainment data indicates 52% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. Of the 24% of *dental laboratory technician* job postings listing a minimum education requirement in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 92% (81) requested high school or vocational training, 3% (3) requested an associate degree, and 5% (4) requested a bachelor's degree.

Educational Supply

Community College Supply

Exhibit 5 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Dental Laboratory Technician (1240.30). Only two colleges in the region have had completions over the past three years: LA City and Pasadena. Currently, there are no non-community college institutions in the greater LA/OC region that have conferred awards in dental laboratory technology/technician (CIP 51.0603) programs in the past three years.

Exhibit 5: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2018-2021

TOP	Program	College	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	3-Year Average
1240.30	Dental Laboratory Technician	LA City	14	15	13	14
		Pasadena	-	2	13	5
Supply Total/Average			14	17	26	19

Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 6. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)	1,259	1,422	163	13%	210	\$14.76	\$19.59	\$31.48

Exhibit 7. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)	1,582	1,812	230	15%	270	\$14.27	\$18.23	\$28.49

Exhibit 8. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Age 55 and older*	Typical Entry-Level Education
Dental Laboratory Technicians (51-9081)	2,841	3,234	393	14%	480	34%	High school diploma or equivalent

*The average percentage of workers age 55 and older across all occupations in the greater LA/OC region is 27%. This occupation has a larger share of older workers, which typically indicates greater replacements needs to offset the amount of impending retirements.

Appendix B: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly 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)

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