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Labor Market Analysis

Medical Assistants



Prepared by Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence



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Summary

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence developed this report for Taft College to determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from postsecondary programs. This report summarizes labor market demand, wages, skills, and postsecondary supply for:

- *Medical Assistants* (SOC 31-9092)

Key Findings

- **Occupational Demand** — *Medical assistants* have a labor market demand of 1,384 annual job openings in the South Central Valley/Southern Mother Lode (SCV/SML) subregion. Between 2021 and 2026, *medical assistants* are projected to grow by 18%.
- **Wages** — The entry-level wage for *medical assistants*, \$17.08/hour, is higher than the living wage in the SCV/SML subregion, which is \$11.91/hour for a single adult.¹
- **Employers** — Employers in the SCV/SML subregion include Adventist Health, Family Healthcare Network, and Community Regional Medical Center.
- **Skills and Certifications** — The top baseline skill is communications; the top specialized skill is medical assistance; and the top software skill is Microsoft Excel. The most in-demand certification is Basic Life Support (BLS).
- **Education** — A postsecondary nondegree award is typically required for *medical assistants*.
- **Supply and Demand Analysis** — Based on 1,384 annual openings (i.e., demand) and 102 postsecondary degrees awarded (i.e., supply), an analysis of supply and demand suggests there is an undersupply of 1,282 workers in the SCV/SML subregion. In the CVML region, 182 awards were conferred suggesting an undersupply of 1,822 workers (based on a demand of 2,004 annual openings).

Recommendation

Based on a comparison of demand and supply, there is an undersupply of trained workers in the SCV/SML subregion and in the CVML region. The Center of Excellence recommends that Taft College work with the regional directors, the college's advisory board, and the local industry in the development of programs to address the shortage of *medical assistants*.

¹ 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://insightccd.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/>.

Introduction

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence developed this report to provide Taft College with labor market information for *medical assistants*. 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. Analysis of the program and occupational data related to *medical assistants* is included in the report. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System code and occupational title used in this report are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*NET OnLine:

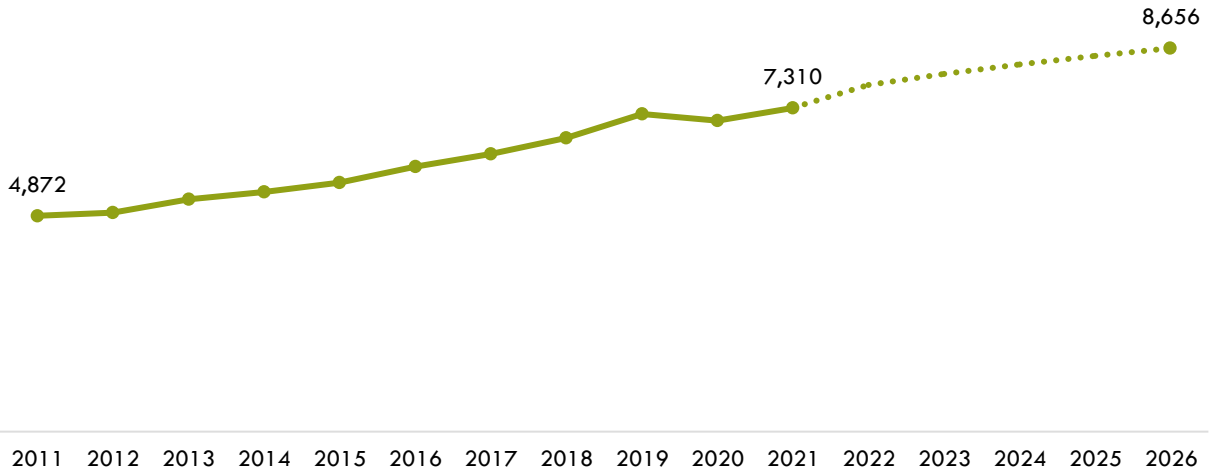
Medical Assistants (SOC 31-9092)

- **Job Description:** Perform administrative and certain clinical duties under the direction of a physician. Administrative duties may include scheduling appointments, maintaining medical records, billing, and coding information for insurance purposes. Clinical duties may include taking and recording vital signs and medical histories, preparing patients for examination, drawing blood, and administering medications as directed by physician.
- **Knowledge:** English Language, Customer and Personal Service, Medicine and Dentistry, Administrative, Computers and Electronics
- **Skills:** Social Perceptiveness, Active Listening, Speaking, Reading Comprehension, Critical Thinking

Employment

Exhibit 1a shows employment trends for *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion. Between 2021 to 2026, the number of jobs for *medical assistants* is projected to increase by 1,346, growing by 18%.

Exhibit 1a. Historical employment and projected occupational demand for *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion, 2011-2026



The SCV/SML subregion employed 7,310 *medical assistants* in 2021 (Exhibit 1b). *Medical assistants* are projected to grow by 18% over the next five years and have projected annual openings of 1,384.

Exhibit 1b. Current employment and projected occupational demand for *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion, 2021-2026

Occupation	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings
Medical Assistants	7,310	8,656	1,346	18%	1,384
TOTAL	7,310	8,656	1,346	18%	1,384

Wages

The average living wage for a single adult in the SCV/SML subregion is \$11.91/hour.² Exhibit 2 shows the hourly wages for *medical assistants* – entry-level wage is \$17.08/hour.³

Exhibit 2. Hourly wages for *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion

Occupation	25 th Percentile Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	75 th Percentile Hourly Earnings
Medical Assistants	\$17.08	\$18.38	\$21.97

Job Postings

There were 927 unique job postings for *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion from February 2023 to July 2023.⁴

Top Employers

The employers with the most job postings are listed in Exhibit 3. The top employers in online job postings were Adventist Health, Family Healthcare Network, and Community Regional Medical Center.

Exhibit 3. Top employers for *medical assistants* in job postings

Employer
Adventist Health
Family Healthcare Network
Community Regional Medical Center
Omni Family Health
Saint Agnes Medical Center
Concentra
Valley Children's Hospital
Sante Health
Pinnacle Treatment Centers
Kaweah Health

² 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://insightccd.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/>.

³ Note: 10th and 25th percentiles are considered entry-level wages while 75th and 90th are considered experienced wages, which may be obtained through long-term employment or extra training, etc.

⁴ Other than occupational 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.

Salaries

Exhibit 4 shows the “Market Salaries” for *medical assistants*. These are calculated by Lightcast using a machine learning model built from millions of job postings every year. This accounts for adjustments based on location, industry, skills, experience, education, among other variables.

Exhibit 4. Market salaries for *medical assistants*

Market Salary	Job Postings
\$36,000-\$39,999	202
\$44,000-\$47,999	161
\$32,000-\$35,999	124
\$40,000-\$43,999	120
\$48,000-\$51,999	78

Education

Of the 927 unique job postings, 834 listed a preferred or minimum educational requirement for the position being filled. Among those, 65% requested a high school or GED, 28% requested an associate degree, and 4% requested a bachelor’s degree (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5. Education levels requested in job postings for *medical assistants*

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
High school or GED	541	65%
Associate degree	234	28%
Bachelor's degree	31	4%
Master's degree or above	28	3%

Baseline, Specialized, and Software Skills

Exhibit 6 depicts the top baseline, specialized, and software skills in job postings. The most common baseline skill is communications. The most common specialized skill is medical assistance. The most important software skill is Microsoft Excel.

Exhibit 6. In-demand baseline, specialized, and software skills for *medical assistants* in job postings

Baseline Skills	Specialized Skills	Software Skills
Communications	Medical Assistance	Microsoft Excel
Customer Service	Vital Signs	Clinic Management Systems
Clerical Works	Medical Records	Lookup Tables
Multilingualism	Nursing	Patient Management Software
Detail Oriented	Venipuncture	IBM WebSphere MQ

Certifications

Of the job postings that listed certification(s), 23% indicated a need for a Basic Life Support (BLS), followed by Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Top certifications requested in job postings

Certifications	% of Job Postings
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	23%
Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)	12%
Phlebotomy Certification	7%
Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)	7%

Education, Work Experience, & Training

A postsecondary nondegree award is typically required for *medical assistants* (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8. Education, work experience, training, and Current Population Survey results for *medical assistants*⁵

Occupation	Typical Entry-level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training	CPS
Medical Assistants	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	None	65%

⁵ "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/>.

Supply

An analysis of program data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the last three program years shows that, on average, 102 awards were conferred in the SCV/SML subregion (Exhibit 9 and 10).

Exhibit 9. TOP and CIP codes for medical assistants

TOP Titles	CIP Titles
120800 - Medical Assisting	51.0710 - Medical Office Assistant/Specialist
	51.0714 - Medical Insurance Specialist/Medical Biller
	51.0801 - Medical/Clinical Assistant
120810 - Clinical Medical Assisting	51.0801 - Medical/Clinical Assistant
	51.0712 - Medical Reception/Receptionist.
	51.0716 - Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary.
120820 - Administrative Medical Assisting	51.0710 - Medical Office Assistant/Specialist.
	51.0714 - Medical Insurance Specialist/Medical Biller.

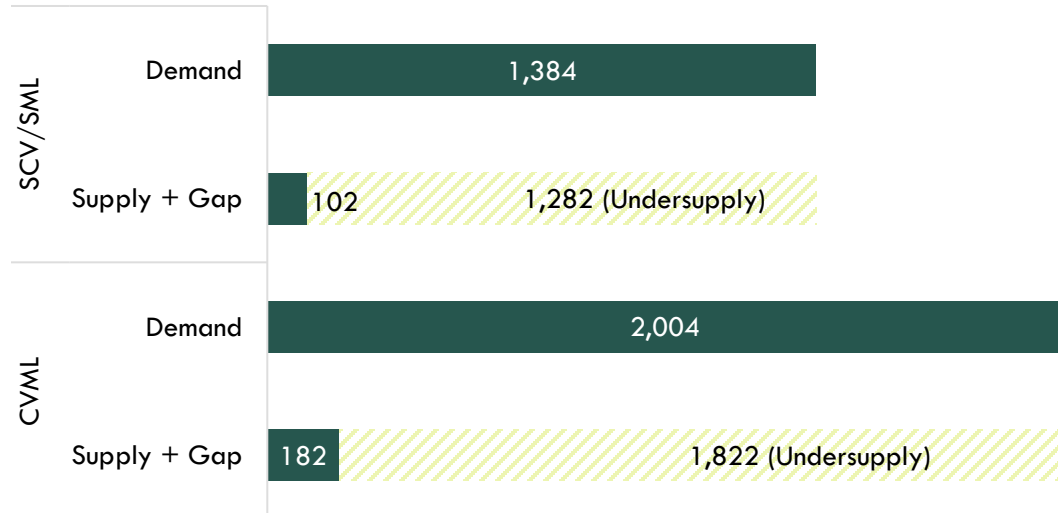
Exhibit 10. Postsecondary supply for medical assistants for Program Years 2019-20 through 2021-22

TOP/CIP Code- Title	College	Associate Degree	Certificate 30 < 60 Semester Units	Certificate 18 < 30 Semester Units	Certificate 16 < 30 Semester Units	TOTAL
120800 - Medical Assisting	Cerro Coso	3				3*
	Modesto	33	47			80
120810 - Clinical Medical Assisting	Cerro Coso		9			9*
	Fresno City	23			58	81*
120820 - Administrative Medical Assisting	Cerro Coso		9			9*
SCV/SML TOTAL		26	18	0	58	102
CVML TOTAL		59	65	0	58	182

*SCV/SML awards

There is an undersupply of 1,282 *medical assistants* in the SCV/SML subregion and an undersupply of 1,822 workers in the CVML region (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11. *Medical assistants* workforce demand (annual job openings), postsecondary awards (supply), and additional students needed to fill gap in the SCV/SML subregion and CVML region



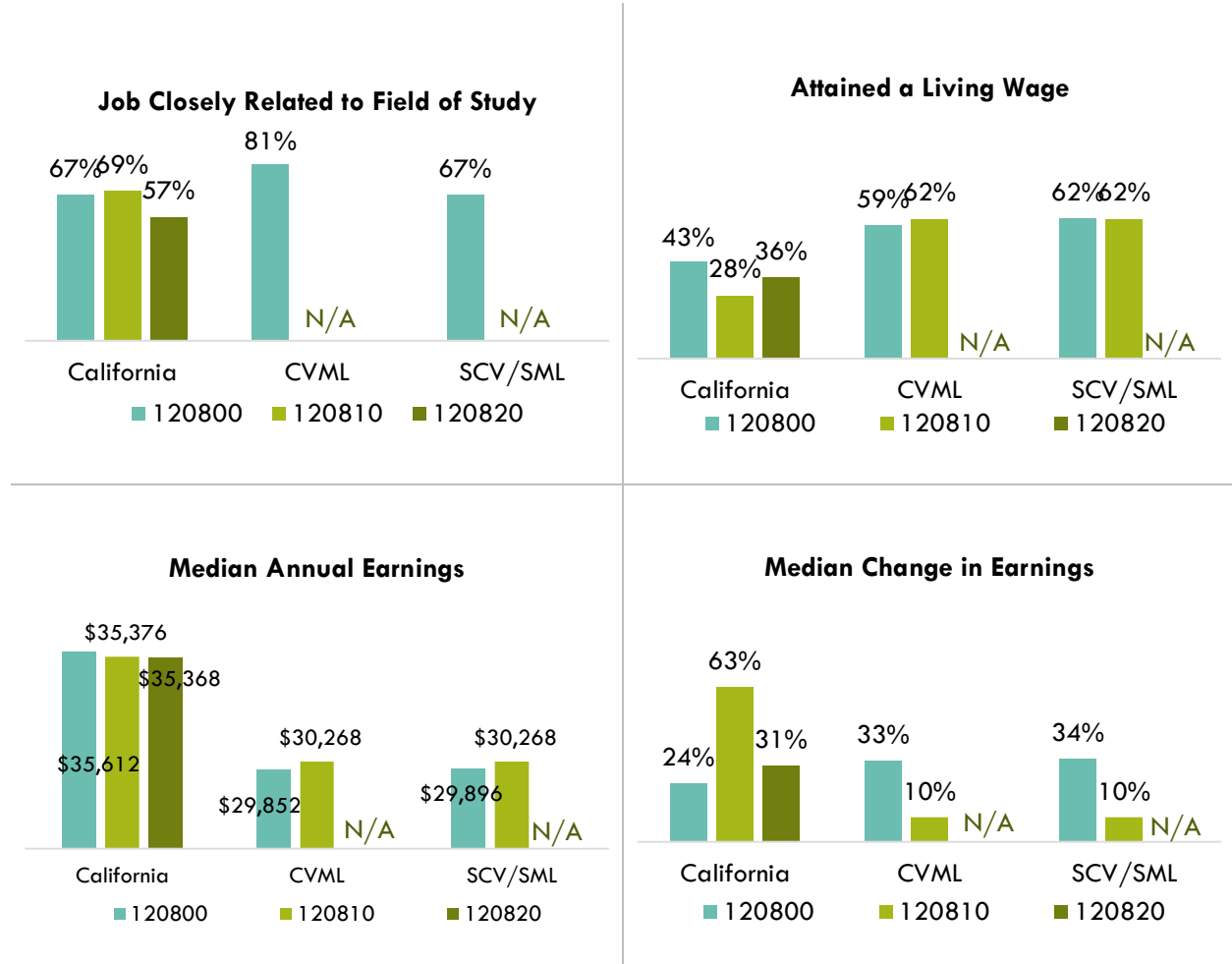
Student Outcomes

Exhibit 12a-12b summarizes outcomes from California Community College Chancellor’s LaunchBoard for programs that have historically trained students to become *medical assistants*.

Exhibit 12a. LaunchBoard Metrics for TOP 120800 - Medical Assisting, 120810 - Clinical Medical Assisting, and 120820 - Administrative Medical Assisting in the SCV/SML subregion

Metric	120800 - Medical Assisting	120810 - Clinical Medical Assisting	120820 - Administrative Medical Assisting
Students Who Got a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	*	73	12
* denotes data not available.			

Exhibit 12b. LaunchBoard Metrics for TOP 120800 - Medical Assisting, 120810 - Clinical Medical Assisting, and 120820 - Administrative Medical Assisting in California, CVML region, and SCV/SML subregion



Recommendation

This report suggests there is an undersupply of 1,282 workers in the SCV/SML subregion and a shortage of 1,822 workers in the CVML region for *medical assistants*. The Center of Excellence recommends that Taft College work with the regional directors, the college’s advisory board, and the local industry in the development of programs to address the shortage of *medical assistants*.

Appendix: 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. (Lightcast). Lightcast occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast 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 Lightcast earnings by industry: economicmodeling.com.
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: https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm .
LaunchBoard	Chancellor’s LaunchBoard. https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx
Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Estimates	California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division: labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov .
Job Posting and Skills Data	Lightcast. https://lightcast.io/ .
Additional Education Requirements/ Employer Preferences	The O*NET Job Zone database includes over 900 as well as information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities and interests associated with specific occupations: onetonline.org .

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. (LIGHTCAST) formula that includes historical employment and economic indicators along with national, state and local trends.

LaunchBoard (Attained the Living Wage): Among SWP students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, the proportion who attained the district county living wage for a single adult measured immediately following academic year of exit.

LaunchBoard (Median Annual Earnings): Among SWP students who exited the community college system and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, median earnings following the academic year of exit.

LaunchBoard (Median Change in Earnings): Among SWP students who exited and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, median change in earnings between the second quarter prior to the beginning of the academic year of entry and the second quarter after the end of the academic year of exit from the last college attended.

LaunchBoard (Job Closely Related to Field of Study): Among SWP students who responded to the CTE Outcomes Survey and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, the proportion who reported that they are working in a job very closely or closely related to their field of study.

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.