

Labor Market Analysis: 1299.00/Other Health Occupations

Breastfeeding and Nutrition – Noncredit Award requiring from 48 to <96 hours

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, January 2024

Summary

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

- **Health Education Specialists (21-1091)** Provide and manage health education programs that help individuals, families, and their communities maximize and maintain healthy lifestyles. Use data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, policies, and environments. May link health systems, health providers, insurers, and patients to address individual and population health needs. May serve as resource to assist individuals, other health professionals, or the community, and may administer fiscal resources for health education programs.¹
- **Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)** All healthcare support workers not listed separately.²

Currently, there is no Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code for lactation consultants. Data for this job title is grouped under two occupations: *health education specialists* (21-1091) and *healthcare support workers, all other* (31-9099). Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree.³ Although the occupation *health education specialists* typically requires a bachelor's degree, it is considered middle-skill because approximately one-third of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate

¹ [Health Education Specialists \(bls.gov\)](#)

² [Healthcare Support Workers, All Other \(bls.gov\)](#)

³ 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.

degree. 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 these occupations of interest in the region. However, there is not an official registrar of lactation education programs or awards in Los Angeles and/or Orange County, and online research shows that an abundance of colleges, private organizations, and not-for-profit organizations provide lactation education opportunities. For this reason, COE cannot decisively confirm whether or not there is a supply gap for lactation educators in the region. For these occupations of interest, entry-level wages exceed the self-sufficiency standard wage in Los Angeles County, and more than one-third of current workers in the field have completed some college/associate degree or less education. **Therefore, due to all the criteria being met, the LA COE endorses this proposed program.** Detailed reasons include:

Demand:

- **Supply Gap Criteria** – Over the next five years, **1,227 jobs are projected to be available annually** in the region due to new job growth and replacements, **which is more/less than the three-year average of 217 awards conferred** by educational institutions in the region.
 - However, the two SOC codes in this report include a variety of health education and/or support occupations, and not solely lactation consultants. Therefore, **the number of annual job openings is likely overstated.**
 - Over the past 12 months, there were **107 online job postings for lactation educators.** The highest number of job postings were for lactation consultants, lactation specialists, and certified lactation counselors.
- **Living Wage Criteria** – Within Los Angeles County, both occupations in this report have **entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard hourly wage** (\$18.10/hour).⁴
- **Educational Criteria** – Within the greater LA/OC region, **77% of the annual job openings** for the occupations of interest **typically require a high school diploma or equivalent.**
 - However, the national-level educational attainment data indicates **39% and 79% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree.**

Supply:

- There are **6 community colleges** in the greater LA/OC region that issue awards related to Other Health Occupations (1299.00), conferring an average of **217 awards annually** between 2019 and 2022.
 - **Only one community college in the region offers a program in lactation education:** Lactation Educator Specialist (Santiago Canyon; Noncredit Program).

⁴ Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

- Between 2019 and 2021, **no non-community colleges in the region conferred awards** under the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code that trains for lactation educators: Lactation Consultant (51.0815).
 - While there is not an official registrar of lactation education programs or in Los Angeles and/or Orange County, online research shows that an **abundance of colleges, private organizations, and not-for-profit organizations provide lactation education opportunities.**

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for the occupations of interest. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 9% through 2027. There will be more than 1,200 job openings per year through 2027 due to job growth and replacement needs. It is important to note that the *health education specialists (21-1091)* and *healthcare support workers, all other (31-9099)* SOC codes include a variety of health education and/or support occupations and not solely lactation consultants. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is likely overstated for lactation education jobs. The majority of jobs in 2022 for these occupations (74%) were located in Los Angeles County.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties⁵

Geography	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	6,265	6,799	534	9%	907
Orange	2,107	2,329	222	11%	320
Total	8,372	9,129	756	9%	1,227

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for the occupations of interest 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

Both occupations have entry-level wages above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$18.20 and \$22.72. Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$28.59 and \$49.94.

⁵ 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*
Health Education Specialists (21-1091)	\$22.72	\$31.87	\$49.94	\$66,300
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)	\$18.20	\$22.64	\$28.59	\$47,100

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The majority (80%) of annual openings for these occupations have entry-level wages below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$18.32 and \$22.01. One occupation has entry-level wages above the county’s self-sufficiency wage: *health education specialists* (\$22.01). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages between \$28.79 and \$48.36, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

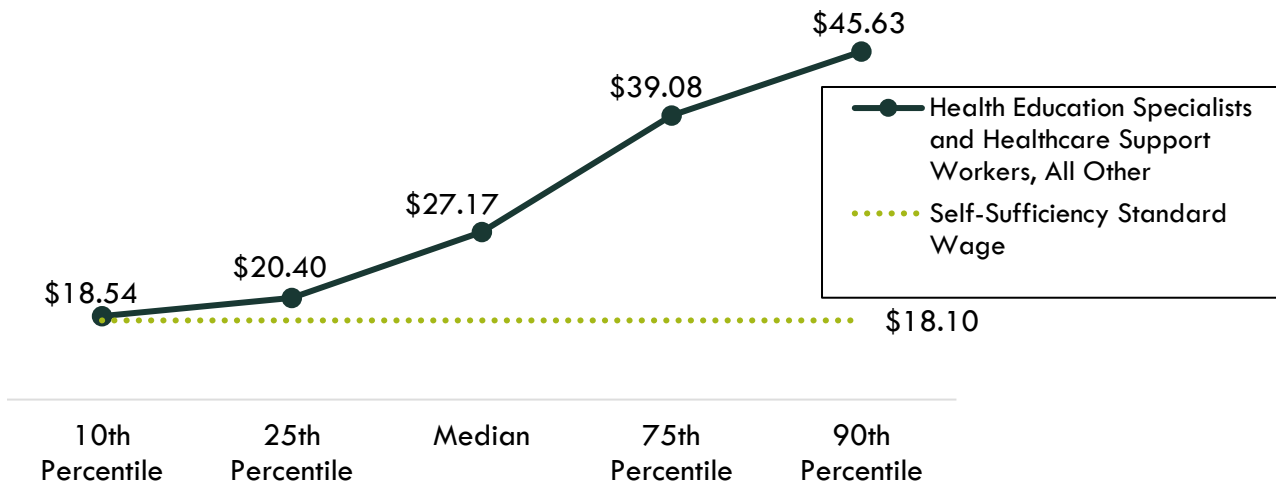
Exhibit 3: Earnings for Occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Health Education Specialists (21-1091)	\$22.01	\$30.85	\$48.36	\$64,200
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)	\$18.32	\$22.79	\$28.79	\$47,400

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

On average, the entry-level earnings for the occupations in this report are \$20.40; this is above 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 Health Education Specialists and Healthcare Support Workers, All Other in LA/OC



Job Postings

There were 107 online job postings for lactation education occupations listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings were for lactation consultants (89%), lactation specialists (7%) and certified lactation counselors (5%). Top qualifications listed on job postings were International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) (84 job postings) and Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC) (2 job postings). The top skills were postpartum care, clinical practices, adult education, nursing, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were Kaiser Permanente, University of California, and Altamed Health Services.

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

- **Bachelor's degree:** *Health education specialists*
- **High school diploma or equivalent:** *Healthcare support workers, all other*

In the greater LA/OC region, the majority of annual job openings (77%) typically require a high school diploma or equivalent. However, the national-level educational attainment data indicates between 39% and 79% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. Of the 69% of lactation education job postings listing a minimum education requirement in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 92% (68) requested high school or vocational training, and 8% (6) 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: Other Health Occupations (1299.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Santiago Canyon, Mt. San Antonio, and LA Southwest. Currently, there is one community college in the region offering a lactation education program: Lactation Educator Specialist (Santiago Canyon; Noncredit Program).

Exhibit 5: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2019-2022

TOP	Program	College	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
1299.00	Other Health Occupations	East LA	45	-	38	28
		LA Southwest	23	36	85	48
		Mt San Antonio	104	19	35	53
		LA Subtotal	172	55	158	128
		N. Orange Adult	-	16	25	14
		Orange Coast	10	15	35	20
		Santiago Canyon*	18	86	61	55
		OC Subtotal	28	117	121	89
Supply Total/Average			200	172	279	217

*Santiago Canyon offers four programs coded under this TOP Code, including Lactation Educator Specialist. Therefore, the awards totals in Exhibit 5 for Santiago Canyon are not solely indicative of Lactation Educator Specialist awards.

Non-Community College Supply

For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for lactation educators. According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)⁶, there is only one Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code that trains for lactation educators: Lactation Consultant (51.0815). However, there are no non-community college institutions in the region that have conferred awards under the Lactation Consultant CIP code since 2019.

While there is not an official registrar of lactation education programs in Los Angeles and/or Orange County, online research shows that an abundance of colleges, private organizations, and not-for-profit organizations offer lactation education opportunities. Since there is not a current public listing of programs or completion data, COE cannot determine the regional supply from non-community college institutions in the field of lactation education.

Certifications

There are entry-level certifications available for lactation consultants, such as Certified Breastfeeding Specialist (CBS), Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC), Certified Breastfeeding Counseling (CBC), Certified Lactation Support Provider (CLSP), and others. These entry-level jobs are able to support families right away and can use their lactation education hours (52+ hours) towards becoming an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) Commission certified lactation consultant, the highest credential in the lactation care field.⁷

According to the IBCLC Commission, certified lactation consultants must meet key eligibility components for one of three pathway options. These pathways are designed to ensure that all applicants have a health sciences background, minimum of 95 hours of lactation specific education (including 5 hours of communication skills, as well as relevant clinical experience and adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct for IBCLCs. Once this criteria is met, candidates can then sit for the IBCLC examination. More information is available on the IBCLC Commission website.⁸

Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 6. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2022 Jobs	2027 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)
Health Education Specialists (21-1091)	1,803	1,981	178	10%	220	\$22.72	\$31.87	\$49.94
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)	4,462	4,818	356	8%	687	\$18.20	\$22.64	\$28.59
Total	6,265	6,799	534	9%	907	-	-	-

⁶ [IPEDS](#)

⁷ [Lactation Education Resources \(lactationtraining.com\)](#)

⁸ [IBCLC Commission \(ibclc-commission.org\)](#)

Exhibit 7. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75th Percentile)
Health Education Specialists (21-1091)	516	567	51	10%	63	\$22.01	\$30.85	\$48.36
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)	1,591	1,763	171	11%	257	\$18.32	\$22.79	\$28.79
Total	2,107	2,329	222	11%	320	-	-	-

Exhibit 8. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Age 55 and older*	Typical Entry-Level Education
Health Education Specialists (21-1091)	2,319	2,548	229	10%	283	23%	Bachelor's degree
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (31-9099)	6,053	6,581	528	9%	943	21%	HS diploma or equivalent
Total	8,372	9,129	756	9%	1,227	-	-

*The average percentage of workers age 55 and older across all occupations in the greater LA/OC region is 27%. These occupations have a smaller share of older workers, which typically indicates fewer 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)

For more information, please contact:

Luke Meyer, Director
 Los Angeles Center of Excellence
Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu

