



**Labor Market Analysis: 1209.00 – Hospital Central Service Technician
Sterile Processing Technician – Noncredit award requiring 288 to <480 hours**
Los Angeles Center of Excellence, November 2024

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"/>	

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupation¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the one identified middle-skill occupation in the region. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, more than one-third of current workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to two of three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 372 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2028. This number is greater than the three-year average of 78 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor’s degree. 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

- \$21.82 is the typical entry-level hourly wages *medical equipment preparers*, which is lower than Los Angeles County’s self-sufficiency standard hourly (\$24.03/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- A high school diploma or equivalent is the typical entry-level education for *medical equipment preparers*, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 43% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- No community colleges issued awards related to hospital central service technician in the greater LA/OC region in the past three years.

Other postsecondary supply

- Four educational institutions in the LA/OC region have conferred awards in programs that train for *medical equipment preparers* over the past three years.
- 78 awards were conferred on average each year by other postsecondary institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region between 2020 and 2022.

TARGET OCCUPATION

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to one middle-skill occupation:

- **Medical equipment preparers (31-9093)** Prepare, sterilize, install, or clean laboratory or healthcare equipment. May perform routine laboratory tasks and operate or inspect equipment.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *medical equipment preparers*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase by 5% through 2028. There will be nearly 400 job openings per year through 2028 due to job growth and replacements. The majority of jobs in 2023 for *medical equipment preparers* (75%) were located in Los Angeles County.

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁴

Geography	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	1,914	1,994	79	4%	276
Orange	626	673	48	8%	96
Total	2,540	2,667	127	5%	372

² Center for Women’s Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024*. <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

³ [Medical Equipment Preparers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/31-9093)

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.

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand the target occupation in Los Angeles County. Positive scores for automation resilience⁵ reflect a lower-than-average threat of the occupation(s) being replaced by automation, while negative scores reflect a greater-than-average risk of automation. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements.

Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County⁶

Occupation	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Automation Resilience	% Aged 55 and older
Medical equipment preparers	1,914	1,994	4%	276	(10.1)	23%

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for *medical equipment preparers* 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 Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *medical equipment preparers* are \$21.82, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$33.79, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupation in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Medical equipment preparers	\$21.82	\$26.51	\$33.79	\$55,100

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *medical equipment preparers* are \$21.32, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$33.02, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

⁵ Automation risk is calculated based on the percentage of time spent on high-risk compared to low-risk work, the number of high-risk jobs in compatible occupations, and the overall industry automation risk.

⁶ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

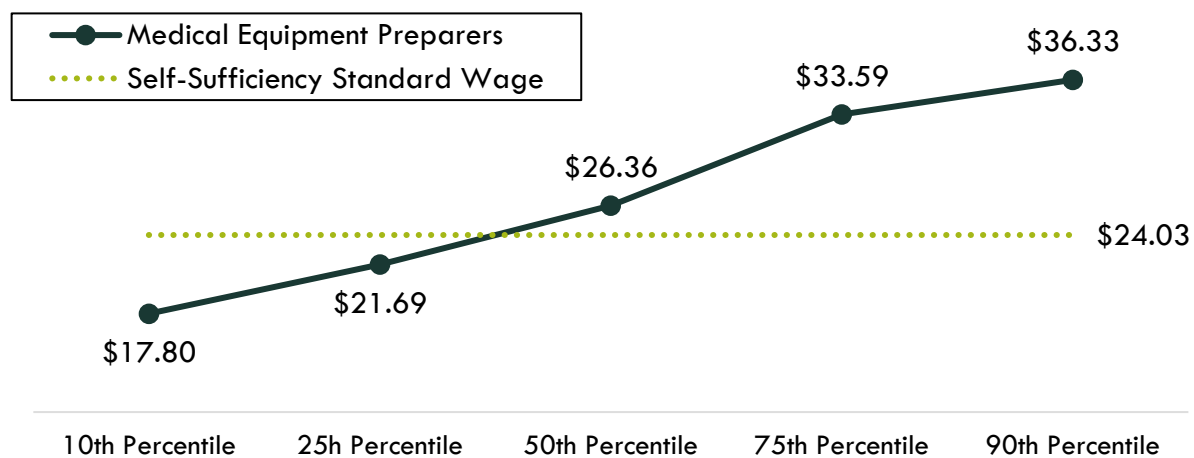
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupation in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Medical equipment preparers	\$21.32	\$25.90	\$33.02	\$53,900

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupation in this report are \$21.69; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupation in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for medical equipment preparers, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 1,102 online job postings related to *medical equipment preparers* listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sterile processing technicians • Central sterile processing technicians • Sterile processing supervisors • Sterilization technicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sterile processing • Sterilization • Surgical instruments • Disinfecting • Infection control • Surgery • Operating room (OR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of California • Providence • Kaiser Permanente • Prospect Medical Holdings • Keck Medical Center of USC

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 45% of the *medical equipment preparers* job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 7 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

Exhibit 7: Education levels requested in job postings for medical equipment preparers, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	22	5%
Associate degree	21	4%
High school diploma or vocational training	455	91%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *medical equipment preparers* (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 43% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

Exhibit 8: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
Medical equipment preparers	High school diploma or equivalent

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

Currently, there are no community colleges in the LA/OC region that offer programs that train for *medical equipment preparers*. Three community colleges in the state offer Hospital Central Service Technician programs (TOP 1209.00). Together, these three colleges have conferred an average of 21 awards each year.

- College of the Canyons (South Central Region)
- Skyline College (Bay Area, Mid-Peninsula Region)
- Southwestern College (San Diego/Imperial Region)

Other Postsecondary 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 *medical equipment preparers*. Exhibit 9 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2020 to 2022. Between 2020 and 2022, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 78 sub-

baccalaureate awards. Sub-baccalaureate awards include associate degrees, postsecondary awards, and other academic awards that typically take fewer than four years to complete.

Exhibit 9: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2020-2022

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
51.0799	Health and Medical Administrative Services, Other	American College of Healthcare and Technology	-	-	20	7
		American College of Healthcare and Technology-Santa Ana	-	-	2	1
51.1012	Sterile Processing Technology/ Technician	Glendale Career College	49	37	27	38
		Premiere Career College	34	26	40	33
Supply Total/Average			83	63	89	78

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DATA SOURCES



POWERED BY



- 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)

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

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