



Labor Market Analysis: 1221.00 – Pharmacy Technology

Introduction to Pharmacy Technician – Noncredit Program Development

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, February 2025

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 half 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

- 1,483 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2028. This number is greater than the three-year average of 620 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

- \$21.71 is the typical entry-level hourly wages for *pharmacy technicians*, 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 *pharmacy technicians*, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 53% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.

Community college supply

- 7 community colleges issued awards related to pharmacy technology in the greater LA/OC region.
- 135 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2021 and 2023.

Other postsecondary supply

- 21 educational institutions in the LA/OC region have conferred awards in programs related to pharmacy technicians over the past three years.
- 485 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:

- **Pharmacy Technicians (29-2052)** Prepare medications under the direction of a pharmacist. May measure, mix, count out, label, and record amounts and dosages of medications according to prescription orders.³

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *pharmacy technicians*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase by 4% through 2028. There will be nearly 1,500 job openings per year through 2028 due to job growth and replacements. The majority of jobs in 2023 for *pharmacy technicians* (75%) were located in Los Angeles County.

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

³ [Pharmacy Technicians \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/pharmacy-technicians)

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	11,209	11,658	449	4%	1,104
Orange	3,797	3,969	171	5%	379
Total	15,006	15,627	620	4%	1,483

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. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time. Occupations with a lower-than-average percentage of full-time workers may have less employment security but may see increased activity in the gig economy.

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	% Full Time Workers
Pharmacy Technicians	11,209	11,658	4%	1,104	(9.9)	13%	75%

WAGES

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

Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *pharmacy technicians* are \$21.71, 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 \$29.21, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 3).

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.

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 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*
Pharmacy Technicians	\$21.71	\$23.65	\$29.21	\$49,200

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *pharmacy technicians* are \$21.61, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$29.09, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

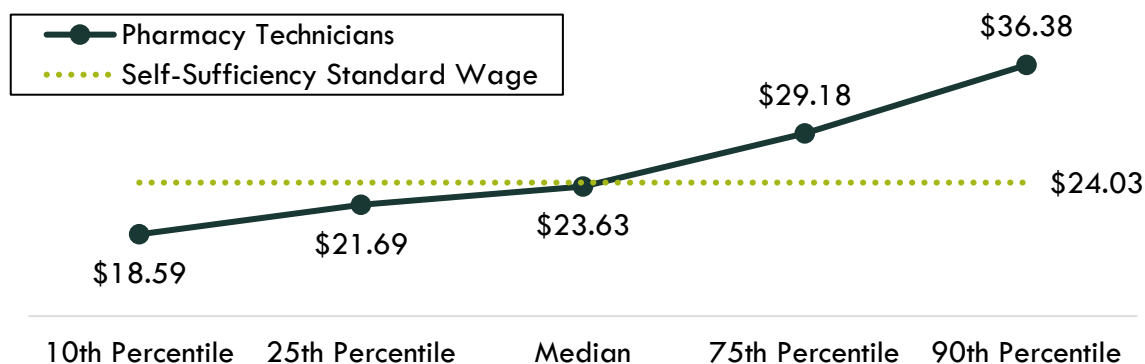
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupation in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Pharmacy Technicians	\$21.61	\$23.54	\$29.09	\$49,000

*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 pharmacy technicians, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 4,643 online job postings related to *pharmacy technicians* 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 occupation 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"> • Pharmacy technicians • Pharmacy interns • Certified pharmacy technicians • Inpatient pharmacy technicians • Pharmacy clerks • Bilingual pharmacy technicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical prescription • Pharmacy experience • Inventory management • Pharmaceuticals • Pharmacist assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVS Health • Walgreens Boots Alliance • Walmart • Rite Aid • Cedars-Sinai

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 50% of the *pharmacy technician* 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 pharmacy technicians, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	214	88%
Associate degree	69	3%
High school diploma or vocational training	2,045	9%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *pharmacy technicians* (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 53% 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 occupation in this report:

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

Occupation	Education Level
Pharmacy technicians	High school diploma or equivalent

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

Exhibit 9 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Pharmacy Technology (1221.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Cerritos, West LA, and Santa Ana.

Exhibit 9: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2021-2023

TOP Code	Program	College	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	3-Year Average
1 221.00	Pharmacy Technology	Cerritos	27	33	32	31
		East LA	8	20	1	10
		LA Mission	24	24	13	20
		Mt San Antonio	-	-	38	13
		West LA	9	14	48	24
		LA Subtotal	68	91	132	97
		N. Orange Adult	-	16	20	12
		Santa Ana	22	31	25	26
		OC Subtotal	22	47	45	38
Supply Total/Average			90	138	177	135

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 *pharmacy technicians*. Exhibit 10 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 485 sub-baccalaureate awards. Sub-baccalaureate awards include associate degrees, postsecondary awards, and other academic awards that typically take fewer than four years to complete.

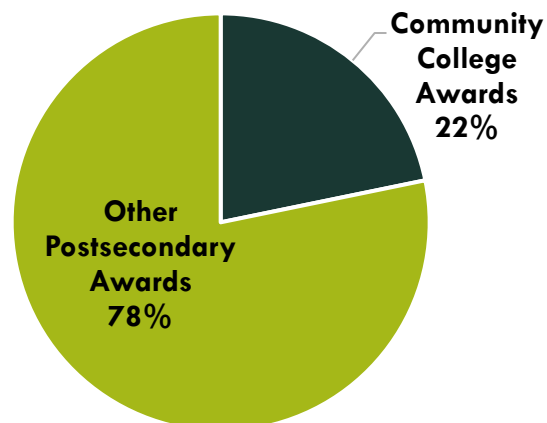
Exhibit 10: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2020-2022

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
51.0805	Pharmacy Technician/Assistant	ABC Adult School	1	26	12	13
		American Career College-Anaheim	28	35	49	37
		American Career College-LA	67	62	80	70
		American College of Healthcare & Technology	6	9	13	9
		Baldwin Park Adult & Community Ed.	14	13	19	15
		CBD College	22	14	12	16
		Concorde Career College-Garden Grove	-	-	14	5
		Downey Adult School	71	71	40	61
		Galaxy Medical College	12	8	2	7
		Hacienda La Puente Adult Ed.	16	29	18	21
		North-West College-Anaheim	10	16	23	16

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	2021-22 Awards	3-Year Average
		North-West College-Glendale	16	12	6	11
		North-West College-Long Beach	32	40	27	33
		North-West College-Pomona	9	10	11	10
		North-West College-Van Nuys	28	9	14	17
		North-West College-West Covina	33	28	37	33
		Platt College-Anaheim	-	6	-	2
		UEI College-Gardena	32	43	53	43
		UEI College-Reseda	36	26	42	35
		UEI College-West Covina	19	28	37	28
		Valley College of Medical Careers	1	4	4	3
Supply Total/Average			453	489	513	485

Exhibit 11 shows the proportion of community college awards conferred in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region compared to the number of other postsecondary awards for the programs in this report. The majority of awards conferred in these programs are awarded by other institutions in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Exhibit 11: Percentage of community college awards compared to other postsecondary institution awards in the Los Angeles/Orange County region



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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)

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