Labor Market Analysis for Program Recommendation: TOP 2104.40 Alcohol and Controlled Substances CIP: 51.1501 Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling *(Addiction Studies)*

Orange County Center of Excellence, November 2026

FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH
ORANGE COUNTY

⚠ Endorsed: Caution Advised		
Program LMI Endorsement Criteria		
Supply Gap:	Met ☑	Partially Met ☐ Not Met ☐
	There are projected to be **971 annual job openings** throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties for these addiction counseling occupations, which **is more than the 292 awards conferred by educational institutions**.	
Self-Sufficiency Standard Living Wage[1]:	Met ☐	Partially Met ☐ Not Met ☑
	All (100%) of annual job openings for these addiction counseling occupations **have entry-level hourly wages ranging from $21.60 to $22.78, which is below the OC living wage of $27.13**.	
Education:	Met ☑	Partially Met ☐ Not Met ☐
	About 75% of the annual job openings for these middle-skill addiction counseling occupations typically require a postsecondary nondegree award, and **38% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education.**	

This LMA brief is valid for 12 months and expires November 2027.

Summary

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (OC COE) prepared this report to determine whether there is a supply gap in the Los Angeles and Orange counties regional labor market related to two occupations:

- Middle-Skill
  - *Psychiatric Technicians (29-2053)*
  - *Psychiatric Aides (31-1133)*

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for these addiction counseling middle-skill occupations, and typical education requirements for these occupations align with a community college education. However, all annual job openings have entry-level wages below the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage. **Therefore, due to some of the regional labor market criteria being met, the COE endorses this proposed program.**

Exhibit 1 lists the occupational demand, supply, typical entry-level education, and educational attainment for the middle-skill occupations included in this report.

[1] The living wage endorsement criteria in this report uses the University of Washington's Center for Women's Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard, which the COE refers to as a living wage; Orange County's living wage of $27.13, was last updated in March 2024.

Exhibit 1: Labor Market Endorsement Summary

Occupation (SOC)	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (CC and Non-CC)	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Typical Entry-Level Education	Community College Educational Attainment
Psychiatric Technicians (29-2053)	LA: 553	LA: 37	OC: $22.78	Post-secondary nondegree award	38%
	OC: 180	OC: 37			
	TTL: 773	*TTL: 74*			
Psychiatric Aides (31-1133)	LA: 162	LA: 206	OC: $21.60	High school diploma or equivalent	38%
	OC: 76	OC: 12			
	TTL: 238	*TTL: 218*			
Total	**971**	**292**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Demand

- In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to these addiction counseling occupations is projected to increase 21% through 2030, equating to 971 annual job openings.
- Hourly entry-level wages for these addiction counseling occupations range from $21.60 to $22.78 in Orange County; all annual openings have entry-level wages below the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage.
- There were 3,685 online job postings for these addiction counseling occupations over the past 12 months. The highest number of postings were for behavioral health technicians, school aides, and behavior interventionists.
- The typical entry-level education for these addiction counseling occupations ranges from a high school diploma to a postsecondary nondegree award.
- About 38% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Supply

- Between 2022 to 2024, an average of 280 awards were conferred by 6 community colleges for these middle-skill occupations in Los Angeles and Orange counties.
    - Community colleges conferred an average of 404 awards applicable towards the above middle-skill occupation.
- From 2021 to 2024, non-community college institutions conferred an average of 12 awards for these middle-skill occupations.
    - Non-community colleges conferred an average of 116 awards applicable towards the above middle-skill occupation.
- In the 2023-24 academic year, Orange County community college students that exited alcohol and controlled substances programs had a median annual wage of $41,580 ($19.99 per hour) post-exit, and 24% attained the regional living wage.
- In 2022-23, 29% of Orange County real estate students that exited their programs reported working a job closely related to their field of study.

Above Middle-Skill Occupations

Although the endorsement summary is based on occupations attainable at the community college level, including related above middle-skill occupations can help illustrate potential career pathways and emerging labor market trends. Since the related program may serve as a stepping-stone toward further education and training, the following above middle-skill occupation, which requires a bachelor's degree or higher, is included in this report (data sources combine the occupations *substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors (21-1011)^* and *mental health counselors (21-1014)^* into a single code, we use this occupation throughout the report):

- Above Middle-Skill – denoted with a caret (^) throughout this report.
    - *Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)^*

Exhibit 2 lists the occupational demand, supply, typical entry-level education, and educational attainment for the above middle-skill occupations included in this report.

Exhibit 2: Labor Market Summary for Above Middle-Skill Occupation

Occupation (SOC)	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (CC and Non-CC)	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Typical Entry-Level Education	Community College Educational Attainment
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)^	LA: 2,771 OC: 850	LA: 116 OC: 0.3	OC: $21.83	Master's degree	10%
Total	**3,621**	**117**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Demand

Occupational Projections

Exhibit 3 shows the annual percentage change in jobs for these addiction counseling occupations from 2020 through 2030. Beginning in 2025, Orange County job levels are projected to grow at a higher rate than all occupations through 2030.

Exhibit 3: Annual Percentage Change in Jobs for Addiction Counseling Occupations, 2020-2030

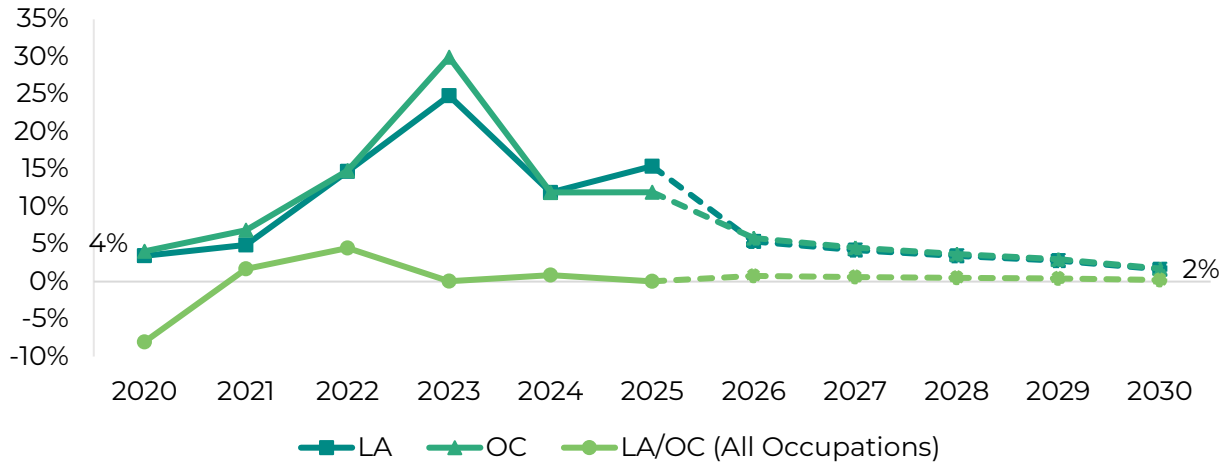


Exhibit 4 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these middle-skill addiction counseling occupations. In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase 21% through 2030. There is projected to be 971 jobs available annually.

Exhibit 4: Middle-Skill Occupational Demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties[2]

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	4,932	5,973	1,040	21%	715
Orange	1,685	2,064	378	22%	256
Total	**6,618**	**8,037**	**1,419**	**21%**	**971**

Exhibit 5 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these above middle-skill addiction counseling occupations. In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase 18% through 2030. There is projected to be 3,621 jobs available annually.

Exhibit 5: Above-Middle Skill Occupational Demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	23,097	27,277	4,180	18%	850
Orange	6,878	8,228	1,350	20%	850
Total	**29,975**	**35,505**	**5,530**	**18%**	**3,621**

Wages

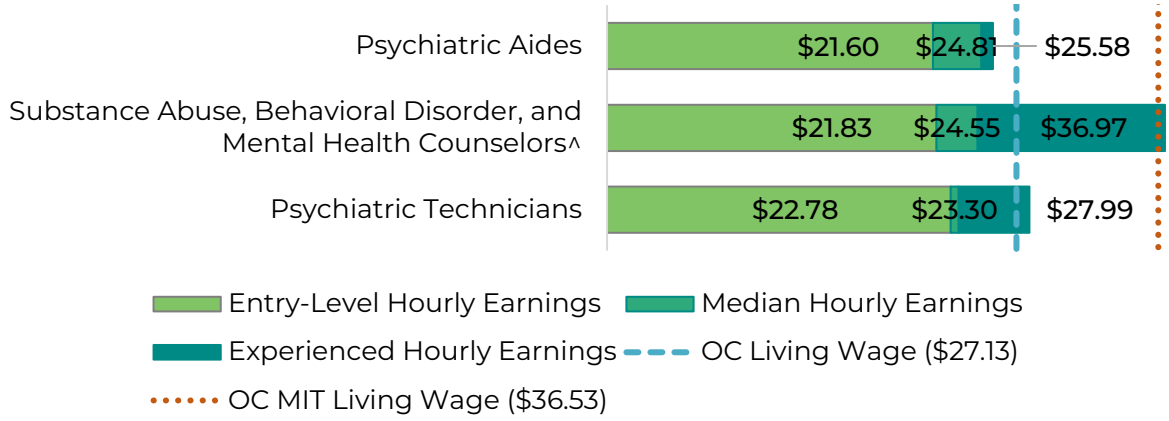
The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these addiction counseling occupations in Orange County as they relate to the county's living wage. Los Angeles County wages are included below to provide a complete analysis of the LA/OC region.

In addition to the Self Sufficiency Standard living wage, data for the MIT Living Wage (updated on February 15, 2026) is provided as a reference. Currently, the MIT Living Wage in Orange County is $36.53. Both figures account for geographic-specific costs of necessities such as housing, food, health care, and transportation to assess the cost of living, and are notated in the exhibits below.

In Orange County, all annual openings for these addiction counseling occupations have entry-level wages below the Self-Sufficiency living wage of $27.13 for a single adult, ranging from $21.60 to $22.78. Exhibit 6 shows the wage range for each of these addiction counseling occupations in Orange County and how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

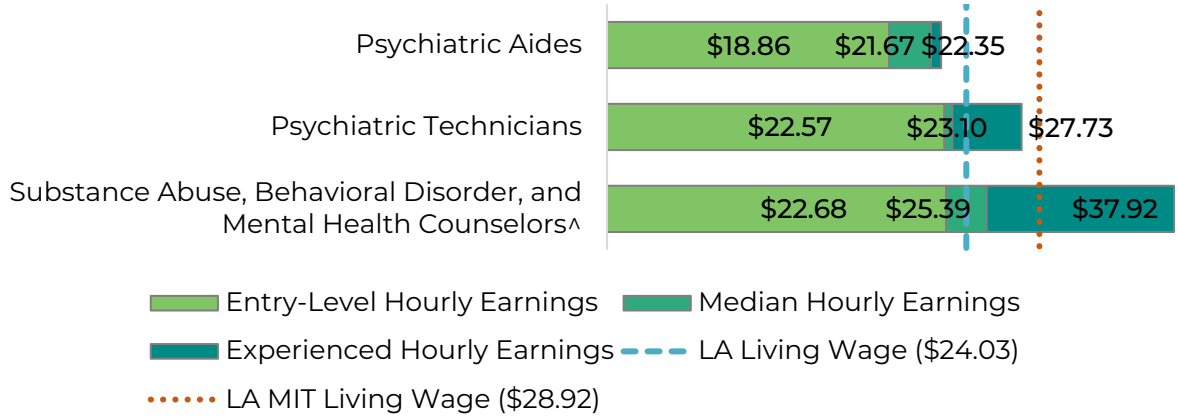
[2] Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

Exhibit 6: Wages by Occupation in Orange County



In Los Angeles County, all annual openings for these addiction counseling occupations have entry-level wages below the Self-Sufficiency living wage of $24.03 for a single adult, ranging from $18.86 to $22.57. Exhibit 7 shows the wage range for each of these addiction counseling occupations in Los Angeles County and how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

Exhibit 7: Wages by Occupation in Los Angeles County



Resilient Jobs and U.S. News & World Report Best Jobs

Exhibit 8 shows if each occupation is considered an Orange County Great Recession-Resilient, COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Job, or a 2026 U.S. News & World Report (USN&WR) Best Job[3]. Only one occupation, *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^*, met the criteria to be considered a USN&WR Best Jobs. None of these three addiction counseling occupations are Great Recession-Resilient Jobs or COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Jo .

[3] "100 Best Jobs," U.S. News & World Report, accessed January 12, 2026, https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/rankings/the-100-best-jobs.

Exhibit 8: Resilient Jobs and USN&WR Best Jobs Designations

Occupation	Great Recession-Resilient Job	COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Job	2026 USN&WR Best Job
Psychiatric Technicians	☐	☐	☐
Psychiatric Aides	☐	☐	☐
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors^	☐	☐	☑

Job Postings

Important Job Postings Data Note: *There are limitations when analyzing job postings. A single job posting may not represent a single job opening for a variety of reasons.*

There were 7,261 online job postings related to these addiction counseling occupations listed in the past 12 months. Exhibit 9 shows the number of job postings by occupation. Nearly 50% of job postings were for *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^*.

Exhibit 9: Number of Job Postings by Occupation (n= 7,261)

Occupation	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors^	3,576	49%
Psychiatric Aides	2,059	28%
Psychiatric Technicians	1,626	22%
Total Postings	**7,261**	**100%**

Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupation

The top job titles for these middle-skill addiction counseling occupations in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 10: Top Job Titles by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupations (n=3,685)

Job Titles	Job Postings	Percentage
Behavioral Health Technicians	558	15%
School Aides	265	7%
Behavior Interventionists	246	7%
Mental Health Workers	174	5%
Mental Health Technicians	162	4%
Behavioral Aides	125	3%
Licensed Psychiatric Technicians	107	3%
Psychiatric Technicians	104	3%
Classroom Aides	103	3%
Behavior Aides	85	2%

The top employers for these middle-skill addiction counseling occupations in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 11.

Exhibit 11: Top Employers by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupations (n=3,685)

Employer	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Amergis	447	12%
Zen Educate	105	3%
Ro Health	73	2%
Positive Behavior Supports Corp.	58	2%
Telecare	54	1%
Maxim Healthcare Services	49	1%
Stepping Stones	48	1%
Star View Behavioral Health	47	1%
360 Behavioral Health	45	1%
University of Southern California	39	1%

The top specialized, soft, and computer skills for these middle-skill addiction counseling occupations listed by those most frequently mentioned in job postings (denoted in parentheses) are shown in Exhibit 12.

Exhibit 12: Top Skills by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupations (n=3,685)

Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Mental Health (1,397)	Communication (1,627)	Microsoft Excel (163)
Behavioral Health (1,309)	Confidentiality (563)	Microsoft Word (140)
Crisis Intervention (743)	Interpersonal Communications (504)	Microsoft Office (122)
Treatment Planning (646)	Ethical Standards And Conduct (428)	Microsoft Outlook (112)
Psychology (640)	Management (423)	Google Workspace (52)
Special Education (591)	Compassion (415)	Microsoft PowerPoint (44)
Psychiatry (535)	English Language (411)	Document-Oriented Databases (36)
De-escalation Techniques (484)	Professionalism (399)	Productivity Software (29)
Social Work (482)	Teamwork (332)	Microsoft Access (27)
Rehabilitation (461)	Coordinating (321)	Spreadsheets (21)

Job Postings for Above Middle-Skill Occupation

The top job titles for the above middle-skill occupation *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^* in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 13.

Exhibit 13: Top Job Titles by Number of Job Postings for Above Middle-Skill Occupation (n=3,576)

Job Titles	Job Postings	Percentage
Licensed Mental Health Therapists	388	11%
Mental Health Therapists	308	9%
Counselors	187	5%
Mental Health Clinicians	187	5%
Licensed Mental Health Counselors	141	4%
Licensed Professional Counselors	87	2%
Substance Abuse Counselors	83	2%
Group Facilitators	70	2%
Residential Counselors	63	2%
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists	61	2%

The top employers for these above middle-skill occupation *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^* in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 14.

Exhibit 14: Top Employers by Number of Job Postings for Above Middle-Skill Occupation(n=3,576)

Employer	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
LifeStance Health	309	9%
Headway	173	5%
Telecare	87	2%
Thriveworks	75	2%
Tarzana Treatment Centers	75	2%
Rula Health	73	2%
Sondermind	62	2%
Star View Behavioral Health	53	1%
Daybreak Health	45	1%
Behavioral Health Services	44	1%

The top specialized, soft, and computer skills for these above middle-skill occupation *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^* listed by those most frequently mentioned in job postings (denoted in parentheses) are shown in Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15: Top Skills by Number of Job Postings for Above Middle-Skill Occupation(n=3,576)

Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Mental Health (2,392)	Communication (1,207)	Microsoft Office (185)
Treatment Planning (1,569)	Coordinating (677)	Microsoft Excel (172)
Social Work (1,165)	Ethical Standards And Conduct (612)	Microsoft Outlook (169)

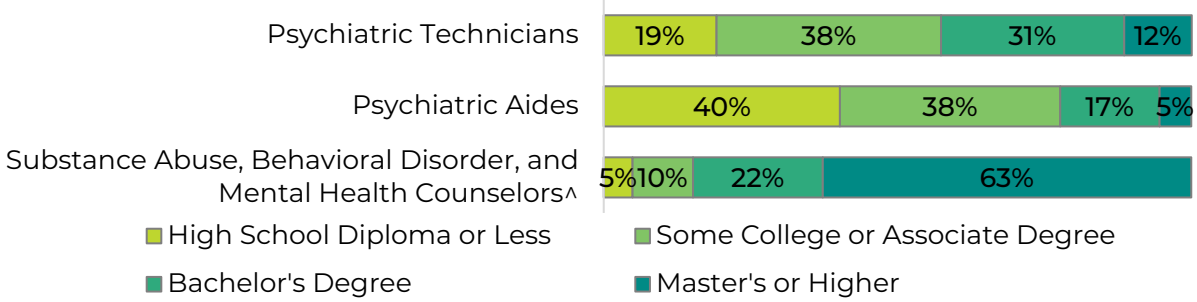
Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Psychology (1,093)	Multilingualism (521)	Microsoft Word (132)
Crisis Intervention (1,041)	Management (485)	Zoom (Video Conferencing Tool) (124)
Case Management (920)	Confidentiality (463)	Google Meet (85)
Behavioral Health (894)	Spanish Language (419)	Microsoft PowerPoint (82)
Substance Abuse (847)	Advocacy (402)	Microsoft Teams (80)
Medical Records (835)	Scheduling (371)	Spreadsheets (54)
Family Therapy (814)	Computer Literacy (339)	Productivity Software (37)

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists postsecondary nondegree award as the typical entry-level education for *psychiatric technicians*, and high school diploma or equivalent for *psychiatric aides*, and master's degree for *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^*.

The national-level educational attainment data indicates between 10% and 38% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. Exhibit 16 shows the educational attainment for each occupation, sorted by highest community college educational attainment to lowest.

Exhibit 16: National-level Educational Attainment for Occupations



Requested Minimum Education Requirement

Of the cumulative job postings for these addiction counseling occupations in Los Angeles and Orange counties that listed a minimum education requirement:

- 71% (2,628) of Middle-Skill Job Postings
  - 85% (2,245) requested a high school diploma or associate degree
  - 7% (189) requested a bachelor's degree.
- 65% (2,341) of Above Middle-Skill Job Postings
  - 26% (614) requested a high school diploma or associate degree
  - 12% (286) requested a bachelor's degree.

Educational Supply

The following tables display the total educational supply for the TOP and CIP codes associated with the middle-skill occupations.

Community College Supply

Exhibit 17 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP codes:

- Alcohol and Controlled Substances (2104.40)
- Home Health Aide (1230.80)
- Psychiatric Technician (1239.00)

The colleges with the most completions in the region are LA City (217), followed by Mt San Antonio (136), and East LA (131). Over the past 12 months, there were no other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

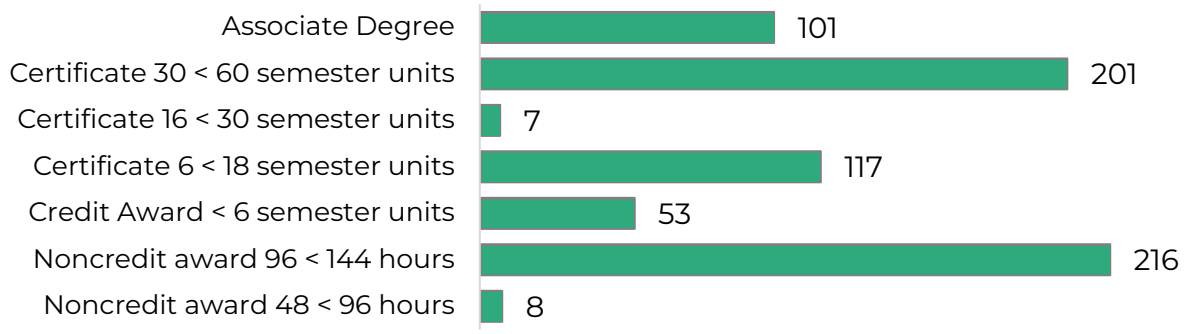
Exhibit 17: Regional Community College Awards (Certificates and Degrees), 2022-2025

TOP Code	Program	College	2021-2022 Awards	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	3-Year Award Average
1230.80	Home Health Aide	LA City	125	262	232	206
		Long Beach	0	1	0	0
		Santa Monica	7	4	12	8
		West LA	0	0	28	9
		LA Subtotal	**132**	**267**	**272**	**224**
		-	-	-	-	-
		OC Subtotal	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Supply Subtotal/Average			**132**	**267**	**272**	**224**
1239.00	Psychiatric Technicians	Mt San Antonio	41	39	30	37
		LA Subtotal	**41**	**39**	**30**	**37**
		Cypress	53	35	23	37
		OC Subtotal	**53**	**35**	**23**	**37**
Supply Subtotal/Average			**94**	**74**	**53**	**74**
2104.40	Alcohol and Controlled Substances	East LA	85	138	171	131
		Glendale	20	11	18	16
		LA City	4	18	11	11
		LA Pierce	42	35	34	37
		Long Beach	16	6	6	9
		Mt San Antonio	35	35	46	39
		Rio Hondo	68	118	112	99
		West LA	13	10	12	12
		LA Subtotal	**295**	**382**	**420**	**366**
		Cypress	15	16	14	15

TOP Code	Program	College	2021-2022 Awards	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	3-Year Award Average
		Saddleback	23	20	28	24
		OC Subtotal	**38**	**36**	**42**	**39**
		Supply Subtotal/Average	**333**	**418**	**462**	**404**
		Supply Total/Average	**559**	**759**	**787**	**702**

Exhibit 18 shows the annual average community college awards by type from 2022-23 to 2024-25. The plurality of the awards are for noncredit award 96 to 144 hours, followed by certificate 30 to 60 semester units then certificate 6 to 18 semester units.

Exhibit 18: Annual Average Community College Awards by Type, 2022-2025



Community College Student Outcomes

Exhibit 19 shows the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics for alcohol and controlled substances programs in Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD), the Orange County Region, and California. Of the 1,113 Orange County alcohol and controlled substances students in the 2024-25 academic year, 56% (624) attended an RSCCD college.

RSCCD students that exited alcohol and controlled substances programs in the 2023-24 academic year had lower median annual earnings ($29,576 or $14.22 per hour) compared to all alcohol and controlled substances students in Orange County ($41,580 or $19.99 per hour). DataVista reports there is insufficient data to determine the percentage of RSCCD alcohol and controlled substances students who attained the living wage in Orange County.

Exhibit 19: Alcohol and Controlled Substances (2104.40) Strong Workforce Program Metrics, 2022-25[4]

SWP Metric	RSCCD	OC Region	California
SWP Students	624	1,113	8,821
SWP Students Who Earned 9 or More Career Education Units in the District in a Single Year	0%	18%	34%
SWP Students Who Completed a Noncredit CTE or Workforce Preparation Course	80%	81%	80%
SWP Students Who Earned a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	Insufficient Data	32	675

[4] All SWP metrics are for 2024-25 unless otherwise noted.

SWP Metric	RSCCD	OC Region	California
SWP Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution (2023-24)	0	Insufficient Data	308
SWP Students with a Job Closely Related to Their Field of Study (2022-23)	Insufficient Data	29%	27%
Median Annual Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	$29,576 ($14.22)	$41,580 ($19.99)	$44,312 ($21.30)
Median Change in Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	32%	31%	29%
SWP Exiting Students Who Attained the Living Wage (2023-24)	Insufficient Data	24%	42%

Non-Community College Supply

To comprehensively analyze the regional supply, it is crucial to include data from other institutions offering alcohol and controlled substances programs. Exhibit 20 displays the annual and three-year average awards granted by these institutions under the related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes:

- Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling (51.1501)
- Psychiatric/Mental Health Services Technician (51.1502)

The available data covers 2021 to 2024. During this period, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 129 awards annually in related programs.

Exhibit 20: Regional Non-Community College Awards, 2021-2024

CIP Code	Program	College	2021-2022 Awards	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	3-Year Award Average
51.1501	Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling	Galaxy Medical College	6	0	5	4
		InterCoast Colleges-Santa Ana	0	0	0	0
		InterCoast Colleges-West Covina	92	101	145	113
		Touro University Worldwide	0	0	1	0
Supply Total/Average			**98**	**101**	**151**	**117**
51.1502	Psychiatric/Mental Health Services Technician	Hacienda La Puente Adult Education	7	3	4	5
		InterCoast Colleges-West Covina	7	12	3	7
Supply Subtotal/Average			**14**	**15**	**7**	**12**
Supply Total/Average			**112**	**116**	**158**	**129**

Regional Demographics

The following section presents occupational, community college program, and population demographic data for Orange County. This comparison can help identify possible equity gaps between the local workforce and the student pipeline who are preparing for these occupations. These insights can inform program development, outreach, and support strategies to better align community college programs with current labor market needs.

Ethnicity

Exhibit 21 compares the ethnicity of Orange County community college students enrolled in alcohol and controlled substances programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these addiction counseling occupations included in this report.

Asian workers have more representation in addiction counseling occupations (20%) compared to the proportion of Asian community college alcohol and controlled substances students (4%). Conversely, Hispanic or Latino individuals make up over half (55%) of alcohol and controlled substances students, but only 34% of the workforce, indicating a potential disconnect between training and employment outcomes.

Exhibit 21: Program and County Demographics by Ethnicity

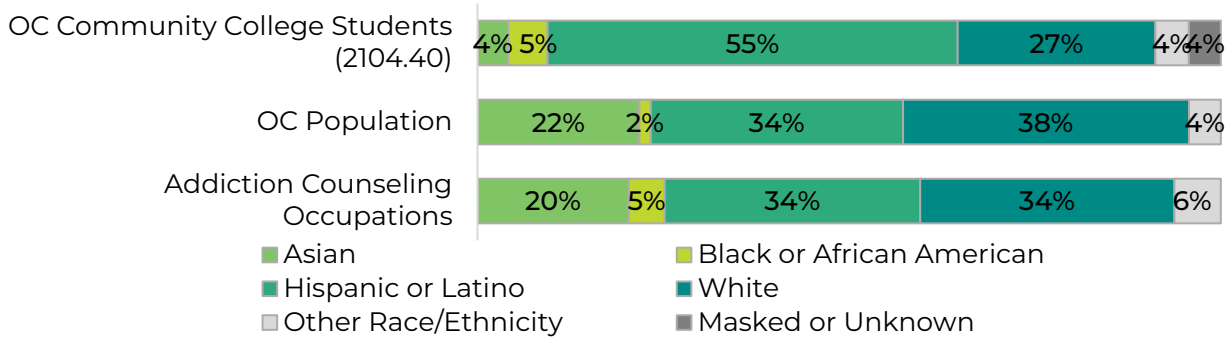
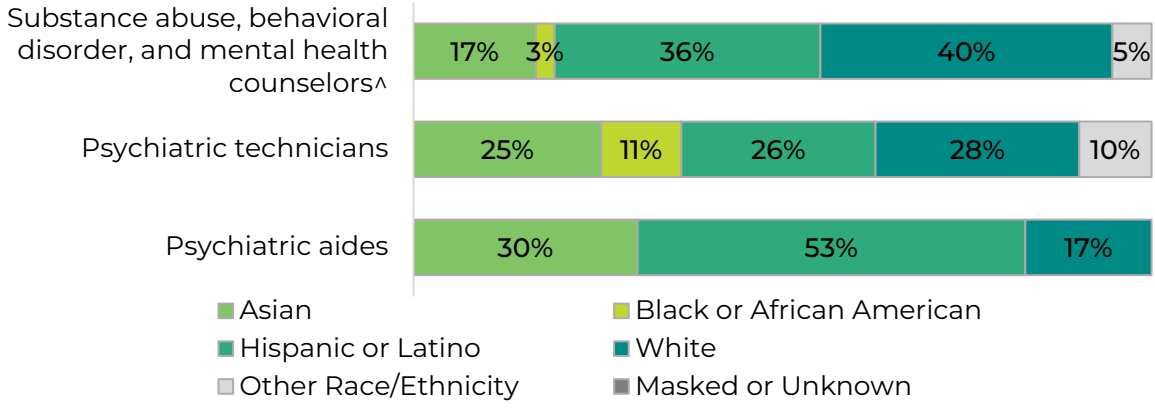


Exhibit 22 shows the disaggregated ethnicity data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Out of all alcohol and controlled substances workers, Asian workers make up only 17% of the workforce in the higher educational requirement (master's degree) occupation *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^*, but 30% of the lower educational requirement (high school diploma or equivalent) occupation *psychiatric aides*. Conversely, white workers make up only 17% of *psychiatric* aides, while representing 40% of the *substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors^* workforce.

Exhibit 22: Disaggregated Ethnic Distribution by Occupation



Age

Exhibit 22 compares the age of Orange County community college students enrolled in alcohol and controlled substances programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these addiction counseling occupations included in this report.

Those employed in addiction counseling-related occupations tend to be 25 and older (84%), with only 15% of the workforce being 24 or younger. Almost half of program enrollments for those 35 and older (46%), potentially representing a program individuals seek to make a later in life career shift, or to gain additional skills to advance in their current careers.

Exhibit 23: Program and County Demographics by Age

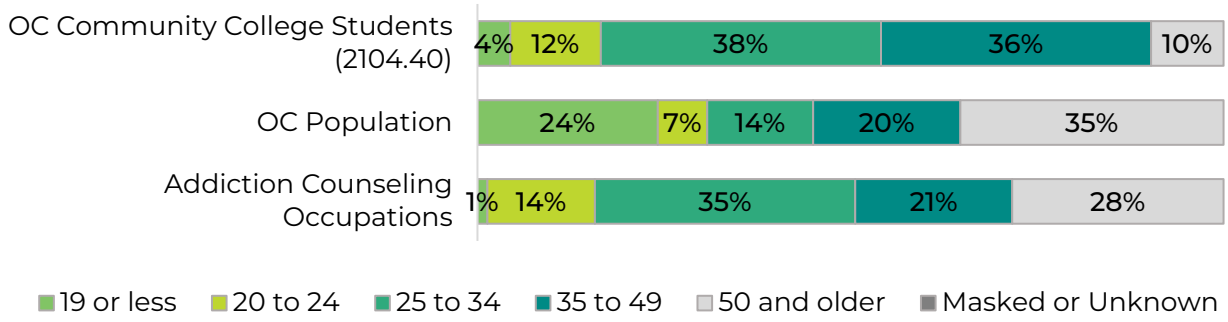
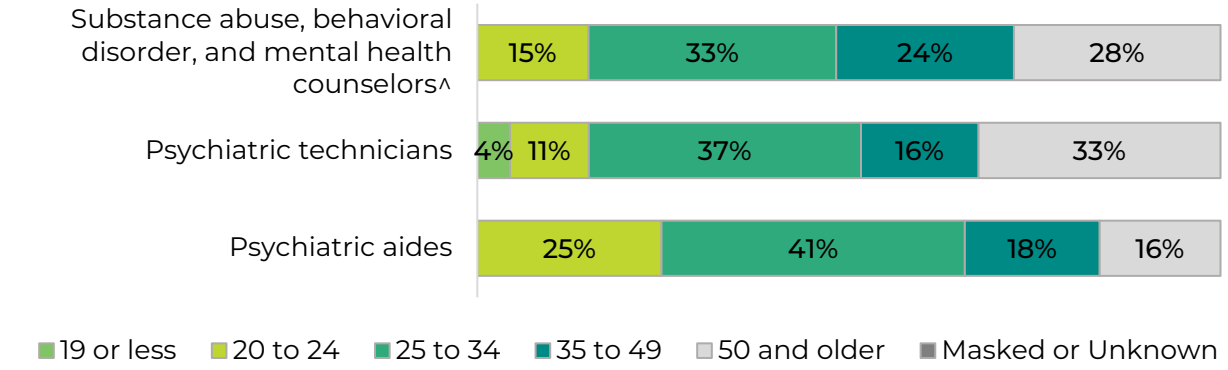


Exhibit 24 shows the disaggregated age data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Exhibit 24: Disaggregated Age Distribution by Occupation



Sex

Exhibit 23 compares the sex of Orange County community college students enrolled in alcohol and controlled substances programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these addiction counseling occupations.

Though the population is split evenly between women and men, only 36% of alcohol and controlled substances workers in the field are men, while this group makes up 52% of community college students.

Exhibit 25: Program and County Demographics by Sex

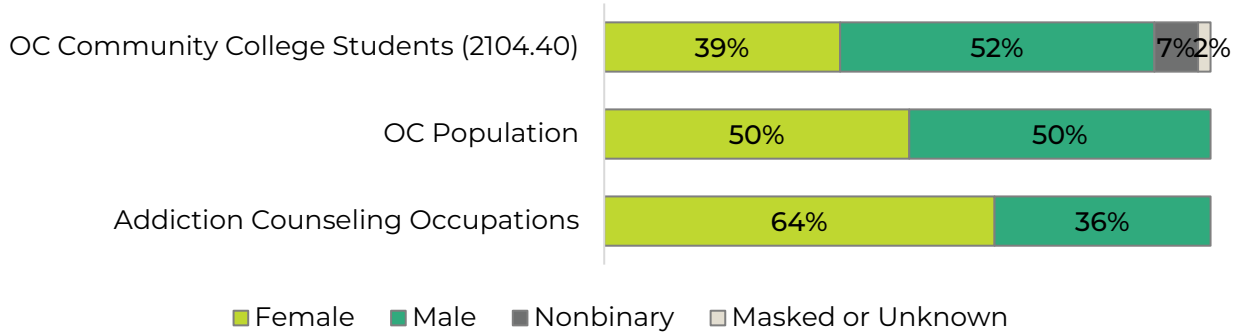
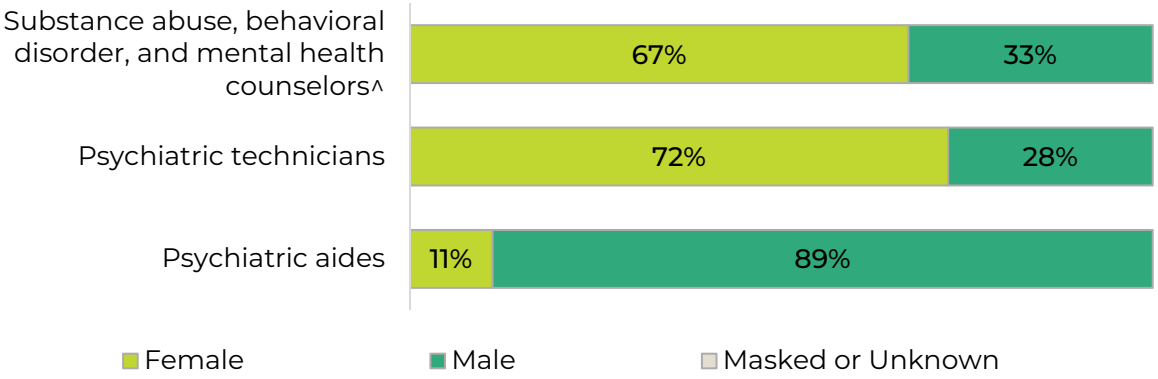


Exhibit 26 shows the disaggregated sex data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Men make up the majority (89%) of the lowest paying occupation that requires the least amount of training while making up the minority of the workforce in higher-paying occupations that require more training.

Exhibit 26: Disaggregated Sex Distribution by Occupation



Appendix A: Methodology

OC COE prepared this report by analyzing occupational and educational program data. Occupational data comes from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm which compiles information from the California Employment Development Department (EDD), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and other agencies. Analysis of emerging occupations is predicated on online job postings data combined with Occupational Information Network (O*NET) profile descriptions. Program supply data was sourced from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart (MIS Data Mart) (datamart.cccco.edu) and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data), also known as IPEDS, which was integrated into the COE's Supply Table. (IPEDS).

Using a TOP-SOC crosswalk, the OC COE identified middle-skill jobs for which programs within these TOP codes train. Middle-skill jobs include:

- All occupations that have 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.

The OC COE determined labor market supply for each occupation (SOC code) by analyzing the number of 3-year average program completers or awards in related TOP and CIP codes. TOP code data comes from MIS Data Mart and CIP code data comes from the IPEDS. The TOP is a system of numerical codes used at the state level to collect and report information on California community college programs and courses throughout the state that have similar outcomes. CIP codes are a taxonomy of academic disciplines at institutions of higher education throughout the United States and Canada. The California Community Colleges are the only system that use TOP codes.

The analysis reflects labor market demand for occupations closely related to the proposed program as expressed by the requesting college in consultation with the OC COE. Traditional labor market data was used to assess current and projected employment based on data trends for detailed occupations, as well as annual average awards granted by regional postsecondary educational institutions. Real-time labor market information (online job postings) assesses employer preferences but cannot be used to measure the quantity of open positions, number of jobs, or annual openings.

All findings are based on the most current available data and a combination of primary and secondary sources. While care was taken to ensure accuracy, the OC COE, its host district, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are not responsible for individual decisions made based on this report.

Appendix B: Data Sources

Data Type	Source
Occupational Projections, Wages, and Job Postings	Traditional and real-time labor market information are captured using data from Lightcast (v.2026.3), a labor market analytics firm.
Living Wage	Per the CCCCO's this report's endorsement criteria uses the University of Washington's Center for Women's Welfare Self-Sufficiency Standard last updated in March 2024, which is $27.13 per hour ($57,294 annually) in Orange County. The MIT Living Wage, updated on February 15, 2026, is a nationally recognized living wage metric and is provided for reference. The current MIT Living Wage in Orange County is $36.53.
Typical Education and Training Requirements, and Educational Attainment	The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data.
Emerging Occupation Descriptions, Additional Education Requirements, and Employer Preferences	The O*NET database includes information on skills, abilities, knowledges, work activities, and interests associated with occupations.
Educational Supply	The CCCCO Data Mart provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Integrated Data System (IPEDS) collects data on the number of postsecondary awards earned (completions).
Student Metrics and Demographics	Data Vista, a statewide data system supported by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office provides data on progress, success, employment, and earnings outcomes for California community college students.
Population and Occupation Demographics	The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the premier source for detailed population and housing information. Data is sourced from IPUMS USA, a database providing access to ACS and other Census Bureau data products.

For more information, please contact the Orange County Center of Excellence:

Jesse Crete, Ed. D., Regional Director
crete_jesse@rsccd.edu

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