Labor Market Analysis for Noncredit Program and Program Recommendation:
TOP 2105.00/Administration of Justice
CIP: 43.0107/Criminal Justice/Police Science
(Specialized Investigator Certificate of Achievement)
(Specialized Investigator, Certificate of Completion)

Orange County Center of Excellence, November 2026

FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH
ORANGE COUNTY

☑ Endorsed: All Criteria Met			
Program LMI Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Met ☑	Partially Met ☐	Not Met ☐
	There are projected to be **2,546 annual job openings** throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties for these investigator occupations, which **is more than the 1,980 awards conferred by educational institutions**.		
Self-Sufficiency Standard Living Wage[1]:	Met ☑	Partially Met ☐	Not Met ☐
	All (100%) of annual job openings for these investigator occupations **have entry-level hourly wages significantly above the OC living wage of $27.13**.		
Education:	Met ☑	Partially Met ☐	Not Met ☐
	Although all (100%) annual job openings for these middle-skill investigator occupations typically require a high school diploma, **between 28% and 44% 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 three occupations:

- Middle-Skill
  - *Detectives and Criminal Investigators (33-3021)*
  - *Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers (33-3051)*

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for these investigator middle-skill occupations, and typical education requirements for these occupations align with a community college education. Additionally, all annual job openings have entry-level wages significantly above the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage. **Therefore, all 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
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers (33-3051)	LA: 1,876 OC: 406 *TTL: 2,282*	LA: 1,521 OC: 459 *TTL: 1,980*	OC: $43.46	High school diploma or equivalent	44%
Detectives and Criminal Investigators (33-3021)	LA: 218 OC: 46 *TTL: 264*	*Accounted for Above*	OC: $45.52	High school diploma or equivalent	28%
Total	**2,546**	**1,980**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Demand

- In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to these investigator occupations is projected to increase 6% through 2030, equating to 2,546 annual job openings.
- Hourly entry-level wages for these investigator occupations range from $43.46 to $45.52 in Orange County; all annual openings have entry-level wages above the Self-Sufficiency Standard living wage.
- There were 2,572 online job postings for these investigator occupations over the past 12 months. The highest number of postings were for border patrol agents, customs and border protection officers, and police services officers.
- The typical entry-level education for these investigator occupations is a high school diploma.
- Between 28% and 44% 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 1,980 awards were conferred by 25 community colleges for these middle-skill occupations in Los Angeles and Orange counties.
- From 2021 to 2024, non-community college institutions did not confer any awards for these middle-skill occupations.
- In the 2023-24 academic year, Orange County community college students that exited administration of justice programs had a median annual wage of $99,152 ($47.67 per hour) post-exit, and 71% attained the regional living wage.
- In 2022-23, 29% of Orange County administration of justice students that exited their programs reported working a job closely related to their field of study.

Demand

Occupational Projections

Exhibit 2 shows the annual percentage change in jobs for these investigator 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 2: Annual Percentage Change in Jobs for Investigator Occupations, 2020-2030

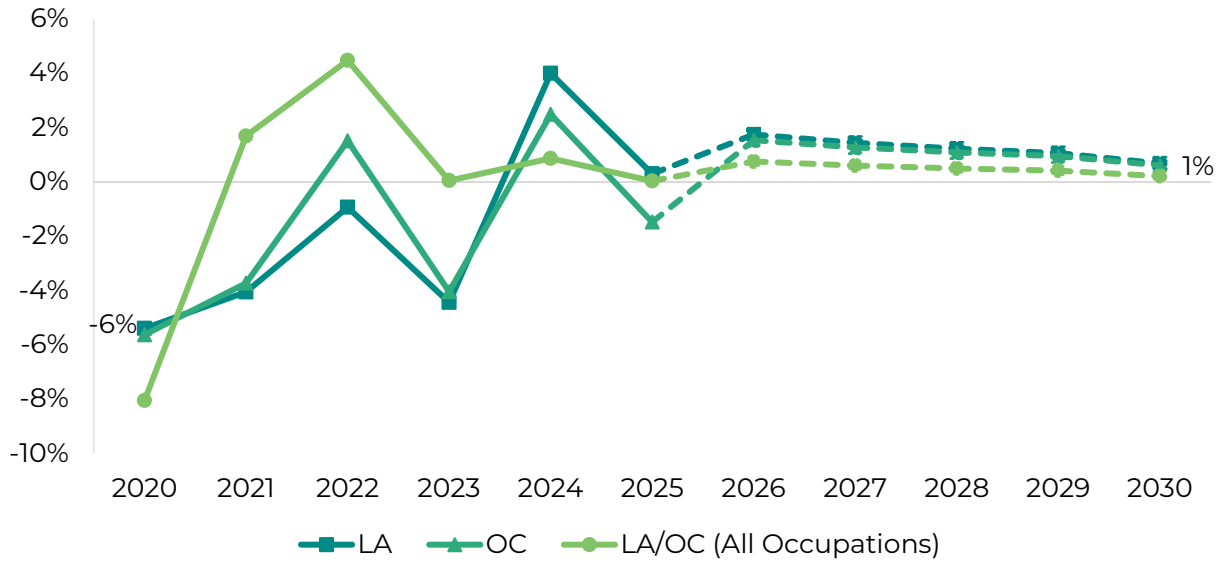


Exhibit 3 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these middle-skill investigator occupations. In Los Angeles and Orange counties, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase 6% through 2030. There is projected to be 2,546 jobs available annually.

Exhibit 3: 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	24,037	25,558	1,521	6%	2,095
Orange	5,287	5,583	295	6%	452
Total	**29,324**	**31,140**	**1,816**	**6%**	**2,546**

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these investigator 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.

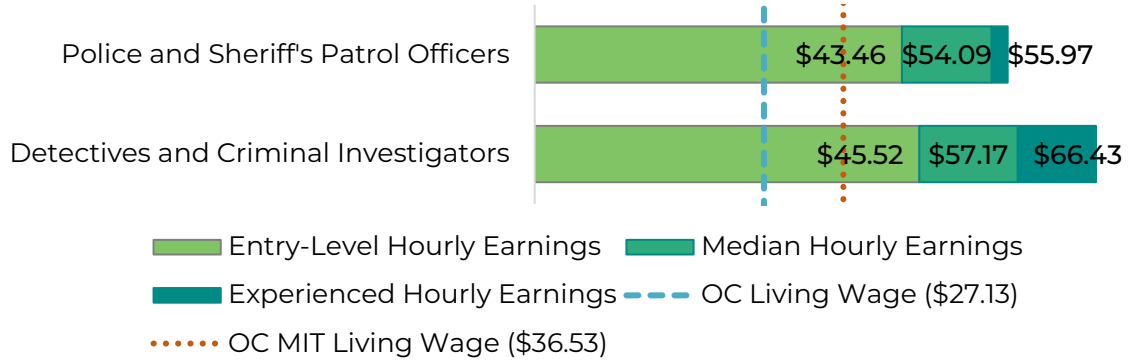
In addition to the Self Sufficiency Standard living wage, data for the MIT Living Wage (updated on February 15, 2026) is provided as a reference. Currently, the MIT Living Wage in Orange County is $36.53. Both figures account for geographic-specific costs of necessities

[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.

such as housing, food, health care, and transportation to assess the cost of living, and are notated in the exhibits below.

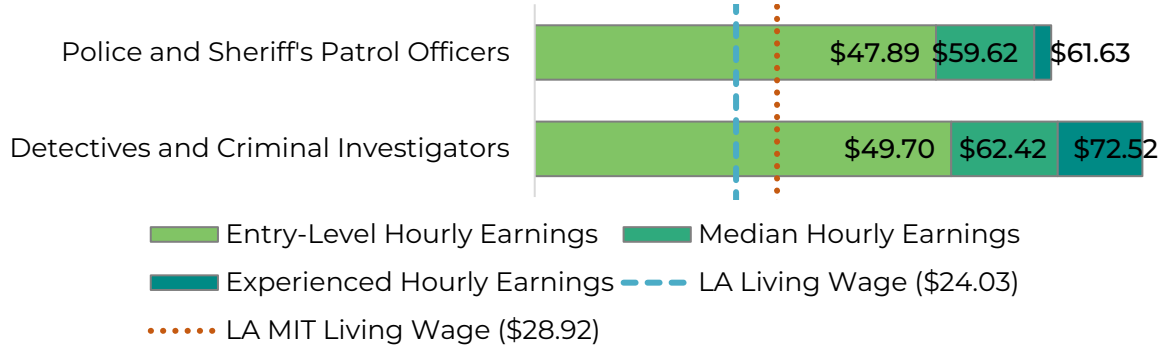
In Orange County, all annual openings for these investigator occupations have entry-level wages significantly above the Self-Sufficiency living wage of $27.13 for a single adult, ranging from $43.46 to $45.52. Exhibit 4 shows the wage range for each of these investigator occupations in Orange County and how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

Exhibit 4: Wages by Occupation in Orange County



In Los Angeles County, all annual openings for these investigator occupations have entry-level wages significantly above the Self-Sufficiency living wage of $24.03 for a single adult, ranging from $47.89 to $49.70. Exhibit 5 shows the wage range for each of these investigator occupations in Los Angeles County and how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

Exhibit 5: Wages by Occupation in Los Angeles County



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

Exhibit 6 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]. Neither of these two investigator occupations meet the criteria to be Great Recession-Resilient Jobs, COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Jobs, or USN&WR Best Jobs.

Exhibit 6: Resilient Jobs and USN&WR Best Jobs Designations

Occupation	Great Recession-Resilient Job	COVID-19 Pandemic Recession-Resilient Job	2026 USN&WR Best Job
Detectives and Criminal Investigators	☐	☐	☐
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	☐	☐	☐

[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.

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 2,572 online job postings related to these investigator occupations listed in the past 12 months. Exhibit 7 shows the number of job postings by occupation. About 84% of job postings were for *police and sheriff's patrol officers* with the remaining 16% were for *detectives and criminal investigators*.

Exhibit 7: Number of Job Postings by Occupation (n=2,572)

Occupation	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	2,149	84%
Detectives and Criminal Investigators	423	16%
Total Postings	**2,572**	**100%**

Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupation

The top job titles for these middle-skill investigator occupations in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 8.

Exhibit 8: Top Job Titles by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupation (n=2,572)

Job Titles	Job Postings	Percentage
Border Patrol Agents	476	19%
Customs and Border Protection Officers	315	12%
Police Services Officers	153	6%
Police Recruits	113	4%
Police Officers	102	4%
CBP Officers	100	4%
Police Academy Instructors	94	4%
Lateral Police Officers	91	4%
Marine Interdiction Agents	60	2%
Police Cadets	55	2%

The top employers for these middle-skill investigator occupations in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 9.

Exhibit 9: Top Employers by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupation (n=2,572)

Employer	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
United States Department of Homeland Security	905	35%
Association Of Former Agents Of The United States Secret Service	203	8%
Federal Bureau of Investigation	70	3%
Border Operations Workforce	50	2%
State of California	46	2%
GardaWorld	30	1%
GoLawEnforcement.com	29	1%
General Dynamics	26	1%
Sacramento Area Council Of Governments	26	1%
Marcom Group	24	<1%

The top specialized, soft, and computer skills for these middle-skill investigator occupations listed by those most frequently mentioned in job postings (denoted in parentheses) are shown in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills by Number of Job Postings for Middle-Skill Occupation (n=2,572)

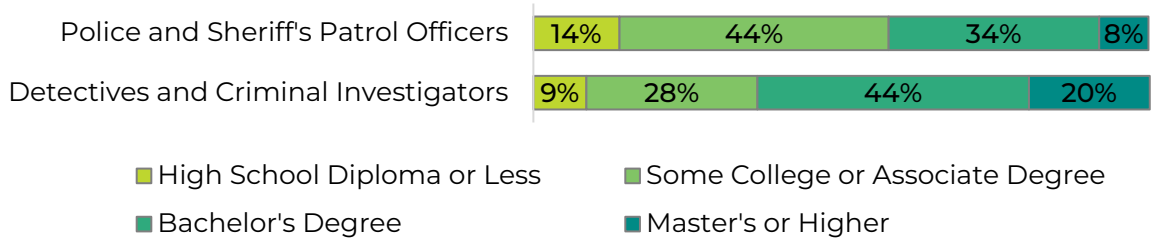
Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Law Enforcement (1,396)	Operations (1,247)	Microsoft Office (75)
Contraband Detection And Control (941)	Investigation (977)	Microsoft Excel (61)
International Laws (872)	Spanish Language (892)	Microsoft PowerPoint (43)
Immigration Law (558)	Communication (891)	Spreadsheets (27)
Physical Fitness (547)	English Language (617)	Microsoft Outlook (19)
Patrolling (470)	Tactfulness (432)	Python (Programming Language) (18)
Motorcycles (432)	Management (389)	Productivity Software (16)
All Terrain Vehicles (425)	Writing (346)	Microsoft Word (15)
Agriculture (367)	Customer Service (308)	SAP Applications (14)
Merchandising (350)	Report Writing (282)	Microsoft Access (11)

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *detectives and criminal investigators*, and *police and sheriff's patrol officers*.

The national-level educational attainment data indicates between 28% and 44% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. Exhibit 11 shows the educational attainment for each occupation, sorted by highest community college educational attainment to lowest.

Exhibit 11: National-level Educational Attainment for Occupations



Requested Minimum Education Requirement

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

- 63% (1,621) of Middle-Skill Occupations Job Postings
  - 44% (706) requested a high school diploma or associate degree
  - 43% (692) 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 12 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP codes: Administration of Justice (2105.00).

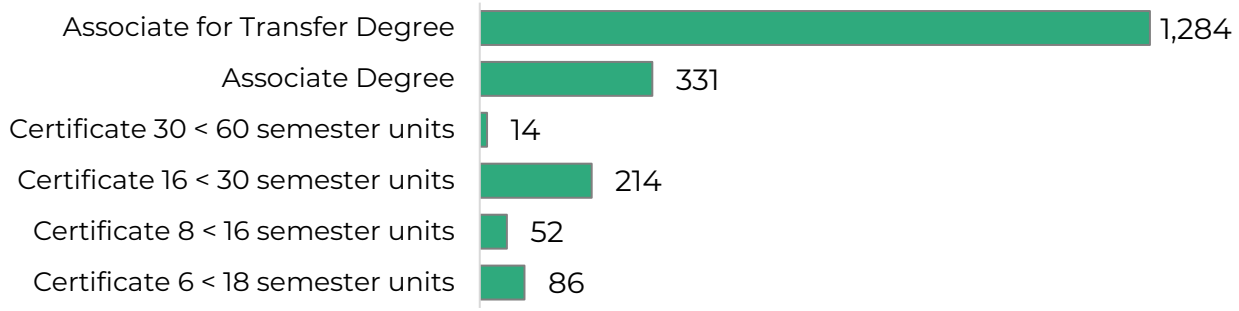
The colleges with the most completions in the region are East LA (346), followed by Golden West (153), and Rio Hondo (151). Over the past 12 months, there were four other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

Exhibit 12: Regional Community College Awards (Certificates and Degrees), 2022-2025

TOP Code	Program	College	2022-2023 Awards	2023-2024 Awards	2024-2025 Awards	3-Year Award Average
2105.00	Administration of Justice	Cerritos	94	95	78	89
		Citrus	143	143	156	147
		Compton	32	42	28	34
		East LA	330	305	404	346
		El Camino	78	86	68	77
		Glendale	28	25	18	24
		LA City	39	36	36	37
		LA Harbor	30	41	30	34
		LA Mission	44	42	36	41
		LA Pierce	74	83	59	72
		LA Southwest	30	28	18	25
		LA Trade	11	19	13	14
		LA Valley	36	39	40	38
		Long Beach	152	132	156	147
		Mt San Antonio	75	78	92	82
		Pasadena	62	68	79	70
		Rio Hondo	155	152	147	151
		Santa Monica	44	60	53	52
		West LA	51	34	37	41
		LA Subtotal	**1,508**	**1,508**	**1,548**	**1,521**
		Coastline	13	2	0	5
		Cypress	61	56	50	56
		Fullerton	109	105	120	111
		Golden West	154	171	135	153
		Irvine	49	36	59	48
		Santa Ana	83	86	88	86
		OC Subtotal	**469**	**456**	**452**	**459**
Supply Total/Average			**1,977**	**1,964**	**2,000**	**1,980**

Exhibit 13 shows the annual average community college awards by type from 2022-23 to 2024-25. The plurality of the awards are for associate for transfer degree, followed by associate degree then certificate 16 to 30 semester units.

Exhibit 13: Annual Average Community College Awards by Type, 2022-2025



Community College Student Outcomes

Exhibit 14 shows the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics for administration of justice programs in Coast Community College District (CCCD), the Orange County Region, and California. Of the 10,488 Orange County administration of justice students in the 2024-25 academic year, 13% (1,344) attended a CCCD college.

CCCD students that exited administration of justice programs in the 2023-24 academic year had lower median annual earnings ($70,578 or $33.93 per hour) compared to all administration of justice students in Orange County ($99,152 or $47.67 per hour). A lower percentage of CCCD administration of justice students attained the living wage (64%) when compared to all administration of justice students in Orange County (71%).

Exhibit 14: Administration of Justice (2105.00) Strong Workforce Program Metrics, 2022-25[4]

SWP Metric	CCCD	OC Region	California
SWP Students	1,344	10,488	86,732
SWP Students Who Earned 9 or More Career Education Units in the District in a Single Year	8%	9%	18%
SWP Students Who Completed a Noncredit CTE or Workforce Preparation Course	Insufficient Data	68%	49%
SWP Students Who Earned a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	77	351	5,447
SWP Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution (2023-24)	101	473	4,790
SWP Students with a Job Closely Related to Their Field of Study (2022-23)	31%	29%	45%
Median Annual Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	$70,578 ($33.93)	$99,152 ($47.67)	$73,848 ($35.50)
Median Change in Earnings for SWP Exiting Students (2023-24)	27%	20%	22%
SWP Exiting Students Who Attained the Living Wage (2023-24)	64%	71%	64%

Non-Community College Supply

No awards were granted by non-community college institutions under related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes: Criminal Justice/Police Science (43.0107).

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

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 15 compares the ethnicity of Orange County community college students enrolled in administration of justice programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these investigator occupations included in this report.

White workers have more than double representation in investigator occupations (48%) compared to the proportion of white community college administration of justice students (18%). Similarly, Asian individuals make up 11% of administration of justice students, but only 6% of the workforce, indicating they may be entering the workforce through other pathways.

Exhibit 15: Program and County Demographics by Ethnicity

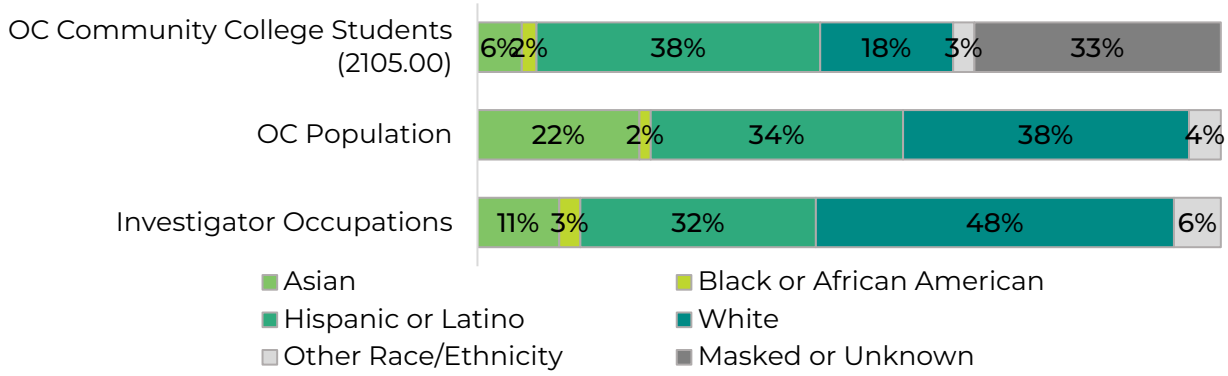
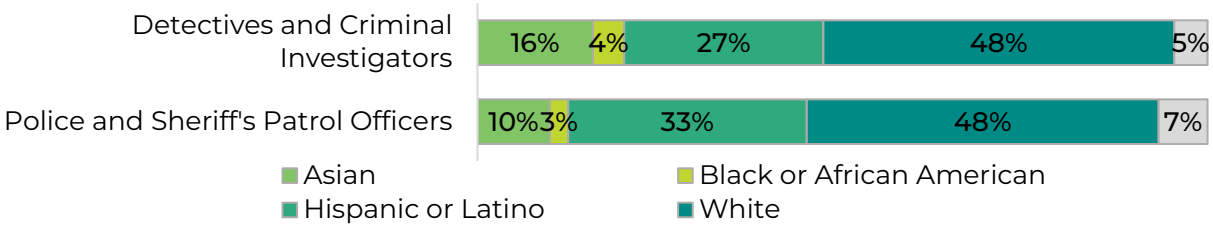


Exhibit 16 shows the disaggregated ethnicity data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Police and sheriff's patrol officers have a slightly larger share of Hispanic or Latino workers (33%) compared to *detective and criminal investigators* (27%). In contrast, *detective and criminal investigators* have a slightly larger share of Asian workers (16%) compared to *police and sheriff's patrol officers* (10%).

Exhibit 16: Disaggregated Ethnic Distribution by Occupation



Age

Exhibit 17 compares the age of Orange County community college students enrolled in administration of justice programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these investigator occupations included in this report.

While only 27% of investigators are 34 and younger, about 61% of this age group make up the student population. This may indicate the need for more on-the-job experience to become an investigator. Additionally, there are far more investigators who are 35 and older (72%) compared to administration of justice students (39%), indicating a possible shift in careers to investigators later in life.

Exhibit 17: Program and County Demographics by Age

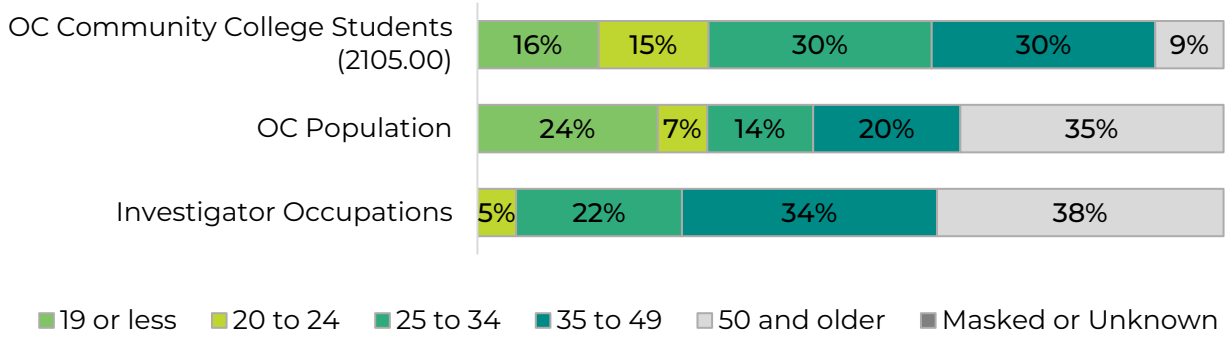
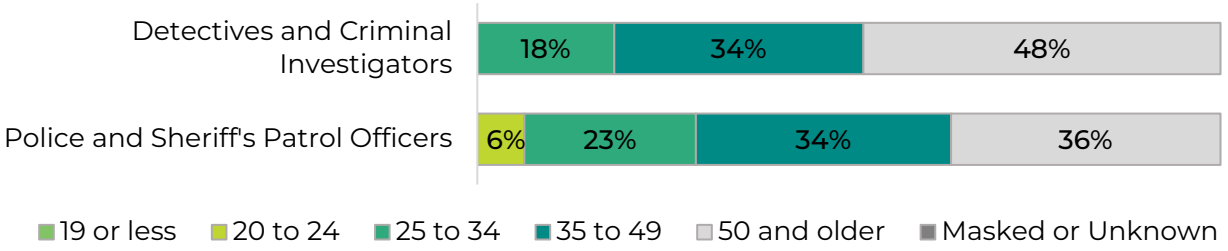


Exhibit 18 shows the disaggregated age data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Detective and criminal investigators have no representation of workers aged 24 and younger, while *police and sheriff's patrol offers* only have 6% representation for the same age group.

Exhibit 18: Disaggregated Age Distribution by Occupation



Sex

Exhibit 19 compares the sex of Orange County community college students enrolled in administration of justice programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these investigator occupations.

Though the population is split evenly between women and men, only 23% of investigators in the field, and 33% of community college students, are women.

Exhibit 19: Program and County Demographics by Sex

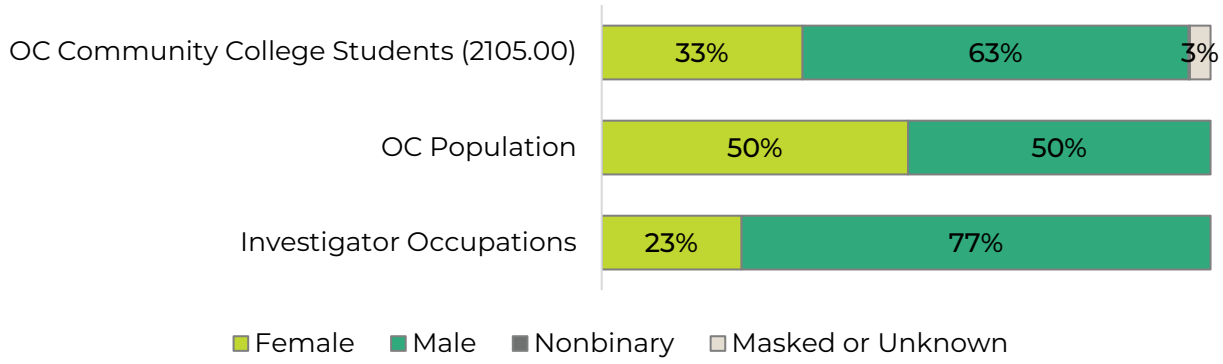
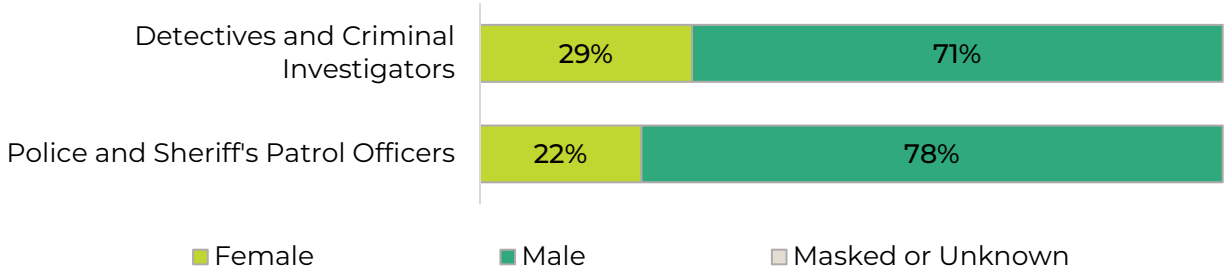


Exhibit 20 shows the disaggregated sex data for each occupation, revealing potential disparities in entry into well-paying occupations or career advancement.

Detectives and criminal investigators have a slightly higher share of women (29%) compared to *police and sheriff's patrol officers* (22%).

Exhibit 20: 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.

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November 2026

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