

# Defining and Measuring Career Mobility

## For the California Community Colleges and Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research

August 2026

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH
LOS ANGELES

POWERED BY
California Community Colleges

# Defining and Measuring Career Mobility

## For the California Community Colleges and Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research




Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research
1100 N Grand Ave, Office 1270
Walnut, CA 91789

- Luke Meyer, Director
- Dr. Christopher L. Chen, Assistant Director
- Dr. Vicki Cabrera, Research Associate
- Dr. Ben Falls, Research Associate
- Emily Lockwood, Research Associate

# Our Mission

### Who We Are

The Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research are part of the Workforce and Economic Development Division. As grant-funded technical assistance providers, the nine Centers are located strategically across the state to study California's regional economies. Our work supports the community colleges by providing customized data on high growth, emerging, and economically-critical industries and occupations.

### What We Do

The Centers produce reports and tools that provide a real-time picture of the labor market, where it is headed, and what programs and training are needed to meet future workforce demand. This research helps community colleges tailor their programs to support the state's dynamic and competitive workforce. Our work can also be applied to educational policy, faculty professional development, and work-based learning opportunities for students.

# Table of Contents


| Section | Page |
|---|---|
| Executive Summary | 4 |
| Introduction | 6 |
| Methodology | 7 |
| Defining and Measuring Career Mobility | 8 |
| Evaluating Career Mobility Measures Based on Feasibility and Validity | 18 |
| How the COE Can Define and Measure Career Mobility | 20 |
| Proposed COE Career Mobility Indicators | 21 |
| Future Research Directions | 24 |
| Conclusion | 25 |
| Appendix A: Scoping Literature Review Methodology | 26 |
| Appendix B: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) | 30 |
| Appendix C: Government Dashboards | 32 |

# Executive Summary

The California Community Colleges (CCC) play a central role in advancing equitable career mobility for more than 2.1 million students statewide. However, a universal definition and measure for career mobility have not been established in labor market research. To address this gap, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence (LA COE) conducted a scoping literature review of academic and applied research on career mobility to identify practical approaches to defining and measuring career mobility to inform Career and Technical Education (CTE) planning for community colleges.

## In our academic literature review, we found:

- **Career mobility was defined in a variety of ways** across academic disciplines, falling into four categories: occupational mobility, job mobility, socioeconomic mobility, and career progression.
- **Five dimensions of career mobility describe more specific aspects of the movement**: direction of movement, distance of movement, type of movement, employer movement, and reason for movement.
- **Several major national datasets and a variety of approaches for measuring career mobility were used**, including four types of career mobility measures: wage-based, occupation-based, skills-based, and time-based.

## In our review of how the federal government defines and tracks career mobility, we found:

- **The government plays a policy role in defining and measuring career pathways through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA**), which is the primary federal reporting framework through which constructs adjacent to career mobility are operationalized at the state level.
- **The US Department of Labor (DOL) provides the Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard**, which combines longitudinal survey data and online job histories to show how workers' wages and careers evolve across 14 occupational clusters.
- **Internal upward mobility in government employment is institutionalized** through the Department of the Interior's Upward Mobility Policy.

## In our review of how state governments define and track career mobility, we found:

- **States define career mobility as a policy objective and focus on upward mobility** in terms of income, credentials, and employment.
- **States measure career mobility** using unemployment insurance (UI) wage records, credential and skill progression measures, and employment changes.
- **Some states provide workforce and labor market dashboards** that include career mobility indicators (e.g., occupational transfers).
- **Internal upward mobility in government employment is institutionalized.**

## In our review of applied research on career mobility, we found three relevant ways to define and measure career mobility:

- **The Project on Workforce at Harvard** provides a model for multidimensional mobility measurement.
- **The CCC's Salary Surfer** provides students with longitudinal wage growth data.
- **Lightcast Career Pathways** provides a skills-based model for career mobility.

## Based on our findings, we proposed how the COE can define and measure career mobility:

- **Career mobility is a multidimensional construct** that can be measured through movement in three areas: 1) income, 2) job role or occupation changes, and 3) the skills required for work.
- **Upward career mobility is most relevant** to the mission and work of the California Community Colleges.
- **The COE can define career mobility** as: upward job changes, income growth, and skills growth.

## We recommend the COE explore adding optional upward career mobility indicators to Labor Market Assessments (LMAs):

- **Upward job changes:** the COE can create an "upward job mobility" indicator using additional data from Lightcast Career Pathways.
- **Income growth:** LMAs already compare entry-level with experienced hourly wages. The COE can add a more comprehensive "income growth potential" indicator using wage growth data from Lightcast, Salary Surfer, and the Census LEHD Job-to-Job (J2J) Explorer.
- **Skills growth:** the COE can add "Skills Gap" information from Lightcast Career Pathways.

## Future research on career mobility should:

- **Test the proposed career mobility** indicators for LMAs
- **Explore lateral mobility data** to understand artificial intelligence disruptions
- **Define holistic career pathways** for above-middle-skill careers
- **Explore career mobility data collection** through items added to the Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS)

# Introduction



The California Community Colleges (CCC), serving more than 2.1 million students, are committed to creating life-changing pathways that lead to economic mobility and success. As the Chancellor's Office advances its Vision 2030 plan centered on equity, a clear, actionable understanding of career mobility is essential. However, a universal definition and measure for career mobility have not been established in labor market research. A variety of terms like career promotions, pathways, and advancement are often used interchangeably, creating confusion that hinders effective career and technical education (CTE) program planning.  To address this gap, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence (LA COE) conducted a scoping literature review of academic, government, and applied labor-market research in the United States. This paper examines how career mobility is defined, measured, and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

### Research Question 1

How is career mobility defined, measured, and analyzed across the nation?

### Research Question 2

What measures of career mobility are we missing from our LMAs?

### Research Question 3

How can we best quantify career mobility using currently available measures?

First, we will describe our methodology, followed by our findings on how career mobility is defined and measured in the academic literature, how it is defined and tracked by the federal government and states, and how it is defined and measured in applied research. Based on our findings, we will then propose a tailored definition and framework for career mobility, designed to equip California's Community Colleges with the conceptual tools and data needed to align CTE programs with student aspirations and workforce demands.

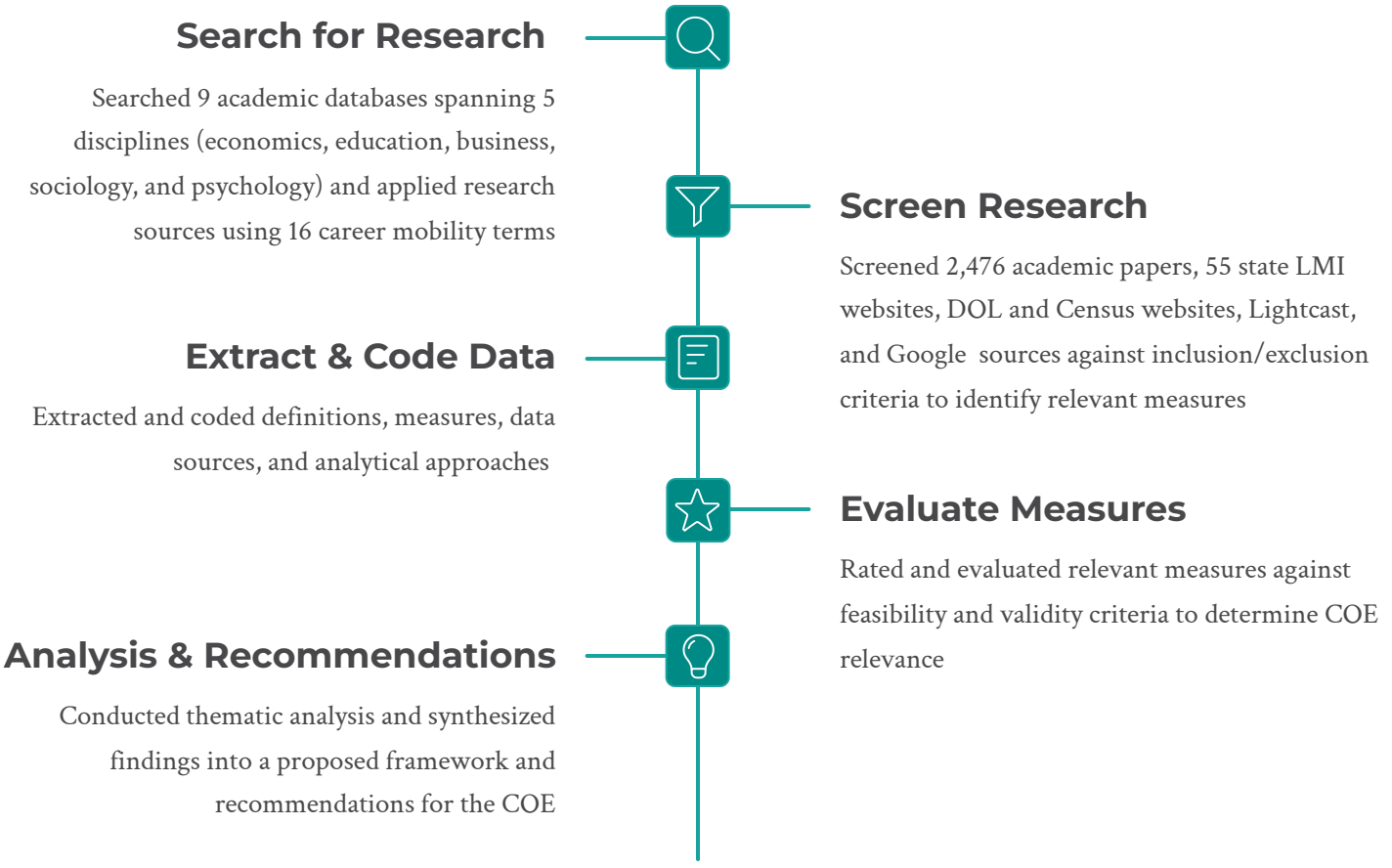
# Methodology

To answer the research questions, we conducted a scoping literature review of academic and applied research on career mobility. To identify relevant research, we systematically searched across nine academic databases spanning five disciplines (economics, education, business, sociology, and psychology) and a variety of applied research sources using 16 terms for career mobility. We screened 2,476 academic papers (peer-reviewed and grey literature), 55 US state and territory labor market information (LMI) websites, the US Department of Labor (DOL) website, Lightcast, and sources identified by Google search. Based on predefined inclusion criteria, we identified the following sources:

- 16 relevant academic papers
- 18 states that track career or occupational mobility
- 2 federal sources: DOL Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard and the Census LEHD Job-to-Job (J2J) Flows
- 3 applied research sources: the California Community Colleges Salary Surfer, Lightcast's Career Pathways, and applied research by the Project on Workforce at Harvard

We then analyzed these sources by extracting and coding definitions and measurement approaches. Extracted data underwent thematic analysis and were rated against a set of criteria to determine their relevance to the COE to inform the recommendations in this report. More details about our methodology can be found in Appendix A.

### Exhibit 1. Scoping Literature Review Methodology



# Defining and Measuring Career Mobility



## How Academic Research Literature Defines and Measures Career Mobility

Our review of the academic literature found:

- **Career mobility was defined in a variety of ways** across academic disciplines, falling into four categories: occupational mobility, job mobility, socioeconomic mobility, and career progression.
- **Five dimensions of career mobility describe more specific aspects of the movement:** direction of movement, distance of movement, type of movement, employer movement, and reason for movement.
- **Several major national datasets and a variety of approaches for measuring career mobility were used**, including four types of career mobility measures: wage-based, occupation-based, skills-based, and time-based.

### Career Mobility is Defined in a Variety of Ways

Across academic disciplines, movement within the labor market has been defined in a number of different ways with no one single standard term or definition. Our systematic search of the research literature used 16 different terms for career mobility, including job mobility, occupational mobility, career development, employee mobility, and economic mobility (a full list of terms can be found in Appendix A).

### Four Categories of Career Mobility Definitions

In our academic literature review, we found four themes or ways of describing career mobility: 1) occupational mobility, 2) job mobility, 3) socioeconomic mobility, and 4) career progression (see Exhibit 2).

### Exhibit 2. Four Ways Career Mobility is Defined in the Academic Literature

#### Occupational Mobility

Movement between occupations

#### Job Mobility

Movement between employers or job roles

#### Socioeconomic Mobility

Movement in terms of wage or earnings growth

#### Career Progression

Movement along structured education-to-employment pathways

## Five Dimensions of Career Mobility

Academic researchers have also described five different dimensions of career mobility. These dimensions describe the quality or type of movement in more detail (see Exhibit 3).

### Exhibit 3. Five Dimensions of Career Mobility in the Academic Literature

#### Direction of Movement

Upward, downward, or lateral movement within the labor market hierarchy.

#### Distance of Movement

How far a worker moves in terms of occupational or wage distance.

#### Type of Movement

Whether the transition is voluntary or involuntary, and the nature of the job change.

#### Employer Movement

Whether the worker stays with the same employer (internal) or moves to a new employer (external).

#### Reason for Movement

The motivating factors behind the career transition, such as layoff, promotion, or personal choice

These dimensions can also be combined to describe more specific aspects of the movement. For example, internal-upward mobility describes job promotions within the same organization, and external-lateral mobility describes moving to a new job at the same hierarchical level at a different organization. [1]

## Four Types of Career Mobility Measures

Academic research studies on career mobility have measured the construct in different ways. Four types of career mobility measures were found: wage-based, occupation-based, skills-based, and time-based (see Exhibit 4).

### Exhibit 4. Four Types of Career Mobility Measures in the Academic Literature




## A Variety of Approaches and Data Sources are Used to Measure Career Mobility

Academic research relied on several major national datasets and a variety of approaches for measuring movement between jobs, occupations, and socioeconomic positions to measure career mobility. The following datasets have been used to measure career mobility in academic research (see Exhibit 5).

---

[1] Thomas W. H. Ng, Kelly L. Sorensen, Lillian T. Eby, and Daniel C. Feldman, "Determinants of Job Mobility: A Theoretical Integration and Extension," Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology 80, no. 3 (2007): 363–386, https://doi.org/10.1348/096317906X130582

## Exhibit 5. Career Mobility Measures in the Academic Literature

| Data Source | Career Mobility Measure | Type(s) of Career Mobility Measure | Dimension(s) of Career Mobility |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Current Population Survey (CPS)** | Retrospective employer-to-employer transitions or occupation changes (month-to-month or year-to-year).[2,3] | Occupation-Based | Type of Movement |
| | Moving between different occupation categories while employed:<br>• Job separation rate: % of workers moving from employment to unemployment in next month<br>• Job switching rate: % of employed workers switching employers in next month<br>• Gross flow rate: (outflow + inflow) / average employment in occupation category<br>• Lifetime perspective through present discounted value calculation[4] | Occupation-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement |
| | GMM approach: Compares current occupation and past occupation using job titles, tasks, and duties (qualitative data), which are assigned a numerical occupation and then calculated using a complex economic theoretical model[5] | Occupation-Based, Skills-Based | Type of Movement, Distance of Movement |
| **National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY)** | Job changes and career trajectories of a cohort of individuals over time. Job shifts = transitions separated by less than one month of nonemployment.[6,7,8] | Occupation-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement |
| **Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), Current Population Survey (CPS), and Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)** | • Occupational Switch: A dummy variable indicating whether a worker's 3-digit occupation code changed from one year (or two-year period) to the next.<br>• Type of Switch: Categorical variable indicating the type of transition (e.g., from a Routine occupation to a Non-Routine Cognitive or Non-Routine Manual occupation).<br>• Task Distance: A continuous measure of the dissimilarity between two occupations based on their task content (Euclidean distance between vectors of DOT/GED/Aptitude scores).<br>• Worker Flows: The number (or fraction) of workers moving from a specific origin occupation to a specific destination occupation in a given period.[9] | Occupation-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement, Distance of Movement |
| | Wage Change: The change in an individual's log real hourly wage following an occupational switch. [10] | Wage-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement, Distance of Movement |
| | Ability/Unobserved Skill: Estimated via occupation-spell fixed effects in wage regressions, used to rank workers within an occupation. [11] | Skills-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement |

## Exhibit 5. Career Mobility Measures in the Academic Literature (Continued)

| Data Source | Career Mobility Measure | Type(s) of Career Mobility Measure | Dimension(s) of Career Mobility |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Job-to-Job Flows (J2J/LEHD) from the US Census Bureau** | • Linked employer-employee transitions[12]<br>• Change in employer | Occupation-Based | Employer Movement |
| | Occupational Wage Premium: estimated occupation-year fixed effects capturing changes in the wage premium for staying in a particular occupation type over time.[13] | Wage-Based, Time-Based | Distance of Movement |
| **US Census Data** | The Markov-chain model approach: provides a formal structure for modeling occupational mobility using observable data such as job vacancies, separations, and transitions.[14] | Occupation-Based | Type of Movement |
| **Current Population Survey (CPS), restricted-use Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) at the detailed occupation level** | Occupational movement of workers between two time periods: Occupation-to-occupation mobility rates are calculated using occupational network analysis[15] | Occupation-Based, Time-Based | Type of Movement |
| **Public Use Sample File** | A change in occupational status: indexed by Duncan's Socio-Economic Index (SEI) scores[16] | Occupation-Based | Type of Movement |
| **Displaced Worker Surveys (DWS), the March Current Population Surveys (MCPS), and the basic monthly Current Population Surveys (CPS)** | Uses measures of occupation distance and direction: Based on underlying skill portfolios and distinguishes between different types of occupational mobility in a way that is relevant for understanding the implications for specific human capital. Calculated using Euclidean distance and factorial analysis with DOT 3-digit occupation codes[17] | Occupation-Based, Skills-Based | Type of Movement, Direction of Movement, Distance of Movement |



[2] Giuseppe Moscarini and Kaj Thomsson, "Occupational and Job Mobility in the US," *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 109, no. 4 (2007): 807–836, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9442.2007.00510.x.

[3] Christian vom Lehn, Cache Ellsworth, and Zachary Kroff, "Reconciling Occupational Mobility in the Current Population Survey," *Journal of Labor Economics* 40, no. 4 (2022): 1005–1051, https://doi.org/10.1086/718563.

[4] Yongseok Shin and C. Y. Kelvin Yuen, "Occupational Mobility and Lifetime Earnings," *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review* 101, no. 3 (2019): 231–244, https://doi.org/10.20955/r.101.231-44.

[5] vom Lehn, Ellsworth, and Kroff, "Reconciling Occupational Mobility in the Current Population Survey," 1005–1051.

[6] Diane H. Felmlee, "The Dynamics of Women's Job Mobility," *Work and Occupations* 11, no. 3 (1984): 259–281, https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888484011003001.

[7] Jeffrey J. Yankow, "The Effect of Cumulative Job Mobility on Early-Career Wage Development," *Social Science Quarterly* 103, no. 3 (2022): 709–723, https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13161.

[8] Chao Wang, Hengshu Zhu, Qiming Hao, Keli Xiao, and Hui Xiong, "Variable Interval Time Sequence Modeling for Career Trajectory Prediction: Deep Collaborative Perspective," in *Proceedings of the Web Conference 2021* (New York: ACM, 2021), 612–623, https://doi.org/10.1145/3442381.3449959.

[9] Guido Matías Cortés, "Essays on the Task Content of Occupations and Occupational Mobility" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2012).

[10] Cortés, "Essays on the Task Content of Occupations and Occupational Mobility."

[11] Cortés, "Essays on the Task Content of Occupations and Occupational Mobility."

[12] Mikkel Hermansen, *Occupational Licensing and Job Mobility in the United States*, OECD Economics Department Working Papers, No. 1585 (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2019).

[13] Cortés, "Essays on the Task Content of Occupations and Occupational Mobility."

[14] P. C. Emmi, "Structural Determinants of Occupational Mobility in a Regional Labor Market," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 19, no. 7 (July 1987): 925–948, https://doi.org/10.1068/a190925.

[15] Ken-Hou Lin et al., "The Contagion of Labor: Linking Workplace Copresence and Occupational Mobility Patterns," *American Journal of Sociology* 131, no. 1 (2025), https://doi.org/10.1086/736439.

[16] Franklin D. Wilson, "Migration and Occupational Mobility: A Research Note," *International Migration Review* 19, no. 2 (1985): 278–292, https://doi.org/10.1177/019791838501900204.

[17] Chris Robinson, "Occupational Mobility, Occupation Distance, and Specific Human Capital," *Journal of Human Resources* 53, no. 2 (2018): 513–551, https://doi.org/10.3368/jhr.53.2.0814-6556R2.

# How Governments Define and Track Career Mobility

In our review of how governments define and track career mobility, we found at the federal level:

- **The federal government plays a policy role in defining and measuring career pathways through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, which is the primary federal reporting framework through which constructs adjacent to career mobility are operationalized at the state level.
- **The US Department of Labor (DOL) provides the Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard**, which combines longitudinal survey data and online job histories to show how workers' wages and careers evolve across 14 occupational clusters.
- **Internal upward mobility in federal government employment is institutionalized** through the Department of the Interior's Upward Mobility Policy.

We also found at the state level:

- **States define career mobility as a policy objective and focus on upward mobility** in terms of income, credentials, and employment.
- **States measure career mobility** using unemployment insurance (UI) wage records, credential and skill progression measures, and employment changes.
- **Some states provide workforce and labor market dashboards** that include career mobility indicators (.g., occupational transfers).
- **Internal upward mobility in government employment is institutionalized.**

## How the Federal Government Defines and Measures Career Mobility

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the United States' primary federal workforce development statute, enacted in 2014 to support access to employment, education, training, and supportive services while addressing employer workforce needs. [18] WIOA establishes the primary federal reporting framework through which constructs adjacent to career mobility are operationalized. Although WIOA does not formally define career mobility, it provides a statutory definition of career pathways (WIOA Sec. 3(7)), which serves as the closest proxy:

> ***Career pathways*** *are defined as integrated sequences of education, training, and support services aligned with regional labor market needs that facilitate credential attainment and advancement within an occupation or occupational cluster.*

---

[18] Emily McGrath, Andrew Stettner, Rachel West, and Michelle Lavere, *Beyond Job Placement: Reimagining WIOA for Economic Mobility and Workforce Resilience*, The Century Foundation, July 14, 2025, **https://tcf.org/content/report/beyond-job-placement-reimagining-wioa-for-economic-mobility-and-workforce-resilience/**

WIOA requires states to report on standardized employment, earnings, credential attainment, skill gains, and employer retention indicators, primarily within one year of program exit. While these indicators focus on short-term outcomes, they provide a consistent national measurement framework that states may supplement with additional analyses. More information about WIOA can be found in Appendix B.

### The US Department of Labor (DOL) provides the Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard

The US Department of Labor provides a federal tool called the **Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard**. [19] This tool combines longitudinal survey data (PSID and NLSY 1997) and online job histories (EMSI) to show how workers' wages and careers evolve across 14 occupational clusters and highlights typical wage trajectories, tenure in occupations or fields, and common upward or lateral job transitions that can inform training and career pathway design.

### Internal Upward Mobility in Federal Government Employment is Institutionalized

Career mobility concepts also appear in internal federal government workforce development initiatives. The Department of the Interior's Upward Mobility Policy emphasizes employee advancement through structured training and development opportunities. [20]

## How State Governments Define and Track Career Mobility

### States Define Career Mobility as a Policy Objective and Focus on Upward Mobility of Income, Credentials, and Employment

Across state WIOA plans, career mobility is rarely defined explicitly but is consistently articulated as a policy objective. States commonly frame success in terms of upward mobility, [21] economic advancement, [22] pathway progression, and access to high-quality employment. [23] These objectives typically emphasize movement into higher-skill and higher-wage occupations, credential progression through stackable pathways, improved economic security, and sustained employment. Despite variation in terminology, states converge on wage gains, credential attainment, and employment stability as three core indicators of upward career mobility. [24]

---

[19] US Department of Labor, Chief Evaluation Office. "Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions Dashboard." US Department of Labor. Accessed December 19, 2025. **https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/resources/career-trajectories-and-occupational-transitions-dashboard**

[20] US Department of the Interior, *Upward Mobility*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/elips/documents/Upward%20Mobility.pdf**

[21] *Program Year 2022 WIOA Annual Report*, California Workforce Development Board, November 2023, **https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2023/11/2022-WIOA-Annual-Report_Final_ACCESSIBLE.pd**

[22] Texas Workforce Commission, *Self-Evaluation Report Submitted to the Sunset Advisory Commission*, August 2025, **https://www.twc.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enterprise/docs/self-evaluation-report-sunset-commission-twc-accessible.pdf**

[23] New York State Department of Labor, *Office of Workforce Data and Research (OWDR)*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://dol.ny.gov/office-workforce-data-and-research-owdr**

## States Measure Career Mobility Using: UI Wage Records, Credential and Skill Progression Measures, and Employment Changes

States primarily measure these outcomes using wage-based indicators derived from Unemployment Insurance wage records, credential and skill progression measures, and analyses linking post-exit employment to training received. Some states conduct longitudinal analyses extending beyond WIOA reporting windows, though most reporting remains focused on short-term pre- and post-participation outcomes. State plans can be viewed at **wioaplans.dol.gov**.

## Some States Provide Workforce and Labor Market Dashboards That Include Career Mobility Indicators

Many states maintain public workforce and labor market dashboards to support labor market analysis and career navigation. These tools provide interactive views of employment, wages, job openings, growth projections, and workforce characteristics across regions and industries. While most dashboards present cross-sectional information rather than tracking individual career trajectories, some include features relevant to mobility-related analysis, such as occupational transition tools, worker flow visualizations, or earnings outcomes linked to workforce programs. Overall, these dashboards function primarily as decision-support tools rather than as direct measures of career mobility over time. More information about state dashboards can be found in Appendix C.

## Internal Upward Mobility in State Government Employment is Institutionalized

Similar to the federal government, several states maintain upward or career mobility programs for government employees, particularly those in entry-level classifications. [25] While program designs vary, these initiatives commonly provide career counseling, education and training support, and formal career ladders to facilitate internal advancement within public sector employment systems.

---

[24] Arizona@Work, *Arizona WIOA State Plan, Program Years 2024–2027: Public Comment Version*, January 2024, **https://arizonaatwork.com/sites/default/files/2024-01/ARIZONA%20WIOA%20State%20Plan%20PY%202024-2027_Public%20Comment%20Version.pdf;** California Workforce Development Board, *California's 2024–2027 Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://cwdb.ca.gov/cwdb-home/reports/ca-unified-strategic-workforce-development-plan/**; Colorado Workforce Development Council, *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://cwdc.colorado.gov/wioa/wioa**; District of Columbia Department of Employment Services, *WIOA State Plan*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://dcworks.dc.gov/page/wioa-state-plan**;Delaware Department of Labor, *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://labor.delaware.gov/wdb/wioa/**;Washington State Employment Security Department, *WIOA Annual Performance Narrative Report*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://esd.wa.gov/jobs-and-training/labor-market-information/reports-and-research/wioa-annual-performance-narrative-report**

[25] Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, *Career Mobility Certification*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://portal.ct.gov/dmhas/hrd/career-development/cdtcareer-mobility--certification** ; Illinois Department of Human Services, *WIOA Unified State Plan*, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=123797**; New York State Department of Civil Service, *Career Planning*, Career Mobility Office, accessed December 17, 2025, **https://careermobilityoffice.cs.ny.gov/cmo/employee-services/career-planning.cfm**

# Applied Research on Career Mobility

In our review of applied research on career mobility, we found three models that offer scalable frameworks:

- **The Project on Workforce at Harvard** provides a model for multidimensional mobility measurement
- **The CCC's Salary Surfer** provides students with longitudinal wage growth data
- **Lightcast Career Pathways** provides a skills-based model for career mobility

## The Harvard Workforce Study is a Model for Multidimensional Mobility Measurement

The Project on Workforce at Harvard conducted a study, "**Navigating Opportunity: Career Information and Mobility in Low-Wage Employment**," which expands beyond wage metrics to analyze social capital and structural factors behind career progression. By merging public datasets like the American Community Survey with original surveys, the study employs a longitudinal, mixed-methods approach. This provides a critical model for how the CCC could enrich its understanding of mobility. Integrating questions on professional networks, mentorship, and wages into existing surveys like the Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS) could yield a more nuanced picture of student outcomes over time.

## The CCC's Salary Surfer Provides Students with Longitudinal Wage Growth Data

The California Community Colleges system provides a foundational model with its **Salary Surfer** tool. Designed for students to empower decision-making, it translates longitudinal wage data into accessible, program-level averages for degrees and certificates. Its strength lies in its direct connection to the programs that the CCCs offer through a user-friendly public interface. A limitation which future tools could address is the lack of explicit source documentation and metrics beyond median wages. The Salary Surfer offers a transparent, student-oriented example that can be expanded upon to address program size and industry or occupational growth.

## Lightcast Career Pathways Provides a Skills-Based Model for Career Mobility

The commercial tool, **Career Pathways**, from Lightcast offers a granular, skills-centric framework for mapping occupational transitions. It synthesizes job postings, real-world career histories, and wage data to model realistic pathways, highlighting skill adjacencies, gaps, and transition probabilities. Its taxonomy of career moves, categorized as similar, lateral, or advancement, provides a lens for analyzing progression. It presents a potent model for how the CCC Centers of Excellence could analyze regional labor markets to illustrate concrete skills-based career ladders from the Community College programs into growing industries. However, a major limitation of using Career Pathways is that Lightcast does not provide more transparency into its data sources or exactly how it determines job mobility.

# Evaluating Career Mobility Measures Based on Feasibility and Validity




Based on an evaluation of feasibility and validity, we identified the top five career mobility measures (two state and three academic) from the following sources: State of California Employment Development Department (EDD), Current Population Survey (CPS), National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), and the New York State Department of Labor.

We evaluated all of the career mobility measures identified in our literature review across academic literature, government, and applied research based on two criteria: 1) feasibility of use by the COE and 2) validity of the measure. We then rated each measure and data source against the criteria (on a scale from 0 = does not meet the criteria to 3 = fully meets the criteria) to determine their relevance to the COE. The average ratings for feasibility and validity were then calculated to determine the final "COE relevance score" for each measure (see Appendix A for details on the methodology, including criteria). Five measures with the highest overall scores were identified: two state measures and three academic measures (see Exhibit 6). However, after categorizing these five measures in terms of direction of mobility, we decided not to include them in our recommendations because the direction of mobility is not specified and we determined that upward mobility is the dimension most relevant to the work of the COE and California Community Colleges. In addition, the data sources for these measures are available at the state level and not the county level, which would be needed for regional LMAs. Our recommendations for how the COE can define and measure career mobility in LMAs are described in the section that follows.

## Exhibit 6. Top 5 Career Mobility Measures Based on Feasibility and Validity

| Rank & Score | Category | Career Mobility Measure | Data Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 (3.0) | State | The California Workforce Supply & Demand Dashboard, developed by the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division, provides interactive data to bolster partnerships among workforce entities, businesses, and educational institutions in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This web-based tool analyzes statewide workforce dynamics by comparing trends in educational program completions against projected job openings and online advertisements. [26] | State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) |
| 2 (2.5) | Academic | Retrospective employer-to-employer transitions or occupation changes (month-to-month or year-to-year). [27] [28] | Current Population Survey (CPS) |
| 2 (2.5) | Academic | Moving between different occupation categories while employed (job-to-job transitions): Job separation rate = % of workers moving from employment to unemployment in next month; Job switching rate = % of employed workers switching employers in next month; Gross flow rate = (outflow + inflow) / average employment in occupation category; Lifetime perspective through present discounted value calculation. [29] | Current Population Survey (CPS) |
| 2 (2.5) | Academic | Job changes and career trajectories of a cohort of individuals over time: Job shifts = transitions separated by less than one month of non-employment. [30] [31] [32] | National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) |
| 2 (2.5) | State | New York's Occupational Mobility dashboard, from the Department of Labor, aids job seekers and career advisors in identifying transferable skills to higher-paying roles using task-based similarity scores from 0 to 100. Users input their region, education level, current occupation, and target salary to view similar jobs with higher median wages, sortable by employment, openings, growth, or wages. It supports career advancement by linking to skills lists and New York State Job Bank postings. Similarity scores ≥80 indicate transferable occupations based on O*NET tasks. Includes projections from 2020-2030 regional data and a tableau guide for web use and data downloads. [33] | New York State Department of Labor |

[26] California Employment Development Department, "California Workforce Supply & Demand Dashboard."

[27] Moscarini and Thomsson, "Occupational and Job Mobility," 807–836.

[28] vom Lehn, Ellsworth, and Kroff, "Reconciling Occupational Mobility," 1005–1051.

[29] Shin and Yuen, "Occupational Mobility and Lifetime Earnings," 231–244.

[30] Felmlee, "Dynamics of Women's Job Mobility," 259–281.

[31] Yankow, "Effect of Cumulative Job Mobility," 709–723.

[32] Wang et al., "Variable Interval Time Sequence Modeling," 612–623.

[33] New York State Department of Labor, "Occupational Mobility."

# How the COE Can Define and Measure Career Mobility

Based on our review, we identified how the COE can define and measure career mobility in their work to support the community colleges in their CTE program planning and student career pathways preparation:

- **Career mobility is a multidimensional construct** that can be measured through movement in three areas: 1) income, 2) job role or occupation changes, and 3) the skills required for work.
- **Upward career mobility is most relevant** to the mission and work of the California Community Colleges
- **The COE can define career mobility** as: upward job changes, income growth, and skills growth

## Career Mobility Is a Multidimensional Construct

Career mobility can be defined as a multidimensional construct for workers' career progression that can be measured through movement in three areas: 1) income, 2) job role or occupation changes, and 3) the skills required for work.

## Upward Career Mobility is Most Relevant for the California Community Colleges

The direction of mobility that is relevant to the mission and work of the California Community Colleges is upward mobility, which aligns to their mission of preparing students for career paths that will provide knowledge and well-paying jobs that will help them compete in today's economy. Therefore, we propose the definition in Exhibit 7.

### Exhibit 7. Proposed Definition of Career Mobility for the COE



#### Upward Job Changes

Movement into higher-level roles and occupations



#### Income Growth

Increases in wages and earning potential over time



#### Skills Growth

Advancement in the skills required for higher-level work

# Proposed COE Career Mobility Indicators

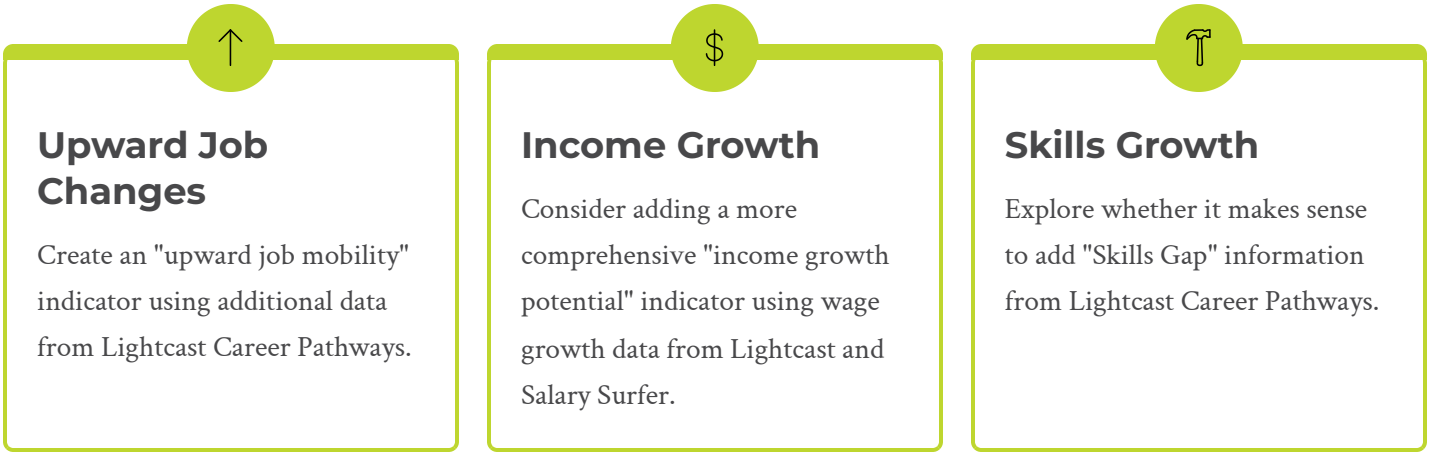
Based on the findings of this review, we recommend the COE explore adding optional career mobility indicators to Labor Market Assessments (LMAs).

- **Upward job changes:** the COE can create an "upward job mobility" indicator using additional data from Lightcast Career Pathways.
- **Income growth:** LMAs already include entry-level vs experienced hourly wages. The COE can consider adding a more comprehensive "income growth potential" indicator using wage growth data from Lightcast, Salary Surfer, and the Census LEHD Job-to-Job (J2J) Explorer.
- **Skills growth:** the COE can explore whether it makes sense to add "Skills Gap" information from Lightcast Career Pathways

## The COE Can Explore Adding Optional Career Mobility Indicators to LMAs

This section describes potential ways each area of career mobility can be measured by the COE that should be further explored to determine feasibility. We propose that the COE explore adding career mobility indicators to COE Labor Market Assessments (LMAs) as optional information to provide community colleges with additional insights into career mobility potential. Ideally, to provide a comprehensive picture of upward career mobility, the COE should measure all three areas: upward job changes, income growth, and skills growth (see Exhibit 8).

### Exhibit 8. Proposed Career Mobility Indicators for COE LMAs



## Upward Job Changes: Create an "Upward Job Mobility" Indicator Using Data from Lightcast Career Pathways

A number of academic research papers and government LMI dashboards measure job or occupation changes, but upward job mobility (as opposed to lateral job changes) is much harder to measure. One source of information on upward job changes is Lightcast Career Pathways. This tool provides a map for each occupation that describes "next-step jobs" (roles people commonly transition into) and "feeder jobs" (roles that feed into a focus occupation), as well as information about the type of transition, including "advancement." This information could be triangulated to create an "upward job mobility" indicator. According to Lightcast, Career Pathways uses job postings data and wage data. However, a major limitation of using Career Pathways is that Lightcast does not provide more transparency into its data sources or exactly how it determines job mobility. Therefore, we recommend further evaluation of this tool by asking Lightcast to provide more information to the COE to determine if the tool meets validity criteria.

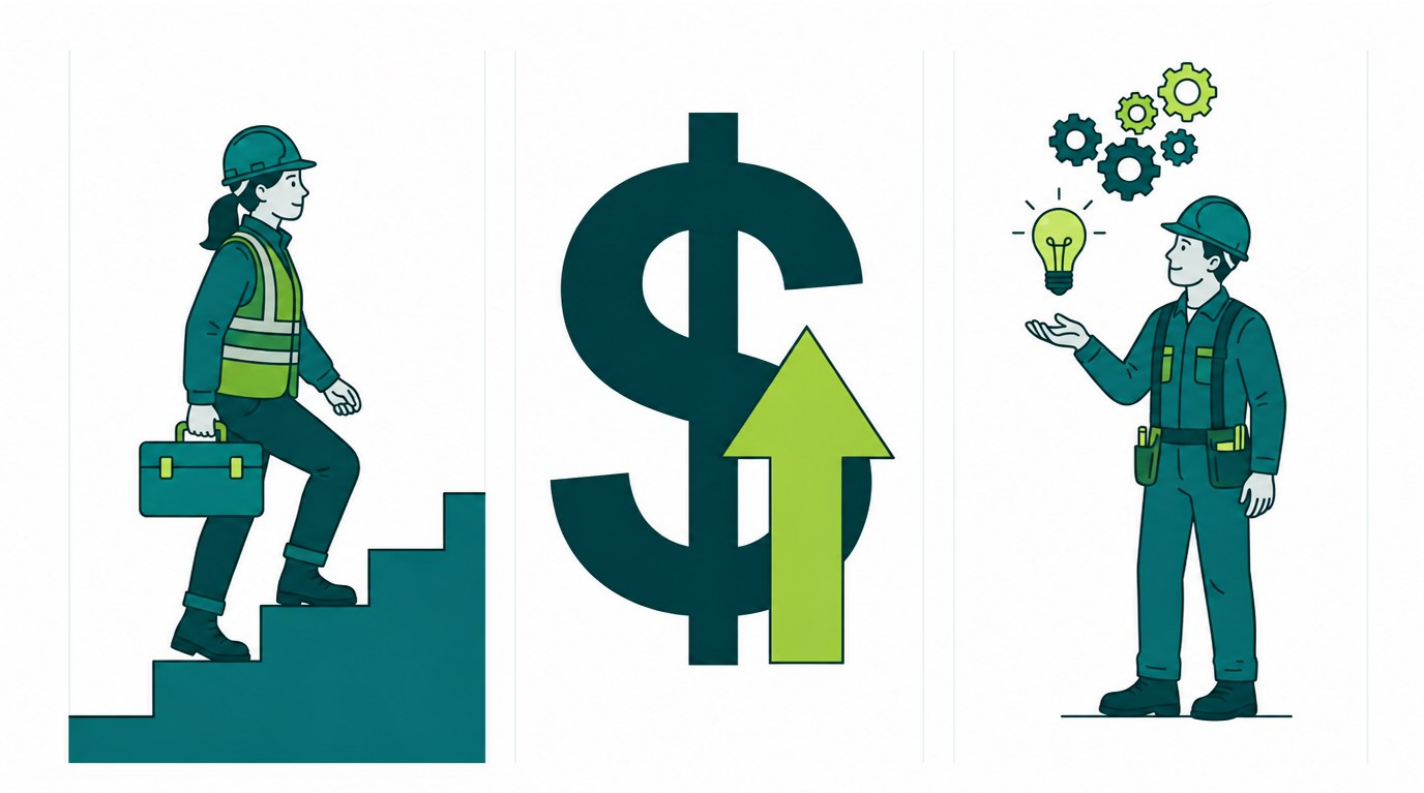
## Income Growth: Add an "Income Growth Potential" Indicator that Triangulates Growth in Hourly Earnings with Additional Wage Growth Data

The COE can consider adding an "income growth potential" indicator to LMAs. LMAs already include wage information that can be used as an income growth indicator: entry-level hourly earnings and experienced hourly earnings. Currently, only entry-level hourly earnings are used as a criterion to determine if occupations are likely to provide students a livable entry-level wage upon employment after graduation with experienced hourly earnings included as additional information that is not factored into program endorsement.

To provide a more comprehensive "income growth potential" indicator, this wage data can be triangulated with additional wage growth data from Salary Surfer and Lightcast. Lightcast provides historical data about wages over time, allowing for an analysis of median hourly earnings trends. Salary Surfer provides additional wage growth data by program, comparing median annual salary two years before, two years after, and five years after receiving a certificate or degree to show students how earnings can grow. We recommend further exploration to determine the best way to create an "income growth potential" indicator, as well as the feasibility and usefulness of including this information in LMAs.

# Skills Growth: Explore Whether Skill Gaps in Lightcast Career Pathways Should be Included

Skills growth, while relevant, is also more difficult to measure. Lightcast Career Pathways also provides information about skills needed relevant to upward job changes. It identifies 'transitional skills,' the most critical skills needed for moving from one occupation to another occupation. Each skill is ranked by an 'importance score,' which can guide where a worker should focus their skill development to make a job change. In addition, Career Pathways also provides 'skills gaps,' which compares the frequency of top skills between a focus occupation and a comparison occupation found within job postings. Skill gaps are provided for specialized skills, common skills, and software skills. However, as mentioned earlier, a limitation of using Career Pathways is that Lightcast does not provide transparency into its data sources or how it determines job mobility. Therefore, we recommend further evaluation of this tool by asking Lightcast to provide more information to the to COE determine if the tool meets validity criteria.



# Future Research Directions



The findings of this research can inform future research studies on career mobility to:

- **Test the proposed career mobility** indicators for LMAs
- **Explore lateral mobility data** to understand artificial intelligence disruptions
- **Define holistic career pathways** for above-middle-skill careers
- **Explore career mobility data collection** through items added to the Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS)

The findings of this research can inform future research studies on career mobility. First, the COE can conduct a study to test whether the proposed career mobility indicators can be included in LMAs and whether they add value to CTE program planning. Having a career mobility indicator in the LMAs can provide more context for programs that are not meeting the endorsement criteria. Additionally, dashboards utilizing this information can direct students to higher-level occupations that pay a better wage. In addition, the current study identified upward mobility as most relevant to the COE and community colleges, but lateral mobility data could be useful for understanding disruptions due to artificial intelligence (AI). A future research study can focus on career mobility related to artificial intelligence based on lateral mobility data. Another study can define holistic career pathways focused on preparing community college students for above-middle skill careers. Future research can also further explore how measures of upward mobility can be used to identify the top 25 above-middle skill occupations in California or by county and identify evidence-based ways community college programs can prepare students for these occupations. Finally, the California Community Colleges can also explore collecting its own data on career mobility by adding a measure of career mobility to the Career Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS) to collect data on all three aspects of career mobility. These items can be based on items from existing surveys, such as Harvard's Project on Workforce **Low-wage Earners Career Navigation Study 2024 survey**.

# Conclusion



This report examined how career mobility is defined and measured across academic research, government reporting systems, and applied labor market tools, with the goal of informing how California's Community Colleges (CCC) and the Centers of Excellence (COE) can more intentionally incorporate career mobility into labor market analysis and program planning. Career mobility is addressed across these contexts, though the degree to which it is explicitly defined and measured varies substantially. Academic research tends to articulate mobility constructs with greater precision, while government and applied systems more often rely on adjacent outcomes that serve as partial indicators.

Across the sources reviewed, career mobility can be generally seen as a multidimensional concept reflected through income growth, movement into higher-skill or higher-wage occupations, and skills development over time. Although approaches differ by purpose and data availability, wage trajectories, occupational advancement, and skill progression recur as central elements, with differences across sectors reflecting analytic constraints rather than substantive disagreement. This paper synthesizes these shared elements into an initial framework, providing a practical reference point for interpreting labor market information while allowing flexibility for future refinement.

For the Centers of Excellence, the findings suggest that incorporating career mobility into LMAs does not require new data systems in the near term. Instead, it requires a clearer conceptual organization of established indicators and transparency about data limitations. Measures such as wage growth and selected indicators of upward mobility can extend current analyses, while recognizing that skills development and longer-term trajectories remain less visible in administrative data and may require targeted primary data collection. Overall, this paper represents an initial effort to organize a complex and fragmented field rather than a definitive model. By outlining a cautious, research-grounded framework, it aims to support more consistent use of career mobility in CCC research, planning, and evaluation, and to provide a foundation for future iteration as data, methods, and institutional priorities evolve.

# Appendix A: Scoping Literature Review Methodology

## Search Strategy

A systematic literature search of academic papers was conducted in nine academic databases: Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, ERIC, PsycINFO, EconLit, Sociological Abstracts, PAIS Index, Web of Science, Scopus. The last run was conducted on September 10, 2025. In addition, a search of relevant applied research sources was conducted in: Google search, the California Community Colleges website, Lightcast, the US Department of Labor website, and State Labor Market Information (LMI) websites.

## Search Terms

We searched for academic and applied research sources using combinations of search terms to capture the multitude of terms for career mobility and identify sources based on our inclusion criteria (see Exhibit 9).

### Exhibit 9. Search Terms for Career Mobility Research

| Career Mobility Term | Definition | Measure | Other |
|---|---|---|---|
| "career mobility"<br>"job mobility"<br>"occupational mobility"<br>"career progression"<br>"career advancement"<br>"career development"<br>"internal mobility"<br>"vertical mobility"<br>"employee mobility"<br>"employee movement"<br>"career trajectory"<br>"job promotion"<br>"career pathway"<br>"geographic mobility"<br>"labor mobility"<br>"economic mobility" | definition<br>concept*<br>framework<br>theory<br>model*<br>perspective<br>typology<br>meaning<br>interpretation<br>construct<br>operationalization | measure*<br>indicator*<br>scale<br>index<br>instrument<br>metric<br>assessment | "literature review" |

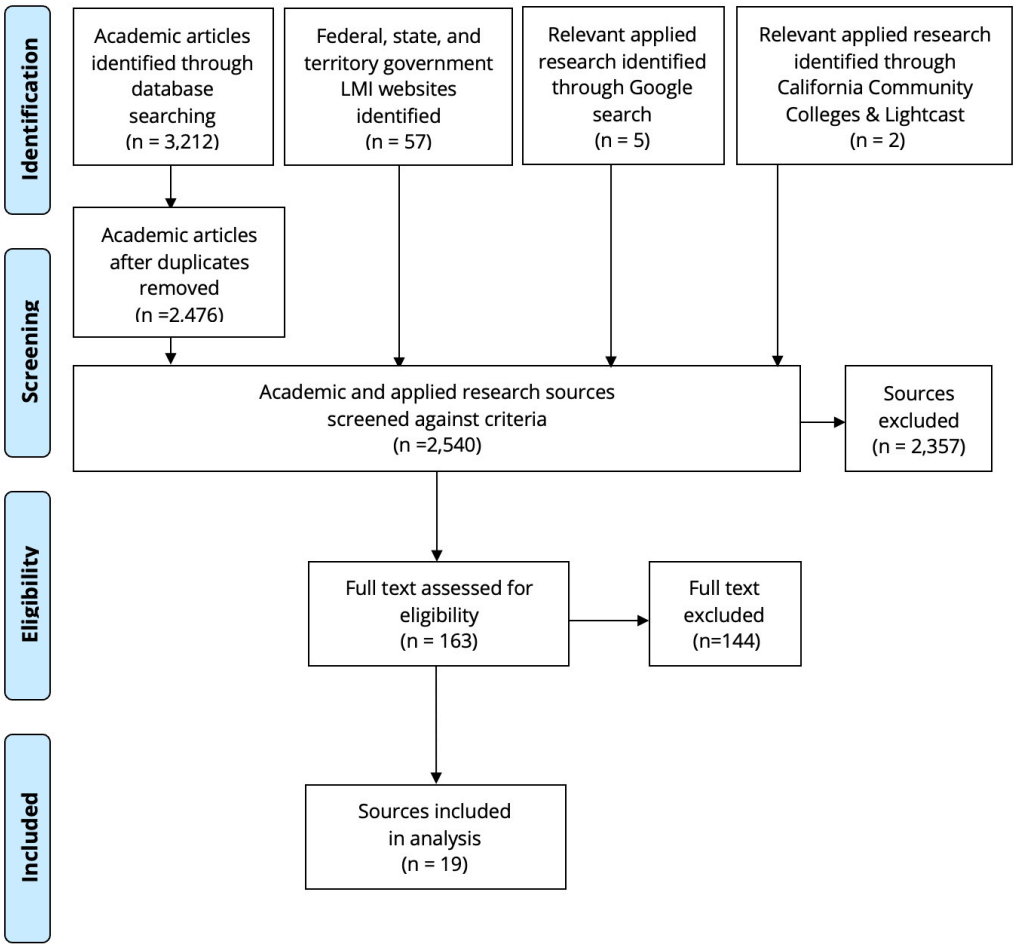
The following Boolean searches in databases were used (filtered by English language and geography when possible):

- **Title: Career mobility term** — ("career mobility" OR "job mobility" OR "occupational mobility" OR "career progression" OR "career advancement" OR "career development" OR "internal mobility" OR "vertical mobility" OR "employee mobility" OR "employee movement" OR "career trajectory" OR "job promotion" OR "career pathway" OR "geographic mobility" OR "labor mobility" OR "economic mobility")
- **AND: definition (all fields)** — (definition OR concept* OR framework OR theory OR model* OR perspective OR typology OR meaning OR interpretation OR construct OR operationalization)
- **AND measure (all fields)** — (measure* OR indicator* OR scale OR index OR instrument OR metric OR assessment)
- **Lit review search — Title: Career mobility term** AND: "literature review" (all fields)

# Screening

Titles and abstracts were screened based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. If the abstract did not provide sufficient information to determine inclusion or exclusion, the full text was assessed. See Exhibit 10 for the PRISMA flow chart.

### Exhibit 10. PRISMA Flow Chart of the Selection of Career Mobility Research Sources



# Data Extraction & Analysis

The full text of the articles was coded for:

**Career Mobility Definition:**

- Name/term (e.g., occupational mobility, job mobility)
- Definition
- Type (e.g., lattice, lateral, internal, organizational)
- Level – individual, group, organizational, societal
- Theories or frameworks referenced
- Discipline/domain

**Career Mobility Measure:**

- Name
- Description
- Indicators or variables used (e.g., promotion, wage increase, job change, perceived mobility)
- Data Source (website/database)
- Validity/reliability reported
- Timeframe measured (e.g., point in time, longitudinal)
- Whether the COE has access to the data source (e.g., Data VISTA, DataMart, Lightcast, BLS)

**Description of Paper:**

- Year of publication
- # of citations
- Paper/source type (e.g., empirical study, review paper, white paper, website, tool)
- Reference
- Title
- Abstract

**Career Mobility Analysis:**

- Analytical technique

**Relevance:**

- Relevance to community colleges
- Relevance to the COE

Extracted data underwent thematic analysis and were rated against a set of criteria to determine their relevance to the COE. To determine how the COE can measure career mobility, we evaluated the measures identified in our literature review to determine: 1) feasibility of implementing the measure for the COE, and 2) validity to ensure accurate measurement of career mobility indicators. To do this, each author rated each measure against a set of criteria for both feasibility and validity. We then rated each measure and data source against the criteria (on a scale from 0 = does not meet criteria to 3 = fully meets criteria) to determine their relevance for the COE. The average ratings for feasibility and validity were then calculated to determine the final 'COE relevance score' for each measure (see Exhibit 11 for criteria).

## Exhibit 11. Criteria for Evaluating Relevance of Career Mobility Measures for the COE

| Area of Evaluation | Criteria |
|---|---|
| **Feasibility of implementing the measure for the COE (50%)** | • Based on available secondary LMI data (15%)<br>• Accessibility of the data for the COE (15%)<br>• Able to measure at the industry or occupational levels (15%)<br>• Able to provide recent data (40%)<br>• Easy to calculate (15%) |
| **Validity to ensure accurate measurement of career mobility indicators (50%)** | • Known and reliable data source (33.33%)<br>• Consistent with established research on career mobility (33.33%)<br>• Able to determine how career mobility metrics were calculated (33.33%) |



# Appendix B: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA legislation lays out 6 primary indicators.

### 1 Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit

The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

### 2 Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit

The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program. For youth, this includes being in education or training, or in unsubsidized employment.

### 3 Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit

The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

### 4 Credential Attainment Rate

The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma/equivalent during participation or within one year after exit.

### 5 Measurable Skill Gains (MSG)

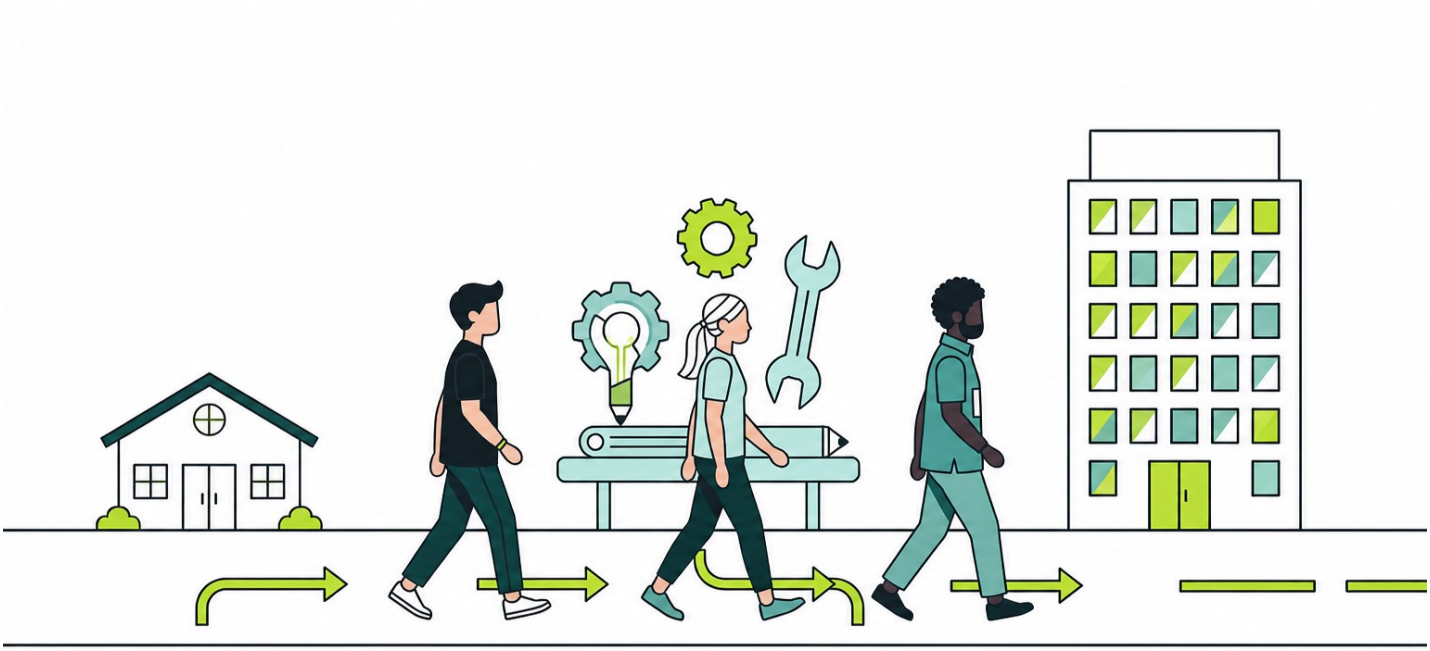
The percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.

### 6 Effectiveness in Serving Employers

The percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit who are employed by the same employer in both the second and fourth quarters after exit; this is reported as a statewide indicator on behalf of all six core programs.

The formal definition provided by the WIOA program is career pathways:

> ***"CAREER PATHWAY—The term 'career pathway' means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—***
>
> *(A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;*
> *(B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the 'National Apprenticeship Act'; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 USC 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an 'apprenticeship', except in section 171);*
> *(C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;*
> *(D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;*
> *(E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;*
> *(F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and*
> *(G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster."*



# Appendix C: Government Dashboards

### Exhibit 12. Examples of State Dashboards that Include Career Mobility Indicators

| Dashboard | URL |
|---|---|
| California's Supply & Demand [35] | https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/workforce-supply-and-demand-dashboard.html |
| Colorado's WORC Earnings[36] | https://itableau.du.edu/views/WORC_Dashboard/3_EarningsDashboard |
| Indiana's Top Jobs [37] | https://topjobs.dwd.in.gov/ |
| New York's Occupational Mobility [38] | https://dol.ny.gov/occupational-mobility |
| Pennsylvania's Worker Movement by Industry [39] | https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials/dashboards/worker-movement-by-industry |
| Wisconsin's Career Clusters [40] | https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/pub/careerclusters |

[34] California Employment Development Department, "California Workforce Supply & Demand Dashboard."

[35] University of Denver, Workforce Outcomes Research Consortium (WORC), *WORC Earnings Dashboard*, accessed December 17, 2025, https://itableau.du.edu/views/WORC_Dashboard/3_EarningsDashboard

[36] Indiana Department of Workforce Development, *Top Jobs*, accessed December 17, 2025, https://topjobs.dwd.in.gov/

[37] New York State Department of Labor, "Occupational Mobility."

[38] Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, *Worker Movement by Industry Dashboard*, accessed December 17, 2025, https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials/dashboards/worker-movement-by-industry

[39] Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, *Career Clusters*, accessed December 17, 2025, https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/pub/careerclusters

# California

**https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/workforce-supply-and-demand-dashboard.html**

The California Workforce Supply & Demand Dashboard, developed by the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division, provides interactive data to bolster partnerships among workforce entities, businesses, and educational institutions in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This web-based tool analyzes statewide workforce dynamics by comparing trends in educational program completions against projected job openings and online advertisements.

# Pennsylvania: Worker Movement by Industry

**https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/statistic-materials/dashboards/worker-movement-by-industry**

From year-to-year employees can stay with the same employer, stay employed in the same industry but with a different employer, find employment in a different industry, or no longer have a record of employment. For each industry these movements are tracked to see how many workers fall into each of these four categories. Similarly, for each year, the same is done for each worker to see what industry and employer (or lack of) they came from. In this way a pattern of movement can be determined for each industry. Some industries have little movement, meaning workers remain employed in the industry from one year to the next. Other industries have a high degree of industry churn. This dataset pinpoints the industries workers come from or go to, which can be useful to determine those industries that feed into a particular industry or the industries workers are leaving an industry for. The worker movement by industry dashboard is a visual display of these movements.

The data in the dashboard is based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This system is a hierarchy that categorizes the industry codes into various levels. The data is available for 2-digit, 3-digit, 4-digit, and 5-digit industries. All filters can be found near the top of the dashboard. The first filter allows you to select an industry code level. The 2-digit level contains broad industry categories and the 5-digit level contains the most detailed industries. Once you make your selection the second filter will update with the appropriate industry titles for the industry code level that you selected. Finally, the last filter allows you to select the direction of the worker's movement. The options include "to the year ahead" or "from the year prior."

# Wisconsin: Career Clusters

**https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/pub/careerclusters**

Wisconsin's Career Clusters dashboard, part of the WisConomy platform by the Job Center of Wisconsin, offers an interactive overview of sixteen career clusters to explore occupational opportunities statewide. Job seekers, educators, and workforce planners select clusters via dropdown to view job openings, median wages, and breakdowns by growth, exits, and transfers, filtered by education requirements. It links to Skill Explorer for detailed occupation data and the Wisconsin Department of Instruction for pathway requirements.

# Indiana Top Jobs

**https://topjobs.dwd.in.gov/**

Indiana's Top Jobs dashboard, launched by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) in July 2025, ranks all 867 federally defined occupations using a data-driven methodology that evaluates demand, wages, growth, retention, and job quality. Job seekers, career changers, and workforce planners use it to identify high-demand, rewarding careers with strong long-term opportunities, replacing the prior INDemand Jobs tool. It supports informed decision-making by providing composite scores, subscores, and regional insights into factors like transferability and technological impact. It provides top occupations (e.g., Accountants, Data Scientists, Civil Engineers) with 'Job Postings' links for searches, transparent rankings and automated updates for efficiency, and profile integration for personalized resume-based access.

# New York

**https://dol.ny.gov/occupational-mobility**

New York's Occupational Mobility dashboard, from the Department of Labor, aids job seekers and career advisors in identifying transferable skills to higher-paying roles using task-based similarity scores from 0 to 100. Users input their region, education level, current occupation, and target salary to view similar jobs with higher median wages, sortable by employment, openings, growth, or wages. It supports career advancement by linking to skills lists and New York State Job Bank postings. Similarity scores ≥80 indicate transferable occupations based on O*NET tasks. It includes projections from 2020-2030 regional data and a Tableau guide for web use and data downloads.

# Colorado

**https://itableau.du.edu/views/WORC_Dashboard/3_EarningsDashboard**

Colorado's WORC (Wage Outcomes Results Coalition) Earnings Dashboard, hosted on Tableau at the University of Denver, tracks earnings outcomes for participants in workforce training programs using linked payroll data. Workforce developers, policymakers, and learners can evaluate program effectiveness by comparing pre- and post-training inflation-adjusted quarterly earnings, industry placements, and demographic trends. It demonstrates return on investment for high-demand career pathways, supporting equitable economic mobility under House Bill 24-1364. Key features include visualizations of earnings trajectories, average program length, matched sample sizes, filters for organizations, demographics, and industries.

# US Department of Labor

**https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasp/evaluation/resources/career-trajectories-and-occupational-transitions-dashboard**

The US Department of Labor's Career Trajectories and Occupational Transitions (CTOT) Dashboard is a national labor market tool that shows how workers' wages and careers evolve over time across 14 occupational clusters. It combines longitudinal survey data and online job histories to highlight typical wage trajectories, how long workers stay in occupations or fields, and the most common upward or lateral transitions between jobs. Users can explore cluster-level patterns, drill down to specific occupations, and use this information—alongside traditional labor market data—to design or refine training programs and career pathways that better support long-term advancement.






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.

© 2026 California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research, Economic and Workforce Development Program