



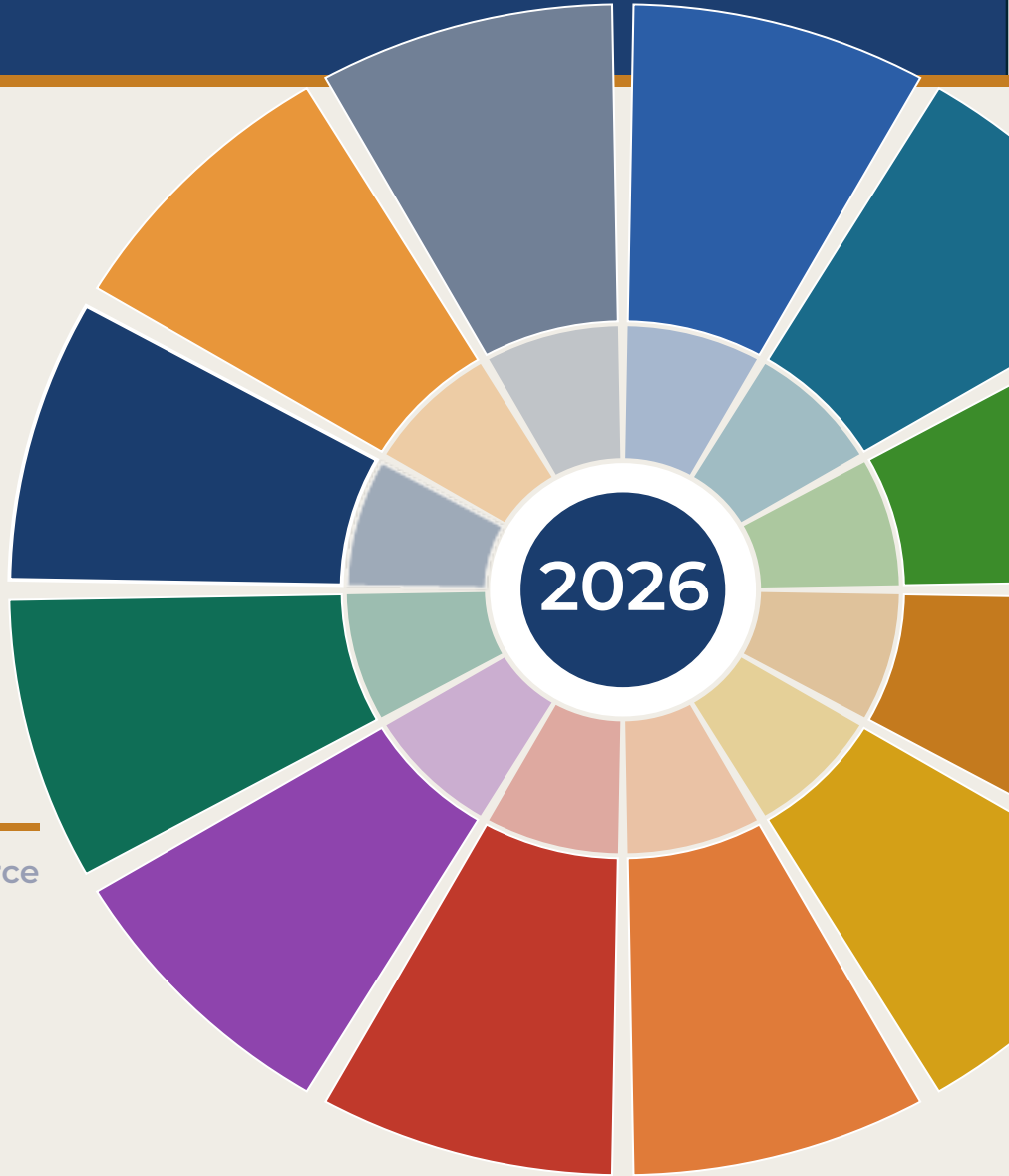
FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

ORANGE COUNTY

ORANGE COUNTY

Labor Market Overview

A Strategic Resource for Workforce
and Career Education Planning



POWERED BY



California
Community
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Introduction

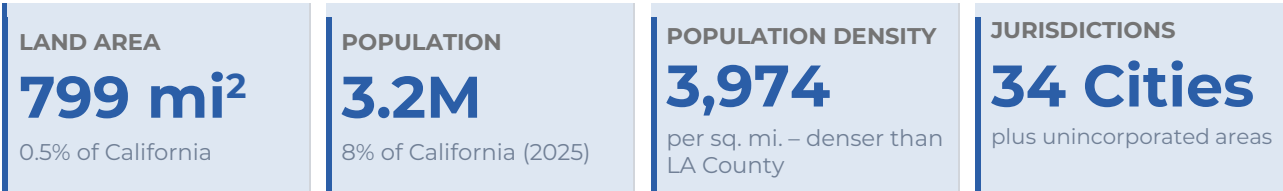
The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (OC COE) developed this report to support local and regional career education initiatives, including the Strong Workforce Program, Perkins V., and Vision 2030. By aligning labor market data with the California Community College Chancellor’s Office’s (CCCCO) sector framework, this report offers a comprehensive view of Orange County’s labor market and serves as a strategic resource for regional stakeholders.

The report begins with a regional profile and economic forecast, establishing context around Orange County’s demographic composition, cost of living, and current and projected economic conditions. Subsequent sections outline the methodology used to identify key occupations, followed by an occupational analysis and a sector-by-sector comparison against eight established criteria. The appendices provide granular detail on the research approach, occupations examined, and supply allocation – offering additional depth for those developing regional strategies and initiatives.

Orange County Profile

Contrary to its relatively small geographic size, Orange County, CA, offers an impressive economic footprint, encompassing a wide range of industries sustained by a population with a diverse demographic composition. This section draws on data and findings from the *2026 Orange County Community Indicator Report*¹, conducted by the Orange County Business Council and partners, beginning with the county’s geographic and population characteristics shown in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1: Geography and Population



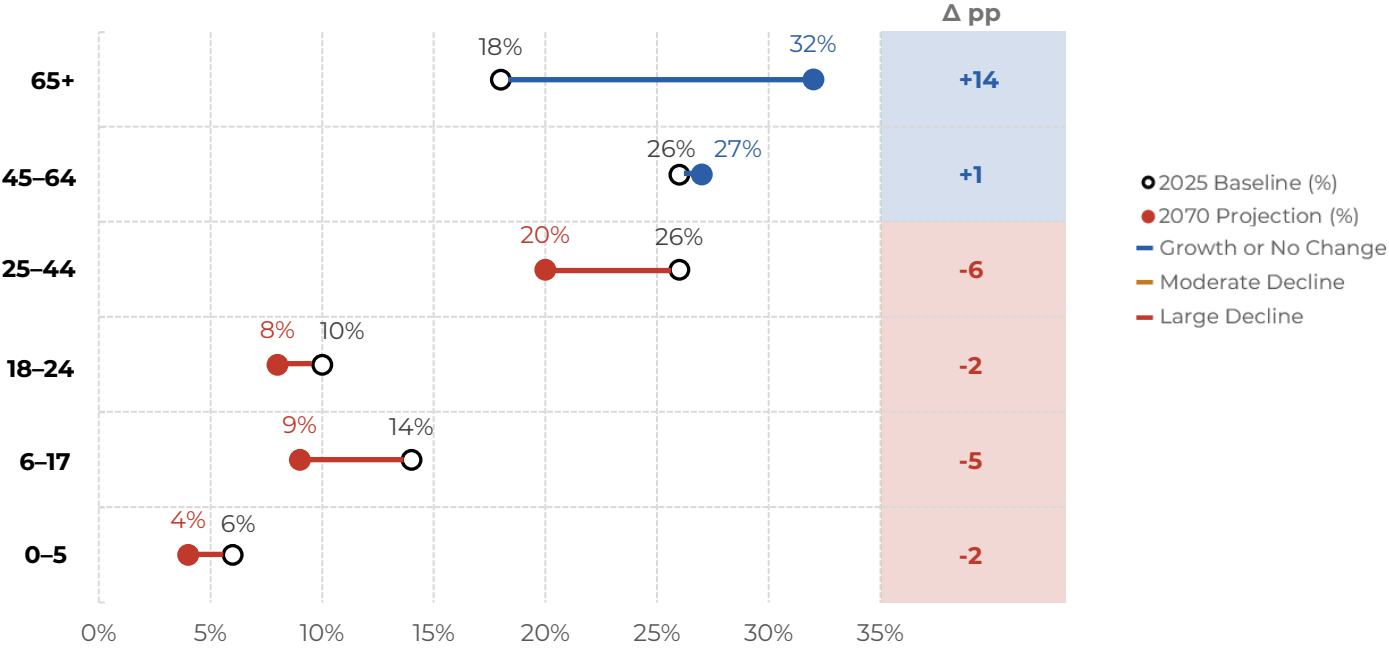
Orange County's density and population are further reflected in its commute patterns – more people travel into the county for work than leave it, with a net inflow of over 200,000 workers in 2022.

¹ Orange County Business Council, *2026 Orange Council Community Indicators Report* (Irvine, CA: Orange County Business Council, 2026), <https://ocbc.org/resources/orange-county-community-indicators-report/>.

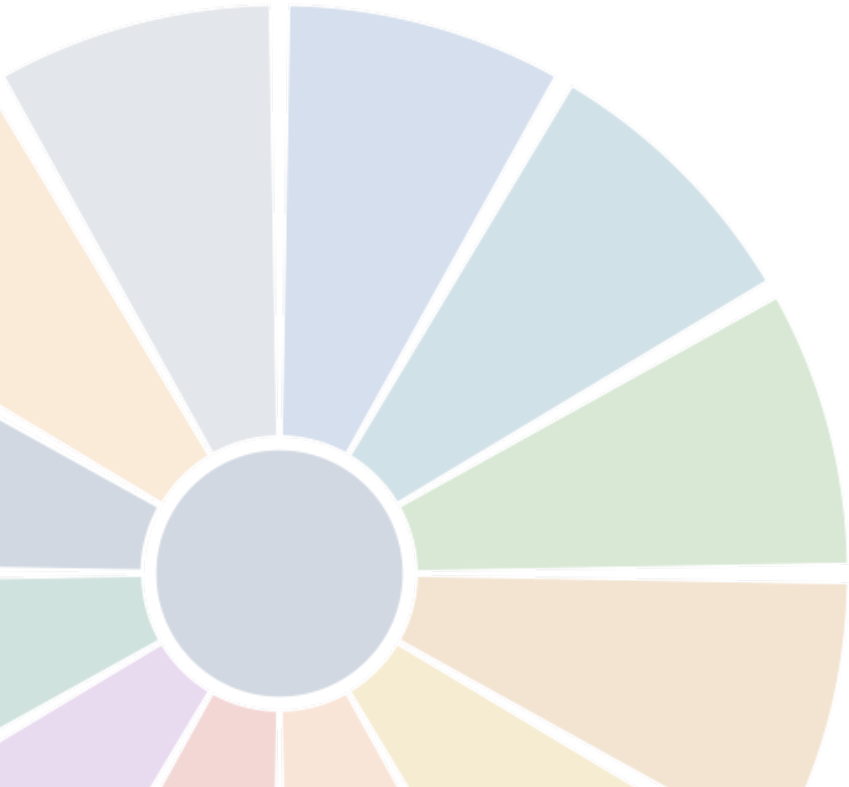
Demographics

Orange County's demographic composition is projected to considerably shift over the coming decades due to an aging population. The share of residents 65 and older are expected to nearly double by 2070, while younger age cohorts are projected to decline. Exhibit 2 details these projections from 2025 to 2070.

Exhibit 2: Population Projections by Age from 2025 to 2070

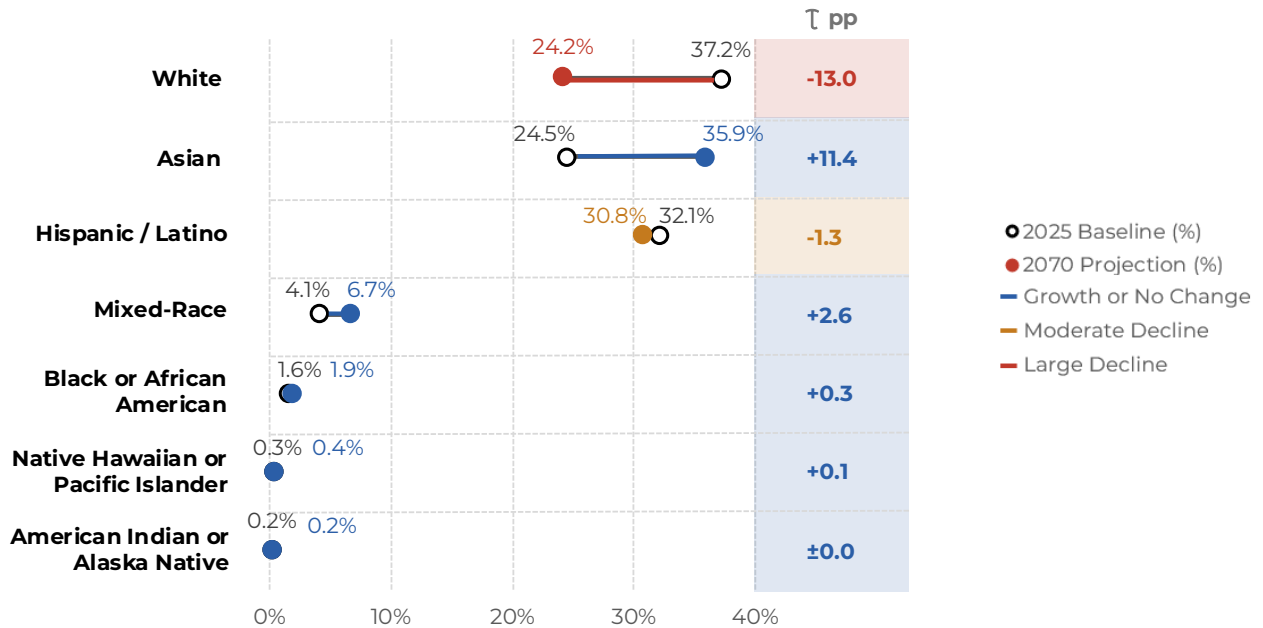


Note: Δ pp = percentage point change



The county's racial and ethnic makeup is also changing; a population that is currently a majority white and Hispanic or Latino is projected to become a plurality Asian and Hispanic or Latino by 2070. Adding to this diversity, nearly one-in-three residents were born outside the United States. Exhibit 3 shows demographic projections for race and ethnicity through 2070.

Exhibit 3: Population Projections by Race and Ethnicity from 2025 to 2070



Note: Δ pp = percentage point change

Education & Salary

Orange County residents are typically well-educated and financially better off than those in neighboring counties. More than six in ten adults hold a bachelor's degree or higher, the median household income exceeds \$110,000, and as of February 2026, the unemployment rate of 4.0%² trails those of surrounding counties. Taken together, Orange County is comprised of a highly skilled and relatively affluent workforce.

Housing

Orange County ranks as the third least affordable county in California for first-time homebuyers, trailing only Santa Barbara and Mono counties. The barriers to homeownership are steep: median home prices have nearly doubled over the past decade, and today, an entry-level home runs over \$1.2 million, requiring a qualifying income of nearly \$242,000. For those eyeing a more

² California Employment Development Department, "Unemployment Rates (Labor Force)," Labor Market Information Division, accessed April 29, 2026, <https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/dataanalysis/AreaSelection.asp?tableName=labforce>.

traditional purchase, the threshold climbs even higher, with a median price of \$1.4 million demanding an annual income approaching \$368,000.

Buying a Home in Orange County is Out of Reach for Most Residents

Home prices have nearly doubled in a decade: the income required to qualify keeps climbing



MINIMUM QUALIFYING INCOME TO PURCHASE*

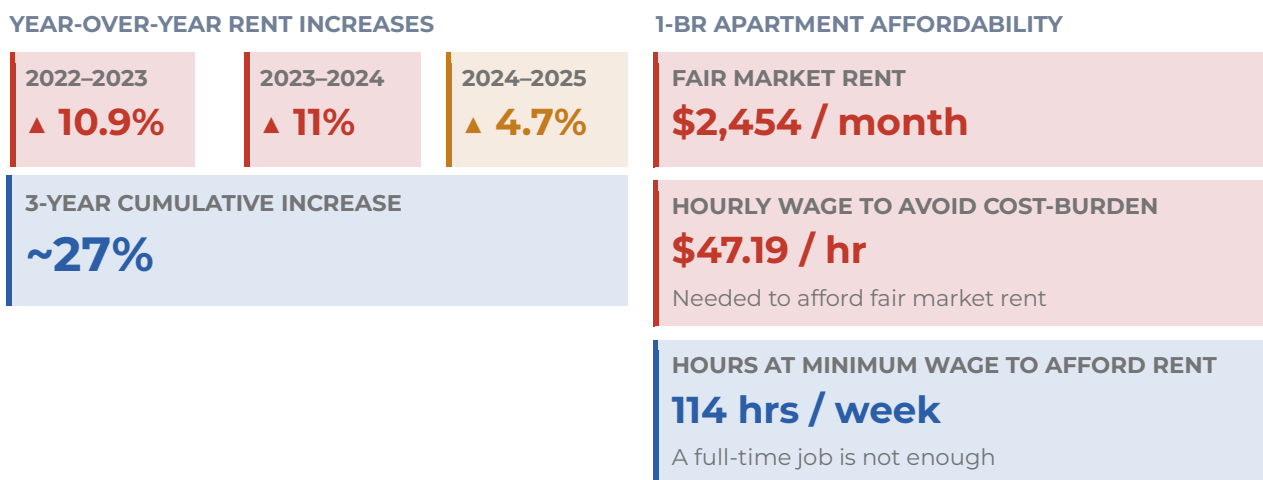


**Bars scaled relative to traditional home income requirement*

The burden of these costs is not felt equally. White and Asian residents have the highest rates of homeownership, while Hispanic or Latino, African American, and multiracial residents are disproportionately renters, leaving them more exposed to the price hikes seen across the rental market. This divide reflects and reinforces broader patterns of economic inequality across the county.

Renting Offers No Relief – Costs Have Surged Nearly 30% in Three Years

Even a 1-bedroom apartment demands wages and hours that most workers simply cannot sustain



Together, these factors underscore a growing disconnect between Orange County wages and its cost of living, with significant implications for workforce recruitment, retention, and the communities that regional employers and educators serve.

Income & Poverty

Despite Orange County's reputation for prosperity, the county's income landscape is sharply divided. While more than half of households earn six figures or more, nearly one-in-four people earn less than \$50,000 annually, and close to one-in-ten residents live in poverty.

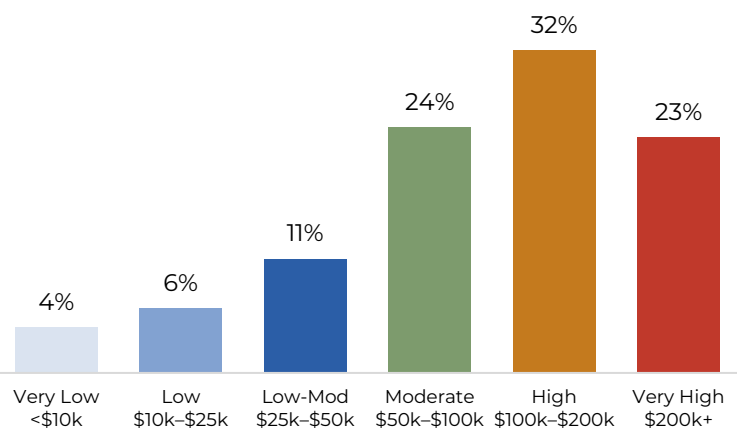
As with housing, these disparities fall along racial and ethnic lines. White and Asian households report the highest median incomes while Hispanic or Latino residents and those identifying as multiracial or other earn significantly less. This income gap compounds the housing affordability challenges described above, as those with the least earning power face the greatest exposure to the county's inflated cost of living.

Taken together, Orange County's income and poverty data reveal a community where significant wealth and extreme need exist side by side.

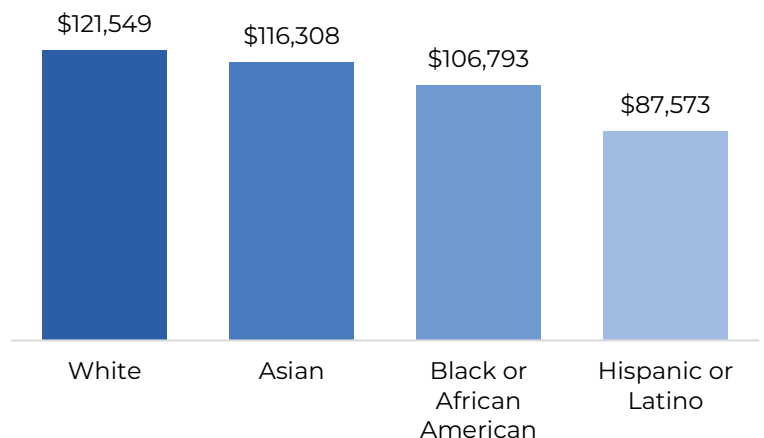
Exhibit 4: Income and Poverty Statistics in Orange County



HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION (2023)
Share of households by income tier



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE/ETHNICITY
Orange County, 2023

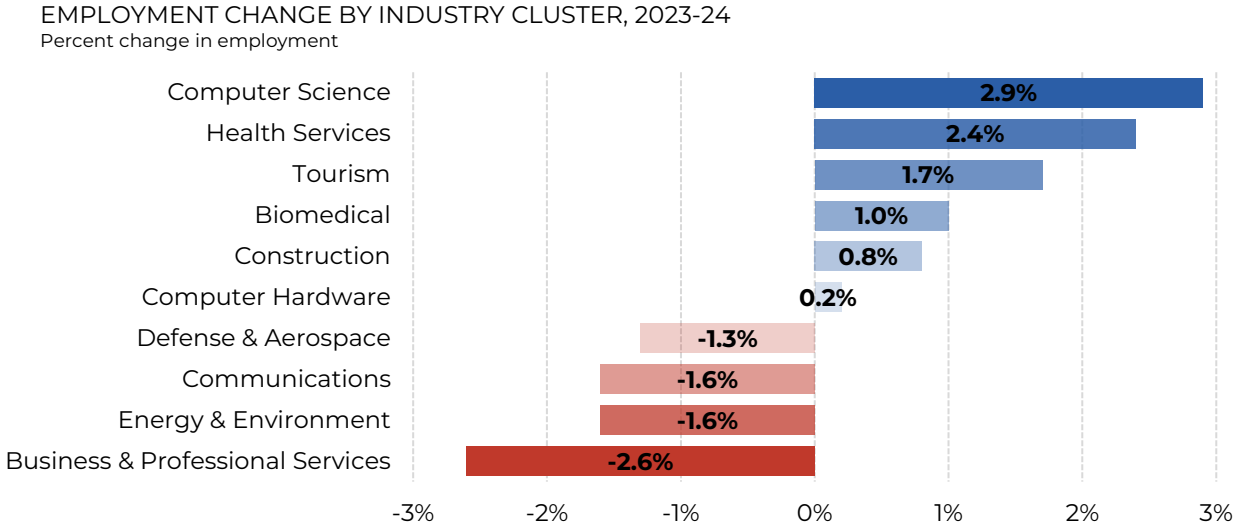


Economy & Industry

Orange County’s economy is significantly stronger than may be implied by its geographic area. The county’s gross regional product (GRP) of \$348 billion rivals or exceeds the economic output of 26 U.S. states – a remarkable figure for a single county. Its business landscape is defined by small businesses, which make up more than 96% of all employers and account for nearly half of local employment.

Orange County’s economy is also broadly diversified across industries. Of the county’s ten major industry clusters, six grew in employment from 2023 to 2024 with Computer Science, Health Services, and Tourism in the lead. The four clusters that contracted, including Defense and Aerospace, Energy and Environment, and Business and Professional Services, signal areas worth monitoring as the region prepares its workforce for the years ahead. Exhibit 5 details employment change across all ten clusters.

Exhibit 5: Percent Change of Employment by Industry Cluster from 2023 to 2024



Orange County Economic Forecast

Drs. Anil Puri and Mira Farka – Director and Co-Director of the Woods Center for Economic Analysis and Forecasting at California State University, Fullerton’s College of Business and Economics – release an annual economic

forecast that includes a three-year outlook on the national, state, and Orange County economies each October. The 2026 iteration, *Winds of Change: What Business Leaders Need to Know in the Current Environment*³, finds that California and Orange County have lagged national economic indicators since the COVID-pandemic:

“The post-pandemic recovery in the state and local economies has not been for the faint of heart. Since 2020, the state – and particularly Southern California – has struggled to regain its earlier growth momentum, falling behind the nation’s stronger pace of job creation [...]. U.S. payroll employment grew by 12.1% between 2020 and August 2025, compared with 10.9% for California and 10.0% for Orange and Los Angeles Counties. Within Southern California, only the Inland Empire surpassed the national rate, posting a robust 13.7% increase.

California’s slower recovery over the past five years stands in sharp contrast to the robust growth seen before the pandemic. Between 2015 and 2019, U.S. employment expanded by 8.6%, while Orange County and California added a much stronger 11.9%. Los Angeles County, at 8.8%, roughly matched the national pace, but the Inland Empire was the standout performer with an astounding 20.4% gain in jobs [...].”⁴

Looking ahead, the Woods Center projects modest but steady employment growth for Orange County through 2027. Total nonfarm employment is forecasted to grow by approximately 6,500 jobs in 2025, 6,000 in 2026, and 9,300 in 2027, reaching a total of 1,711,500, with the unemployment rate expected to remain in the 4.2–4.4% range. That annual growth rate of roughly 0.38% remains well below the county's historical trend, reflecting the broader reality that Southern California's recovery, while real, continues to underperform the national pace.

Moreover, industry outlook is uneven. The Leisure and Hospitality industry leads projected growth at an average of 3.0% annually from 2025 to 2027, followed by Educational and Health Services at 1.4% and Other Services at 0.4%. Most other sectors, however, are expected to contract: Professional and

³ Anil Puri and Mira Farka, *2026 Economic Forecast: The Nation, Southern California and Orange County* (Fullerton, CA: Woods Center for Economic Analysis and Forecasting, 2026), <https://business.fullerton.edu/engagement/economic-analysis-and-forecasting/assets/pdf/csuf-2026-economic-forecast-report.pdf>.

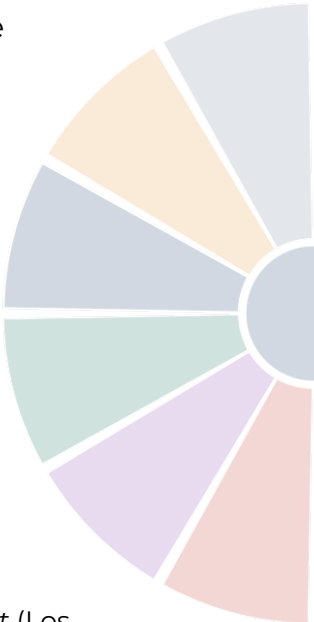
⁴ Puri and Farka, *2026 Economic Forecast*, 56–57.

Business Services (-0.8%), Information (-0.6%), and Wholesale Trade (-0.6%) facing the steepest average annual decline. These trends carry direct implications for the workforce and career education programs examined in the sections that follow.

Despite these near-term headwinds, Orange County's innovative economy offers a more optimistic long-term signal. Life Sciences leads projected employment growth over the next decade at 12.1%, followed by Aerospace and Defense at 6.0% and the Creative Economy at 6.6%. Venture capital investment reinforces this momentum, with AI and Machine Learning attracting \$2.62 billion and Robotics and Drones \$2.6 billion year-to-date in 2025 alone.⁵

Business sentiment largely reflects this cautious optimism. The Woods Center's Orange County Business Expectations Index – in which any reading above 50 indicates a positive outlook – recovered from a low of 52.2 in the second quarter of 2025 to 74.4 by the fourth quarter, its highest level since early 2024. Most executives anticipate stable or modestly improving conditions, though inflation, tariffs, geopolitical risk, and talent acquisition remain their primary concerns.

Taken together, the forecast paints a picture of an economy navigating a period of constrained growth, one that is holding its own against regional peers but has yet to fully recapture its pre-pandemic momentum. The sector-level analysis examines how Orange County's workforce and career education pipeline align with these evolving economic conditions, and where the greatest opportunities and gaps exist.



⁵ Wallace Walrod, *2025 Southern California Economic Update: Orange County Report* (Los Angeles: Southern California Association of Governments, 2026), prepared by Tech Coast Consulting Group, <https://scaag.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/26-426-ES-0357-RegionalEconomicAnalysis2025CountyReportsOrange-Final.pdf>.

Methodological Approach

This report analyzes Orange County’s labor market landscape by examining occupations across all twelve community college economic sectors. It builds upon the foundational, methodological framework established through the OC COE’s [2023 Orange County Labor Market Overview](#) and utilizes current labor market information.

Exhibit 6: The Twelve CCCCCO Sectors

Advanced Manufacturing	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	Agriculture, Water, & Environmental Technologies
Business & Entrepreneurship	Education & Human Development	Energy, Construction, & Utilities
Health	Information & Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media	Life Sciences & Biotechnology
Public Safety	Retail, Hospitality, & Tourism	Other/Unassigned

The Other/Unassigned sector accounts for a diverse mix of occupations that do not neatly fit into a specific, predefined sector. This catch-all designation includes occupations that are less common like clergy, highly specialized roles such as economics and physicists, and those that lack a single, well-defined sector and/or industry association.

This analysis evaluated all 796 occupations within the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Twenty-one occupations with fewer than 10 jobs in Orange County in 2024 were excluded, leaving 775 occupations for review. Each occupation was mapped to a CCCCCO sector and assessed against eight criteria, earning one point per criterion met. Occupations reaching the established criterion threshold of four or more points advanced to detailed analysis, yielding the 243 occupations examined throughout this report, collectively representing 56% of all Orange County jobs and 54% of all annual openings.

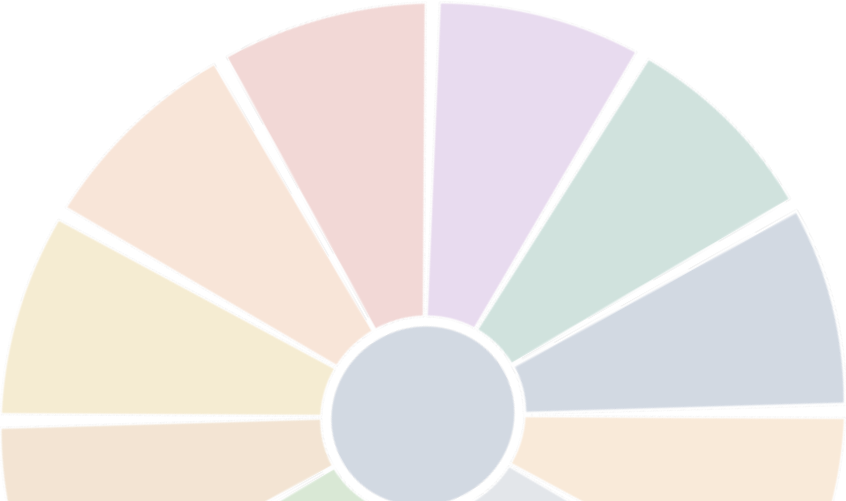


Exhibit 7: Eight-Point Criteria Used for Analysis



The eight criteria were designed to identify occupations that are not merely present in Orange County's labor market, but are sizeable, growing, accessible, well-compensated, stable, and in genuine local demand.

Criteria 1 through 3 measure labor market scale and momentum by examining the number of jobs, projected growth, and annual openings to determine if an occupation is large enough and growing fast enough to matter.

Criteria 4 and 5 assess whether an occupation pays enough to meet the real cost of living in one of California's most expensive counties.

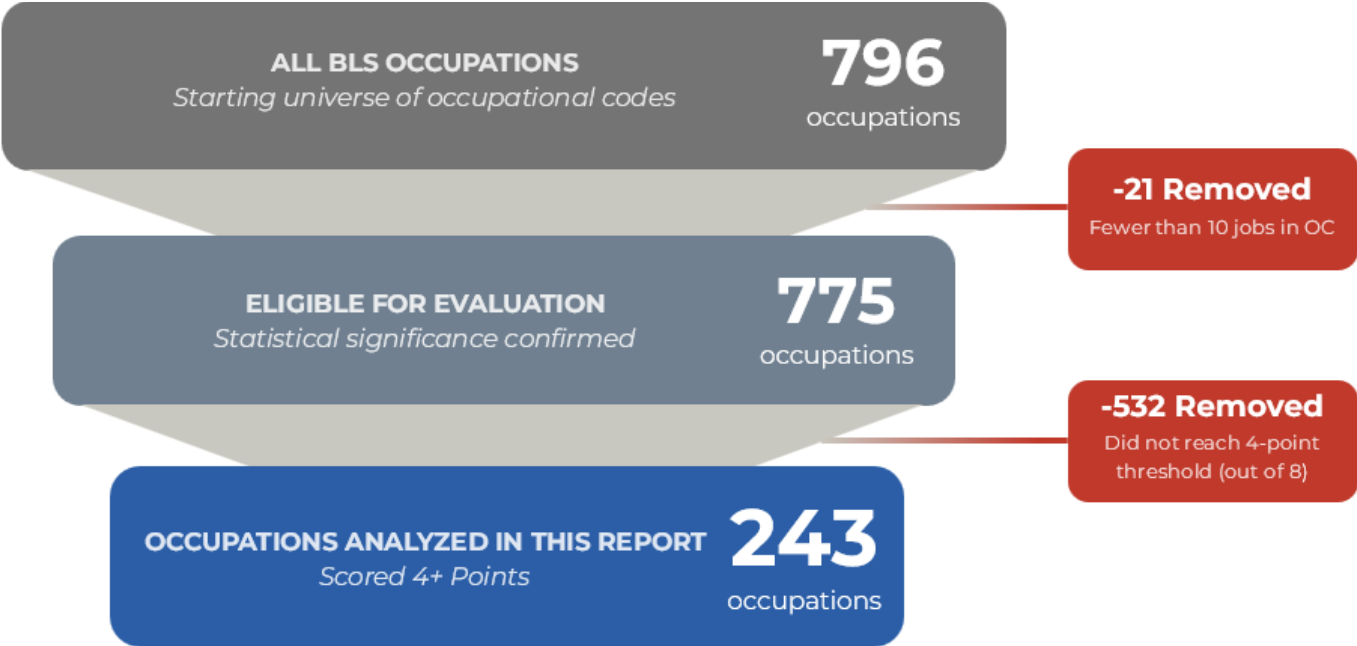
Criteria 6 and 7 provide a quality signal, identifying occupations with demonstrated stability and broader recognition.

Criteria 8 ensures local relevance, prioritizing occupations where Orange County has a genuine competitive presence rather than simply reflecting national trends.

In 2024, Orange County boasted a robust employment landscape, with a staggering 1.86 million jobs across the 775 analyzed occupations. What makes this report particularly noteworthy is its attention to the 243 occupations that earned four points or more during evaluation, collectively accounting for 1.03 million jobs - 56% of all Orange County jobs.

County jobs. This refined selection allows us to focus on analyzing the occupations – and thereby sectors – that not only sustain Orange County’s economic engine but also exhibit exceptional performance across the established metrics.

Exhibit 8: The Occupation Selection Pipeline (from 796 to 243)



These 243 occupations represent a significant share of Orange County's labor market



OC Labor Market Overview: 2023 vs. 2026

The most significant finding in comparing the 2023 and 2026 reports is not a change in Orange County's labor market, but a change in Orange County's cost of living. The number of occupations qualifying for analysis (those that earned 4 points or more) fell from 338 in 2023 to 243 in 2026, a reduction of 95

occupations. The driving force behind that decline is not a weakening labor market but rather sharply rising wage thresholds required to meet the report's living wage criteria; thresholds that fewer occupations can clear today than three years ago.

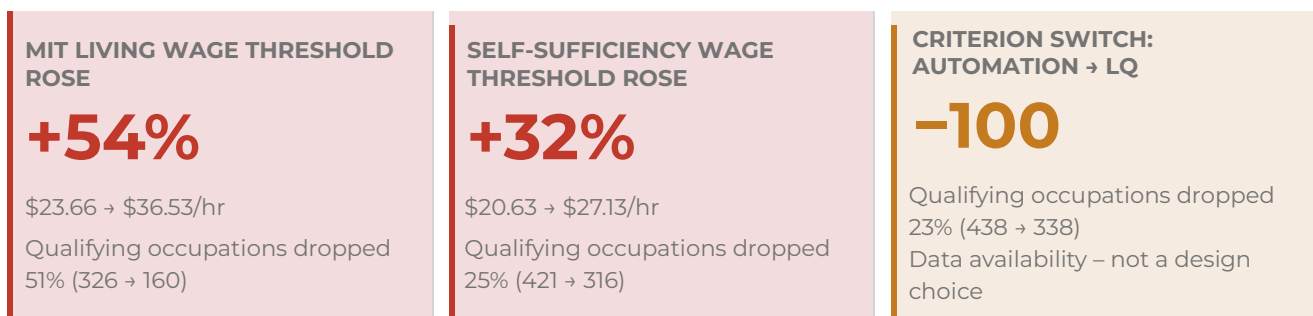
What Changed in Methodology

Six of the eight criteria carried over from 2023 were unchanged in structure, though their benchmark values shifted with updated data. Two criteria changed more fundamentally. First, the living wage benchmarks – both the lower Self-Sufficiency Standard threshold and the higher MIT Living Wage – rose substantially, reflecting Orange County's accelerating cost of living. Second, Lightcast's Automation Index used in 2023 to assess automation risk was discontinued and replaced with Location Quotient (LQ). LQ measures the concentration of an occupation in Orange County relative to the national average; an LQ above 1.0 indicates that the occupation is more prevalent locally than it is nationally, signaling genuine regional demand. This was not a discretionary methodology change. Instead, it was a data availability decision, with LQ being a well-established labor market measure well suited to this type of regional analysis.

Key Drivers of Change

The callouts below summarize the three largest contributors to the decline from 338 to 243 occupations.

Exhibit 9: Largest Contributors to Decline in Occupations With 4+ Points



The 5-year projected growth threshold dropped from 6.62% to 2.92%. However, this led to an increase in the number of qualifying occupations, adding an additional 12 occupations from the 2023 report. It was not enough to offset losses elsewhere. The three criteria that showed no meaningful change (i.e., median job count, average annual openings, and resilience/US News designations) confirm that the underlying labor market structure remained relatively stable. The full criterion-by-criterion comparison,

including threshold values and occupation counts, is included in Appendix A: 2023 vs. 2026 LMO Comparison.

Overall, the 2026 report is not finding a weaker labor market – it is applying a more demanding cost-of-living lens to the same underlying landscape. That is itself an important finding: Orange County's wages have simply not kept pace with what it costs to live here. The occupational and sector analysis that follows reflects this reality and focuses attention on those occupations that can genuinely support a sustainable livelihood in the region.



Occupational Analysis

Of Orange County’s 775 evaluated occupations, 243 – nearly one in three – cleared the four-point threshold and form the basis of this analysis. These occupations are sizeable, growing, well-compensated, stable, and locally concentrated. Together they account for 56% of all 2024 jobs and 54% of all annual openings in the county.

The distribution across sectors is uneven and reflects where Orange County's labor market concentrates quality opportunities. Education and Human Development qualifies 74% of its eligible occupations, and Health qualifies 59%, reflecting the depth of those sectors locally. Advanced Manufacturing, by contrast, qualifies just 8% – a signal worth examining as the sector navigates structural change. Exhibit 10 shows the full breakdown by sector.

Exhibit 10: Number of BLS Occupations by CCCCCO Sector

CCCCO sector	Total ⁶ BLS Occupations (#)	Occupations in this Report (#)	% of Total BLS Occupations
Advanced Manufacturing	103	8	8%
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	60	7	12%
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	39	5	13%
Business & Entrepreneurship	101	39	39%
Education & Human Development	35	26	74%
Energy, Construction & Utilities	102	25	25%
Health	100	59	59%
ICT/Digital Media	49	21	43%
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	8	4	50%
Public Safety	27	11	41%
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	50	15	30%
Other/Unassigned	101	23	23%
Grand Total	775	243	31%

⁶ This refers to the 775 total BLS occupations that were eligible for evaluation based on having 10 or more jobs in Orange County.

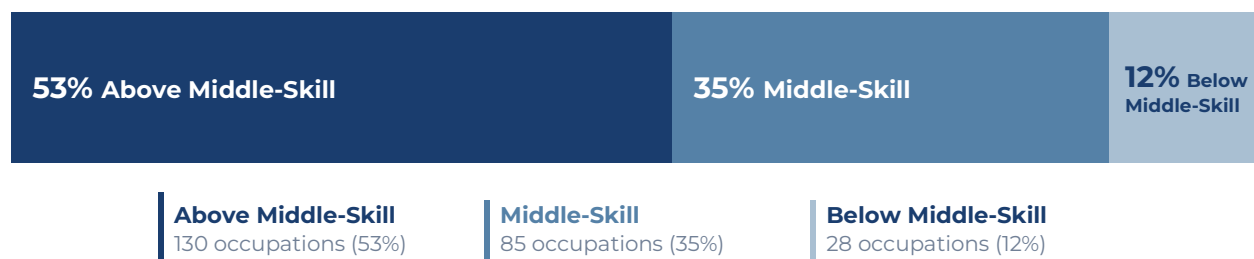
Occupational Skill-Level

Each occupation can be designated under one of the following three skill levels:

- **Below Middle-Skill (*):** Less than a community college education (e.g., high school diploma)
- **Middle-Skill:** Community college education (e.g., post-secondary certificate or associate degree)
- **Above Middle-Skill (^):** More than a community college education (e.g., bachelor's degree)

As shown in Exhibit 11, although a slight majority (53%) of the examined 243 occupations are above middle-skill (^), a substantial percentage – 35% (85) – are middle-skill. This underscores the significant and extensive impact middle-skill occupations in the county's workforce.

Exhibit 11: Share of the 243 Analyzed Occupations by Skill-Level



The data reflects a clear relationship between skill level and occupational labor market outcomes. Below middle-skill occupations – those typically requiring less than a community college education – scored the lowest overall, with only 2 of the 28 included in this report earning five points, and none scoring higher. By contrast, middle- and above middle-skill occupations more consistently met the wage, resilience, and national recognition criteria, which explains their stronger representation in the final 243. In short, the higher the typical education requirement, the more likely an occupation is to clear the thresholds this report uses to define a quality opportunity.

Skill-Level by Sector

An analysis of the skill-level distribution of the 243 occupations across CCCCCO sectors reveals:

- Above middle-skill (^) occupations dominate half of all sectors (6 of 12), most notably Education and Human Development (90%), ICT/Digital Media (71%), and Advanced Manufacturing (70%): none of which include

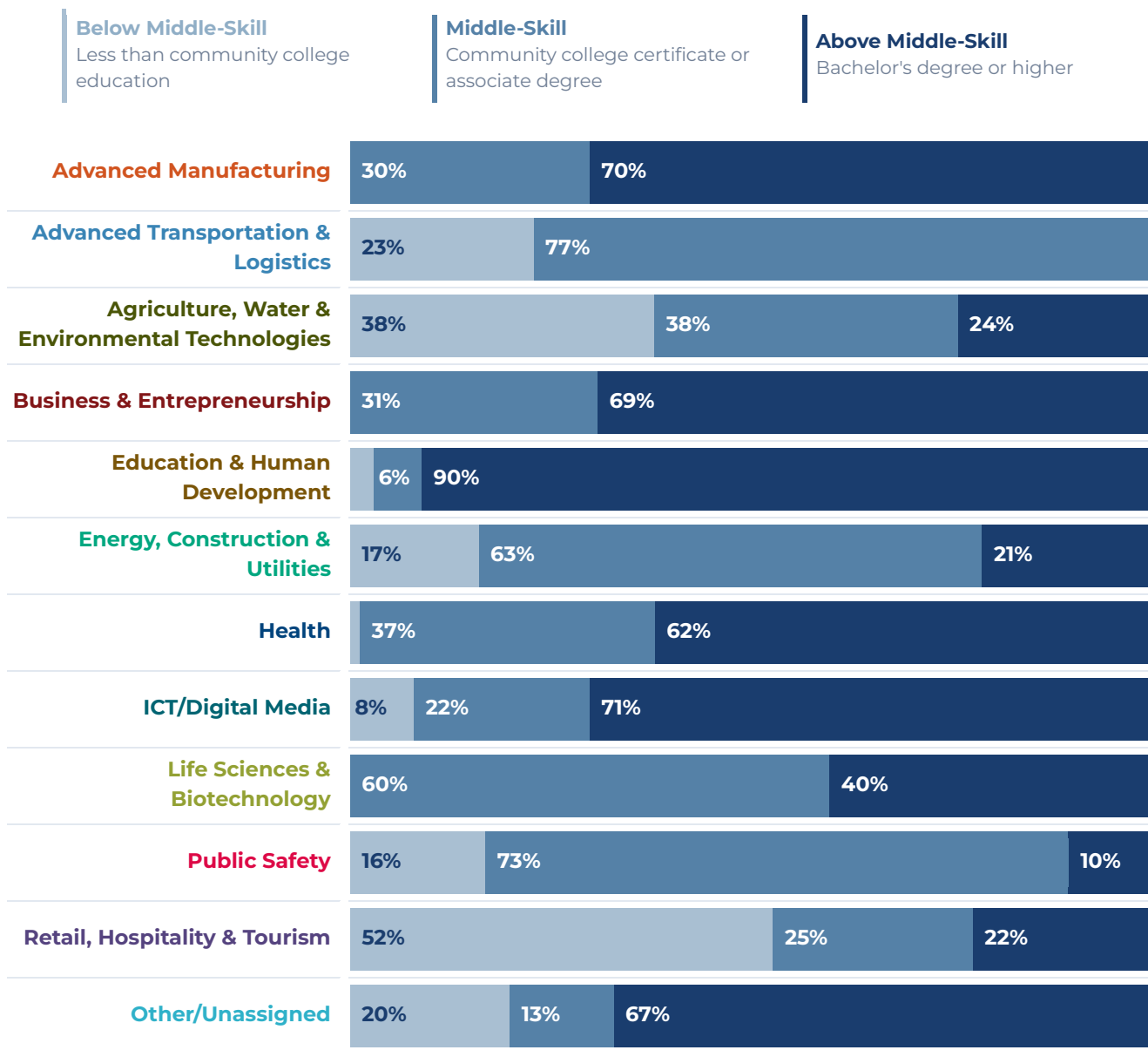
any below middle-skill occupations, along with Business and Entrepreneurship and Life Sciences and Biotechnology.

- Middle-skill occupations hold the majority in 4 sectors, led by Advanced Transportation and Logistics (77%), Public Safety (73%), and Energy, Construction, & Utilities (63%) – sectors closely aligned with community college certificate and associate degree pathways.
- The sectors with the lowest percentages of middle-skill occupations are Education & Human Development (6%), Other/Unassigned (13%), and ICT/Digital Media (22%); in Other/Unassigned, these occupations account for the smallest share compared to all other skill levels.
- Agriculture, Water, & Environmental Technologies is the most evenly split sector, with middle- and below middle-skill occupations each comprising 38%.
- Retail, Hospitality, & Tourism is the only sector where below middle-skill occupations form the majority (52%).



Exhibit 12 displays the occupational skill-level distribution for each CCCC sector.

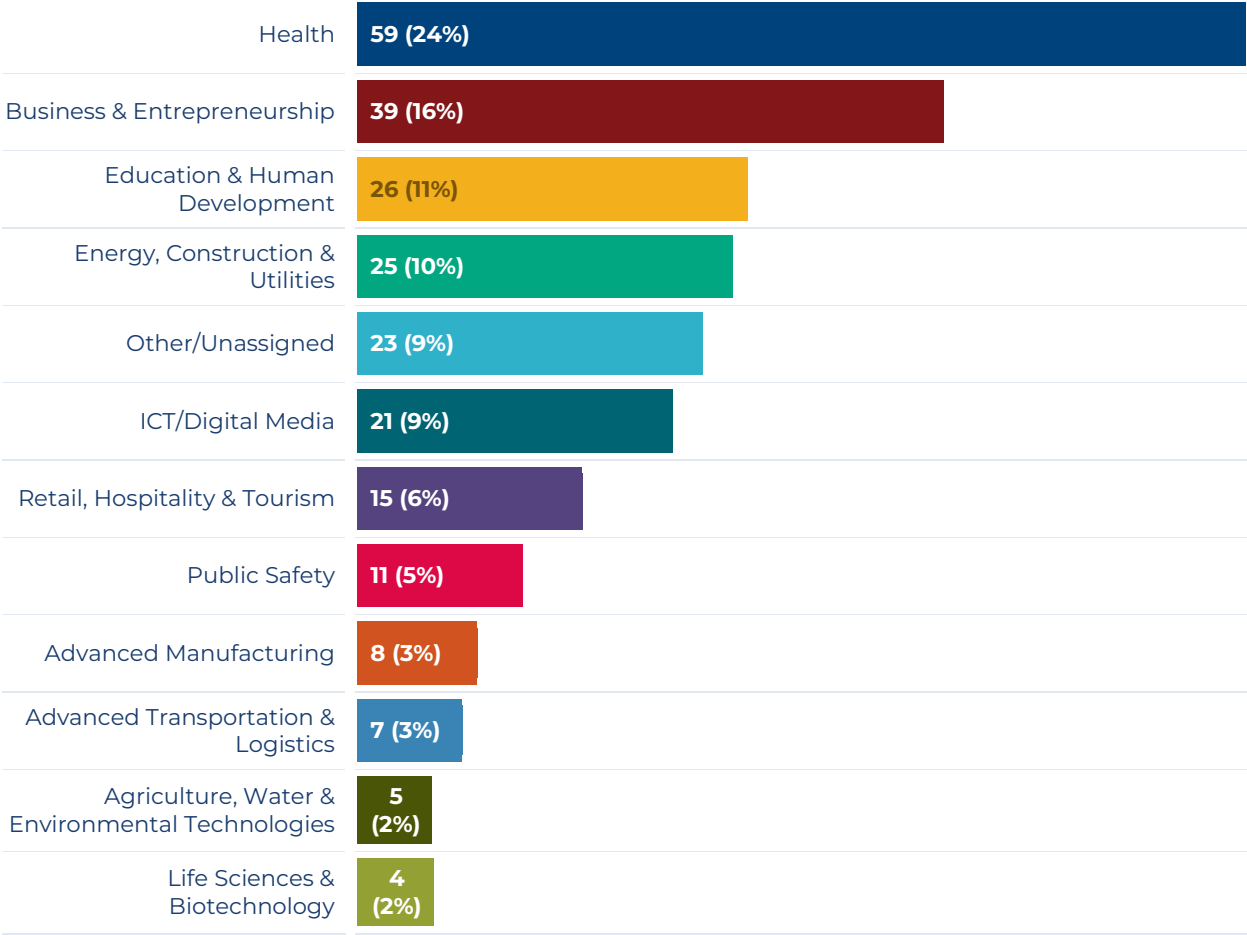
Exhibit 12: Occupational Skill-Level Distribution by CCCC Sector



Sector Overview

Orange County’s 243 qualifying occupations are distributed unevenly across the 12 CCCCCO sectors. Health dominates, accounting for nearly one-in-four occupations, and three sectors alone – Health (24%), Business & Entrepreneurship (16%), and Education & Human Development (11%) – claim more than half the total occupations. At the other end, Agriculture, Water, & Environmental Technologies and Life Sciences/Biotechnology each represent just 2% of the total occupations, and eight of the twelve sectors individually account for less than 10% of occupations. This concentration reflects where Orange County’s labor market generally clusters quality opportunities – and sets the stage for the sector-by-sector analysis that follows. Exhibit 13 shows the full distribution of the 243 occupations included in this report by CCCCCO sector.

Exhibit 13: Distribution of 243 Occupations by CCCCCO Sector



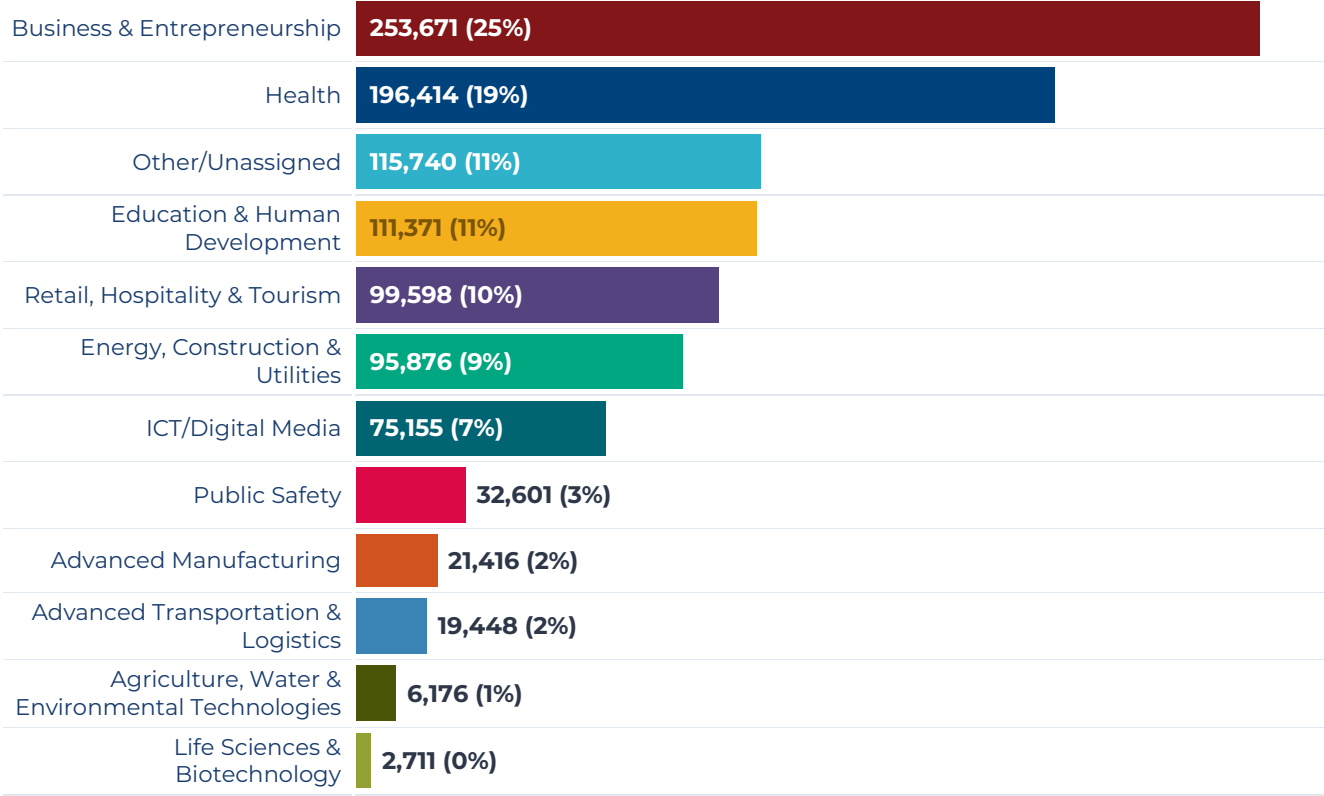
Number of Jobs by Sector

The 243 occupations analyzed in this report represent more than half of Orange County’s 2024 workforce, but that footprint is concentrated in a handful of sectors.

<p>TOTAL 2024 JOBS</p> <p>1,030,178</p> <p>56% of all Orange County jobs across the 243 analyzed occupations</p>	<p>3 LARGEST SECTORS</p> <p>565,825 (55%)</p> <p>Business & Entrepreneurship Health Other/Unassigned</p>	<p>5 SMALLEST SECTORS</p> <p>82,352 (8%)</p> <p>Public Safety Advanced Manufacturing Adv. Transportation & Logistics Agriculture & Environmental Life Sciences</p>
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Exhibit 14 shows the full distribution of 2024 jobs across all sectors.

Exhibit 14: Distribution of 2024 Jobs by CCCCCO Sector



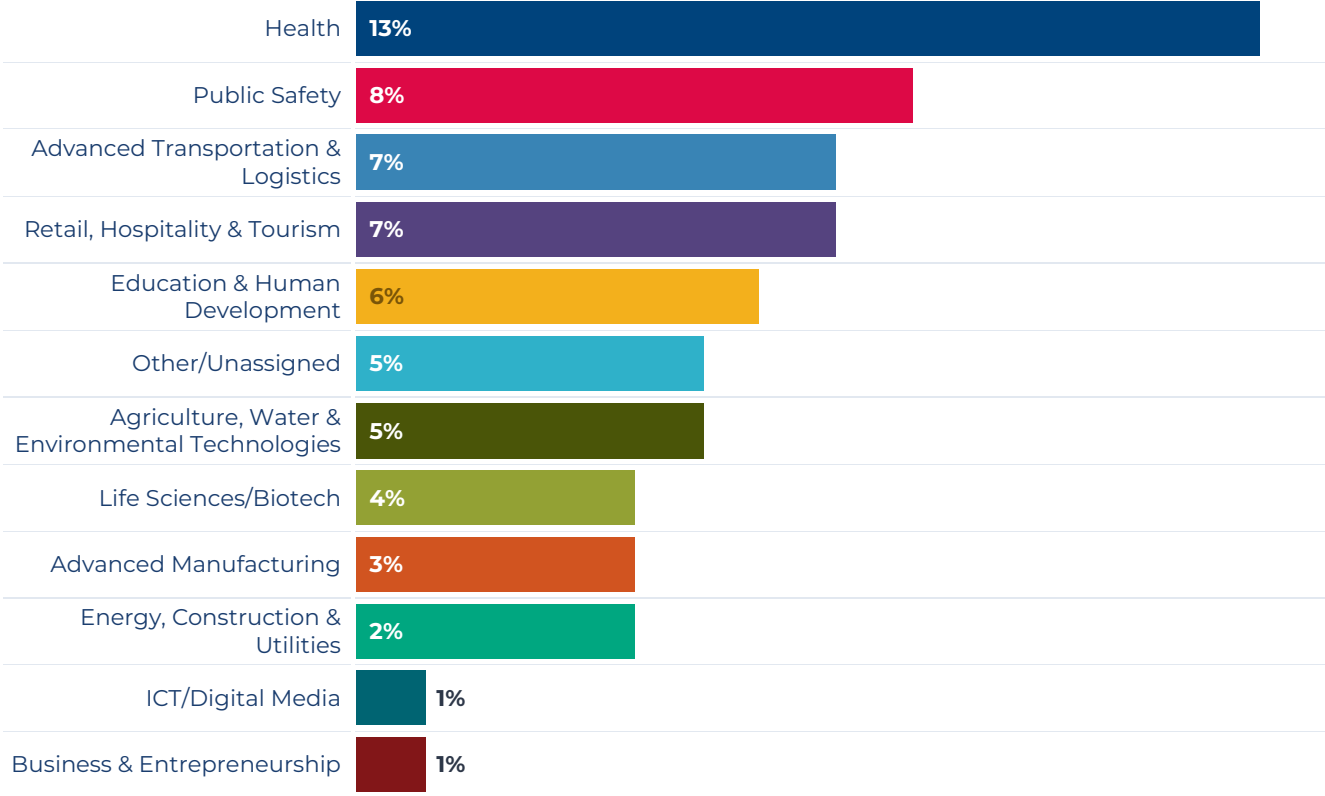
Projected 5-Year Percent Change by Sector

Every one of the 243 occupations across all sectors is projected to add jobs through 2029, but the pace of growth varies considerably, and most sectors will grow more slowly than the 5.5% projected for the 243 occupations as a whole.

<p>PROJECTED GROWTH - ALL 243 OCCUPATIONS</p> <p>+5.5% 2024–2029</p> <p>All 12 sectors projected to grow, 1%–13%</p> <p>All outpace the 2.92% for all 775 OC occupations</p>	<p>4 SECTORS ABOVE THE 5.5% BENCHMARK</p> <p>4 of 12 sectors</p> <p>Health (13%)</p> <p>Public Safety (8%)</p> <p>Adv. Transportation & Logistics (7%)</p> <p>Retail, Hospitality & Tour. (7%)</p>	<p>8 SECTORS BELOW THE 5.5% BENCHMARK</p> <p>8 of 12 sectors</p> <p>Slowest: ICT/Digital Media (1%) and Business & Entrepreneurship (1%)</p>
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Exhibit 15 shows the projected 5-year growth rate for each sector.

Exhibit 15: Projected 5-Year Percent Change by CCCCCO Sector



Annual Openings by Sector

The 243 occupations account for more than half of all annual openings across Orange County's point – eligible occupations – but this demand is heavily concentrated in just a few sectors.

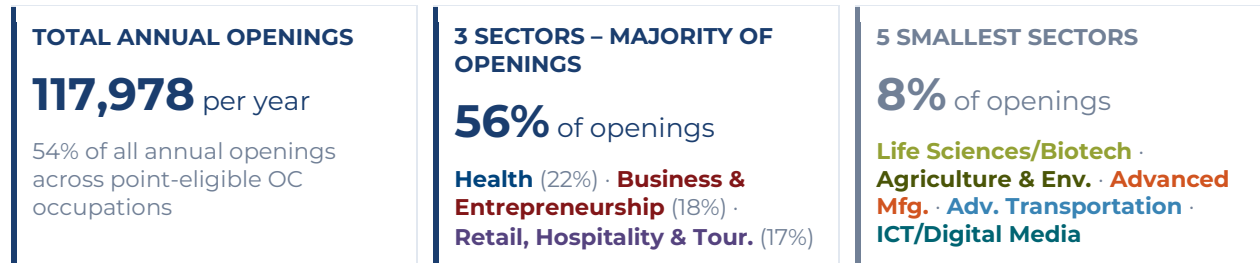
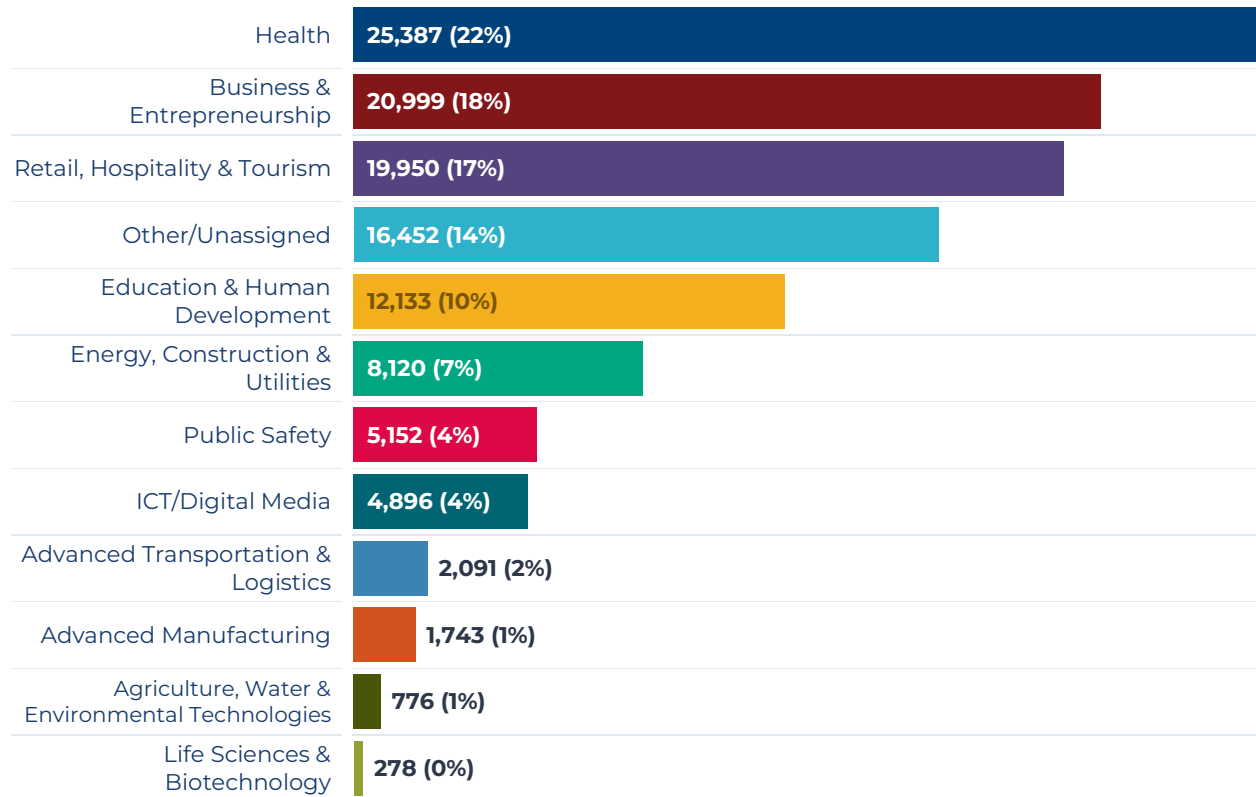


Exhibit 16 shows the full distribution of projected annual openings across all twelve sectors.

Exhibit 16: Annual Openings of the 243 Occupations by Sector



Entry-Level Wages by Sector

Entry-level wages are evaluated against two benchmarks in this report: the Self-Sufficiency Standard (\$27.13/hr), which represents the minimum needed to cover basic costs in Orange County, and MIT Living Wage (\$36.53/hr), a more demanding threshold that reflects current economic conditions including inflation. Together, these two measures capture both the floor and a more meaningful target for workforce self-sufficiency; the gap between them reveals how many sectors clear one bar but not the other.

<p>8 SECTORS ABOVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE (\$27.13/HR) 8 of 12 sectors ICT/Digital Media \$43.67 · Advanced Manufacturing \$37.21 Business & Entrepreneurship \$35.68 · Life Sciences & Biotechnology \$32.64 · Energy, Construction & Utilities \$31.02 · Health \$29.92 · Advanced Transportation & Logistics \$28.63 · Education & Human Dev. \$27.44</p>	<p>4 SECTORS BELOW SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE (\$27.13/HR) 4 of 12 sectors Public Safety \$25.69 · Other/Unassigned \$23.88 · Agriculture & Env. Technologies \$23.78 · Retail, Hospitality & Tour. \$17.63</p>
<p>2 SECTORS ABOVE MIT LIVING WAGE (\$36.53/HR) 2 of 12 sectors ICT/Digital Media \$43.67 · Advanced Manufacturing \$37.21 – the only two sectors to meet both living wage benchmarks</p>	
<p>3 SECTORS WHERE 50%+ OF OCCUPATIONS MET BOTH LIVING WAGE METRICS 3 of 12 sectors Health – 56% of occupations met both thresholds · Advanced Manufacturing – 50% · Life Sciences & Biotechnology – 50%</p>	



Exhibit 17 shows the weighted entry-level wage for each sector relative to both benchmarks. Additional detail on the individual living wage metrics is provided in Appendix B: Methodology.

Exhibit 17: Sectors' Entry-Level Wages (25th Percentile) Weighted by 2024 Jobs

ICT/Digital Media	\$43.67
Advanced Manufacturing	\$37.21
Business & Entrepreneurship	\$35.68
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	\$32.64
Energy, Construction & Utilities	\$31.02
Health	\$29.92
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	\$28.63
Education & Human Development	\$27.44
Public Safety	\$25.69
Other/Unassigned	\$23.88
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	\$23.78
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	\$17.63



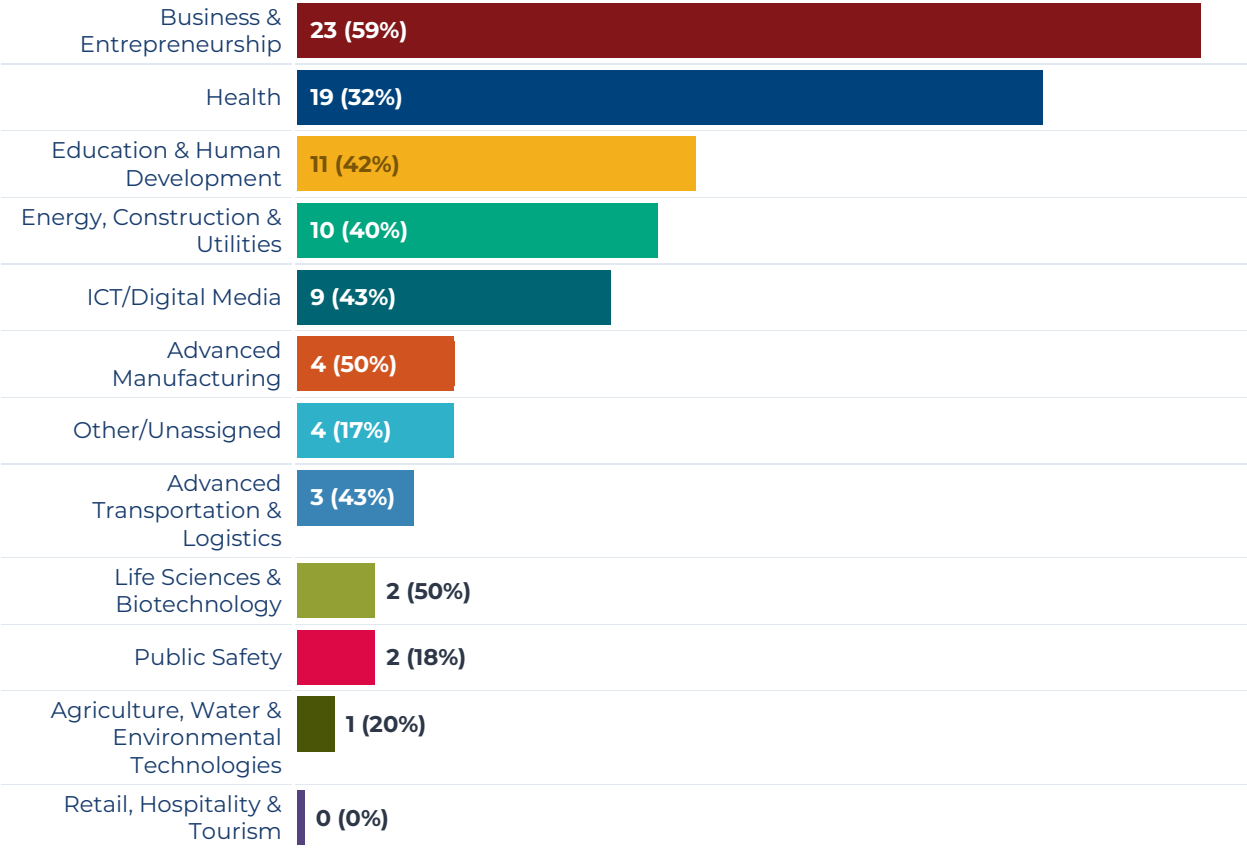
Resilient Jobs by Sector

More than a third of the 243 occupations analyzed have remained stable or, in some instances, thrived in past economic downturns, though resilience is far from evenly distributed across sectors.

<p>RESILIENT OCCUPATIONS OVERALL</p> <p>36% of 243 occupations</p> <p>88 of 243 occupations designated resilient during the Great Recession, COVID-19, pandemic, or both</p>	<p>3 SECTORS – 50%+ RESILIENT OCCUPATIONS</p> <p>3 of 12 sectors</p> <p>Business & Entrepreneurship (59%)</p> <p>Advanced Manufacturing (50%)</p> <p>Life Sciences & Biotechnology (50%)</p>	<p>ONLY SECTOR WITH ZERO RESILIENT OCCUPATIONS</p> <p>1 of 12 sectors</p> <p>Retail, Hospitality & Tourism</p> <p>0 of its 15 occupations carry a resilience designation</p>
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Exhibit 18 shows the absolute number and share of resilient occupations by sector. Additional detail on Resilient Jobs is provided in Appendix B: Methodology.

Exhibit 18: Recession Resilient Occupations by Sector



U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Jobs by Sector

Thirty-seven percent of the 243 analyzed occupations appear on the U.S. News & World Report 100 Best Jobs of 2026 list – an occupational quality signal driven overwhelmingly by one sector.

OCCUPATIONS ON THE U.S. NEWS 100 BEST JOBS OF 2026 LIST

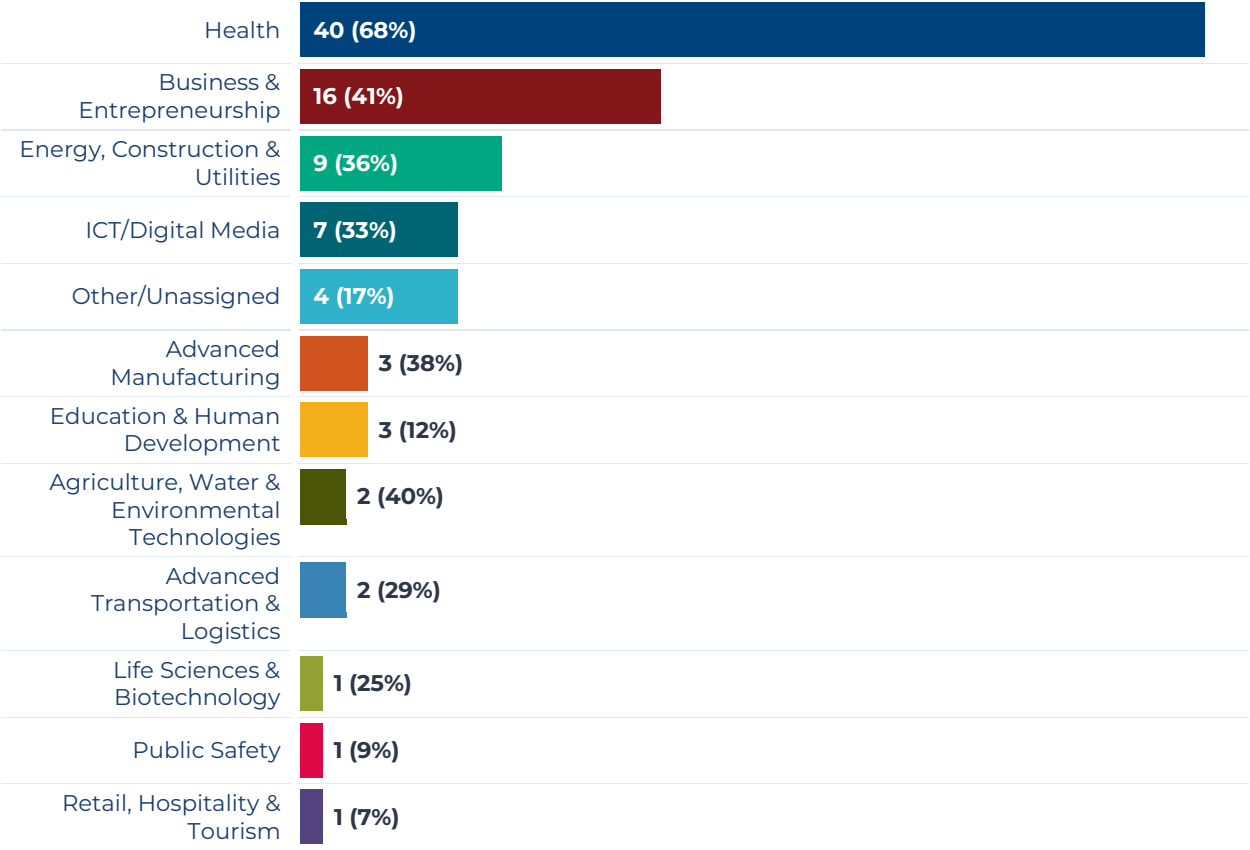
89 of 243 occupations (37%)

Best Job designations appear across all 12 sectors – with significant variation in both count and share by sector

<p>SECTORS WITH THE MOST BEST JOB DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>56 of 89 top 2 sectors</p> <p>Health – 40 (68%), more than all other 10 sectors combined</p> <p>Business & Entrepreneurship – 16 (41%)</p>	<p>SECTORS WITH THE FEWEST BEST JOB DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>1 each occupation</p> <p>Life Sciences & Biotechnology – 1 of 4 (25%)</p> <p>Public Safety – 1 of 11 (9%)</p> <p>Retail, Hospitality & Tourism – 1 of 15 (7%)</p>
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Exhibit 19 shows the number and share of Best Jobs designations by sector. Additional detail on the U.S. News & World Report 100 Best Jobs of 2026 list is provided in Appendix B: Methodology.

Exhibit 19: U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job Status by Sector



Location Quotient by Sector

Location quotient (LQ)⁷ measures how concentrated an occupation is in Orange County relative to the national average. An LQ above 1.0 means Orange County employs a higher share of workers in that occupation than the country as a whole – an indicator that the occupation reflects genuine local demand rather than simply tracking national trends. An LQ below 1.0 suggests the occupation is less prevalent here than elsewhere. In this report, occupations with an LQ above 1.0 earned one point in the scoring framework. Of the 243 occupations analyzed, two-thirds cleared this bar, confirming that the occupations in this report are not just broadly important but specifically anchored in Orange County's economy.

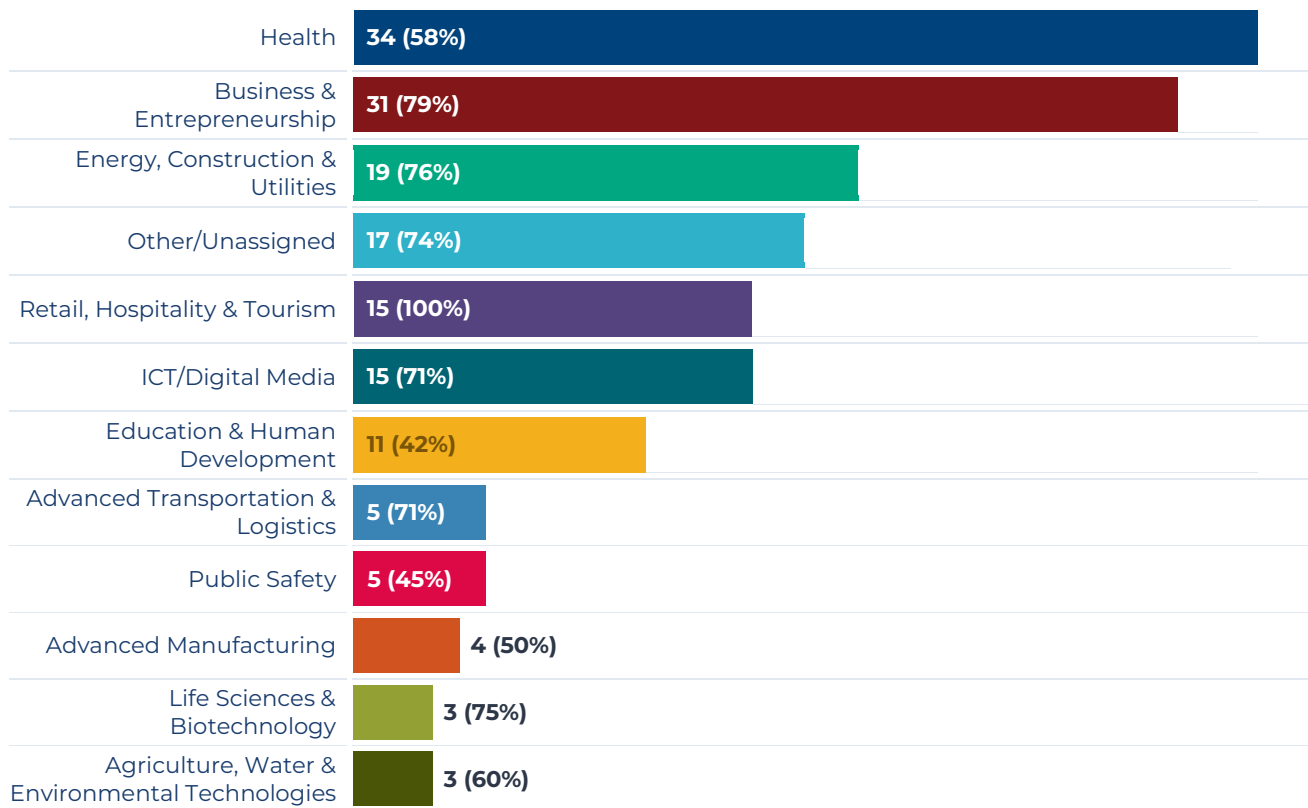
<p>OCCUPATIONS WITH LQ AT OR ABOVE 1.0</p> <p>162 of 243 occs.</p> <p>67% of analyzed occupations are more concentrated in OC than the national average</p>	<p>TOP 3 SECTORS BY COUNT OF HIGH-LQ OCCUPATIONS</p> <p>84 of 162 ↑LQ occs.</p> <p>Health (34) · Business & Entrepreneurship (31) · Energy, Construction & Utilities (19)</p>	<p>1 SECTOR WITH 100% HIGH-LQ OCCUPATIONS</p> <p>15 of 15 occs.</p> <p>Retail, Hospitality & Tourism is the only sector with 100% of its occupations more concentrated in OC than the national average.</p>
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⁷ Lightcast, "Concentration (Location Quotient)," August 14, 2024, accessed March 12, 2026, <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/7124870-concentration-location-quotient>.

Exhibit 20 shows the number and share of high-concentration occupations by sector.

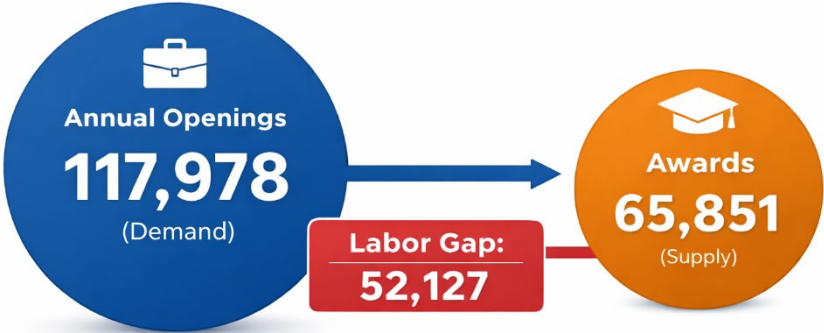
Exhibit 20: Distribution of Occupations with High Concentration (LQ≥1) by CCCCCO Sector



Demand vs. Supply

This section compares the projected annual demand for each sector's occupations against the educational supply of awards granted in related fields. Demand is measured by average annual openings through 2029; supply is measured by total educational awards – subdivided into community college (CC) and non-community college (non-CC) – conferred in programs aligned to those occupations. The difference between demand and supply is the labor differential, which indicates whether a sector faces a gap in qualified candidates or an oversupply of credential holders relative to available positions.

Across all 243 occupations, Orange County's annual openings of 117,978 outpace total educational supply by 65,851 awards – a significant aggregate gap that underscores the scale of unmet demand. Nine of the twelve sectors carry a labor gap, while three show signs of oversupply.



The three sectors in apparent oversupply – Advanced Transportation and Logistics (-3,284), ICT/Digital Media (-1,177), and Life Sciences and Biotechnology (-640) – share a common pattern: in each case, the oversupply is driven almost entirely by non-community college awards. In Advanced Transportation and Logistics, for example, non-CC awards (4,680) outnumber CC awards (695) by more than 6.7 to one. This distinction matters for community college planning purposes, as the aggregate figures can obscure the degree to which CC programs remain underrepresented even in ostensibly saturated sectors.

Exhibit 21: Three Sectors with Oversupply

Advanced Transportation & Logistics	CC 695	Non-CC 4,680
ICT/Digital Media	CC 1,931	Non-CC 4,142
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	CC 114	Non-CC 804

Exhibit 22 details the full breakdown.

Exhibit 22: Demand vs. Supply for the 243 Occupations by CCCCCO Sector

CCCCO Sector	Annual Openings	Total Supply	CC Awards	Non-CC Awards	Labor Gap
Advanced Manufacturing	1,743	1,182	151	1,031	561
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	2,091	5,375	695	4,680	(3,284)
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	776	158	–	158	618
Business & Entrepreneurship	20,999	14,101	5,221	8,880	6,898
Education & Human Development	12,133	4,902	1,179	3,723	7,231
Energy, Construction & Utilities	8,120	1,735	695	1,040	6,385
Health	25,387	11,290	1,872	9,418	14,097
ICT/Digital Media	4,896	6,073	1,931	4,142	(1,177)
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	278	918	114	804	(640)
Public Safety	5,152	1,488	1,456	32	3,665
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	19,950	431	431	–	19,520
Other/Unassigned	16,452	4,475	432	4,043	11,977
Total	117,978	52,127	14,176	37,951	65,851



Best-of-the-Best

Of the 243 occupations analyzed in this report, 31 – just 13% – cleared the highest bar, earning 7 or 8 points across the eight evaluation criteria. These are Orange County's Best-of-the-Best: occupations that simultaneously offer strong wages, growth, demand, resilience, and local relevance. They represent the jobs most likely to serve as durable, well-compensated career pathways for the county's workforce.

Five of the 31 earned a perfect 8 points: Financial Managers, Lawyers, Computer and Information Systems Managers, Data Scientists, and Dentists. The remaining 26 occupations scored 7 points. The remaining 26 scored 7 points. Compared to the 2023 edition of this report, the 7-point threshold is new: rising costs of living in Orange County mean that occupations falling just short of the top score still represent meaningful opportunities worth elevating for students and program planners.

Together, these 31 occupations account for 171,316 jobs – 9% of all Orange County employment – and are projected to generate 5% of the county's annual openings through 2029, growing at 4%, a percentage point above the countywide projection. Exhibit 23 summarizes the key characteristics of the Best-of-the-Best occupations.

Exhibit 23: Best-of-the-Best Occupational Characteristics

Metric	Best-of-the-Best (All 31 Occupations)	8 points (5 Occupations)	7 points (26 Occupations)
Above Middle-Skill (AMS); Middle-Skill (MS)	24 (77%) AMS; 7 (23%) MS	5 (100%) AMS; 0 (0%) MS	19 (73%) AMS; 7 (27%) MS
Share of Point-Eligible Occupations (775)	4%	0.6%	3%
2024 Orange County Jobs	171,316 (9% of OC)	36,175 (2% of OC)	135,142 (7% of OC)
Projected Annual Openings Through 2029	12,053	2,227	9,826
Job Growth Projection Through 2029 (vs. 3% Across All Occ.)	4%	4%	4%
Weighted Hourly Wage (vs. \$25.80 Across All Occ.)	\$47.07 (+\$21.27 premium)	\$58.22 (+\$32.42 premium)	\$44.09 (+\$18.29 premium)

What makes this group compelling is how consistently they outperform. Every one of the 31 occupations pays an entry-level wage above the Self-

Sufficiency Standard of \$27.13 per hour, meaning none of these careers leave workers financially exposed to Orange County's cost of living. Twenty-eight of 31 exceed the MIT Living Wage of \$36.53, with entry-level wages spanning from \$28.22 for *Dental Hygienists* to \$73.01 for *Computer and Information Systems Managers*[^]. The weighted average across the group is \$47.07 per hour – a \$21.27 premium above the countywide average.

Durability is another defining characteristic. Twenty-nine of 31 occupations held their ground through both the Great Recession and the COVID-19 downturn, and 29 of 31 appear on the U.S. News & World Report 100 Best Jobs of 2026 list – an external validation of their breadth of quality. Exhibit 21 highlights the group's standout data points.

The U.S. News and World Report 100 Best Jobs of 2026 designation offers an independent quality check – one that weighs salary, growth, work-life balance, and broader career value rather than any single metric. Twenty-nine of the 31 Best-of-the-Best occupations appear on that list, a near-perfect alignment that affirms the rigor of this report's own criteria. The two that do not – *Facilities Managers* and *Clinical and Counseling Psychologists*[^] – still cleared every other threshold in this analysis, including wages above both living wage benchmarks and strong resilience records. Their absence from the U.S. News list is a nuance, not a disqualification.

Local relevance is the final lens. Of the 31 Best-of-the-Best occupations, 18 – just over half – have a Location Quotient above 1.0, meaning they are more concentrated in Orange County than the national average. The group's average LQ is 1.0, precisely matching the national baseline, but that figure masks meaningful variation: *Sales Managers*[^] (1.7) and *Civil Engineers*[^] (1.6) are among the most locally concentrated, while *Nurse Practitioners*[^] (0.5) – the group's strongest grower at 29% projected five-year growth – has the lowest LQ, suggesting Orange County has significant room to develop that pipeline further. That only 13 of 31 occupations have LQs below 1.0 is itself a signal: these are not generic national occupations mapped onto a local report. They are, in large part, jobs that Orange County's economy genuinely concentrates and depends on.

The overall group skews strongly toward above middle-skill roles – 24 of 31 typically require a bachelor's degree or higher, but 7 middle-skill occupations made the cut, representing an important signal for community college program planning.

Of the 12 sectors analyzed in this report:

- Half (6) are represented across the Best-of-the-Best Occupations
- Health and Business & Entrepreneurship sectors together account for 71% of all Best-of-the-Best occupations, 14 and 8 respectively, and are the only sectors with double-digit representation
- The remaining 9 occupations are spread across 4 other sectors: Energy, Construction and Utilities; Advanced Manufacturing; ICT/Digital Media; and Other/Unassigned

Exhibit 24 details key data-driven observations of the Best-of-the-Best Occupations.

Exhibit 24: Key Observations of the Best-of-the-Best Occupations

<p>SCALE & MOMENTUM 2,612 openings</p> <p>Highest avg. annual openings: <i>General & Operations Managers</i> (Middle-skill)</p>	<p>SCALE & MOMENTUM 1,573 openings</p> <p>2nd highest avg. annual openings: <i>Registered Nurses</i> (Middle-skill)</p>	<p>SCALE & MOMENTUM +29%</p> <p>Strongest 5-year job growth: <i>Nurse Practitioners</i>[^] · Lowest LQ in group (LQ 0.5)</p>	<p>WAGE ADEQUACY \$28–\$73 /hr</p> <p>Entry-level wage range · <i>Dental Hygienists</i> (\$28.22) → <i>CIS Managers</i>[^] (\$73.01) · All 31 exceed Self-Sufficiency Standard</p>
<p>WAGE ADEQUACY 28 of 31</p> <p>Exceed MIT Living Wage (\$36.53) · <i>CIS Managers</i>[^] have the highest entry-level hourly wage (\$73.01)</p>	<p>QUALITY SIGNAL 29 of 31</p> <p>Recession resilient · 2 exceptions: <i>Respiratory Therapists & Dietitians and Nutritionists</i>[^]</p>	<p>QUALITY SIGNAL 29 of 31</p> <p>On U.S. News Best Jobs 2026 · 2 exceptions: <i>Facilities Managers and Clinical & Counseling Psychologists</i>[^]</p>	<p>LOCAL RELEVANCE 18 of 31</p> <p>High concentration in OC (LQ ≥ 1.0) · Avg. LQ of 1.0 across all 31, led by <i>Sales Managers</i>[^] (LQ 1.7) and <i>Civil Engineers</i>[^] (LQ 1.6)</p>
<p>SECTORS REPRESENTED ACROSS BEST-OF-THE-BEST OCCUPATIONS 6 of 12 sectors</p> <p>Health leads with 14 occupations (45%) · Business & Entrepreneurship follows with 8 (26%) · Only 3 sectors account for all 7 middle-skill Best-of-the-Best occupations: Health (4), Business & Entrepreneurship (2), and ICT/Digital Media (1)</p>			



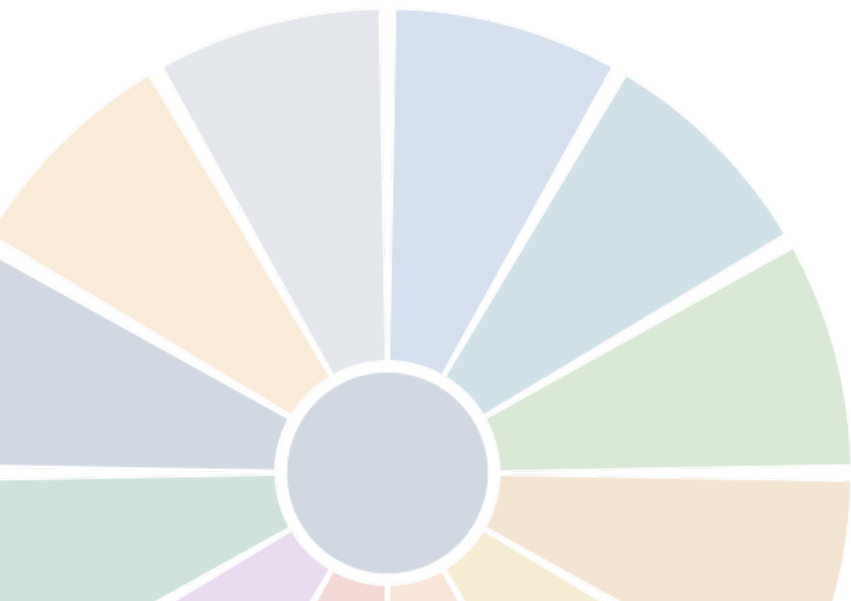
Exhibit 25 lists all 31 occupations with their full data profiles by number of points earned then average annual openings, highest to lowest

Exhibit 25: The 31 Best-of-the-Best Occupations

Pts	Occupation	Skill Level	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	LQ	CCCCO Sector
8	Financial Managers (11-3031)	AMS	11,083	3%	818	\$60.33	1.2	Business & Entrepreneurship
8	Lawyers (23-1011)	AMS	12,714	4%	567	\$51.75	1.3	Other/Unassigned
8	CIS Managers (11-3021)	AMS	7,516	4%	539	\$73.01	1.1	ICT/Digital Media
8	Data Scientists (15-2051)	AMS	2,982	11%	233	\$38.67	1.2	ICT/Digital Media
8	Dentists, General (29-1021)	AMS	1,879	4%	70	\$61.37	1.3	Health
7	General & Operations Managers (11-1021)	MS	30,843	3%	2,612	\$40.33	0.8	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Registered Nurses (29-1141)	MS	25,346	6%	1,573	\$51.69	0.7	Health
7	Project Management Specialists (13-1082)	AMS	13,051	1%	921	\$38.17	1.2	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Sales Managers (11-2022)	AMS	11,527	-2%	833	\$40.62	1.7	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Construction Managers (11-9021)	AMS	6,120	3%	494	\$37.86	1.0	Energy, Construction & Utilities
7	Civil Engineers (17-2051)	AMS	6,507	0%	388	\$39.72	1.6	Energy, Construction & Utilities
7	Chief Executives (11-1011)	AMS	4,664	1%	320	\$52.22	1.4	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Social & Community Service Managers (11-9151)	AMS	3,030	10%	298	\$30.33	1.3	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Industrial Engineers (17-2112)	AMS	3,246	6%	234	\$45.68	0.9	Advanced Manufacturing
7	Dental Hygienists (11-1021)	MS	2,727	8%	210	\$28.22	1.1	Health
7	Human Resources Managers (11-3121)	AMS	2,667	1%	207	\$58.04	1.1	Business & Entrepreneurship
7	Nurse Practitioners (29-1171)	AMS	1,848	29%	196	\$67.25	0.5	Health
7	Electrical Engineers (17-2071)	AMS	2,867	1%	159	\$49.41	1.4	Advanced Manufacturing
7	Facilities Managers (11-3013)	MS	1,650	4%	150	\$38.23	1.0	Business & Entrepreneurship

Pts	Occupation	Skill Level	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	LQ	CCCCO Sector
7	Pharmacists (29-1051)	AMS	3,153	3%	138	\$62.17	0.9	Health
7	Radiologic Technologists & Technicians (29-2034)	MS	1,730	6%	110	\$38.00	0.7	Health
7	Information Security Analysts (15-1212)	AMS	1,479	10%	110	\$45.72	0.7	ICT/Digital Media
7	Physical Therapists (29-1123)	AMS	2,380	4%	109	\$45.94	0.8	Health
7	Physician Assistants (29-1071)	AMS	1,331	14%	106	\$61.13	0.8	Health
7	Clinical & Counseling Psychologists (19-3033)	AMS	1,099	21%	104	\$37.23	1.2	Health
7	Respiratory Therapists (29-1126)	MS	1,673	5%	101	\$45.05	1.1	Health
7	Speech-Language Pathologists (29-1127)	AMS	1,337	10%	101	\$39.85	0.7	Health
7	Psychologists, All Other (19-3039)	AMS	1,103	11%	99	\$32.74	1.3	Health
7	Computer Network Support Specialists (15-1241)	MS	1,569	3%	88	\$53.65	0.8	ICT/Digital Media
7	Occupational Therapists (29-1122)	AMS	1,249	8%	81	\$46.87	0.7	Health
7	Dietitians and Nutritionists (29-1031)	MS	945	11%	81	\$37.05	1.0	Health

AMS indicates above middle-skill; MS represents middle-skill



Appendix A: 2023 vs. 2026 LMO Comparison

Exhibit 26 shows the complete criterion-by-criterion comparison between the 2023 and 2026 reports, including threshold values and occupation counts.

Exhibit 26: LMO Criteria Comparison and Occupation Counts (2023 vs. 2026)

Criterion	2023 Threshold	2026 Threshold	Change	2023 Occupations Met	2026 Occupations Met	Net Change
Job Count (Median)	579	553	-26 (-4%)	389 (50%)	388 (50%)	-1 (0%)
5-Year % Change	6.62%	2.92%	-3.70 pp (-56%)	331 (43%)	343 (44%)	+12 (+4%)
Avg. Annual Openings	63.5	55.5	-8.0 (-13%)	398 (51%)	388 (50%)	-10 (-3%)
Self-Sufficiency Living Wage	\$20.63/hr	\$27.13/hr	+\$6.50 (+32%)	421 (54%)	316 (41%)	-105 (-25%)
MIT Living Wage	\$23.66/hr	\$36.53/hr	+\$12.87 (+54%)	326 (42%)	160 (21%)	-166 (-51%)
Resilience Designation	Yes	Yes	No change	99 (13%)	99 (13%)	0 (0%)
U.S. News Best Job	Yes	Yes	List updated	98 (13%)	99 (13%)	+1 (+1%)
Automation Index (2023)/ LQ (2026)	Score ≥ 100	LQ ≥ 1	Criterion switched	438 (57%)	338 (44%)	-100 (-23%)

pp = percentage points. Occupation counts show number (and share) of 2023 (776) and 2026 (775) point-eligible occupations meeting each criterion.



Appendix B: Methodology

The OC COE meticulously examined 796 occupational codes within the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. After removing 21 occupations due to statistical insignificance – stemming from having little to no 2024 jobs, the OC COE analyzed 775 occupations.

Criteria and Points

To identify occupations for further, in-depth analysis, the OC COE identified eight criteria to determine which have significant employment and demand, pay at or above the living wage, were stable during the last two economic recessions, are considered a Best Job by U.S. News & World Report, and have a greater concentration in Orange County relative to the country as a whole. Occupations earned one point per criteria met or exceeded. The full list of criteria is listed in Exhibit 27 and the occupational data is available in Appendix C: Labor Market Data by Occupation and Sector.

Exhibit 27: Criteria for Evaluating Occupations

SCALE & MOMENTUM			WAGE ADEQUACY		QUALITY SIGNAL		LOCAL RELVANCE
2024 Jobs (Median)	2024–2029 % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Self-Sufficiency Living Wage	MIT Living Wage	Resilience Designation	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
553	2.92%	55.5	\$27.13/hr	\$36.53/hr	Yes	Yes	≥ 1.0

Each criterion is defined as follows:

1. 2024 Jobs – the number of jobs in 2024. An occupation earned a point if its 2024 jobs were at least the median number of jobs across all occupations.
2. 2024 – 2029 % Change – the projected change in employment, expressed as a percentage. A positive percentage indicates employment is projected to increase, while a negative percentage indicates employment is projected to decrease. A point was granted if the occupation’s 5-year percent change was at least the 5-year percent change for jobs across all occupations.
3. Avg. Annual Openings – the projected number of annual job openings from 2024 to 2029. This figure considers new job creation, as well as turnover due to retirements or workers leaving the field. An

- occupation earned a point if its average annual openings was at least the median annual openings across all occupations.
4. Living Wage (Self-Sufficiency Standard) – “the income working families need to meet a minimum yet adequate level, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs.”⁸ This figure was last updated in March 2024, setting the living wage to \$27.13 per hour for one working adult with no children. An occupation offering an entry-level (25th percentile) wage greater than or equal to this figure earned a point.
 5. Living Wage (MIT) – “the hourly rate that an individual in a household must earn to support themselves and/or their family, working full-time or 2080 hours per year.”⁹ This figure was last updated in February 2025, setting the living wage to \$36.63 per hour for one working adult with no children. An occupation offering an entry-level (25th percentile) wage greater than or equal to this figure earned a point.
 6. Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic, or Overall Resilient – occupations that were considered resilient during the Great Recession, COVID-19 Pandemic Recession, or both recessions, based on criteria exercised in the OC COE’s *Resilient Jobs and Jobs for Recovery*¹⁰ report, published in March 2023. An occupation earned a point if they received the resilient designation.
 7. U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job - U.S. News considers several factors in its Best Jobs rankings, including projected growth, salary, and work-life balance.¹¹ An occupation included in the 100 Best Jobs¹² list earned a point.
 8. Location Quotient (LQ) – this figure “is a way of quantifying how concentrated a characteristic of a particular region is compared to the nation... [and] reveals what makes that particular region ‘unique’

⁸ Center for Women’s Welfare, "Self-Sufficiency Standard Calculator," University of Washington School of Social Work, <https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/calculator/>.

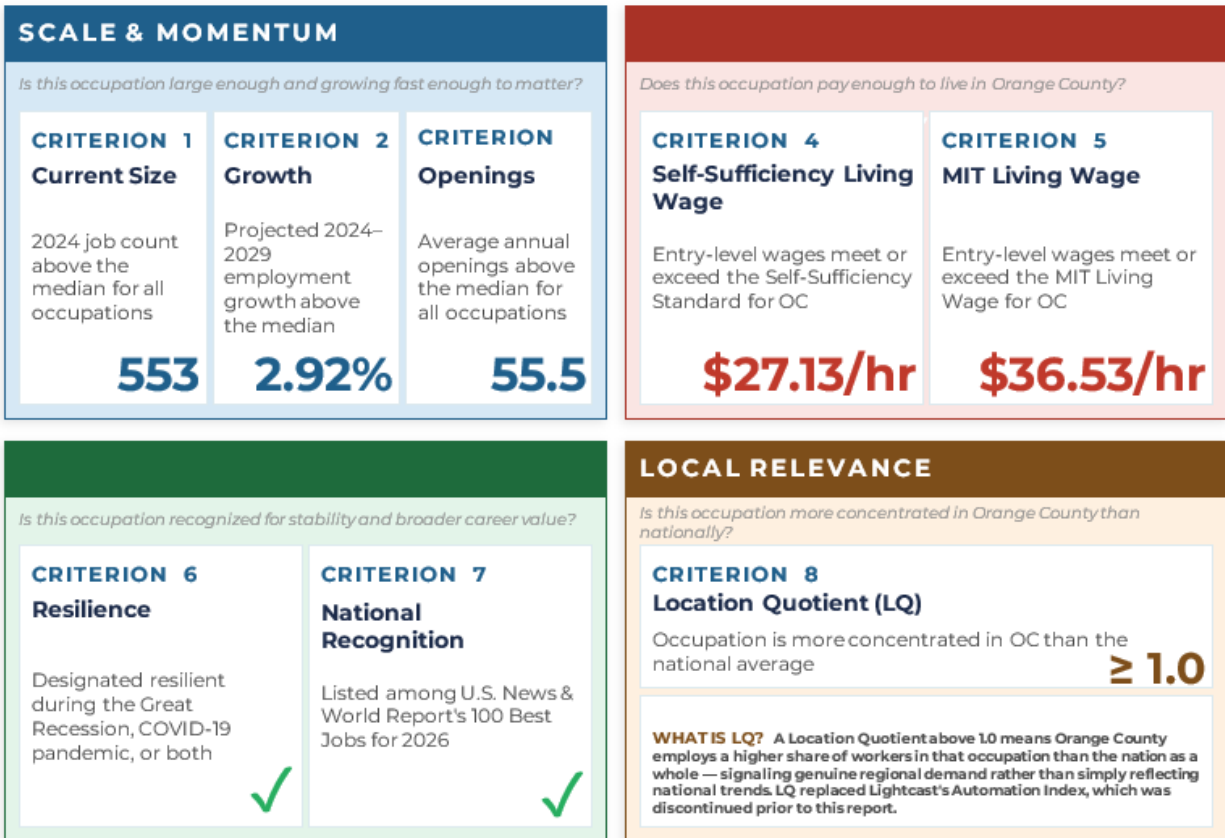
⁹ Living Wage Institute, "Living Wage Calculation for Orange County, California," Living Wage Calculator, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, February 15, 2026 <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06059>.

¹⁰ OC COE, *Orange County Resilient Jobs: Jobs for Recovery* (Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research, March 2023), <https://coecc.net/orange-county/2023/03/oc-resilient-jobs-jobs-for-recovery/>.

¹¹ U.S. News Staff, "How U.S. News Ranks the Best Jobs," *U.S. News & World Report*, January 13, 2026, <https://careers.usnews.com/advice/articles/how-us-news-ranks-the-best-jobs>.

¹² U.S. News & World Report, "100 Best Jobs of 2026," Best Jobs Rankings, 2026, <https://careers.usnews.com/best-jobs/rankings/the-100-best-jobs>.

in comparison to the national average.”¹³ An occupation earned a point if its LQ was greater than 1, the national average.



After evaluating the distribution of points across all 775 point-eligible occupations, the OC COE calculated the average scores by sector and skill level. These comprehensive findings are detailed in Exhibit 28.

Exhibit 28: Average Points by Sector and Skill-Level (775 Point-Eligible Occupations)

Sector	Below Middle-Skill*	Middle-Skill	Above Middle-Skill^	Grand Total
Advanced Manufacturing	1.0	1.7	4.6	1.6
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	1.2	1.3	2.5	1.6
Business & Entrepreneurship	1.8	3.1	4.3	3.5
Education & Human Development	4.0	3.2	4.3	4.2
Energy, Construction & Utilities	1.5	2.6	3.9	2.3
Health	2.6	3.9	4.2	4.0

¹³ Lightcast, “Concentration (Location Quotient).”

Sector	Below Middle-Skill*	Middle-Skill	Above Middle-Skill^	Grand Total
ICT/Digital Media	1.8	2.9	3.8	3.1
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	–	3.8	4.0	3.9
Public Safety	2.0	3.1	4.0	2.9
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	2.7	2.7	4.3	2.8
Other/Unassigned	2.0	2.2	3.0	2.4
Grand Total	1.7	2.7	3.9	2.7

Dashes indicate no occupations in that category.

To focus the analysis on high-impact roles, we applied a four-point minimum threshold. This filtered the initial sample down to 243 occupations, the sector and skill-level averages of which are detailed in Exhibit 29.

Exhibit 29: Average Points by Sector and Skill-Level (243 Occupations Earning 4+ Points)

Sector	Below Middle-Skill*	Middle-Skill	Above Middle-Skill^	Grand Total
Advanced Manufacturing	–	4.3	6.2	5.5
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	4.0	5.4	–	5.0
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.2
Business & Entrepreneurship	–	4.8	5.5	5.3
Education & Human Development	4.0	4.0	4.9	4.8
Energy, Construction & Utilities	4.0	4.7	6.3	4.8
Health	4.0	5.1	5.2	5.1
ICT/Digital Media	4.0	4.6	5.4	5.0
Life Sciences & Biotechnology	–	6.0	4.0	5.0
Public Safety	4.0	4.5	5.0	4.5
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	4.1	4.0	4.7	4.2
Other/Unassigned	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.5
Grand Total	4.1	4.8	5.2	4.9

Dashes indicate no occupations in that category

Occupational Sectors

To further understand the Orange County labor market by sector, the OC COE categorized each of the 796 occupations within the BLS's SOC system using a TOP-SOC-Sector crosswalk that matches community college Taxonomy of

Program (TOP) codes to SOC codes. Occupations were assigned to sectors based on this crosswalk. It is important to note that this crosswalk is based on a 1:1 match, meaning that each TOP code and every individual SOC code is assigned to one sector, respectively. The OC COE acknowledges that educational programs may prepare students to enter a variety of sectors; therefore, a mapping of how TOP codes prepare students for occupations in different sectors is included in Appendix D: Top-Sector Matrix. Supply

Supply is defined as the average number of awards conferred by community colleges (2021 – 2024) and non-community college institutions (2020 – 2023) in the last three years of data, respectively.

To determine where labor gaps exist, the OC COE utilized a TOP-CIP-SOC crosswalk to identify educational programs at community college and non-community college institutions in relation to the occupations meeting the 4-point benchmark. Though educational programs may train students for multiple occupations, TOP and CIP codes were exclusively assigned to one sector for the purpose of measuring supply in this report. Consequently, the supply from each TOP and CIP code was tallied only once. The supply for that TOP or CIP code was assigned to the occupations in their corresponding sector assignment. For example, Business Administration (0505.00) programs train students for a variety of business and management roles in various sectors. However, for the purposes of this report, all awards conferred under the Business Administration TOP code were assigned to the Business and Entrepreneurship sector. A mapping of how the supply for each TOP code was assigned to each sector is included in Appendix D: Top-Sector Matrix.

It is important to note that International Business and Trade (0508.00) is the sole TOP code assigned to the Global Trade sector. However, for the purposes of this report, this International Business and Trade is categorized within the Business and Entrepreneurship sector.

Appendix C: Labor Market Data by Occupation and Sector

Exhibit 30 details the occupational data for the 243 occupations scoring four points or more, sorted by sector, total points earned, and annual openings (descending). Best-of-the-Best occupations (7-8 pts) are highlighted in dark blue; middle-skill occupations are in light gray.

Exhibit 30: Sector-Specific Occupational Data for the 243 Occupations Earning 4+ Points

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Advanced Manufacturing										
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	Above MS	7	3,246	6%	234	\$45.68	Yes	Yes	0.9
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	Above MS	7	2,867	1%	159	\$49.41	Yes	Yes	1.4
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	Above MS	6	2,992	3%	175	\$43.02	No	Yes	1.0
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	Above MS	6	896	5%	57	\$50.94	No	No	1.0
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	Middle-skill	5	2,543	9%	260	\$28.60	Yes	No	0.5
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	Above MS	5	1,608	6%	173	\$36.11	No	No	1.2
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	Middle-skill	4	6,169	-1%	586	\$27.14	Yes	No	0.8
17-3023	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	Middle-skill	4	1,094	0%	97	\$31.44	No	No	1.0

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Advanced Transportation & Logistics										
13-1081	Logisticians	Middle-skill	6	2,611	7%	264	\$31.62	Yes	Yes	0.9
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	Middle-skill	6	2,873	1%	231	\$37.36	Yes	No	1.2
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	Middle-skill	5	5,201	3%	464	\$35.18	Yes	No	0.8
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	Middle-skill	5	2,223	12%	340	\$24.67	No	Yes	1.3
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	Middle-skill	5	2,125	6%	201	\$35.20	No	No	1.0
53-3054	Taxi Drivers	Below MS	4	2,279	17%	312	\$10.32	No	No	1.0
43-5021	Couriers and Messengers	Below MS	4	2,137	12%	279	\$14.38	No	No	1.1
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies										
29-1131	Veterinarians	Above MS	5	926	7%	36	\$46.28	No	Yes	0.9
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	Middle-skill	4	1,549	7%	296	\$17.96	No	No	1.2
37-2021	Pest Control Workers	Below MS	4	1,193	3%	158	\$18.50	No	No	1.1
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	Middle-skill	4	1,280	8%	144	\$21.50	No	Yes	0.9
37-3013	Tree Trimmers and Pruners	Below MS	4	1,228	-3%	142	\$21.66	Yes	No	1.7

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Business & Entrepreneurship										
11-3031	Financial Managers	Above MS	8	11,083	3%	818	\$60.33	Yes	Yes	1.2
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	Middle-Skill	7	30,843	3%	2,612	\$40.33	Yes	Yes	0.8
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	Above MS	7	13,051	1%	921	\$38.17	Yes	Yes	1.2
11-2022	Sales Managers	Above MS	7	11,527	-2%	833	\$40.62	Yes	Yes	1.7
11-1011	Chief Executives	Above MS	7	4,664	1%	320	\$52.22	Yes	Yes	1.4
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	Above MS	7	3,030	10%	298	\$30.33	Yes	Yes	1.3
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	Above MS	7	2,667	1%	207	\$58.04	Yes	Yes	1.1
11-3013	Facilities Managers	Middle-Skill	7	1,650	4%	150	\$38.23	Yes	No	1.0
13-1111	Management Analysts	Above MS	6	15,132	2%	1,268	\$34.98	Yes	Yes	1.3
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	Above MS	6	11,442	1%	992	\$28.46	Yes	Yes	1.2
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	Above MS	6	10,722	1%	870	\$29.15	Yes	Yes	1.0
11-2021	Marketing Managers	Above MS	6	6,020	0%	459	\$53.62	No	Yes	1.3
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	Above MS	6	4,973	1%	315	\$33.17	Yes	Yes	1.4
11-3012	Administrative Services Managers	Middle-Skill	6	3,660	2%	306	\$43.93	Yes	No	1.3
13-2051	Financial and Investment Analysts	Above MS	6	4,628	0%	287	\$37.71	No	Yes	1.2

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	Above MS	6	2,872	-1%	194	\$45.51	Yes	No	1.1
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	Above MS	6	1,062	7%	78	\$34.32	Yes	Yes	0.9
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	Above MS	5	20,402	1%	1,543	\$34.89	No	Yes	1.2
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	Above MS	5	15,286	1%	1,351	\$28.05	Yes	No	1.2
11-9199	Managers, All Other	Above MS	5	14,351	1%	1,085	\$35.14	Yes	No	1.2
13-1028	Buyers and Purchasing Agents	Middle-Skill	5	5,497	2%	542	\$28.68	Yes	No	1.0
13-1051	Cost Estimators	Middle-Skill	5	2,666	-2%	216	\$32.43	Yes	No	1.1
13-2028	Property Appraisers and Assessors	Middle-Skill	5	924	-8%	70	\$29.43	Yes	No	1.1
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	Middle-Skill	4	18,111	0%	1,688	\$28.92	No	No	1.1
39-5092	Manicurists and Pedicurists	Middle-Skill	4	6,080	5%	732	\$16.00	No	No	2.3
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	Middle-Skill	4	8,136	-1%	640	\$22.55	Yes	No	1.0
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	6,213	0%	635	\$33.17	No	No	1.2
39-5094	Skincare Specialists	Middle-Skill	4	2,193	8%	346	\$16.20	No	No	1.9

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
41-9021	Real Estate Brokers	Middle-Skill	4	2,972	0%	255	\$32.34	No	No	2.0
43-3051	Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	Middle-Skill	4	2,397	-7%	248	\$19.71	Yes	No	1.4
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	Above MS	4	2,639	-4%	224	\$38.14	No	No	0.8
13-2099	Financial Specialists, All Other	Above MS	4	1,469	-1%	107	\$30.01	Yes	No	1.0
13-1131	Fundraisers	Above MS	4	918	6%	77	\$27.30	No	No	0.6
13-2053	Insurance Underwriters	Above MS	4	1,095	-12%	73	\$36.85	No	No	0.8
11-3061	Purchasing Managers	Above MS	4	869	2%	67	\$50.51	No	No	1.0
11-2032	Public Relations Managers	Above MS	4	827	2%	63	\$49.23	No	No	0.9
13-2041	Credit Analysts	Above MS	4	977	-10%	58	\$31.80	No	No	1.3
11-3131	Training and Development Managers	Above MS	4	572	3%	46	\$49.51	No	No	1.1
19-3032	Industrial-Organizational Psychologists	Above MS	4	50	-1%	3	\$44.00	No	Yes	1.7
Education & Human Development										
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	Above MS	6	10,334	7%	862	\$37.52	Yes	No	0.7
25-3099	Teachers and Instructors, All Other	Above MS	6	2,667	5%	344	\$27.84	Yes	No	1.4

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
11-9032	Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secondary	Above MS	6	2,565	6%	207	\$58.70	Yes	No	0.7
11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	Above MS	6	1,786	4%	135	\$38.14	Yes	No	0.7
11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	Above MS	6	1,101	6%	86	\$30.94	Yes	No	1.5
25-2059	Special Education Teachers, All Other	Above MS	6	667	6%	55	\$36.76	No	No	1.4
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	Above MS	5	6,801	7%	541	\$36.56	No	No	0.6
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	Above MS	5	4,738	7%	469	\$25.47	Yes	No	1.1
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	Above MS	5	3,961	6%	363	\$29.43	Yes	No	1.0
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	Above MS	5	4,122	7%	345	\$36.17	Yes	No	0.6
21-1013	Marriage and Family Therapists	Above MS	5	3,143	10%	330	\$21.69	No	Yes	3.5
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	Above MS	5	1,554	6%	168	\$29.93	Yes	No	0.6

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	Above MS	5	1,466	7%	127	\$33.61	Yes	No	0.6
25-2058	Special Education Teachers, Secondary School	Above MS	5	959	7%	83	\$36.87	No	No	0.6
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	Middle-Skill	4	12,309	6%	1,714	\$17.85	No	Yes	0.8
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	Above MS	4	16,161	6%	1,415	\$32.75	No	No	0.8
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Teachers	Below MS	4	8,632	8%	1,182	\$17.16	No	No	1.7
25-3041	Tutors	Above MS	4	6,143	5%	1,131	\$16.84	No	No	2.5
25-3031	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	Above MS	4	7,493	4%	958	\$22.35	No	No	1.5
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	Middle-Skill	4	4,460	8%	585	\$17.52	No	Yes	0.8
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	Above MS	4	4,042	6%	390	\$23.26	Yes	No	0.8
25-9099	Educational Instruction and Library Workers, All Other	Above MS	4	2,700	4%	276	\$18.43	No	No	1.8
21-1019	Counselors, All Other	Above MS	4	1,619	8%	177	\$19.42	No	No	2.1
25-4022	Librarians and Media Collections Specialists	Above MS	4	698	7%	77	\$32.32	No	No	0.5
29-1129	Therapists, All Other	Above MS	4	660	16%	62	\$24.79	No	No	1.0
25-2057	Special Education Teachers, Middle School	Above MS	4	591	7%	51	\$37.26	No	No	0.6

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Energy, Construction & Utilities										
11-9021	Construction Managers	Above MS	7	6,120	3%	494	\$37.86	No	No	1.0
17-2051	Civil Engineers	Above MS	7	6,507	0%	388	\$39.72	No	No	1.6
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	Middle-Skill	6	5,778	5%	534	\$28.47	No	No	1.0
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	Above MS	6	3,048	1%	199	\$76.93	No	No	1.3
49-2098	Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	Middle-Skill	6	1,172	11%	142	\$27.31	No	No	1.3
47-2111	Electricians	Middle-Skill	5	9,068	3%	845	\$26.91	No	No	1.0
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	Middle-Skill	5	4,133	8%	419	\$29.67	No	No	0.9
17-1011	Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	Above MS	5	2,567	2%	167	\$36.00	No	No	1.7
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters	Middle-Skill	5	1,555	1%	137	\$30.57	No	No	1.3
49-9052	Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	Middle-Skill	5	1,156	5%	136	\$34.67	No	No	1.0
47-2231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	Middle-Skill	5	726	17%	89	\$23.96	No	No	2.1
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	Middle-Skill	5	740	13%	79	\$41.25	No	No	0.5

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
47-4021	Elevator and Escalator Installers and Repairers	Middle-Skill	5	597	6%	54	\$39.52	No	No	2.3
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Below MS	4	13,604	5%	1,398	\$21.65	No	No	0.8
47-2031	Carpenters	Middle-Skill	4	14,538	-1%	1,060	\$25.87	No	No	1.3
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	Middle-Skill	4	8,051	2%	643	\$36.17	No	No	0.8
47-2081	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	Below MS	4	3,960	3%	310	\$26.39	No	No	3.4
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	Below MS	4	3,703	-4%	245	\$28.75	No	No	1.6
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	Middle-Skill	4	2,849	1%	242	\$31.63	No	No	0.5
47-2181	Roofers	Below MS	4	2,829	3%	230	\$28.15	No	No	1.5
47-2161	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	Below MS	4	1,070	0%	82	\$23.96	No	No	3.8
51-8021	Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators	Middle-Skill	4	634	1%	72	\$24.29	No	No	1.6
47-2121	Glaziers	Middle-Skill	4	901	-3%	71	\$28.38	No	No	1.4
19-4051	Nuclear Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	268	14%	45	\$41.71	No	No	4.0
51-8011	Nuclear Power Reactor Operators	Middle-Skill	4	302	15%	40	\$49.37	No	No	4.4

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Health										
29-1021	Dentists, General	Above MS	8	1,879	4%	70	\$61.37	Yes	Yes	1.3
29-1141	Registered Nurses	Middle-Skill	7	25,346	6%	1,573	\$51.69	Yes	Yes	0.7
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	Middle-Skill	7	2,727	8%	210	\$28.22	Yes	Yes	1.1
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	Above MS	7	1,848	29%	196	\$67.25	Yes	Yes	0.5
29-1051	Pharmacists	Above MS	7	3,153	3%	138	\$62.17	Yes	Yes	0.9
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	Middle-Skill	7	1,730	6%	110	\$38.00	Yes	Yes	0.7
29-1123	Physical Therapists	Above MS	7	2,380	4%	109	\$45.94	Yes	Yes	0.8
29-1071	Physician Assistants	Above MS	7	1,331	14%	106	\$61.13	Yes	Yes	0.8
19-3033	Clinical and Counseling Psychologists	Above MS	7	1,099	21%	104	\$37.23	Yes	No	1.2
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	Middle-Skill	7	1,673	5%	101	\$45.05	No	Yes	1.1
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	Above MS	7	1,337	10%	101	\$39.85	Yes	Yes	0.7
19-3039	Psychologists, All Other	Above MS	7	1,103	11%	99	\$32.74	Yes	Yes	1.3
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	Above MS	7	945	11%	81	\$37.05	No	Yes	1.0
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	Above MS	7	1,249	8%	81	\$46.87	Yes	Yes	0.7
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Middle-Skill	6	7,564	6%	721	\$33.90	No	Yes	1.1

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	Above MS	6	6,253	16%	667	\$35.05	Yes	Yes	1.0
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	Middle-Skill	6	1,049	7%	165	\$36.19	Yes	Yes	0.9
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Middle-Skill	6	962	7%	62	\$34.91	Yes	Yes	1.0
29-1041	Optometrists	Above MS	6	1,070	1%	52	\$47.35	Yes	Yes	2.0
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	Middle-Skill	5	64,276	21%	13,060	\$16.00	No	Yes	1.3
31-9092	Medical Assistants	Middle-Skill	5	9,799	10%	1,413	\$19.31	No	Yes	1.1
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	Above MS	5	6,181	21%	780	\$21.90	No	Yes	1.2
31-9011	Massage Therapists	Middle-Skill	5	3,755	8%	544	\$16.71	No	Yes	2.0
21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	Above MS	5	2,124	15%	253	\$23.06	Yes	No	1.5
29-2072	Medical Records Specialists	Middle-Skill	5	2,118	6%	163	\$22.04	No	Yes	1.0
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	Above MS	5	1,802	12%	135	\$48.84	No	No	1.0
21-1094	Community Health Workers	Middle-Skill	5	754	11%	98	\$22.34	No	Yes	1.1
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	Middle-Skill	5	809	7%	57	\$31.42	No	Yes	0.7

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
19-3034	School Psychologists	Above MS	5	733	5%	51	\$49.35	No	No	1.1
29-1215	Family Medicine Physicians	Above MS	5	1,419	4%	49	\$78.16	No	No	1.1
29-1223	Psychiatrists	Above MS	5	510	9%	23	\$96.26	No	Yes	1.6
29-1023	Orthodontists	Above MS	5	127	3%	5	\$138.44	No	Yes	1.7
29-1022	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	Above MS	5	118	4%	4	\$129.14	No	Yes	1.6
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	12,641	5%	1,345	\$19.99	No	No	1.4
31-9091	Dental Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	6,316	7%	910	\$22.83	No	No	1.5
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	4,104	5%	417	\$21.03	No	Yes	0.8
29-2042	Emergency Medical Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	2,092	20%	246	\$19.10	No	No	1.1
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	Middle-Skill	4	2,119	12%	203	\$23.51	No	No	1.1
31-9099	Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	Middle-Skill	4	1,392	5%	195	\$22.24	No	No	1.2
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	Above MS	4	1,716	12%	194	\$31.83	No	No	0.8
21-1091	Health Education Specialists	Above MS	4	1,302	4%	147	\$22.76	No	No	1.7
31-9093	Medical Equipment Preparers	Middle-Skill	4	701	6%	99	\$23.13	Yes	No	0.9

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
29-2043	Paramedics	Middle-Skill	4	575	26%	56	\$29.42	No	No	0.4
29-2091	Orthotists and Prosthetists	Above MS	4	270	13%	27	\$35.88	No	Yes	2.3
29-1151	Nurse Anesthetists	Above MS	4	329	12%	22	\$116.85	No	Yes	0.6
29-1216	General Internal Medicine Physicians	Above MS	4	620	3%	21	\$57.86	No	No	0.8
29-2035	Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	Middle-Skill	4	328	6%	20	\$42.60	No	Yes	0.7
29-1211	Anesthesiologists	Above MS	4	541	2%	17	\$116.36	No	Yes	1.1
29-1221	Pediatricians, General	Above MS	4	521	2%	16	\$71.14	No	Yes	1.0
29-2092	Hearing Aid Specialists	Below MS	4	146	12%	14	\$28.84	No	Yes	1.1
29-1214	Emergency Medicine Physicians	Above MS	4	388	4%	14	\$85.30	No	Yes	1.0
29-1222	Physicians, Pathologists	Above MS	4	248	3%	8	\$69.47	No	No	1.5
29-1181	Audiologists	Above MS	4	174	6%	8	\$36.56	No	No	1.0
29-1242	Orthopedic Surgeons, Except Pediatric	Above MS	4	258	3%	7	\$76.38	No	No	1.4
19-1041	Epidemiologists	Above MS	4	110	7%	7	\$41.73	No	Yes	0.7
29-1218	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	Above MS	4	197	2%	6	\$90.98	Yes	Yes	0.8
29-1161	Nurse Midwives	Above MS	4	61	19%	5	\$79.96	No	Yes	0.6
29-9092	Genetic Counselors	Above MS	4	27	10%	2	\$51.55	No	Yes	0.6
29-1024	Prosthodontists	Above MS	4	15	6%	1	\$93.67	No	No	1.1

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)/Digital Media										
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	Above MS	8	7,516	4%	539	\$73.01	Yes	Yes	1.1
15-2051	Data Scientists	Above MS	8	2,982	11%	233	\$38.67	Yes	Yes	1.2
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	Above MS	7	1,479	10%	110	\$45.72	Yes	Yes	0.7
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	Middle-Skill	7	1,569	3%	88	\$53.65	Yes	Yes	0.8
15-1252	Software Developers	Above MS	6	18,309	2%	968	\$57.96	No	Yes	1.0
27-1011	Art Directors	Above MS	6	1,760	-1%	155	\$28.72	Yes	Yes	1.7
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	Above MS	6	1,760	3%	105	\$53.69	No	No	1.6
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	Above MS	5	7,285	0%	408	\$31.93	Yes	No	1.4
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	Above MS	5	5,079	1%	294	\$46.18	No	Yes	0.9
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	Middle-Skill	4	6,748	-4%	404	\$28.03	Yes	No	0.9
27-1024	Graphic Designers	Above MS	4	4,523	-2%	322	\$23.06	Yes	No	1.5
27-2042	Musicians and Singers	Below MS	4	2,241	5%	285	\$22.43	No	No	1.2
27-2011	Actors	Middle-Skill	4	1,086	9%	143	\$25.27	No	No	1.7
15-1253	Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	Above MS	4	2,389	-1%	137	\$36.50	No	No	1.1

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
15-1255	Web and Digital Interface Designers	Middle-Skill	4	2,249	-2%	136	\$31.72	No	No	1.7
27-2012	Producers and Directors	Above MS	4	1,782	2%	135	\$30.06	Yes	No	0.9
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Middle-Skill	4	2,790	-2%	133	\$40.42	No	No	0.8
27-2099	Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other	Below MS	4	696	10%	96	\$16.01	No	No	1.5
15-1251	Computer Programmers	Above MS	4	1,666	-7%	85	\$32.69	No	No	1.2
27-2041	Music Directors and Composers	Above MS	4	574	8%	63	\$22.01	No	No	1.1
27-1014	Special Effects Artists and Animators	Above MS	4	673	-1%	58	\$27.28	No	No	1.8
Life Sciences and Biotechnology										
19-4099	Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	Middle-skill	6	904	3%	118	\$28.74	Yes	No	1.0
49-9062	Medical Equipment Repairers	Middle-skill	6	810	4%	81	\$26.62	Yes	Yes	1.2
19-1029	Biological Scientists, All Other	Above MS	4	583	7%	53	\$36.56	No	No	0.8
17-2031	Bioengineers and Biomedical Engineers	Above MS	4	415	3%	25	\$47.38	No	No	1.7

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Public Safety										
33-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	Middle-Skill	6	935	6%	73	\$69.47	Yes	No	0.5
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	Middle-Skill	5	4,760	6%	415	\$43.09	No	No	0.6
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	Middle-Skill	5	1,187	4%	116	\$35.42	Yes	No	0.3
21-1092	Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists	Above MS	5	847	4%	77	\$43.86	No	No	0.9
33-9032	Security Guards	Middle-Skill	4	15,944	10%	2,408	\$17.92	No	No	1.2
33-9092	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers	Below MS	4	4,289	10%	1,299	\$16.91	No	No	2.6
33-9099	Protective Service Workers, All Other	Below MS	4	1,596	5%	459	\$17.49	No	No	1.7
33-2011	Firefighters	Middle-Skill	4	1,423	8%	131	\$35.10	No	No	0.4
33-1091	First-Line Supervisors of Security Workers	Middle-Skill	4	786	10%	93	\$22.23	No	No	1.0
33-3021	Detectives and Criminal Investigators	Middle-Skill	4	583	5%	45	\$44.61	No	No	0.5
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	Middle-Skill	4	251	7%	35	\$34.30	No	Yes	1.0

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
Retail, Hospitality & Tourism										
51-3011	Bakers	Below MS	5	3,092	7%	521	\$16.76	No	Yes	1.1
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	Above MS	5	1,112	8%	150	\$29.18	No	No	2.3
27-1022	Fashion Designers	Above MS	5	946	-3%	81	\$36.84	No	No	2.9
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	Below MS	4	43,536	8%	10,785	\$16.41	No	No	1.1
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	Below MS	4	17,453	9%	2,954	\$17.29	No	No	1.1
35-9011	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	Below MS	4	8,279	5%	1,581	\$16.04	No	No	1.5
39-9032	Recreation Workers	Below MS	4	4,461	7%	987	\$16.59	No	No	1.3
11-9051	Food Service Managers	Middle-Skill	4	4,931	5%	597	\$22.85	No	No	1.4
35-9099	Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	Below MS	4	3,513	4%	564	\$16.07	No	No	3.4
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	Below MS	4	2,939	6%	517	\$17.08	No	No	1.1
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	Middle-Skill	4	3,164	6%	400	\$23.79	No	No	1.4
39-1014	First-Line Supervisors of Entertainment and Recreation Workers, Except Gambling Services	Middle-Skill	4	1,884	10%	232	\$18.18	No	No	1.8

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
13-1121	Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners	Above MS	4	1,949	7%	213	\$22.91	No	No	1.1
51-3021	Butchers and Meat Cutters	Below MS	4	1,642	3%	203	\$17.93	No	No	1.1
39-7018	Tour and Travel Guides	Middle-Skill	4	699	7%	165	\$16.02	No	No	1.0
Other/Unassigned										
23-1011	Lawyers	Above MS	8	12,714	4%	567	\$51.75	Yes	Yes	1.3
39-9031	Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	Middle-Skill	5	5,446	12%	1,156	\$18.08	No	Yes	1.3
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	Above MS	5	3,572	9%	535	\$16.40	No	Yes	1.1
43-4061	Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	Below MS	5	2,941	3%	262	\$27.36	Yes	No	1.7
21-2011	Clergy	Above MS	5	2,279	4%	218	\$30.26	Yes	No	0.8
17-2199	Engineers, All Other	Above MS	5	2,644	-1%	147	\$44.29	No	No	1.4
27-3042	Technical Writers	Above MS	5	1,915	-3%	146	\$44.17	No	No	3.2
17-2011	Aerospace Engineers	Above MS	5	1,569	0%	87	\$61.36	No	No	2.0
11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	Above MS	5	733	12%	77	\$62.32	No	No	0.6
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	Below MS	4	30,095	4%	4,547	\$16.03	No	No	1.1
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	Below MS	4	12,431	10%	3,517	\$16.01	No	No	2.9
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	Below MS	4	18,675	4%	2,845	\$16.07	No	No	1.2

SOC	Occupation	Skill Level	Pts	2024 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Avg. Annual Openings	Entry-Level Wage	Resilient Job	U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best Job	Location Quotient
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	5,131	7%	623	\$21.94	No	No	1.3
53-6021	Parking Attendants	Below MS	4	3,294	5%	470	\$16.00	No	No	2.1
43-6012	Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Middle-Skill	4	2,667	4%	387	\$18.62	No	No	1.6
13-1041	Compliance Officers	Above MS	4	4,411	1%	347	\$31.46	Yes	No	1.0
27-3043	Writers and Authors	Above MS	4	1,819	5%	195	\$17.78	No	No	1.3
21-2021	Directors, Religious Activities and Education	Above MS	4	1,374	4%	148	\$28.01	No	No	0.9
27-1013	Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	Above MS	4	861	7%	87	\$6.25	No	No	1.2
19-2031	Chemists	Above MS	4	843	3%	62	\$34.31	No	No	0.9
19-1021	Biochemists and Biophysicists	Above MS	4	151	14%	16	\$41.05	No	Yes	0.4
19-1099	Life Scientists, All Other	Above MS	4	146	5%	8	\$51.48	No	No	1.6
19-2011	Astronomers	Above MS	4	29	21%	3	\$42.66	No	No	1.2

Appendix D: Top-Sector Matrix

The OC COE acknowledges that a single TOP code may prepare students for multiple occupations across sectors. For the purposes of this report, the supply for each TOP code was assigned to occupations in the corresponding primary sector, as detailed in Exhibit 31.

Exhibit 31: TOP-Sector Crosswalk

Sector abbreviation key:

AM Advanced Manufacturing	ATL Advanced Transportation & Logistics	AgWET Agriculture, Water & Env. Technologies	BE Business & Entrepreneurship
EDU Education & Human Development	ECU Energy, Construction & Utilities	H Health	ICT/DM ICT/Digital Media
LSBT Life Sciences & Biotechnology	PS Public Safety	RHT Retail, Hospitality & Tourism	O Other/Unassigned

Symbol legend:

★ Primary sector assignment – supply for this TOP code is assigned to this sector

✓ Also prepares students for occupations in this sector

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0102.10	Veterinary Technician (Licensed)			★	✓			✓					
0102.20	Artificial Inseminator (Licensed)			★									
0104.00	Viticulture, Enology, and Wine Business	✓		★	✓							✓	
0109.40	Turfgrass Technology			★	✓							✓	
0112.00	Agriculture Business, Sales and Service			★	✓				✓				
0115.10	Parks and Outdoor Recreation			★	✓							✓	

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0116.00	Agricultural Power Equipment Technology		✓	★									
0201.00	Architecture and Architectural Technology	✓					★						
0430.00	Biotechnology and Biomedical Technology	✓							✓	★			✓
0501.00	Business and Commerce, General		✓		★		✓		✓			✓	✓
0502.00	Accounting				★								
0502.10	Tax Studies				★								
0504.00	Banking and Finance				★								
0505.00	Business Administration		✓		★		✓		✓			✓	✓
0506.00	Business Management		✓		★		✓		✓			✓	✓
0506.30	Management Development and Supervision	✓	✓		★		✓		✓				
0506.40	Small Business and Entrepreneurship				★							✓	
0506.50	Retail Store Operations and Management				✓							★	
0508.00	International Business and Trade				★								
0509.00	Marketing and Distribution				★				✓				
0509.20	Purchasing				★								
0509.40	Sales and Salesmanship				★							✓	
0509.60	Display				✓							★	
0509.70	E-Commerce (Business emphasis)				★				✓			✓	

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0510.00	Logistics and Materials Transportation		★		✓								
0511.00	Real Estate				★								
0511.10	Escrow				★								
0512.00	Insurance				★								
0514.00	Office Technology/Office Computer Applications		✓		✓				★				
0514.10	Legal Office Technology				★								✓
0514.20	Medical Office Technology				✓			★					
0514.40	Office Management				✓							★	
0516.00	Labor and Industrial Relations				✓							★	✓
0602.00	Journalism								★				✓
0604.00	Radio and Television								★				
0604.10	Radio								★				
0604.20	Television (including combined TV/Film/Video)								★				
0604.30	Broadcast Journalism								★				✓
0606.00	Public Relations				✓							★	
0607.00	Technical Communication								★				✓
0610.00	Mass Communications				✓				★				✓
0612.20	Film Production								★				

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0614.00	Digital Media	✓			✓				★			✓	
0614.10	Multimedia								★				
0614.20	Electronic Game Design								★				
0614.30	Website Design and Development								★				
0614.40	Animation								★				
0614.60	Computer Graphics and Digital Imagery								★				
0699.00	Other Media and Communications								★				✓
0701.00	Information Technology, General	✓							★				
0702.00	Computer Information Systems	✓			✓				★				✓
0702.10	Software Applications				✓				★				
0707.00	Computer Software Development	✓			✓				★				✓
0707.10	Computer Programming				✓				★				✓
0707.20	Database Design and Administration				✓				★				✓
0707.30	Computer Systems Analysis								★				
0708.00	Computer Infrastructure and Support								★				
0708.10	Computer Networking								★				
0708.20	Computer Support								★				
0709.00	World Wide Web Administration								★				

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0709.10	E-Commerce (Technology emphasis)				✓				★				
0802.00	Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant)					★							
0802.10	Educational Aide (Teacher Assistant), Bilingual					★							
0809.00	Special Education					★							
0835.20	Fitness Trainer							✓					★
0835.60	Coaching				✓	★						✓	✓
0836.10	Recreation Assistant				✓	★						✓	
0860.00	Educational Technology					★							
0899.00	Other Education					★							
0924.00	Engineering Technology, General (requires Trigonometry)	★	✓				✓						✓
0934.00	Electronics and Electric Technology	★					✓						✓
0934.10	Computer Electronics	★							✓				✓
0934.30	Telecommunications Technology	✓					✓		★				
0934.40	Electrical Systems and Power Transmission		✓				★						
0934.60	Biomedical Instrumentation	✓								★			
0945.00	Industrial Systems Technology and Maintenance	★			✓		✓						
0946.00	Environmental Control Technology (HVAC)	✓					★						
0946.10	Energy Systems Technology	✓	✓				★						✓

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0947.00	Diesel Technology	✓	★	✓			✓						✓
0947.20	Heavy Equipment Maintenance	✓	★	✓									
0947.30	Heavy Equipment Operation		★	✓			✓						✓
0947.50	Truck and Bus Driving		★										
0948.00	Automotive Technology	✓	★										
0948.50	Recreational Vehicle Service		★										
0950.00	Aeronautical and Aviation Technology	★	✓				✓						✓
0952.00	Construction Crafts Technology				✓		★						
0952.10	Carpentry						★						
0952.20	Electrical		✓				★						✓
0952.30	Plumbing, Pipefitting and Steamfitting						★						
0952.40	Glazing						★						
0952.60	Masonry, Tile, Cement, Lath and Plaster						★						
0952.70	Painting, Decorating, and Flooring						★						
0952.80	Drywall and Insulation						★						
0952.90	Roofing						★						
0953.00	Drafting Technology	✓					★		✓				✓
0953.10	Architectural Drafting						★						

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
0953.20	Civil Drafting						★						
0956.00	Manufacturing and Industrial Technology	★	✓				✓		✓				✓
0956.70	Industrial and Occupational Safety and Health	★											
0957.00	Civil and Construction Management Technology				✓		★						
0957.20	Construction Inspection						★						
1005.00	Commercial Music	✓							★				
1006.00	Technical Theater								✓				★
1009.00	Applied Design	✓							✓				★
1013.00	Commercial Art	✓							★				
1030.00	Graphic Art and Design								★				
1099.00	Other Fine and Applied Arts								✓				★
1201.00	Health Occupations, General							★					
1202.00	Hospital and Health Care Administration				✓			★					
1208.00	Medical Assisting							★					
1208.10	Clinical Medical Assisting							★					
1208.20	Administrative Medical Assisting				✓			★					
1208.30	Health Facility Unit Coordinator				✓			★					
1209.00	Hospital Central Service Technician							★					

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
1210.00	Respiratory Care/Therapy							★					
1211.00	Polysomnography							★					
1212.00	Electro-Neurodiagnostic Technology							★					
1214.00	Orthopedic Assistant							★		✓			
1217.00	Surgical Technician							★					
1220.00	Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology							★					
1221.00	Pharmacy Technology							★					
1222.00	Physical Therapist Assistant							★					
1223.00	Health Information Technology							★	✓				
1223.10	Health Information Coding							★					
1224.00	School Health Clerk							★					
1225.00	Radiologic Technology							★					
1226.00	Radiation Therapy Technician							★					
1227.00	Diagnostic Medical Sonography							★					
1228.00	Athletic Training and Sports Medicine							★					✓
1230.00	Nursing							★					
1230.10	Registered Nursing							★					
1230.20	Licensed Vocational Nursing							★					

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
1230.80	Home Health Aide							★					
1240.00	Dental Occupations							★					
1240.10	Dental Assistant							★					
1240.20	Dental Hygienist							★					
1250.00	Emergency Medical Services							★					
1251.00	Paramedic							★					
1261.00	Community Health Care Worker							★					
1262.00	Massage Therapy				★			✓					
1299.00	Other Health Occupations							★					
1303.00	Fashion											★	
1303.10	Fashion Design											★	
1303.20	Fashion Merchandising				✓							★	
1303.30	Fashion Production	★										✓	
1305.00	Child Development/Early Care and Education					★							
1305.10	Child and Adolescent Development					★							
1305.20	Children with Special Needs					★							
1305.40	Preschool Age Children					★							
1305.50	The School Age Child					★							

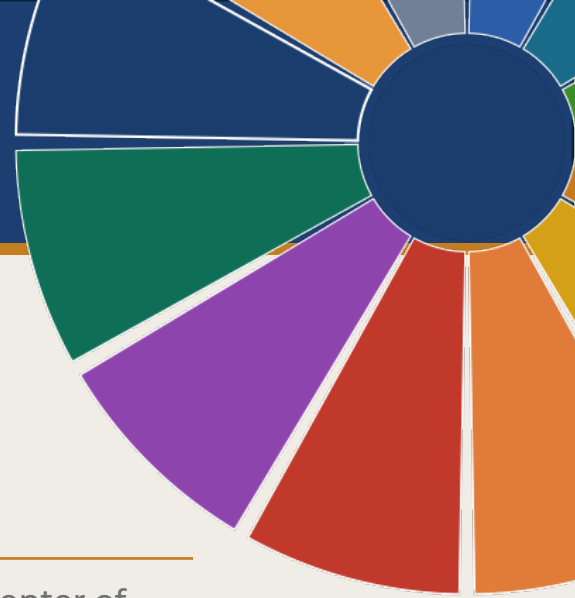
TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
1305.80	Child Development Administration and Management					★							
1305.90	Infants and Toddlers					★							
1306.00	Nutrition, Foods, and Culinary Arts							★				✓	
1306.20	Dietetic Services and Management							★				✓	
1306.30	Culinary Arts											★	
1307.00	Hospitality				✓							★	
1307.10	Restaurant and Food Services and Management							✓				★	
1307.20	Lodging Management				✓							★	
1307.30	Resort and Club Management				✓						✓	★	
1308.00	Family Studies				✓	★							
1402.00	Paralegal				✓								★
1920.00	Ocean Technology	★		✓			✓			✓			✓
2101.00	Community Services, General				✓	✓							★
2102.00	Public Administration		✓		✓		✓					✓	★
2104.00	Human Services				✓	✓		✓			✓		★
2104.40	Alcohol and Controlled Substances							★					
2104.50	Disability Services				✓	✓		✓			✓		★

TOP Code	Program	AM	ATL	AgWET	BE	EDU	ECU	H	ICT/DM	LSBT	PS	RHT	O
2105.00	Administration of Justice				✓					✓	★	✓	
2105.10	Corrections					✓			✓		★		
2105.20	Probation and Parole										★		
2105.30	Industrial and Transportation Security		✓		✓						★	✓	
2105.40	Forensics, Evidence, and Investigation				✓					✓	★	✓	
2105.50	Police Academy										★		
2105.60	Modern Policing										★		
2133.00	Fire Technology				✓						★	✓	
2133.10	Wildland Fire Technology										★		
2133.50	Fire Academy										★		
2199.00	Other Public and Protective Services										★		
2206.10	Geographic Information Systems				✓		✓		★		✓	✓	✓
3007.00	Cosmetology and Barbering				★							✓	
3009.00	Travel Services and Tourism				✓							★	
3020.00	Aviation and Airport Management and Services		★										
3020.10	Aviation and Airport Management		★										



FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

ORANGE COUNTY



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