



FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

INLAND EMPIRE/DESERT

WORKFORCE DEMAND ASSESSMENT

# Low Desert Region

INLAND EMPIRE / DESERT

# 2026



California  
Community  
Colleges



**IEDRC**  
INLAND EMPIRE/DESERT  
REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The two-county Inland Empire/Desert Region is a vast region at over 27,000 square miles, making it geographically larger than 10 U.S. states. With 4.74 million residents, the region is the 12th largest Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the country by population, with more residents than 26 states. The region is comprised of many diverse communities with unique workforce challenges and opportunities that require further illumination. The Inland Empire/Desert region is divided into four distinct subregions to reflect the unique and varied workforce challenges and economic opportunities across its diverse communities. This structure allows for more targeted analysis and planning, as each subregion faces its own set of conditions that merit deeper exploration.

The Low Desert Subregion is the smallest of the four subregions by population. While this population is projected to remain the smallest subregion over the next five years, job growth is projected to outpace regional job growth. With this growth comes a need for further investment in community college programs to support the next generation of students. The COE has created this report to provide community colleges and K-12 faculty and staff with insights to help them decide where and how best to apply those investments. This report provides labor market information on the current state of the subregion's population and industries, as well as how it is projected to grow and change over the next half decade. By understanding where people live and where they work, the faculty and staff can better anticipate the future needs of all local stakeholders and help meet the coming demand for additional skilled workers in the subregion in the years to come.

Currently, skilled workers in the Low Desert Subregion are employed across a wide range of occupations. To support more focused program planning, the COE has established criteria to narrow this list to 104 regional "Quality Job Occupations" (Quality Jobs). These occupations offer entry-level wages at or above the regional living wage, are primarily filled by individuals with a middle-skill education level and are projected to experience strong demand over the next five years. By highlighting these Quality Jobs, community colleges and K-12 faculty and staff across the entire region can focus their efforts on investing in the training needed for occupations that offer students the brightest economic outlook.

To build on the regional Quality Jobs analysis with a focus on the Low Desert Subregion, this report incorporates data from the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI) data on active programs at the subregion's four community colleges. By combining this information with the CCCC crosswalk that links community college programs to specific occupations, the COE identifies which Quality Jobs are currently supported by active programs and highlights occupations that are not yet being trained for locally. This analysis is intended to assist faculty and staff in identifying where to expand current offerings and possibly re-examine program design to focus on specific skills related to Quality Jobs. The list of occupations not currently aligned with any active programs in the subregion, along with corresponding potential program offerings, is intended to support faculty and staff in identifying opportunities for new programs and prioritizing occupations that could be the focus of future curriculum development.

For community college and K-12 faculty and staff in the Low Desert Subregion, this report is intended to be a foundation for understanding the current labor market landscape, forecasted change to that landscape, and how programs in the subregion are or are not focused on the most promising middle-skill occupations. However, further analysis is still needed. An occupation that aligns well with the workforce needs of one city or town in the region may not be as relevant in another. The same consideration applies to career and technical education (CTE) programs at community colleges, which must reflect the specific economic and community contexts they serve.

Before any investment in new or existing programs, each institution should conduct additional analysis of its service area, local industry, and available resources to determine if its plans align with the hyper-local realities on the ground. As always, the COE wants to make sure community college and K-12 faculty and staff have the most up-to-date and relevant labor market research available when making the important choices that will help shape the training opportunities available to students in both the subregion and the region overall.

With that in-mind, this report answers five major questions:

### **Section 1: What are the Population and Labor Force Characteristics in the Low Desert Subregion?**

- With 10.4% of the Inland Empire/Desert Region's population within its borders, the Low Desert Subregion is the smallest subregion in terms of population (490,726 residents).
- The subregion is projected to shed over 6,800 residents over the next five years, projecting a 1.4% decline.
- The subregion has had consistently higher unemployment rates than the broader region, potentially impacting residents' ability to access jobs.
- Working-age residents comprise over 48% of the subregional population, with this share projected to increase over the next five years. This indicates that workforce development efforts will have a strong residential pool of individuals to work with.
- Hispanic residents account for over 54% of residents, followed by White residents who account for over 34%. The share of Hispanic residents is projected to increase while the share of White residents is projected to decrease.
- The subregion has a nearly equal share of residents with a college education when compared with the broader region, 44.4% and 44.5%, respectively. The subregion has a larger share of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher compared to the region.

### **Section 2: Which Industries are Important to the Low Desert Subregion's Economy?**

- The subregion had over 199,600 jobs in 2024, accounting for over 10% of the region's 1.94 million jobs.
- The subregion is projected to increase industry employment by 8.7% over the next five years, adding 13,828 jobs, accounting for 11.2% of regional job growth.
- The five industry sectors employing the largest number of workers in the Low Desert Subregion are Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Government, and Construction.

- While Accommodation and Food Services continues to lead in total job volume, adding over 2,100 new jobs, it is the Health Care and Social Assistance sector that stands out as the fastest growing, with a projected increase of more than 5,800 jobs by 2029.
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Transportation and Warehousing are also expected to see meaningful gains, reflecting the subregion's evolving mix of service-oriented and logistics-driven industries.

### **Section 3: What Jobs are Important to the Low Desert Subregions Economy, and do we have the labor force to meet the demand?**

- Office and Administrative Support Occupations represent the largest number of quality jobs for the subregion, with 7,222 jobs and 500 annual openings, accounting for over 8% of all IED annual job openings in this occupational group.
- Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations represent a major occupational group in the region, with 5,705 jobs and 577 openings, ranking higher in both employment and local workforce concentration.
- Occupations in management, skilled trades, healthcare, and support services present strong opportunities for alignment with local education and workforce training programs that prepare students for quality jobs in the region.
- The majority of quality jobs occupations in the Low Desert Subregion (94.2%) typically require less than a bachelor's degree for entry, indicating that community college training programs provide pathways to in-demand and well-paying positions.

### **Section 4: Which Quality Jobs do community Colleges in the Low Desert Subregions ' economy train workers for?**

- Subregional community colleges offer training for Quality Jobs in nine of the ten community college sectors.
- Program expansion opportunities exist in the Business and Entrepreneurship sector, with quality jobs occupations projected to have 723 annual job openings over the next five years in the subregion.
- Demand for quality jobs workers in the Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism sector is strong and concentrated in the Low Desert Subregion, with 250 annual job openings projected over the next five years, accounting for 20% of regional demand.
- There are five program codes that serve as opportunities for program expansion, as subregional colleges currently offer them, but have not issued awards over the last three academic years.

### **Section 5: What programs should my college offer to meet the workforce demand in the Low Desert Subregion?**

- Program development opportunities exist across all of the 10 community college sectors, suggesting subregional colleges have many opportunities to address subregional workforce needs with new programs.

- The Advanced Transportation and Logistics sector stands out, with 488 projected subregional job openings annually for quality jobs, representing the most significant opportunity for program development aimed at addressing supply gaps.
- Following this sector, the Energy, Construction, and Utilities, and Health sectors exhibit the greatest gaps between current program offerings and labor market demand, making them strong candidates for future program development.

# SECTION 1: WHAT ARE THE POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS IN THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION?

## 1.1: GEOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION

The Low Desert Subregion encompasses the eastern portion of Riverside County, extending from the San Jacinto mountains in the west to the Arizona state border in the east, the San Bernardino County border on the north, and the Imperial County border on the south. The Low Desert Subregion is the second largest of the four subregions by area, but it contains about 10% of the regional population and 10% of its jobs. The subregion is home to two community colleges and 10 high school districts. See Appendix B for a list of ZIP codes and Cities associated with this subregion.<sup>1</sup>

To assist regional community colleges with strategic planning and career education (CE) program development, the Inland Empire/Desert Region Center of Excellence (COE) conducted a series of subregional workforce demand assessments to pinpoint quality job opportunities for program investment. This analysis identifies middle-skill occupations that demonstrate strong workforce demand and offer entry-level hourly earnings above the regional living wage. These roles are typically accessible to individuals with less than a bachelor’s degree and are well-aligned with community college training programs, making them highly attainable for students pursuing career education pathways. The occupations highlighted in this assessment may be used to calibrate or develop CE training programs designed to address the region's in-demand and high-wage job opportunities. This subregional brief presents demographic, industry, and occupation data to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of the Inland Empire-Low Desert Subregion. See Appendix A for Methodology and Data Sources used in this report.

### Community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion



<sup>1</sup> ZIP-level data in Lightcast is based on county-level data using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) dataset. It is important to note that ZIP codes are not geographical areas and are typically points on a map that may be used to approximate geographical boundaries. ([kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957501-zip-level-employment-data](https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957501-zip-level-employment-data))

## 1.2: ECONOMIC OVERVIEW OF THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION

As shown in Exhibit 1, the number of jobs in the Low Desert Subregion grew by 8.7% since 2019, reaching 199,620 jobs in 2024. During the same five-year period, Inland Empire/Desert (IED) regional employment grew by 9%, significantly outpacing the national growth rate of 4%, adding 155,714 jobs. The Low Desert Subregion is projected to grow at a slower rate than the region as a whole, but faster than the nation, adding 12,443 and growing by 7%, while the IED region is projected to grow by 6%, and the nation is projected to grow by 4%. However, the average earnings per job in the region (\$64.3K) remain \$24.2K below the national average, which may present challenges for attracting and retaining skilled talent.

### Exhibit 1: Overview of the Low Desert Subregion



**490,726**

Population (2024)

As of 2024, the subregion's population increased by 4.5% since 2019, growing by 21,209. The population is expected to decrease by -1.4% between 2024 and 2029, reducing by 6,814 residents.



**\$ 64.3K**

Avg. Earnings Per Job (2024)

Subregional average earnings per job are \$24,203 below the national average earnings of \$88,501 per job.



**199,620**

Jobs (2024)

In 2024, total employment reached 199,620 jobs, reflecting a five-year growth of 16,010 jobs since 2019. Looking ahead, employment is projected to increase by an additional 13,828 jobs over the next five years.



**Top 3 Industries**

Jobs (2024)

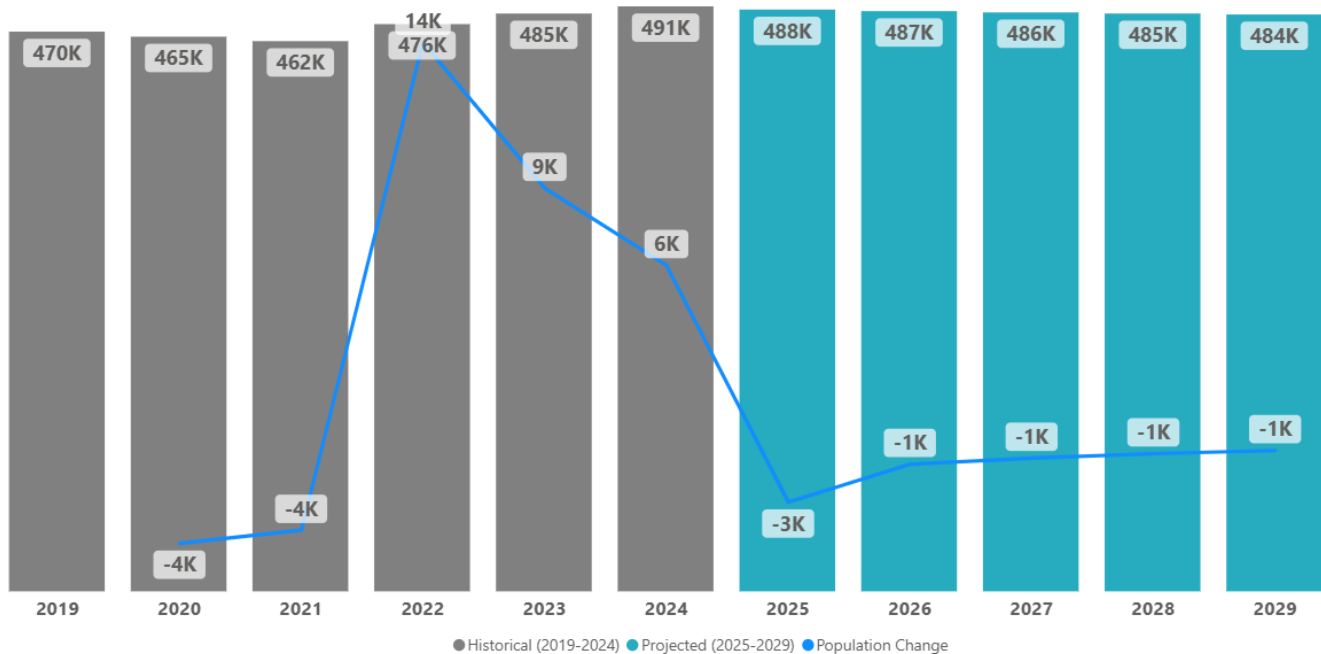
The top three industries by job counts in 2024 are Accommodation & Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade, adding 8,667 jobs by 2029.

Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Economy Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

### 1.3: LOW DESERT SUBREGION POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE

In 2024, the Low Desert Subregion was home to 490,726 residents, or 10.4% of the Inland Empire region's 4.74 million residents (Exhibit 2). The subregion added 21,209 residents, growing by 4.5% since 2019. The subregion is projected to decrease by 6,814 residents, or -1.4%, through 2029.

Exhibit 2: Population, in thousands, Low Desert Subregion (2019-2029)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

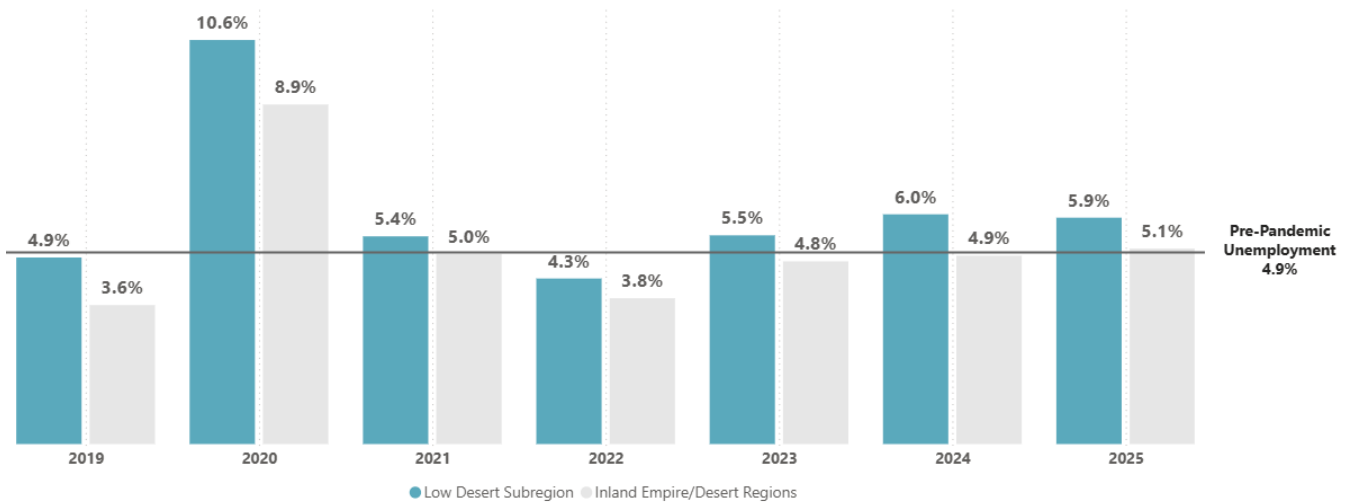
While population data is interesting and an important measure of a region's overall economic health, these data do not represent the number of residents in the labor force.

Labor force data reflects the employment status of people 16-years or older based on where they reside. The labor force is the total of employed residents or those who are unemployed and are seeking work. The unemployment rate represents the number of unemployed individuals as a share of the total labor force.

Exhibit 3 below displays the subregion's combined city-level unemployment rates for cities that have a population greater than 25K. Note that these figures do not represent the entire college service area due to the constraints on this type of data; however, it is helpful to understand the unemployment trends in the larger cities.

Since 2019, the Low Desert Subregion has maintained consistently higher unemployment rates compared to the broader Inland Empire region. While both areas experienced a sharp spike in unemployment in 2020 due to the pandemic, the subregion's unemployment has not returned to its pre-pandemic average of 4.9% by 2025. From 2024 to 2025, unemployment in the Low Desert Subregion decreased slightly to 5.9%, remaining higher than the regional rate of 5.1%.

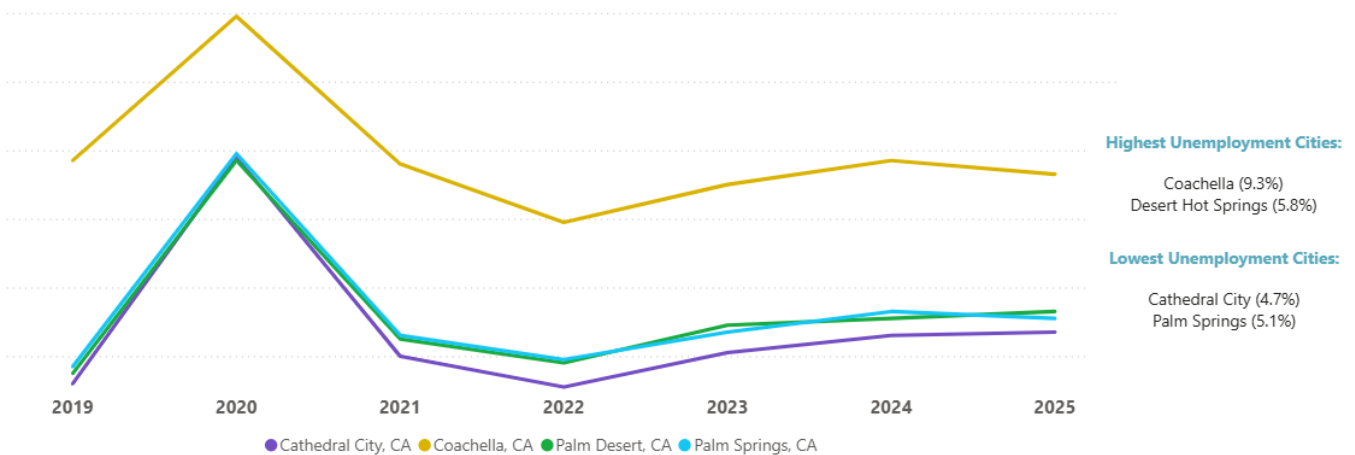
### Exhibit 3: Unemployment rate, Low Desert Subregion & IED (2019-2025)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Exhibit 4 displays the city-level unemployment rates for four of the sixteen cities in the subregion that have a population greater than 25K. Unemployment trends across the Low Desert cities showed no recovery since the pandemic. In 2024, Coachella had the highest unemployment rate at 9.3%, followed by Hot Springs, at 5.8%, indicating ongoing economic challenges. In contrast, Cathedral City (4.7%) maintained the lowest unemployment rate, with Palm Springs (5.1%) slightly higher. While all cities experienced a sharp increase in unemployment in 2020, the pace of recovery has not been even across the subregion.

### Exhibit 4: Unemployment rate, Low Desert Subregion Cities (2019-2025)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

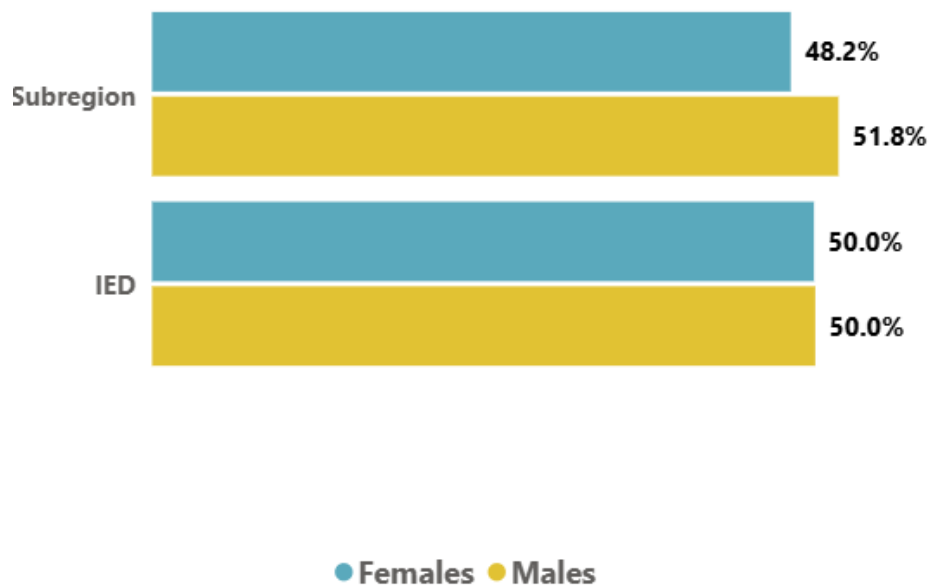
Higher city-level unemployment than regional figures can affect students' ability to find work due to localized labor market dynamics and limited job access. Understanding these factors is essential for

community college faculty to effectively support their students in navigating the job market and achieving successful employment outcomes.

#### 1.4: LOW DESERT SUBREGION POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

As shown in Exhibit 5, the Low Desert Subregion has a slightly higher share of male residents than female residents. While the IED region's gender distribution is at exact parity (50.0%), male residents constitute a larger share of the Low Desert Subregion's population (51.8%).

**Exhibit 5: Population Gender Proportions, Low Desert Subregion & IED (2024)**



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

These are minor differences, and while the Low Desert does have a slightly higher male share, the distribution still reflects near gender parity. Given the similar gender balance between the Low Desert and the IED, the implications for workforce and educational planning may include:



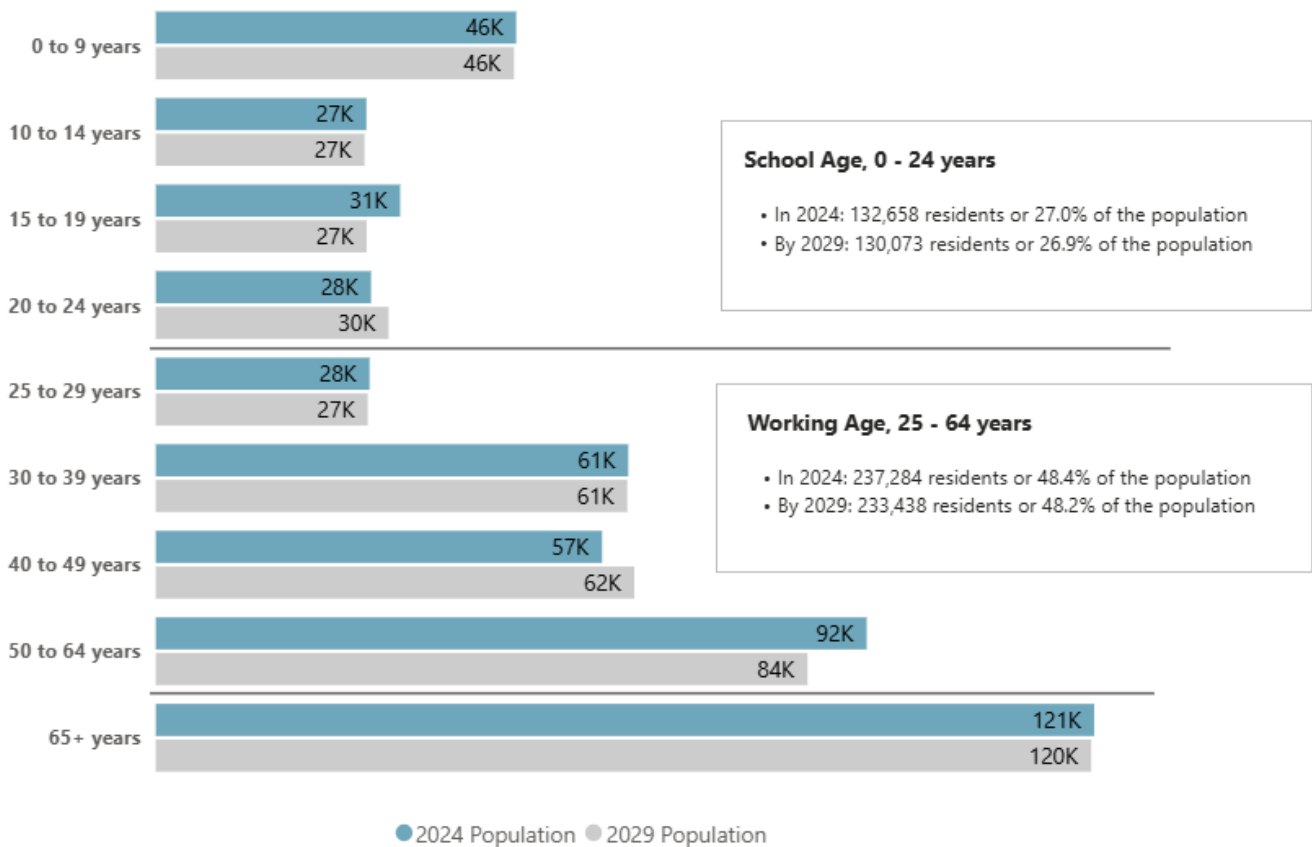
- Workforce programs should ensure gender-inclusive strategies, especially in fields traditionally underrepresented by one gender (e.g., women in STEM/trades, men in healthcare/education).
- The slight variation may have localized impacts on childcare demand, health services, or career program enrollment depending on specific demographics in smaller geographies.

Understanding a population's age distribution may provide insight into the future demand for housing, services, and education needs. The age categories displayed in Exhibit 6 include +490k individuals in the Low Desert Subregion.

Exhibit 6 illustrates the current (2024) and projected (2029) age distribution of residents in the Low Desert Subregion. The data shows a slight increase in the 20 to 24-year-old group, traditionally considered the college-going population, which is projected to grow from 28K to 30K residents.

Within the working-age population (25 to 64 years), which currently makes up 48.4% of the population and is projected to decline slightly to 48.2% by 2029, most age groups are expected to remain stable or increase modestly. However, one cohort stands out: residents aged 40 to 49 years are projected to increase from 57K to 62K, indicating some growth in mid-career populations. In contrast, the 50 to 64-year-old group is expected to decline more noticeably, from 92K to 84K, signaling a gradual shift toward retirement in that segment. These patterns suggest a moderate demographic shift that may influence workforce participation, service needs, and educational priorities across the subregion.

### Exhibit 6: Population Age Distribution, Low Desert Subregion & IED (2024 - 2029)



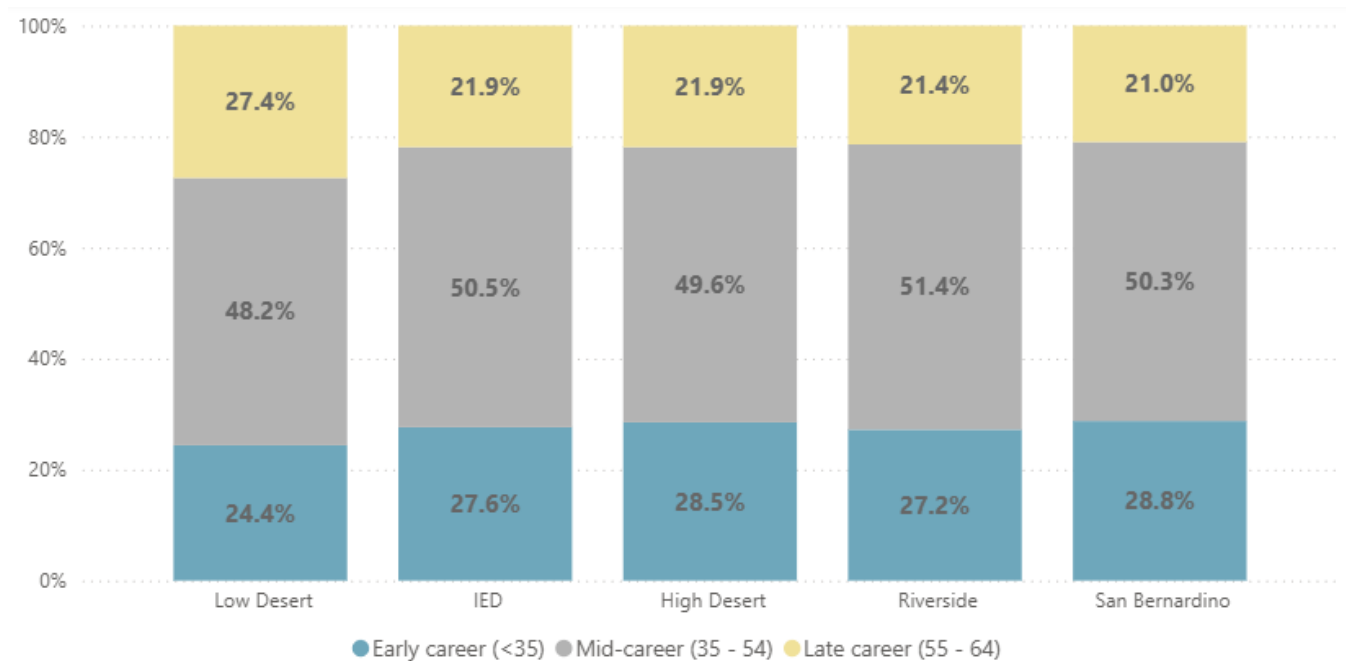
Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

In 2024, working-age residents made up 48.4% of the subregion’s approximately ~237K population, with projections indicating a decrease to 48.2% by 2029. Similarly, the school-age population accounted for 27.0% in 2024 and is expected to decrease slightly to 26.9% by 2029.

A valuable approach to further disaggregating the population is by analyzing residents’ career stages based on age. The Bureau of Labor Statistics defines individuals between ages 25 and 54 as being in their “prime working age.”<sup>2</sup> As shown in Exhibit 7, approximately 237K residents between the ages of 25 and 64 are grouped into early, mid, and late career categories for comparative analysis.

1. Early career (< 35) represents 24.4% of the working-age cohort in 2024 and is projected to decrease to 23.9% by 2029.
2. Mid-career (35 – 54) represents 48.2% of the working-age cohort in 2024 and is projected to increase to 51.8% by 2029.
3. Late career (55 - 64) represents 27.4% of the working-age cohort in 2024 and is projected to decrease to 24.3% by 2029.

### Exhibit 7: Population Working-age Distribution, All Subregions & IED (2024)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

These findings indicate that the workforce in the Low Desert is predominantly older, with a significant number of individuals approaching retirement. This reinforces the importance of succession planning,

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023, June 7). Labor force participation rate for people ages 25 to 54 in May 2023 highest since January 2007. The Economics Daily. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2023/labor-force-participation-rate-for-people-ages-25-to-54-in-may-2023-highest-since-january-2007.htm>

skills transfer, and strategies to replenish the local talent pipeline. Across the region, maintaining a stable share of prime working-age adults (35–54 years) highlights the need to strengthen education-to-career pathways and align training programs with projected industry demand to support long-term workforce sustainability.

While age distribution provides insight into the career stages and potential workforce participation of the population, understanding the racial and ethnic composition of the region adds important context for evaluating equity, access, and programmatic needs. Examining demographic patterns by race and ethnicity can help identify population segments that may require targeted workforce and educational interventions, especially as the Inland Empire continues to diversify. The following section explores the racial and ethnic makeup of the Low Desert Subregion and how it is projected to shift by 2029.

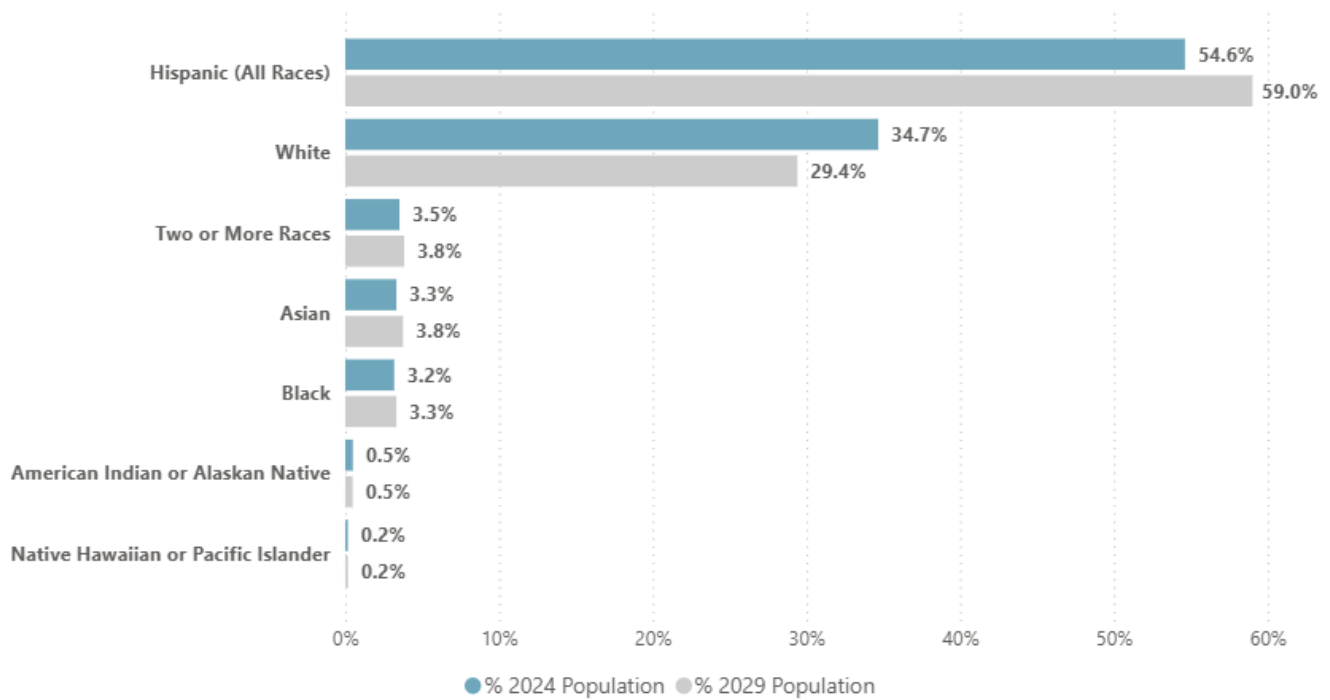
The U.S. Census Bureau collects race and ethnicity data based on standards set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.<sup>3</sup> Residents are asked to self-identify their race and indicate whether they are of Hispanic or Latino origin. These categories are intended to reflect social and cultural identities, rather than biological, anthropological, or genetic classifications. Race and ethnicity data play a critical role in informing federal and state civil rights policies, supporting efforts to ensure equal employment opportunities, and identifying and addressing disparities in areas such as health and environmental outcomes. It's essential to acknowledge that while this approach complies with established guidelines, the Center of Excellence (COE) recognizes that this representation may not fully capture the nuanced diversity within the population.

As shown in Exhibit 8, Hispanic (All Races) individuals comprised 54.6% of the Low Desert Subregion's population in 2024, slightly less than the Inland Empire regional share of 54.3%. This proportion is projected to rise to 59.0% by 2029. In contrast, the share of White, Non-Hispanic residents in the subregion is expected to decline from 34.7% in 2023 to 29.4% by 2029.

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<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau. (2024, December 20). About the Topics of Race. <https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html>

## Exhibit 8: Race and Ethnicity Distribution, Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Exhibit 9 displays the gender distribution across racial and ethnic groups in the Low Desert Subregion. While many groups maintain a relatively balanced male–female ratio, generally within  $\pm 2\%$  of an even split, a few groups show more noticeable disparities. For example:

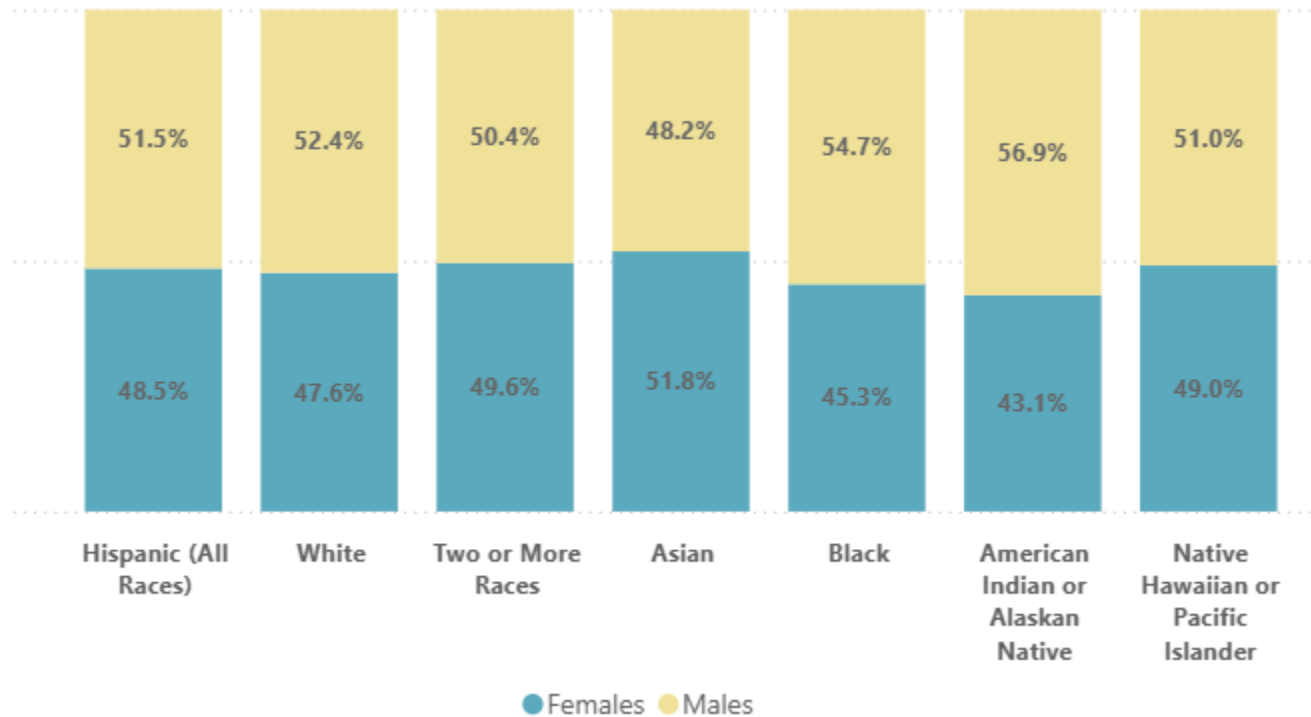
- American Indian or Alaskan Native residents have the largest gender gap, with males accounting for 56.9% and females 43.1%.
- Asian residents show the greatest female-majority, with 51.8% female and 48.2% male.
- Black residents also reflect a male-majority, with 54.7% male and 45.3% female.

These gender variations, particularly among Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Black residents, may be important to consider when shaping inclusive education and workforce development strategies in the subregion.



This could have implications for education or workforce programs aimed at these groups, particularly in addressing any gender-specific needs or opportunities.

## Exhibit 9: Gender Distribution by Race and Ethnicity, Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)



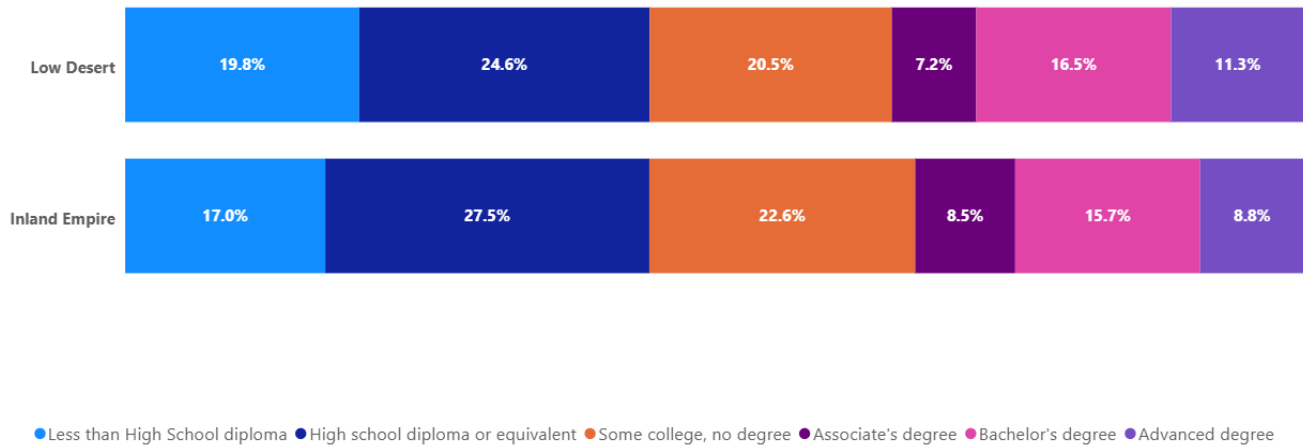
Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Region Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

### 1.5: LOW DESERT SUBREGION POPULATION EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that residents aged 25 and older have completed. Educational attainment data may illuminate mismatches between resident skills and employment needs and the need for additional regional postsecondary program offerings.

As shown in Exhibit 10, the Low Desert Subregion has a slightly higher share of residents without a high school diploma (19.8%) compared to the Inland Empire overall (17.0%), and a slightly lower share with only a high school diploma (24.6% vs. 27.5%). Combined, nearly 44.4% of Low Desert residents have no education beyond high school, indicating a continued need for foundational skills development and entry-level workforce programs. While the share of residents with some college but no degree is slightly lower in the Low Desert (20.5%) than in the region (22.6%), the opportunity to reengage adult learners remains significant. On the other hand, the Low Desert has a slightly higher share of residents with bachelor’s degrees (16.5%) and advanced degrees (11.3%) compared to the Inland Empire (15.7% and 8.8%, respectively), the relatively higher share of degree holders suggests an opportunity to build on that momentum to support economic mobility and workforce development in high-skill sectors.

## Exhibit 10: Education attainment, Low Desert Subregion and IED, 2024

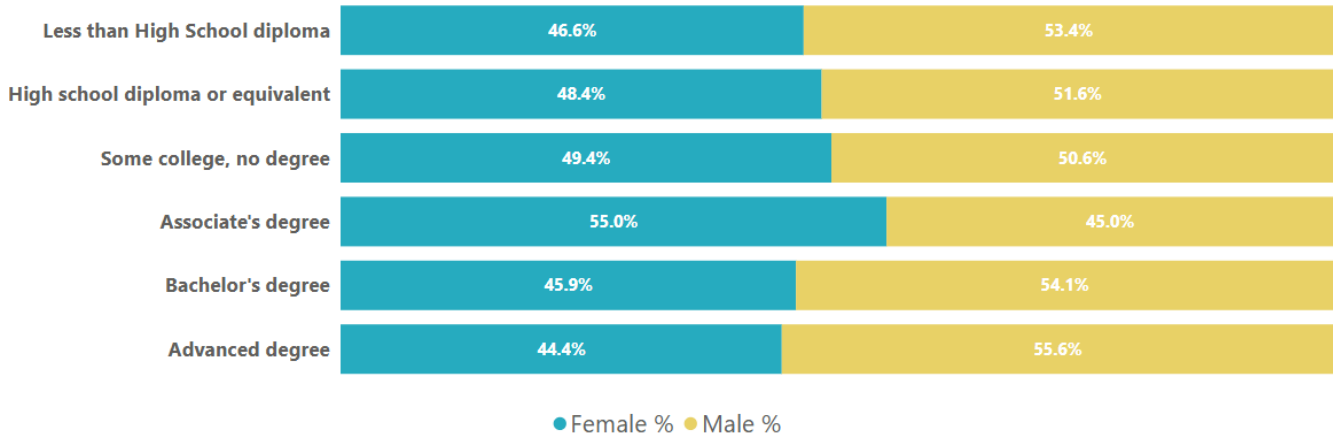


Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Table S1501: Educational Attainment: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

The slightly higher share of residents with bachelor’s and advanced degrees in the Low Desert suggests there is a small but important segment of the population that could serve as a foundation for building stronger connections between education and regional workforce needs. For community colleges, this presents an opportunity to design or expand short-term credentials, upskilling pathways, and transfer-focused programs that support both non-degree holders seeking upward mobility and degree holders looking to retrain or shift into high-demand technical fields. Aligning programs with local job demand ensures that residents, regardless of previous education, can access meaningful career pathways.

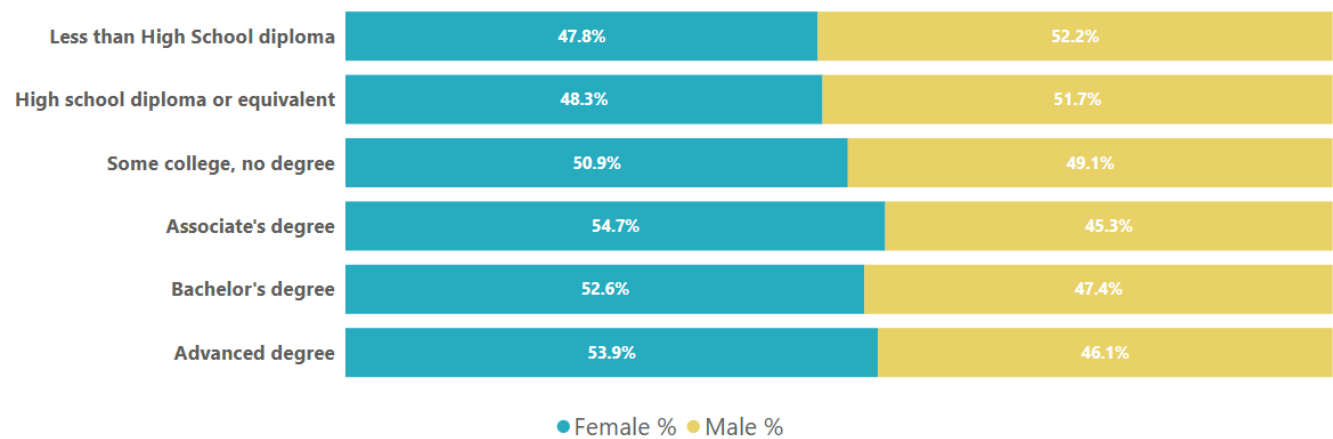
As shown in Exhibit 11, in the Low Desert Subregion, women are more likely to hold associate degrees, making up 55.0% of that group, while only slightly less likely to have some college, no degree (49.4%). However, men make up the majority at higher degree levels, comprising 54.1% of bachelor’s degree holders and 55.6% of those with advanced degrees. Men also outnumber women at the lowest education levels, including 53.4% of those with less than a high school diploma and 51.6% of high school graduates. These patterns point to a gender gap at both ends of the educational spectrum, suggesting the need for targeted strategies that support men’s access to foundational and degree programs, while also encouraging women’s advancement into bachelor’s and graduate-level education.

### Exhibit 11: Education attainment, Low Desert Subregion by Gender, 2024



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Table S1501: Educational Attainment: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Exhibit 12: Educational attainment, Inland Empire Region by Gender, 2024



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Table S1501: Educational Attainment: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## SECTION 2: WHICH INDUSTRIES ARE IMPORTANT TO THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION'S ECONOMY?

Industries are defined as groups of employer establishments classified according to their primary business activity, such as the goods they produce, the services they offer, or what they sell. Data on industries is typically collected through government administrative records and employer reports, such as unemployment insurance filings and payroll tax records. Sources like the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and state labor departments aggregate this information to track employment by industry.

This analysis measures industries by current job counts, projected job change over the next five years, average earnings per worker, and location quotient. It is important to note that industries employ a broad mix of occupations that support business operations, including roles in management, finance, healthcare, food service, sales, and production. All positions are counted, whether full-time or part-time, and are typically reported based on the location where the employer processes payroll.

Exhibit 13 displays current and projected employment in the Low Desert Subregion by industry sector and subsector, and the share of regional industry employment concentrated in the subregion.

**Exhibit 13: Industries (3-Digit; grouped by 2-Digit NAICS), Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)**

Industry Sector (2-digit)	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Change	2024 - 2029 % Change	Share of IED Jobs %	Avg. Earnings Per Job
<b>Accommodation and Food Services</b>					
Accommodation	9,096	169	1.9%	50%	\$51,273
Food Services and Drinking Places	25,606	1,968	7.7%	17%	\$35,710
<b>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</b>					
Administrative and Support Services	14,601	495	3.4%	12%	\$49,855
Waste Management and Remediation Services	420	24	5.8%	8%	\$84,138
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</b>					
Animal Production and Aquaculture	367	(82)	(22.4%)	30%	\$66,639
Crop Production	5,079	(166)	(3.3%)	69%	\$60,208
Fishing, Hunting and Trapping	8	1	8.5%	25%	\$57,863
Forestry and Logging	8	(1)	(7.7%)	11%	\$61,230
Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry	4,663	(366)	(7.8%)	75%	\$47,648
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</b>					
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	9,247	1,438	15.5%	44%	\$51,150
Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions	472	85	18.1%	58%	\$60,273
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	1,833	184	10.0%	24%	\$52,411
<b>Construction</b>					
Construction of Buildings	2,956	174	5.9%	10%	\$89,489
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	1,098	15	1.4%	7%	\$119,320
Specialty Trade Contractors	11,697	177	1.5%	11%	\$75,054
<b>Educational Services</b>					
Educational Services	1,912	303	15.8%	6%	\$45,283

Industry Sector (2-digit)	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Change	2024 - 2029 % Change	Share of IED Jobs %	Avg. Earnings Per Job
<b>▣ Educational Services</b>					
Educational Services	1,912	303	15.8%	6%	\$45,283
<b>▣ Finance and Insurance</b>					
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	1,328	(185)	(13.9%)	13%	\$96,274
Funds, Trusts, and Other Financial Vehicles	1	0	66.8%	2%	\$85,121
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	1,043	(6)	(0.6%)	8%	\$107,016
Monetary Authorities-Central Bank	1	(1)	(98.4%)	21%	\$116,006
Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities	338	5	1.5%	13%	\$167,061
<b>▣ Government</b>					
Federal Government	1,089	12	1.1%	2%	\$135,049
Local Government	16,298	786	4.8%	7%	\$112,511
State Government	1,712	(5)	(0.3%)	6%	\$105,515
<b>▣ Health Care and Social Assistance</b>					
Ambulatory Health Care Services	9,579	1,060	11.1%	10%	\$89,525
Hospitals	4,690	130	2.8%	10%	\$109,214
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,605	200	7.7%	9%	\$58,852
Social Assistance	13,654	4,412	32.3%	13%	\$30,689
<b>▣ Information</b>					
Broadcasting and Content Providers	227	(5)	(2.3%)	17%	\$79,156
Computing Infrastructure Providers, Data Processing, Web Hosting, and Related Services	48	(1)	(2.8%)	1%	\$92,517
Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries	672	95	14.2%	19%	\$36,633
Publishing Industries	147	(52)	(35.6%)	11%	\$70,096
Telecommunications	228	(33)	(14.4%)	5%	\$115,318
Web Search Portals, Libraries, Archives, and Other Information Services	11	0	(0.3%)	3%	\$70,472
<b>▣ Management of Companies and Enterprises</b>					
Management of Companies and Enterprises	215	0	0.1%	3%	\$110,971
<b>▣ Manufacturing</b>					
Apparel Manufacturing	31	(23)	(76.8%)	6%	\$51,327
Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	166	9	5.4%	4%	\$91,831
Chemical Manufacturing	280	1	0.3%	5%	\$88,691
Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	122	11	9.1%	3%	\$88,324
Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	58	14	24.7%	2%	\$92,869
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	448	62	13.8%	3%	\$95,928
Food Manufacturing	1,254	219	17.4%	10%	\$83,452
Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	128	3	2.3%	3%	\$78,588
Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	10	(7)	(75.0%)	11%	\$49,742
Machinery Manufacturing	207	(1)	(0.5%)	3%	\$102,377
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	113	(2)	(1.6%)	2%	\$76,424
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	401	(37)	(9.2%)	6%	\$87,427
Paper Manufacturing	21	(6)	(29.4%)	1%	\$81,283
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	10	(1)	(11.3%)	4%	\$131,128
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	210	(23)	(11.1%)	2%	\$79,530
Primary Metal Manufacturing	119	(37)	(31.2%)	3%	\$92,003
Printing and Related Support Activities	75	(13)	(16.8%)	3%	\$56,534
Textile Mills	10	1	8.6%	15%	\$44,934

Industry Sector (2-digit)	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Change	2024 - 2029 % Change	Share of IED Jobs %	Avg. Earnings Per Job
Textile Product Mills	62	(14)	(21.8%)	7%	\$63,546
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	166	(33)	(20.0%)	2%	\$69,067
Wood Product Manufacturing	437	(4)	(1.0%)	9%	\$84,470
<b>☐ Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction</b>					
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	58	2	4.2%	4%	\$129,421
Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	428.5%	0%	\$211,441
Support Activities for Mining	5	0	(6.0%)	5%	\$102,488
<b>☐ Other Services (except Public Administration)</b>					
Personal and Laundry Services	3,614	336	9.3%	11%	\$38,746
Private Households	1,315	146	11.1%	12%	\$19,201
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	2,129	96	4.5%	11%	\$47,009
Repair and Maintenance	2,420	81	3.4%	8%	\$57,299
<b>☐ Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</b>					
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6,306	290	4.6%	10%	\$87,231
<b>☐ Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</b>					
Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets (except Copyrighted Works)	3	(1)	(38.6%)	10%	\$158,106
Real Estate	4,867	52	1.1%	21%	\$75,827
Rental and Leasing Services	712	8	1.1%	11%	\$66,522
<b>☐ Retail Trade</b>					
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	1,625	238	14.6%	10%	\$64,998
Clothing, Clothing Accessories, Shoe, and Jewelry Retailers	2,026	(5)	(0.3%)	11%	\$38,049
Food and Beverage Stores	4,590	408	8.9%	11%	\$53,700
Furniture, Home Furnishings, Electronics, and Appliance Retailers	949	(93)	(9.8%)	10%	\$57,557
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	1,127	25	2.2%	10%	\$42,496
General Merchandise Retailers	3,489	122	3.5%	9%	\$44,089
Health and Personal Care Retailers	1,576	101	6.4%	12%	\$58,305
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	2,437	40	1.7%	9%	\$89,285
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, Book, and Miscellaneous Retailers	2,690	(108)	(4.0%)	15%	\$39,297
<b>☐ Transportation and Warehousing</b>					
Air Transportation	23	4	15.8%	2%	\$66,633
Couriers and Messengers	666	151	22.6%	3%	\$45,281
Pipeline Transportation	0	0	37.4%	0%	\$206,840
Postal Service	27	13	50.4%	8%	\$64,973
Rail Transportation	59	(6)	(9.9%)	2%	\$107,645
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	0	0	(15.8%)	0%	\$33,050
Support Activities for Transportation	270	(2)	(0.7%)	2%	\$76,296
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	505	96	19.0%	8%	\$38,817
Truck Transportation	1,794	344	19.2%	5%	\$84,241
Warehousing and Storage	3,307	432	13.1%	3%	\$70,755
Water Transportation	0	0	100.1%	0%	\$79,480
<b>☐ Utilities</b>					
Utilities	551	27	4.9%	10%	\$194,367

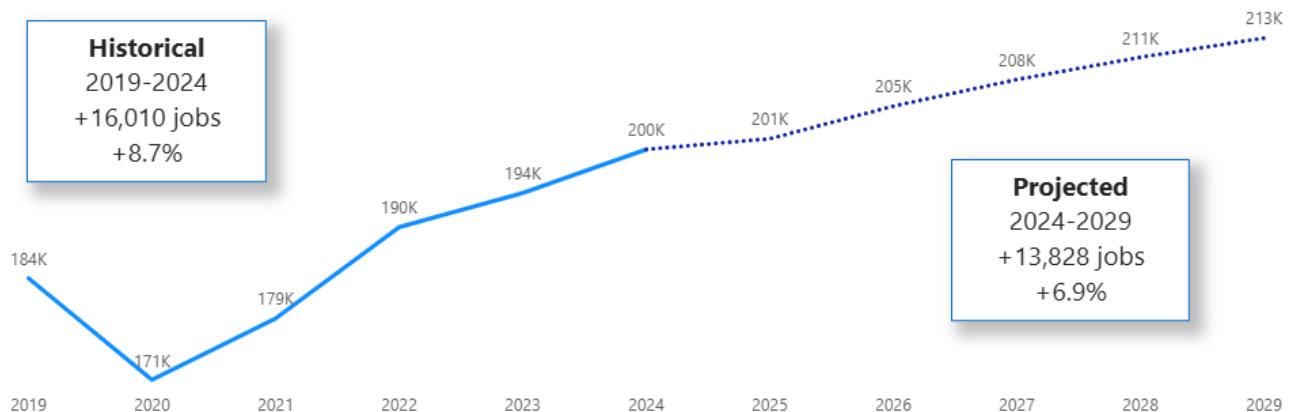
Industry Sector (2-digit)	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Change	2024 - 2029 % Change	Share of IED Jobs %	Avg. Earnings Per Job
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>					
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	2,129	29	1.3%	5%	\$88,324
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	1,048	61	5.9%	4%	\$94,854
Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers	29	(9)	(31.7%)	1%	\$86,334

Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Industry Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

## 2.1 INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW

As shown in Exhibit 14, industry employers reported 199,620 total jobs in 2024, or about 10.4% of the Inland Empire/Desert Region’s total employment of 1.93 million jobs. From 2024 to 2029, the Low Desert Subregion is projected to add 13,828 jobs, growing by 6.9%. Over this same time frame, the IED region is projected to add 123,459 jobs, growing by 6.4%, indicating that 11.2% of regional job growth can be attributed to gains made in the Low Desert Subregion.

**Exhibit 14: Historical and projected change in industry employment, Low Desert Subregion (2019 - 2029)**

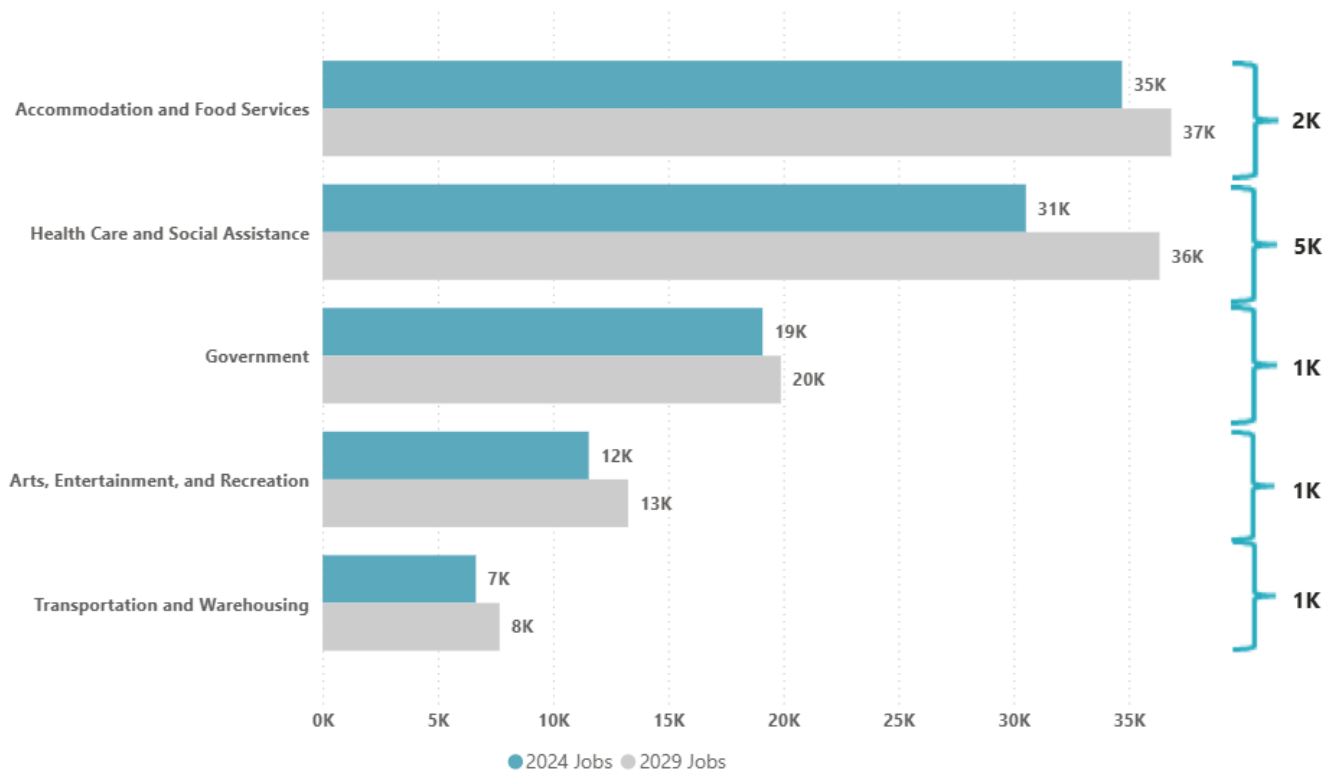


Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Industry Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Exhibit 15 highlights the top five industry sectors by job count in 2024 and their projected employment levels in 2029. Job counts include all positions, full-time and part-time, based on where businesses report payroll activity.

In 2024, the five industry sectors employing the largest number of workers in the Low Desert Subregion are Accommodation and Food Services (35K), Health Care and Social Assistance (31K), Government (19K), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (12K), and Transportation and Warehousing (7K). By 2029, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector is projected to experience the most significant growth, adding 5K new jobs for a total of more than 36K jobs by 2029, a 16.0% increase. Together, these top five industry sectors are expected to contribute (9,646) over 70.0% of the subregion’s overall job growth (13,827 jobs) over the next five years.

## Exhibit 15: Job numbers by Industry Sector & Projected Change, Low Desert Subregion (2024- 2029)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Industry Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

While the Accommodation and Food Services sector continues to lead in total job volume, adding over 2,000 new jobs, it is the Health Care and Social Assistance sector that stands out as the fastest growing, with a projected increase of more than 5,000 jobs by 2029. Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Transportation and Warehousing sectors are also expected to see meaningful gains, reflecting the subregion’s evolving mix of service-oriented and logistics-driven industries. These trends emphasize the importance of expanding training pipelines in healthcare, hospitality, recreation, and transportation, ensuring residents are equipped for the region’s most promising and accessible career opportunities.

### 2.2 NOTABLE INDUSTRIES IN THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION

Exhibit 16 provides three notable industry subsectors for this subregion based on those that are growing faster than the region overall (at or above 6.0% growth), average earnings exceeding the regional living wage standard of \$43,180.80 annually, and a location quotient (LQ) of 1.2 or greater, indicating local industry concentration. Location Quotient (LQ) is a measure that compares the concentration of jobs in a specific industry within a subregion to the national average.

The Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation subsector is the largest among the three, with 9,247 jobs in 2024, projected to grow by 1,438 jobs (15.5%) by 2029. This subsector pays \$51,150 on average, above the living wage, and has a high concentration in the region (LQ = 4.0), underscoring its importance to the local economy. The Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions subsector is smaller in size,

with 472 jobs, but is expected to grow by 18.1%, adding 85 jobs, and also exceeds the living wage benchmark with average earnings of \$60,273 and an LQ of 2.2. The Performing Arts and Spectator Sports subsector rounds out the group with 1,833 jobs in 2024 and is projected to grow by 10.0% by 2029. It offers average annual earnings of \$52,411 and has a regional LQ of 1.7.

Together, these subsectors not only reflect strong economic potential through above-average growth and livable wages but also signal opportunities for targeted workforce programs in arts, culture, and recreation, all of which are deeply embedded in the subregion’s economic fabric.

**Exhibit 16: Top Industries (3-Digit; grouped by 2-Digit NAICS), Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)**

Industry Sector (2-digit)	2024 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Change	2024 - 2029 Growth Rate	Share of IED Jobs %	Employment Concentration (L.Q.)	Avg. Earnings Per Job
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</b>						
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	9,247	1,438	15.5%	44%	4.0	\$51,150
Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions	472	85	18.1%	58%	2.2	\$60,273
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	1,833	184	10.0%	24%	1.7	\$52,411
<b>Retail Trade</b>						
Food and Beverage Stores	4,590	408	8.9%	11%	1.2	\$53,700
Health and Personal Care Retailers	1,576	101	6.4%	12%	1.2	\$58,305
<b>Transportation and Warehousing</b>						
Postal Service	27	13	50.4%	8%	1.9	\$64,973
Warehousing and Storage	3,307	432	13.1%	3%	1.5	\$70,755

Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Industry Overview, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

**2.3 INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT CONCENTRATION**

An LQ above 1.0 means the industry is more concentrated locally than nationally, suggesting a regional strength or specialization. This can help identify industries that drive the local economy and may offer strong career opportunities for students. Exhibit 17 displays the industry sectors with the job growth and location quotients, or employment concentrations, in the Low Desert Subregion.

In the top-right quadrant, Health Care and Social Assistance clearly stands out with both high job growth (~19%) and a significant increase in employment concentration (+6%), represented by the largest bubble on the chart. This indicates the sector is expanding rapidly and becoming more regionally specialized, reinforcing its status as a strategic focus for workforce training, particularly in nursing, allied health, and support roles.

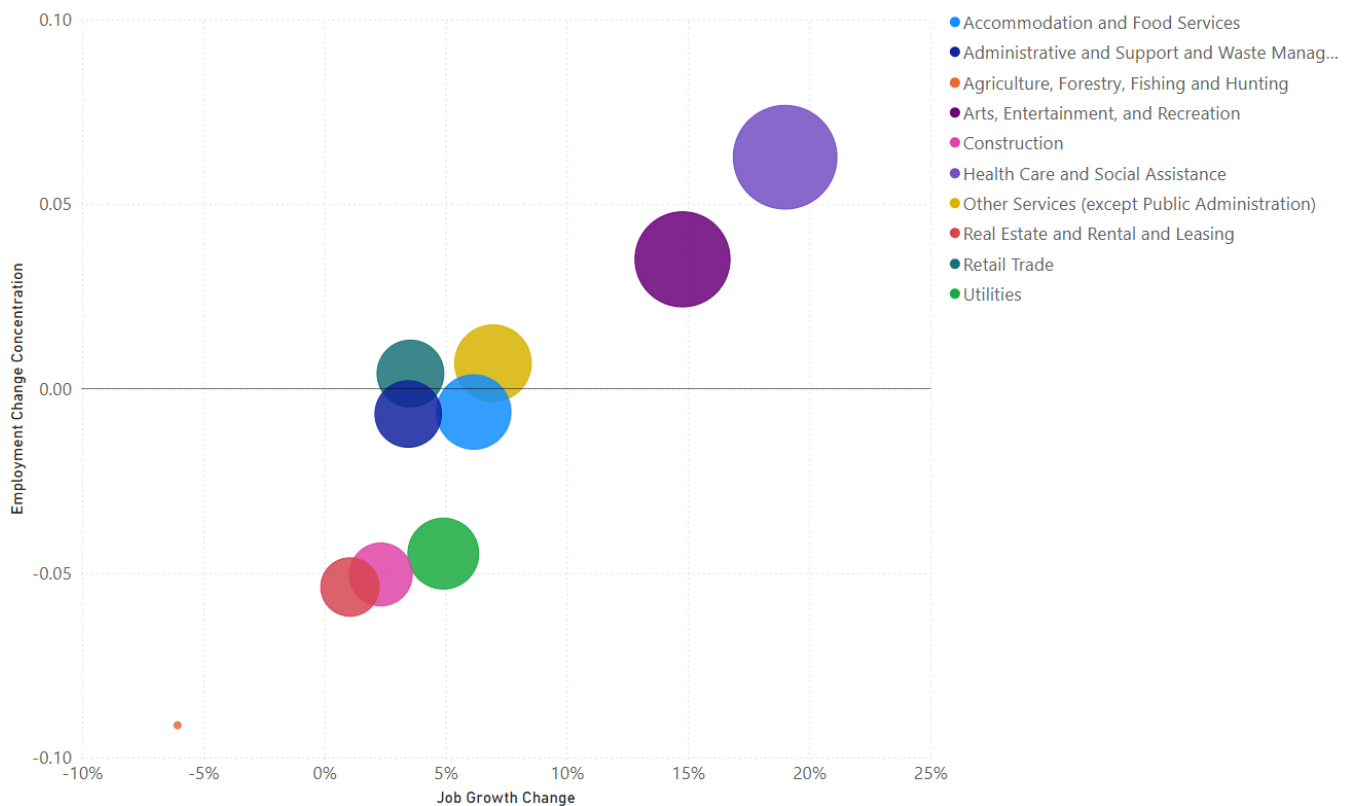
Also, in the top-right quadrant, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation demonstrates strong growth (14.8%) and a modest increase in concentration (+4%), suggesting rising local demand for services such as repair, maintenance, and personal care. Its mid-sized bubble reflects moderate scale, but the upward trend signals opportunity for short-term certificate or small business-focused programs.

In contrast, Accommodation and Food Services; and Administrative and Support and Waste Management, although showing positive job growth (~3-6%), sits just below the zero line for

employment concentration change, indicating it's growing but not as rapidly as the national trend. Their large bubble size reflects its substantial role as a regional employer, especially for early-career workers, and underscores the continued need for customer service training, management pathways, and retention strategies.

Sectors like Construction (2.3%), Utilities (4.9%), and Real Estate (1.1%) show moderate to low job growth and slightly negative changes in employment concentration, placing them in the lower-left quadrant. While these sectors remain significant employers, their slower relative growth may signal the need for more targeted, responsive training strategies aligned with local economic shifts.

### Exhibit 17: Highest Industry Employment Concentration (2-Digit NAICS), Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Highest Ranked Industries, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Health Care and Social Assistance leads regional industry growth and specialization, making it a clear workforce development priority. Other Services also show strength in job creation and scale.

To better understand where targeted training and career pathways can have the greatest impact, the next section highlights the top occupations within these sectors, based on the Quality Jobs criteria.

## SECTION 3: WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT JOBS FOR THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION'S ECONOMY, AND DO WE HAVE THE WORKFORCE TO MEET THE DEMAND?

An occupation refers to a group of jobs and job titles that involve similar tasks and require comparable knowledge, skills, and abilities. Individuals performing essentially the same type of work are classified under the same occupation, regardless of the industry in which they are employed. Some occupations are largely concentrated within a single industry, such as police officers, who are typically employed in government, while others, like information technology or maintenance workers, are found across multiple industries.

To identify the best opportunities for new program development in the Low Desert Subregion, this report highlights a subset of high-quality jobs, referred to as "Quality Jobs." These occupations meet the following criteria:

- They are in-demand, with at least 53 average annual job openings in the Inland Empire/Desert Region.
- They offer entry-level wages at or above the regional living wage of \$20.76 per hour.
- They are considered middle-skill occupations, defined as jobs that typically require more than a high school diploma and less than a bachelor's degree for entry, or a bachelor's degree only when a significant share of workers (at least one-third) in the occupation have some college or an associate degree. This includes occupations requiring no formal educational credential, a high school diploma, an apprenticeship, a postsecondary certificate, or an associate degree.

Applying the above criteria to occupations in the Low Desert Subregion, we identified 104 that qualify as "quality jobs." See Appendix B for a complete list of the 104 Quality Job Occupations identified in this research.

### 3.1 QUALITY JOB OCCUPATIONS

Exhibit 18 displays the 104 Quality Jobs grouped by the associated major occupational group using the 2-digit occupational profile from the Standard Occupational Classification System.<sup>4</sup> Analyzing occupations within the context of their broader 2-digit occupational major group is valuable because it reveals patterns in employment demand, specialization, and vulnerability to automation across related job roles. Grouping occupations this way helps align training programs and workforce strategies with sector-wide trends rather than isolated job titles.

As shown in Exhibit 18, the Low Desert Subregion plays a notable role in supporting the broader Inland Empire labor market, especially in management, construction, healthcare, and office-based occupations. Office and Administrative Support Occupations represent the largest single occupational group in the subregion, with 7,222 jobs and 500 average annual openings, contributing 8.8% of all regional jobs and 9.1% of average annual openings in this category across the Inland Empire.

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2018). 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system: Major groups. U.S. Department of Labor. [https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/major\\_groups.htm](https://www.bls.gov/soc/2018/major_groups.htm)

Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations are another major contributor, accounting for 5,705 jobs and 577 annual openings in the subregion, which is more than 9% of all jobs and openings in this field regionally. Similarly, the subregion accounts for 9.1% of the region’s Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations employment, with 2,630 jobs and 263 annual openings, underscoring its importance in meeting regional healthcare workforce needs.

While Transportation and Material Moving Occupations account for 3,324 jobs and 430 annual openings, their share of the regional total is smaller at 5.2%, suggesting opportunities for growth in this high-demand sector. Management Occupations also represent a key local employment category with 2,558 jobs and 284 openings, contributing 15.0% of the region’s total in this group.

In select occupations, the Low Desert Subregion provides a disproportionate share of regional talent. For example, it contributes a significant share of regional jobs and openings in Food Service (20.4%), Building and Grounds Cleaning Occupations (16.4%), and Sales Occupations (14.3% of jobs and 14.5% of openings). Although small in number, Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations maintain a consistent share of the region’s workforce (5.8%), indicating specialized yet locally relevant employment opportunities.

These data highlight the subregion’s diverse occupational base, especially in middle-skill sectors where community colleges can play a vital role. Occupations in management, skilled trades, healthcare, and support services offer strong opportunities to align with local education and workforce training programs that prepare students for quality jobs in the region.

### Exhibit 18: Annual Job Openings per Quality Job by 2-digit Major Occupational Group, Low Desert Subregion (2024 - 2029)

Occupational Major Groups (2-digit SOC Categories)	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	% of Regional Jobs	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	% of Regional Annual Job Openings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations (20 Occupations)	7,222	82,094	8.8%	807	8,919	9.1%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations (15 Occupations)	5,705	61,211	9.3%	577	6,107	9.5%
Construction and Extraction Occupations (8 Occupations)	4,211	41,129	10.2%	367	3,450	10.6%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (5 Occupations)	3,324	63,633	5.2%	430	7,532	5.7%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (13 Occupations)	2,630	29,041	9.1%	263	2,829	9.3%
Management Occupations (6 Occupations)	2,558	17,682	14.5%	284	1,891	15.0%
Sales and Related Occupations (3 Occupations)	1,792	12,499	14.3%	157	1,081	14.5%
Protective Service Occupations (7 Occupations)	1,408	18,268	7.7%	139	1,837	7.6%
Healthcare Support Occupations (7 Occupations)	1,002	12,424	8.1%	156	1,893	8.3%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations (4 Occupations)	643	9,859	6.5%	42	646	6.6%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations (3 Occupations)	579	6,128	9.5%	45	447	10.2%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (1 Occupation)	566	2,771	20.4%	78	374	20.8%
Production Occupations (3 Occupations)	508	7,664	6.6%	54	792	6.8%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations (1 Occupation)	394	2,406	16.4%	52	328	15.9%
Legal Occupations (1 Occupation)	277	2,788	9.9%	36	321	11.3%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations (4 Occupations)	245	2,774	8.8%	26	279	9.3%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations (1 Occupation)	83	640	12.9%	8	58	14.5%
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations (1 Occupation)	80	1,157	6.9%	15	220	6.9%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations (1 Occupation)	37	633	5.8%	5	78	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,263</b>	<b>374,800</b>		<b>3,544</b>	<b>39,082</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

This major occupational group-level analysis helps colleges and workforce planners identify which occupational categories present both strong economic opportunity and an urgent need for program

alignment, particularly when considering their contribution to the overall job growth in the Inland Empire/Desert (IED) region.

### 3.2 QUALITY JOB OCCUPATIONAL TYPICAL ENTRY LEVEL EDUCATION

The “Typical Entry Level Education” is an occupational classification developed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and is assigned at the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) level. This metric reflects the minimum formal education typically required to enter a given occupation and is informed by data from the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) and the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program. BLS determines these education requirements using a combination of employer surveys, labor market expert input, and analysis of job duties and training needs.<sup>5</sup>

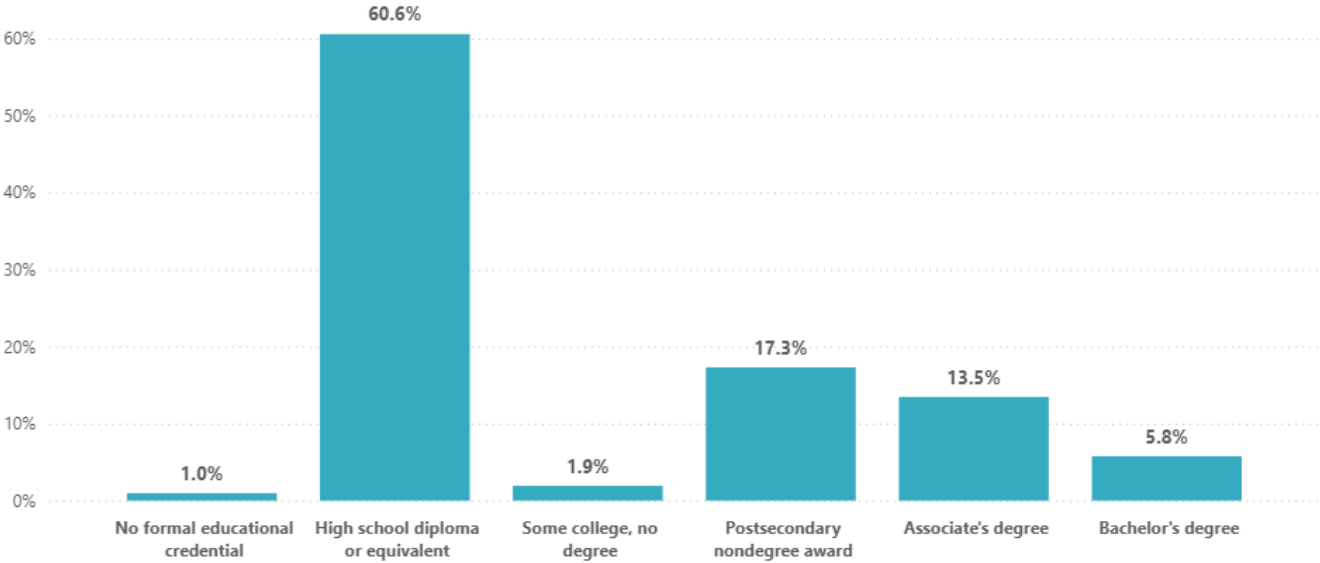
The data is updated biennially, in alignment with the release schedule of the Occupational Outlook Handbook. Educational levels are standardized into categories such as less than a high school diploma, high school diploma or equivalent, postsecondary nondegree award, associate degree, bachelor’s degree, and advanced degrees. This classification is widely used by educators, workforce planners, and policy makers to identify middle-skill jobs, support program alignment, and design career pathways based on real-world labor market needs.

Exhibit 19 displays the proportion of Quality Job’s Typical Entry Level Education classification for the Inland Empire-Desert region. The vast majority of Quality Jobs occupations in the region (94.2%) typically require less than a bachelor’s degree for entry. Specifically, 61.6% require at most a high school diploma or equivalent, and 32.7% require a middle skill level of education from “some college, no degree” to an associate’s degree.

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). Education and training assignments by detailed occupation. Occupational Outlook Handbook. U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/education/tech.htm>

### Exhibit 19: Typical Entry Level Education Requirement for Quality Jobs, IED Region (2024)



Source: Lightcast 2026.1 – Occupation Table, QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

## SECTION 4: WHICH QUALITY JOBS DO COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION TRAIN?

This section outlines programs that prepare students for employment in quality jobs<sup>1</sup> and provides labor market information for subregional faculty and staff to review these programs to assess whether expanding them in the subregion would help address unmet workforce demand.

To ensure our research included active programs, we analyzed the program offerings listed as “active” or “approved” in the Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI). COCI is a repository of locally approved curricula<sup>2</sup> that contains the most up-to-date inventory of current community college program offerings. Some programs displayed below are considered active despite having issued an average of zero awards over the last three academic years. Active programs without awards represent opportunities for potential program expansion or increased marketing efforts. However, please note that the most recent award data is through the 2024-2025 academic year, and programs developed after this timeframe will not be reflected in the awards data.

Programs shown in this section are categorized by priority sectors using a crosswalk developed by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO). To identify the vocational occupations for each program, we used a crosswalk that was developed by the CCCCCO in collaboration with regional COEs that associate occupation codes with program codes.

The sector sub-sections display the following:

- Active subregional program offerings aligned with regional quality jobs, organized by CCCCCO priority sector. This information provides insight into how subregional community colleges currently address employer demand through their program offerings.
- The subregional colleges that offer each program that prepares students for quality jobs occupations. Knowing which institutions currently supply workers for quality jobs may provide context for colleges considering program expansion.
- The average number of awards conferred annually by subregional colleges in each program, during the academic years 2022-2025.<sup>3</sup> Awards data illuminates the scale of subregional supply efforts, highlighting opportunities for program expansion.
- Labor market information for quality jobs trained by subregional program offerings in each sector. This includes employment characteristics, such as current employment, projected demand, and entry-level earnings, for each quality job occupation. Knowing the employer demand for individual quality jobs occupations may assist focused program expansion efforts.

### Advanced Transportation and Logistics Sector

Exhibit 20 displays the existing programs in the advanced transportation and logistics sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the advanced transportation and logistics sector that train students for quality jobs.

### Exhibit 20: Existing Advanced Transportation and Logistics Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0948.00	Automotive Technology	2	Palo Verde, Desert	89
0948.40	Alternative Fuels and Advanced Transportation Technology	1	Desert	1

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The two advanced transportation and logistics programs highlighted above train students for two quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 21. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,525 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 5%, adding 75 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 145 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

### Exhibit 21: Quality Jobs Trained by Existing Advanced Transportation and Logistics Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	550	52	565	\$31.54
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	975	93	989	\$22.63
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,525</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>1,555</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Sector

Exhibit 22 displays existing programs in the agriculture, water, and environmental technologies sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Of the two community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion, one currently offers programs in the business and entrepreneurship sector that train students for quality jobs.

### Exhibit 22: Existing Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0109.40	Turfgrass Technology	1	Desert	12
0112.00	Agriculture Business, Sales and Service	1	Desert	1
0115.00	Natural Resources	1	Desert	14

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The three agriculture, water, and environmental technologies programs highlighted above train students for four quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 23. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,959 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 4%, adding 70 jobs through 2029. On

average, these occupations are expected to produce 200 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

**Exhibit 23: Quality Jobs Trained by Existing Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029**

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	277	18	266	\$25.23
19-4071	Forest and Conservation Technicians	37	5	78	\$28.04
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1,455	148	1,572	\$28.24
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,959</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>2,026</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

**Business and Entrepreneurship Sector**

Exhibit 24 displays the existing programs in the business and entrepreneurship sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the business and entrepreneurship sector that train students for quality jobs.

**Exhibit 24: Existing Business and Entrepreneurship Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0501.00	Business and Commerce, General	1	Desert	24
0502.00	Accounting	1	Desert	16
0505.00	Business Administration	2	Palo Verde, Desert	184
0506.30	Management Development and Supervision	2	Palo Verde, Desert	13
0511.00	Real Estate	1	Desert	0

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The five business and entrepreneurship programs highlighted above train students for 12 quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 25. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 7,100 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 2%, adding 130 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 723 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

**Exhibit 25: Quality Jobs Trained by Existing Business and Entrepreneurship Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029**

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-3013	Facilities Managers	187	18	164	\$37.75
11-3071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	224	22	444	\$37.47
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22
11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	813	72	384	\$24.27
13-1051	Cost Estimators	251	22	224	\$28.74
41-9021	Real Estate Brokers	228	20	105	\$23.40
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	1,117	98	524	\$21.21
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1,455	148	1,572	\$28.24
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	1,578	188	1,745	\$21.49
43-3051	Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	176	19	186	\$24.25
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	550	52	565	\$31.54
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	329	35	559	\$26.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,100</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>6,582</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

**Education and Human Development Sector**

Exhibit 26 displays the existing programs in the education and human development sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. One of the two community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offers a program in the education and human development sector that train students for quality jobs.

**Exhibit 26: Existing Education and Human Development Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0836.10	Recreation Assistant	1	Desert	0

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The single education and human development program highlighted above trains students for one quality job occupation, as shown in Exhibit 27. In 2024, this occupation accounted for 190 jobs in the subregion and is projected to grow by 12%, adding 23 jobs through 2029. On average, this occupation is expected to produce 28 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

### Exhibit 27: Quality Jobs Trained by Existing Energy, Construction, and Utilities Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Energy, Construction, and Utilities Sector

Exhibit 28 displays the existing programs in the energy, construction, and utilities sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the energy, construction, and utilities sector that train students for quality jobs.

### Exhibit 28: Existing Energy, Construction, and Utilities Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0201.00	Architecture and Architectural Technology	1	Desert	7
0946.00	Environmental Control Technology (HVAC)	1	Desert	134
0946.10	Energy Systems Technology	2	Palo Verde, Desert	1
0952.00	Construction Crafts Technology	1	Palo Verde	14
0953.00	Drafting Technology	1	Desert	1
0957.00	Civil and Construction Management Technology	1	Desert	9
0957.20	Construction Inspection	1	Desert	5

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The seven energy, construction, and utilities programs highlighted above train students for 10 quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 29. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 2,359 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 5%, adding 116 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 236 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

**Exhibit 29: Quality Jobs Trained by Existing Energy, Construction, and Utilities Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029**

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-3013	Facilities Managers	187	18	164	\$37.75
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters	101	10	81	\$26.71
17-3022	Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians	56	5	76	\$30.45
47-2231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	87	11	111	\$24.26
47-4011	Construction and Building Inspectors	136	15	175	\$30.83
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	550	52	565	\$31.54
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	701	66	611	\$24.56
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	146	15	308	\$27.62
49-9099	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	333	35	356	\$20.96
51-8021	Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators	62	7	65	\$23.20
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,359</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>2,511</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

**Health Sector**

Exhibit 30 displays the existing programs in the health sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the health sector that train students for quality jobs.

**Exhibit 30: Existing Health Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
1221.00	Pharmacy Technology	1	Desert	22
1222.00	Physical Therapist Assistant	1	Desert	10
1230.20	Licensed Vocational Nursing	2	Palo Verde, Desert	27
1251.00	Paramedic	1	Desert	0
1306.00	Nutrition, Foods, and Culinary Arts	1	Desert	1

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The five health programs highlighted above train students for five quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 31. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,959 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 8%, adding 163 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 231 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

### Exhibit 31: Quality Jobs Trained by Health Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
29-2043	Paramedics	56	4	65	\$29.86
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	463	52	516	\$22.05
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	810	84	865	\$31.37
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	64	13	158	\$35.52
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	566	78	374	\$24.18
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,959</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>1,977</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Sector

Exhibit 32 displays the existing programs in the information and communication technologies/digital media sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the information and communication technologies/digital media sector that train students for quality jobs.

### Exhibit 32: Existing Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0514.00	Office Technology/Office Computer Applications	1	Desert	25
0614.00	Digital Media	1	Desert	15
0702.00	Computer Information Systems	2	Palo Verde, Desert	11
0702.10	Software Applications	1	Palo Verde	2
0708.10	Computer Networking	1	Desert	26
1005.00	Commercial Music	1	Desert	4
1012.00	Applied Photography	1	Desert	2
2206.10	Geographic Information Systems	1	Desert	0

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The eight information and communication technologies/digital media programs highlighted above train students for 15 quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 33. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 4,454 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 4%, adding 166 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 477 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

### Exhibit 33: Quality Jobs Trained by Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	47	3	54	\$28.26
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	120	7	97	\$38.08
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	199	14	230	\$29.59
17-3023	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	36	4	61	\$29.91
17-3031	Surveying and Mapping Technicians	53	7	61	\$23.18
27-4011	Audio and Video Technicians	83	8	58	\$21.33
33-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	97	9	133	\$66.14
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1,455	148	1,572	\$28.24
43-3061	Procurement Clerks	53	5	61	\$21.02
43-4161	Human Resources Assistants, Except Payroll and Timekeeping	101	11	147	\$23.52
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	335	38	415	\$29.45
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1,492	177	1,891	\$21.06
43-9022	Word Processors and Typists	73	8	103	\$22.76
43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	122	11	130	\$21.12
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,454</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>5,121</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Public Safety Sector

Exhibit 34 displays the existing programs in the public safety sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Both community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion currently offer programs in the public safety sector that train students for quality jobs.

### Exhibit 34: Existing Public Safety Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
2105.00	Administration of Justice	2	Palo Verde, Desert	84
2105.10	Corrections	1	Desert	1
2105.50	Police Academy	1	Desert	9
2133.00	Fire Technology	2	Palo Verde, Desert	16
2133.50	Fire Academy	1	Desert	15

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The five public safety programs highlighted above train students for eight quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 35. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,661 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 7%, adding 112 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 166 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

## Exhibit 35: Quality Jobs Trained by Public Safety Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	199	14	230	\$29.59
33-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	51	5	56	\$56.94
33-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	97	9	133	\$66.14
33-1021	First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers	44	4	63	\$47.10
33-2011	Firefighters	213	22	311	\$29.14
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	406	39	483	\$36.11
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	462	46	684	\$38.79
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,661</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>2,070</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

### Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Sector

Exhibit 36 displays the existing programs in the retail, hospitality, and tourism sector that prepare students for employment in quality jobs. Of the two community colleges in the Low Desert Subregion, one currently offers programs in the retail, hospitality, and tourism sector that train students for quality jobs.

## Exhibit 36: Existing Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Programs that Train Quality Jobs, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title	# of Colleges Offering Program in Subregion	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0506.50	Retail Store Operations and Management	1	Desert	0
1306.30	Culinary Arts	1	Desert	23
1307.00	Hospitality	1	Desert	3
1307.30	Resort and Club Management	1	Desert	1

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

The four retail, hospitality, and tourism programs highlighted above train students for four quality job occupations as shown in Exhibit 37. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,900 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 9%, adding 164 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 250 annual job openings in the subregion, reflecting strong and sustained demand for skilled workers.

### Exhibit 37: Quality Jobs Trained by Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
11-9051	Food Service Managers	931	121	734	\$25.81
11-9072	Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	28	110	\$28.22
11-9081	Lodging Managers	212	23	55	\$30.43
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	566	78	374	\$24.18
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,900</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>1,272</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Key Takeaways

The programs displayed in this section represent some of the best opportunities for current students to graduate and enter jobs with a bright outlook. Despite these programs being listed as active in the curriculum inventory, the awards data suggest opportunities for program expansion. Community college staff and faculty are encouraged to consider their current program offerings to determine if their programs are supplying enough students to meet subregional employment demand.

Program expansion across the nine sectors shown in this section would strengthen the subregional economy by supplying employers with qualified candidates to fill essential roles. While each sector has room for program expansion, the scale of demand in certain sectors warrants further illumination. For example, the Business and Entrepreneurship sector represents the greatest opportunity for program expansion, with 723 annual job openings projected for quality jobs in the subregion, accounting for nearly 11% of regional employer demand in this sector.

The demand for quality jobs in the Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism sector is strong and concentrated in the Low Desert Subregion, with 250 annual job openings projected over the next five years, accounting for 20% of regional demand. Both sectors illuminated here stand out as great opportunities for program expansion.

Several active programs in the subregion have not issued awards over the last three academic years, potentially representing opportunities for program expansion or increased marketing efforts. These programs are listed in Exhibit 38 below. Please note that these programs were displayed in their respective sectors and were consolidated for this Exhibit. Furthermore, the Exhibit may display programs that have issued one award over the last three academic years, as the average is less than one award per year, and, therefore, are worthy of program expansion consideration. Newly developed programs may be displayed as awards have yet to be conferred in these program codes.

**Exhibit 38: Existing Programs that Train Quality Jobs with Less Than One Average Award Reported Over the Past Three Years, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title	CCCO Sector	# Colleges Offering Programs (Subregion)	Colleges Offering Programs By Name	3-Yr Award Average (Subregion)
0506.50	Retail Store Operations and Management	Retail, Hospitality and Tourism	1	Desert	0
0511.00	Real Estate	Business and Entrepreneurship	1	Desert	0
0836.10	Recreation Assistant	Education and Human Development	1	Desert	0
1251.00	Paramedic	Health	1	Desert	0
2206.10	Geographic Information Systems	Information and Communication Technologies - Digital Media	1	Desert	0

Source: COCI, MIS DATA MART

## SECTION 5: WHAT PROGRAMS SHOULD MY COLLEGE OFFER TO MEET THE WORKFORCE DEMAND IN THE LOW DESERT SUBREGION?

This section examines the alignment of subregional training programs with quality jobs occupations. By comparing programs not currently active in the subregion with the quality job occupations they could train, this section aims to identify the best opportunities for program development. The goal is to identify the programs that train students for quality jobs occupations that are currently not covered by subregional program offerings.

To identify the best opportunities for new program development, we analyzed COCI's list of program offerings through March 2026 and identified programs not currently offered in the subregion that are linked to quality jobs. Occupations already served by existing subregional programs were excluded from this analysis to ensure the findings highlight unmet workforce needs and lack alignment with local subregional program offerings.

Programs shown in this section are categorized by priority sectors using a crosswalk developed by the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). To identify the vocational occupations for each program, we used a crosswalk that was developed by the CCCCCO in collaboration with regional COEs that associate occupation codes with program codes.

Each sub-section displays the following:

- Inactive program offerings aligned with regional quality jobs, organized by CCCCCO priority sector. This list of programs may serve as a foundation for program development efforts, as each program leads to employment in quality jobs.
- Labor market information for associated quality jobs that students could be trained for by the addition of programs for each sector. This displays employment characteristics, such as current employment, projected demand, and entry-level earnings, for each quality job occupation. Knowing the employer demand for individual quality jobs occupations may assist focused program development efforts.

The intention of this section is to highlight inactive programs with the greatest potential to prepare students for quality jobs. Additionally, it encourages subregional faculty and staff to review these programs and assess whether their college should develop a program that trains students for the identified occupations.

### Advanced Manufacturing Sector

Exhibit 39 highlights advanced manufacturing program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer six advanced manufacturing programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

## Exhibit 39: Advanced Manufacturing Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
0934.10	Computer Electronics
0934.20	Industrial Electronics
0945.00	Industrial Systems Technology and Maintenance
0950.00	Aeronautical and Aviation Technology
0950.50	Aircraft Fabrication
0961.00	Optics

Source: COCI

The advanced manufacturing programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the four quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 40. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 2,163 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 6%, adding 140 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 234 annual job openings in this subregion.

## Exhibit 40: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Advanced Manufacturing Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
29-2081	Opticians, Dispensing	105	11	93	\$22.39
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	34	3	63	\$30.67
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	37	4	222	\$29.79
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,986	216	1,722	\$21.42
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,163</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>2,101</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

### Advanced Transportation and Logistics Sector

Exhibit 41 highlights advanced transportation and logistics program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer seven advanced transportation and logistics programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

## Exhibit 41: Advanced Transportation and Logistics Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
0510.00	Logistics and Materials Transportation
0947.00	Diesel Technology
0947.20	Heavy Equipment Maintenance
0947.40	Railroad and Light Rail Operations
0947.50	Truck and Bus Driving
0950.10	Aviation Airframe Mechanics
0950.20	Aviation Powerplant Mechanics

Source: COCI

The advanced transportation and logistics program highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the eight quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 42. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 4,055 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 9%, adding 372 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 488 annual job openings in this subregion.

**Exhibit 42: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Advanced Transportation and Logistics Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029**

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	324	33	491	\$21.21
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	37	4	222	\$29.79
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	319	31	435	\$24.99
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	201	18	267	\$27.74
53-1047	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	560	65	1,196	\$24.63
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,512	323	5,530	\$23.20
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	88	13	249	\$23.18
53-4031	Railroad Conductors and Yardmasters	15	1	66	\$41.77
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,055</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>8,455</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Sector  
 Exhibit 43 highlights agriculture, water, and environmental technologies program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer three agriculture, water, and environmental technologies programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

**Exhibit 43: Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title
0102.10	Veterinary Technician (Licensed)
0102.20	Artificial Inseminator (Licensed)
0116.00	Agricultural Power Equipment Technology

Source: COCI

The agriculture, water, and environmental technologies programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the three quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 44. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 306 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 5%, adding 15 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 31 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 44: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	69	9	111	\$21.88
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	37	4	222	\$29.79
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	201	18	267	\$27.74
<b>Total</b>		<b>306</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>600</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Business and Entrepreneurship Sector

Exhibit 45 highlights business and entrepreneurship program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer five business and entrepreneurship programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

### Exhibit 45: Business and Entrepreneurship Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
0504.00	Banking and Finance
0512.00	Insurance
0514.10	Legal Office Technology
1402.00	Paralegal
3005.00	Custodial Services

Source: COCI

The business and entrepreneurship programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the seven quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 46. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 1,685 jobs in the subregion and are projected to decline by 1%, shedding 12 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 176 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 46: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Business and Entrepreneurship Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	109	8	113	\$35.32
13-2072	Loan Officers	220	15	110	\$23.64
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	277	36	321	\$23.76
37-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	394	52	328	\$21.53
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	446	39	452	\$21.87
43-4031	Court, Municipal, and License Clerks	139	16	227	\$25.85
43-4131	Loan Interviewers and Clerks	101	8	59	\$22.07
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,685</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>1,610</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

Education and Human Development Sector

Exhibit 47 highlights an opportunity to develop an education and human development program. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer one education and human development program that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

**Exhibit 47: Education and Human Development Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title
1602.00	Library Technician (Aide)

Source: COCI

The education and human development program highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the one quality job occupation shown in Exhibit 48. In 2024, this occupation accounted for 73 jobs in the subregion and is projected to grow by 1%, adding one job through 2029. On average, this occupation is expected to produce 15 annual job openings in this subregion.

**Exhibit 48: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Education and Human Development Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029**

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
25-4031	Library Technicians	80	15	220	\$23.55

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

Energy, Construction, and Utilities Sector

Exhibit 49 highlights energy, construction, and utilities program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer eight energy, construction, and utilities programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

**Exhibit 49: Energy, Construction, and Utilities Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion**

TOP Code	TOP Title
0934.40	Electrical Systems and Power Transmission
0935.00	Electro-Mechanical Technology
0952.10	Carpentry
0952.20	Electrical
0952.30	Plumbing, Pipefitting and Steamfitting
0952.40	Glazing
0956.40	Sheet Metal and Structural Metal
0958.00	Water and Wastewater Technology

Source: COCI

The energy, construction, and utilities programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the 10 quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 50. In 2024,

these occupations accounted for 4,349 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 2%, adding 86 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 376 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 50: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Energy, Construction, and Utilities Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
47-2031	Carpenters	2,326	187	1,507	\$25.58
47-2111	Electricians	750	71	872	\$24.73
47-2121	Glaziers	83	8	74	\$24.47
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	636	57	521	\$23.32
47-2211	Sheet Metal Workers	81	7	82	\$24.29
47-2221	Structural Iron and Steel Workers	112	10	108	\$21.46
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	34	3	63	\$30.67
49-2098	Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	69	8	86	\$23.45
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	141	13	173	\$39.72
51-8031	Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	117	12	169	\$31.74
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,349</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>3,656</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

### Health Sector

Exhibit 51 highlights health program development opportunities. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer 22 health programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

### Exhibit 51: Health Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
1205.10	Phlebotomy
1208.00	Medical Assisting
1208.20	Administrative Medical Assisting
1208.30	Health Facility Unit Coordinator
1209.00	Hospital Central Service Technician
1210.00	Respiratory Care/Therapy
1211.00	Polysomnography
1212.00	Electro-Neurodiagnostic Technology
1217.00	Surgical Technician
1218.00	Occupational Therapy Technology
1219.00	Optical Technology
1220.00	Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
1223.00	Health Information Technology
1223.10	Health Information Coding
1225.00	Radiologic Technology
1226.00	Radiation Therapy Technician
1227.00	Diagnostic Medical Sonography
1239.00	Psychiatric Technician
1240.00	Dental Occupations
1240.10	Dental Assistant
1240.20	Dental Hygienist
1299.00	Other Health Occupations

Source: COCI

The health programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the 14 quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 52. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 2,097 jobs in the subregion and are projected to grow by 9%, adding 181 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 246 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 52: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Health Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	216	16	174	\$37.07
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	111	10	128	\$50.90
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	82	7	74	\$40.49
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	183	15	168	\$39.53
29-2053	Psychiatric Technicians	75	12	157	\$20.87
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	101	9	100	\$30.20
29-2072	Medical Records Specialists	126	12	122	\$22.01
29-2081	Opticians, Dispensing	105	11	93	\$22.39
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	233	24	257	\$22.51
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	28	5	61	\$33.63
31-9091	Dental Assistants	462	69	911	\$22.29
31-9093	Medical Equipment Preparers	76	12	138	\$23.14
31-9097	Phlebotomists	136	21	211	\$21.55
31-9099	Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	163	24	288	\$21.77
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,097</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>2,882</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Sector

Exhibit 53 highlights an opportunity to develop an information and communication technologies/digital media program. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer one information and communication technologies/digital media program that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

### Exhibit 53: Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Program Development Opportunity, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
0934.30	Telecommunications Technology

Source: COCI

The information and communication technologies/digital media program highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the two quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 54. In 2024, these occupations accounted for 152 jobs in the subregion and are projected to decline by 8%, losing 12 jobs through 2029. On average, these occupations are expected to produce 14 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 54: Quality Job Not Trained by Existing Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	86	8	138	\$26.98
49-9052	Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	66	6	104	\$28.98
<b>Total</b>		<b>152</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>242</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Public Safety Sector

Exhibit 55 highlights an opportunity to develop a public safety program. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer two public safety programs that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

### Exhibit 55: Public Safety Program Development Opportunity, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
2105.30	Industrial and Transportation Security
2199.00	Other Public and Protective Services

Source: COCI

The public safety program highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the two quality job occupations shown in Exhibit 56. In 2024, this occupation accounted for 203 jobs in the subregion and is projected to grow by 8%, adding 16 jobs through 2029. On average, this occupation is expected to produce 24 annual job openings in this subregion.

### Exhibit 56: Quality Job Not Trained by Existing Public Safety Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
33-1091	First-Line Supervisors of Security Workers	136	15	106	\$22.39
43-5031	Public Safety Telecommunicators	67	8	117	\$30.09
<b>Total</b>		<b>203</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>223</b>	

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

#### Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Sector

Exhibit 57 highlights a retail, hospitality, and tourism program development opportunity. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer one retail, hospitality, and tourism program that may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

## Exhibit 57: Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Program Development Opportunities, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
3020.40	Flight Attendant

Source: COCI

The retail, hospitality, and tourism programs highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the one quality job occupation shown in Exhibit 58. In 2024, this occupation accounted for 560 jobs in the subregion and is projected to grow by 8%, adding 47 jobs through 2029. On average, this occupation is expected to produce 65 annual job openings in this subregion.

## Exhibit 58: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
53-1047	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	560	65	1,196	\$24.63

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

### Unassigned Sector

Exhibit 59 highlights a program development opportunity that is not currently assigned to a CCCCCO sector. Low Desert Subregion community colleges do not currently offer one program that is not assigned to a CCCCCO sector and may prepare students for employment in quality jobs.

## Exhibit 59: Non-Sector Specific Program Development Opportunity, Low Desert Subregion

TOP Code	TOP Title
2101.00	Community Services, General

Source: COCI

The program highlighted above may train students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for the one quality job occupation shown in Exhibit 60. In 2024, this occupation accounted for 249 jobs in the subregion and is projected to grow by 1%, adding 4 jobs through 2029. On average, this occupation is expected to produce 24 annual job openings in this subregion.

## Exhibit 60: Quality Jobs Not Trained by Existing Programs, Low Desert Subregion, 2024-2029

SOC	SOC Title	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)
43-4061	Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	249	24	302	\$22.01

Source: Lightcast 2026.1

## **Key Takeaways**

The sectors above represent opportunities to build pipelines for students to find employment in high-paying, in-demand middle-skill occupations, which no community college in the subregion appears to offer based on our research. The number of annual job openings and the lack of current program offerings in the subregion demonstrate demand that could be met by new local programs. However, colleges are encouraged to consider the entirety of regional program offerings prior to program development since the program approval process views labor market needs and community college supply from a regional perspective. While the program development opportunities highlighted in this section would assist subregional colleges in addressing workforce demand in their subregion, the COE recommends a comprehensive labor market assessment before focused program development efforts.

All 10 CCCCCO sectors present program development opportunities for the subregional community colleges; however, some sectors warrant closer attention due to the scale of the projected workforce demand, specifically, the projected annual openings. The Advanced Transportation and Logistics sector stands out, with 488 projected annual subregional job openings for quality jobs, representing the most significant opportunity for program development to address supply gaps. Following this sector, the Energy, Construction, and Utilities, and Health sectors exhibit the greatest gaps between current program offerings and labor market demand, making them strong candidates for future program development.

Faculty and institutions considering new program development should consider the supply gap analysis provided in this research, available instructional capacity, and potential student interest before proceeding. While each college is encouraged to conduct its own in-depth assessment of program feasibility, the COE has identified these programs as strong candidates for further exploration based on current labor market demand and alignment with quality jobs.

## APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This subregional brief presents demographic, labor force, industry, and occupation data to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of the Low Desert Subregion and provides insight into the alignment of community college training programs and the middle-skill workforce. Demographic information, including population, gender, age, race and ethnicity, and educational attainment, helps frame the subregion, displaying unique features that differentiate the subregion from the broader regional population. Labor force information provides insight into the subregion's ability to mobilize the population into entering the workforce and contribute to the subregional economy.

Industry data is presented to describe the activities of businesses in the subregion, illuminating the types of businesses that employ the subregional workforce. This information may be used to identify which businesses make the greatest impact on the subregional economy, potentially guiding future workforce planning investments. Occupation data is presented in this report to identify the occupational characteristics most impactful to workforce planners and community colleges. This report exclusively displays occupational information for those occupations that meet the quality job criteria. These are the jobs most likely to focus decision-makers on making investments that provide the best opportunities for residents.

The California Community College Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI), as a repository for community college programs, illuminated the programs that community colleges currently offer in the subregion. By comparing active programs to related occupations, as identified in the CCCCCO and COE TOP-SOC crosswalk, the quality jobs occupations trained by existing programs could be highlighted. Programs with little supply from community colleges aligned with quality jobs with considerable demand are presented as opportunities for program expansion. Quality jobs occupations, not trained by existing programs, were identified as opportunities for program development.

### Definitions

**Labor market information** was pulled from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm that specializes in providing insights for workforce development, economic planning, and education. Lightcast compiles its regional and occupational datasets from a variety of federal and state sources. Among these are the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which offers detailed industry employment and wage data, and other critical sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Quarterly Workforce Indicators, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics and Current Population Survey, and data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.<sup>7</sup> These combined resources provide comprehensive insights into employment trends, wage patterns, and quality job workforce characteristics. The baseline year of 2024 was used to offer the maximum comparability with the student data available, and the projected data was through 2029.

**Annual job openings** include the projected growth (new jobs) and replacement needs of an occupation annually. This figure is often used to assess the expected employer demand for an occupation, providing a number of job openings that will require new workers to fill.

**Demand** is the number of job openings projected every year over the next five years. This represents job openings due to new job growth as well as job replacements due to retirements and workers leaving an occupation.

**Supply** in this report is represented by the average number of awards issued by subregional community colleges over the last three academic years. Averaging recent award figures smooths uneven award issuance and provides an estimate of how many awards may be issued in the future. While a student may earn more than one award, it is assumed that each award represents one student exiting a subregional program.

**Educational attainment** is the highest level of education attained by workers aged 25 years or older. This information may illuminate mismatches between resident skills and employment needs.

**Industry Employment** is a count of jobs in a given geography. Businesses operating within the same industry produce similar goods and services and share comparable production processes for creating these goods and services. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the federal system used to classify all business establishments into specific industries. Staffing patterns show the distribution of occupational employment and demand for each industry. For example, Community Colleges employ faculty, but the institutions also hire a variety of administrators and support staff to maintain operations. The same is true for most industries. Regional educational institutions should be aware of the types of industries in their area to help inform the needed industry-specific occupational skills that may be required by local employers.

**Location quotient** quantifies how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region "unique." A high location quotient (1.2 times or greater concentration in the local region compared to the nation) reveals industries that are highly represented and make the area unique. Conversely, industries with a low location quotient account for a smaller share of jobs than the national average, indicating that while job seekers may find work in these industries, they are more likely to find a higher concentration of these jobs elsewhere in the nation.

An **occupation** is a set of activities or tasks employees are paid to perform. Employees who perform essentially the same tasks are in the same occupation, whether or not they work in the same industry. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries; other occupations are found in many industries. For example, jobs for registered nurses are concentrated in the healthcare industry sector, but educational industries may also employ these jobs.

**SOC code:** The Standard Occupational Classification system is a federally defined system used to classify workers into occupational categories that are grouped together according to job duties.<sup>8</sup>

**TOP code:** The Taxonomy of Programs is a system of codes used by the State of California to compare differently named academic programs with similar outcomes across community colleges.<sup>9</sup> Each course offered by California Community Colleges is assigned to a TOP code.

**Living wage:** The living wage for this study is based on the University of Washington’s Self-Sufficiency Standards, which measure the minimum income necessary for an individual (under age 65 and without disability) or family to afford basic expenses in the Inland Empire/Desert Region.<sup>10</sup> The living wage is \$20.76 in Riverside County and \$20.07 in San Bernardino County. This report uses the higher rate of \$20.76 as the benchmark to identify quality jobs that provide workers with high-quality employment opportunities.

**NAICS Code:** The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is a system of codes used to classify business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.<sup>11</sup>

**Quality job:** A middle-skill job that requires at least a high school diploma and typically less than a bachelor’s degree; entry-level earnings are above the living wage for a single adult in the Inland Empire/Desert regions; and has at least 53 projected annual job openings in the Inland Empire/Desert between 2024 and 2029.

## APPENDIX B: QUALITY JOB OCCUPATIONS

### Quality Jobs Occupational Overview, Low Desert Subregion, 2024

Major Occupational Group	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)	Typical Entry Level Education
<b>Architecture and Engineering Occupations</b>						
17-3011 Architectural and Civil Drafters	101	846	10	81	\$26.71	Associate's degree
17-3022 Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians	56	797	5	76	\$30.45	Associate's degree
17-3023 Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	36	675	4	61	\$29.91	Associate's degree
17-3031 Surveying and Mapping Technicians	53	456	7	61	\$23.18	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations</b>						
27-4011 Audio and Video Technicians	83	640	8	58	\$21.33	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations</b>						
37-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	394	2406	52	328	\$21.53	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Business and Financial Operations Occupations</b>						
13-1031 Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	109	1698	8	113	\$35.32	High school diploma or equivalent
13-1051 Cost Estimators	251	2673	22	224	\$28.74	Bachelor's degree
13-2072 Loan Officers	220	1757	15	110	\$23.64	Bachelor's degree
<b>Computer and Mathematical Occupations</b>						
15-1231 Computer Network Support Specialists	47	738	3	54	\$28.26	Associate's degree
15-1232 Computer User Support Specialists	277	3998	18	266	\$25.23	Some college, no degree
15-1244 Network and Computer Systems Administrators	120	1787	7	97	\$38.08	Bachelor's degree
15-1299 Computer Occupations, All Other	199	3337	14	230	\$29.59	Bachelor's degree
<b>Construction and Extraction Occupations</b>						
47-2031 Carpenters	2326	20513	187	1507	\$25.58	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2111 Electricians	750	9127	71	872	\$24.73	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2121 Glaziers	83	946	8	74	\$24.47	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2152 Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	636	5637	57	521	\$23.32	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2211 Sheet Metal Workers	81	907	7	82	\$24.29	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2221 Structural Iron and Steel Workers	112	1392	10	108	\$21.46	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2231 Solar Photovoltaic Installers	87	1095	11	111	\$24.26	High school diploma or equivalent
47-4011 Construction and Building Inspectors	136	1514	15	175	\$30.83	High school diploma or equivalent

Major Occupational Group	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)	Typical Entry Level Education
<b>☐ Educational Instruction and Library Occupations</b>						
25-4031 Library Technicians	80	1157	15	220	\$23.55	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>☐ Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations</b>						
35-1011 Chefs and Head Cooks	566	2771	78	374	\$24.18	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>☐ Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations</b>						
29-1126 Respiratory Therapists	216	2222	16	174	\$37.07	Associate's degree
29-1292 Dental Hygienists	111	1510	10	128	\$50.90	Associate's degree
29-2032 Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	82	871	7	74	\$40.49	Associate's degree
29-2034 Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	183	2019	15	168	\$39.53	Associate's degree
29-2043 Paramedics	56	874	4	65	\$29.86	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2052 Pharmacy Technicians	463	4876	52	516	\$22.05	High school diploma or equivalent
29-2053 Psychiatric Technicians	75	945	12	157	\$20.87	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2055 Surgical Technologists	101	1134	9	100	\$30.20	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2056 Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	69	968	9	111	\$21.88	Associate's degree
29-2061 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	810	8712	84	865	\$31.37	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2072 Medical Records Specialists	126	1387	12	122	\$22.01	Postsecondary nondegree award
29-2081 Opticians, Dispensing	105	953	11	93	\$22.39	High school diploma or equivalent
29-2099 Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	233	2571	24	257	\$22.51	Postsecondary nondegree award
<b>☐ Healthcare Support Occupations</b>						
31-1132 Orderlies	73	768	12	126	\$21.16	High school diploma or equivalent
31-2011 Occupational Therapy Assistants	28	340	5	61	\$33.63	Associate's degree
31-2021 Physical Therapist Assistants	64	775	13	158	\$35.52	Associate's degree
31-9091 Dental Assistants	462	6299	69	911	\$22.29	Postsecondary nondegree award
31-9093 Medical Equipment Preparers	76	849	12	138	\$23.14	High school diploma or equivalent
31-9097 Phlebotomists	136	1396	21	211	\$21.55	Postsecondary nondegree award
31-9099 Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	163	1998	24	288	\$21.77	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>☐ Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations</b>						
49-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	550	5967	52	565	\$31.54	High school diploma or equivalent
49-2022 Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	86	1601	8	138	\$26.98	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-2094 Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	34	732	3	63	\$30.67	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-2098 Security and Fire Alarm Systems Installers	69	801	8	86	\$23.45	High school diploma or equivalent

Major Occupational Group	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)	Typical Entry Level Education
49-3011 Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	37	2195	4	222	\$29.79	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-3023 Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	975	10439	93	989	\$22.63	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-3031 Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	319	4676	31	435	\$24.99	High school diploma or equivalent
49-3042 Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	201	2925	18	267	\$27.74	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9021 Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	701	6252	66	611	\$24.56	Postsecondary nondegree award
49-9041 Industrial Machinery Mechanics	146	3002	15	308	\$27.62	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9051 Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	141	1912	13	173	\$39.72	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9052 Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers	66	1098	6	104	\$28.98	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1986	15513	216	1722	\$21.42	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9091 Coin, Vending, and Amusement Machine Servicers and Repairers	61	517	8	67	\$21.79	High school diploma or equivalent
49-9099 Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	333	3583	35	356	\$20.96	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Legal Occupations</b>						
23-2011 Paralegals and Legal Assistants	277	2788	36	321	\$23.76	Associate's degree
<b>Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations</b>						
19-4071 Forest and Conservation Technicians	37	633	5	78	\$28.04	Associate's degree
<b>Management Occupations</b>						
11-3013 Facilities Managers	187	1688	18	164	\$37.75	Bachelor's degree
11-3071 Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	224	4622	22	444	\$37.47	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9051 Food Service Managers	931	5737	121	734	\$25.81	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9072 Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	190	798	28	110	\$28.22	Bachelor's degree
11-9081 Lodging Managers	212	506	23	55	\$30.43	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9141 Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	813	4331	72	384	\$24.27	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>Office and Administrative Support Occupations</b>						
43-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1455	15437	148	1572	\$28.24	High school diploma or equivalent
43-3021 Billing and Posting Clerks	308	3450	36	388	\$21.10	High school diploma or equivalent
43-3031 Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	1578	14985	188	1745	\$21.49	Some college, no degree
43-3051 Payroll and Timekeeping Clerks	176	1779	19	186	\$24.25	High school diploma or equivalent
43-3061 Procurement Clerks	53	688	5	61	\$21.02	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4031 Court, Municipal, and License Clerks	139	1811	16	227	\$25.85	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4061 Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	249	3259	24	302	\$22.01	High school diploma or equivalent

Major Occupational Group	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)	Typical Entry Level Education
43-4111 Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan	218	2401	27	285	\$20.84	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4131 Loan Interviewers and Clerks	101	800	8	59	\$22.07	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4161 Human Resources Assistants, Except Payroll and Timekeeping	101	1351	11	147	\$23.52	Associate's degree
43-4199 Information and Record Clerks, All Other	140	1929	18	248	\$23.16	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5031 Public Safety Telecommunicators	67	889	8	117	\$30.09	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5052 Postal Service Mail Carriers	145	3116	15	224	\$22.13	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5053 Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators	34	812	4	67	\$21.23	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5061 Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	324	5047	33	491	\$21.21	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5111 Weighers, Measurers, Checkers, and Samplers, Recordkeeping	112	2123	14	261	\$22.38	High school diploma or equivalent
43-6011 Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	335	3719	38	415	\$29.45	High school diploma or equivalent
43-6014 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	1492	15928	177	1891	\$21.06	High school diploma or equivalent
43-9022 Word Processors and Typists	73	978	8	103	\$22.76	High school diploma or equivalent
43-9041 Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	122	1592	11	130	\$21.12	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>▣ Production Occupations</b>						
51-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	329	5474	35	559	\$26.00	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8021 Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators	62	549	7	65	\$23.20	High school diploma or equivalent
51-8031 Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	117	1641	12	169	\$31.74	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>▣ Protective Service Occupations</b>						
33-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	51	642	5	56	\$56.94	High school diploma or equivalent
33-1012 First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	97	1416	9	133	\$66.14	High school diploma or equivalent
33-1021 First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers	44	592	4	63	\$47.10	Postsecondary nondegree award
33-1091 First-Line Supervisors of Security Workers	136	953	15	106	\$22.39	High school diploma or equivalent
33-2011 Firefighters	213	2893	22	311	\$29.14	Postsecondary nondegree award
33-3012 Correctional Officers and Jailers	406	5169	39	483	\$36.11	High school diploma or equivalent
33-3051 Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	462	6603	46	684	\$38.79	High school diploma or equivalent
<b>▣ Sales and Related Occupations</b>						
41-3021 Insurance Sales Agents	446	5342	39	452	\$21.87	High school diploma or equivalent
41-9021 Real Estate Brokers	228	1219	20	105	\$23.40	High school diploma or equivalent
41-9022 Real Estate Sales Agents	1117	5938	98	524	\$21.21	High school diploma or equivalent

Major Occupational Group	2024 Jobs (Subregion)	2024 Jobs (Region)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Subregion)	Avg. Annual Job Openings (Region)	Entry Level Wages (Region)	Typical Entry Level Education
<b>Transportation and Material Moving Occupations</b>						
53-1047 First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	560	10283	65	1196	\$24.63	High school diploma or equivalent
53-3032 Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2512	48288	323	5530	\$23.20	Postsecondary nondegree award
53-3051 Bus Drivers, School	150	2774	29	492	\$23.50	No formal educational credential
53-3052 Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	88	1520	13	249	\$23.18	High school diploma or equivalent
53-4031 Railroad Conductors and Yardmasters	15	768	1	66	\$41.77	High school diploma or equivalent

Source: Lightcast 2026.1