



# Labor Market Analysis: 0850.10 – Sign Language Interpreting 16.1603 – Sign Language Interpretation and Translation

## *Sign Language Interpreting – Certificate requiring 16 to <30 semester units*

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, June 2026

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Program Endorsement Criteria</b>			
<b>Supply Gap:</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Living Wage:</b> (Entry-Level, 25 <sup>th</sup> )	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Education:</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Emerging Occupation(s)</b>			
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupation<sup>1</sup> or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the one identified middle-skill occupation in the region. Furthermore, entry-level wages exceed the self-sufficiency standard wage in Los Angeles County, and one-third of current workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

**Recommendation:** Due to all three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

## Key Findings

### Supply Gap

- 312 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2029. This number is greater than the three-year average of 215 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.
  - However, the *interpreters and translators* (27-3091) SOC code includes all interpreting and translating jobs, including sign language interpreters. Since the

<sup>1</sup> Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor’s degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor’s degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education, but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

SOC code does not solely represent sign language interpreters, **the number of annual job openings is likely overstated.**

- Over the past 12 months, there were **252 online job postings related to sign language interpreters.** The highest number of job postings were for American Sign Language interpreters, sign language interpreters, educational interpreters, interpreters, and school sign language interpreters.

### **Living Wage**

- \$24.96 is the typical entry-level hourly wage for *interpreters and translators*, which is higher than Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly (\$24.03/hour). <sup>2</sup>

### **Educational Attainment**

- A bachelor's degree is the typical entry-level education for *interpreters and translators*, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 34% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.

### **Community college supply**

- 9 community colleges issued awards related to sign language interpreting in the greater LA/OC region.
- 78 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2023 and 2025.

### **Other postsecondary supply**

- 2 educational institutions in the LA/OC region have conferred bachelor's awards in programs related to sign language interpreting over the past three years.
- 137 awards were conferred on average each year by other postsecondary institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region between 2022 and 2024.

## **TARGET OCCUPATION**

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to one middle-skill occupation. Although this occupation typically requires a bachelor's degree, it is considered middle-skill because approximately one-third of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

- ***Interpreters and translators (27-3091)*** Interpret oral or sign language or translate written text from one language into another. <sup>3</sup>

## **OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND**

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *interpreters and translators*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to decrease by 3% through 2029. However, there will be more than 300 job openings per year through 2029 due to retirements and workers leaving the field. It is important to note

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<sup>2</sup> Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024.* <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

<sup>3</sup> [Interpreters and Translators \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/interpreters-and-translators)

that the *interpreters and translators* (27-3091) SOC code includes all interpreting and translating jobs and not solely sign language interpreting. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is likely overstated for sign language interpreters. The majority of jobs in 2024 for *interpreters and translators* (76%) were located in Los Angeles County.

**Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties<sup>4</sup>**

Geography	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024-2029 Change	2024-2029 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	2,647	2,537	(110)	(4%)	233
Orange	834	846	13	2%	79
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,481</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>(98)</b>	<b>(3%)</b>	<b>312</b>

### Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for *interpreters and translators* in Los Angeles County. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time.

**Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County<sup>5</sup>**

Occupation	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Aged 55 and older	% Full Time Workers
Interpreters and Translators	2,647	2,537	(4%)	233	32%	100%

## WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for *interpreters and translators* in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county’s self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

### Los Angeles County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *interpreters and translators* are \$24.96, which is above the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$47.05 (Exhibit 3).

<sup>4</sup> Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

### Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupation in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Interpreters and Translators	\$24.96	\$32.89	\$47.05	\$68,400

\*Rounded to the nearest \$100

### Orange County

The typical entry-level hourly wages for *interpreters and translators* are \$22.80, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn wages of \$45.59, which is higher than the self-sufficiency standard (Exhibit 4).

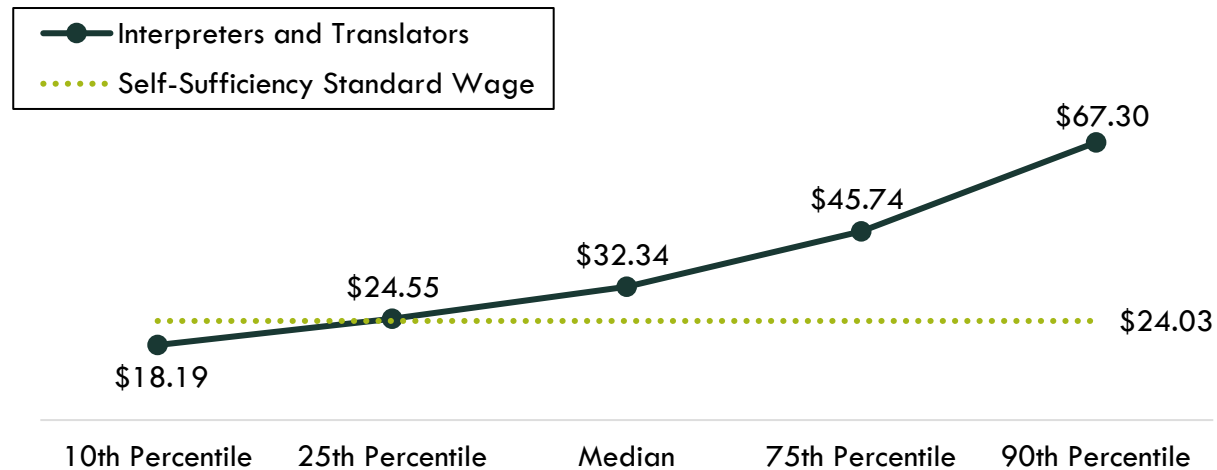
### Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupation in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Interpreters and Translators	\$22.80	\$30.69	\$45.59	\$63,800

\*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupation in this report are \$24.55; this is above the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupation in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

### Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for target occupation, Los Angeles and Orange counties



## JOB POSTINGS

There were 252 online job postings related to sign language interpreters listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupation in this report (Exhibit 6).

**Exhibit 6: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties**

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American sign language interpreters</li> <li>Sign language interpreters</li> <li>Educational interpreters</li> <li>Interpreters</li> <li>School sign language interpreters</li> <li>Certified sign language interpreters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American Sign Language (ASL)</li> <li>Language interpretation</li> <li>Sign language interpretation</li> <li>Hearing disorders</li> <li>Effective communication</li> <li>Network interface controllers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ProCare Therapy*</li> <li>BlazerJobs*</li> <li>Focus Interpreting*</li> <li>California State University-Long Beach</li> <li>Amergis*</li> <li>Soliant Health*</li> <li>Sunbelt Staffing*</li> <li>VocoVision*</li> </ul>

\*Staffing company

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 46% of the target job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 7 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

**Exhibit 7: Education levels requested in job postings for target occupation, Los Angeles and Orange counties**

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	36	31%
Associate degree	28	24%
High school diploma or vocational training	51	44%

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a bachelor's degree as the typical entry-level education for *interpreters and translators* (Exhibit 8). However, the national-level data indicates 34% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupation in this report:

**Exhibit 8: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics**

Occupation	Education Level
Interpreters and translators	Bachelor's degree

## EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

### Community College Supply

Exhibit 9 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Sign Language Interpreting (0850.10). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Mt. San Antonio, LA Pierce, and El Camino.

**Exhibit 9: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2023-2025**

TOP Code	Program	College	2022-23 Awards	2023-24 Awards	2024-25 Awards	3-Year Average
0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting	East LA	9	6	8	8
		El Camino	14	10	13	12
		LA Pierce	21	15	6	14
		Mt San Antonio	19	26	11	19
		Rio Hondo	1	3	1	2
		<b>LA Subtotal</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>54</b>
		Golden West	18	13	3	11
		Saddleback	4	4	11	6
		Santa Ana	-	-	2	1
		Santiago Canyon	9	7	1	6
		<b>OC Subtotal</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>
		<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>95</b>	<b>84</b>

Exhibit 10 displays the community college awards broken down by award type. In this case, the majority of awards issued by community colleges are associate degrees (56%).

**Exhibit 10: Community college awards by award type, 2023-2025**

Award Type	# of Awards	% of Awards
A.A./A.S. degrees	44	56%
Certificates	34	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Other Postsecondary Supply

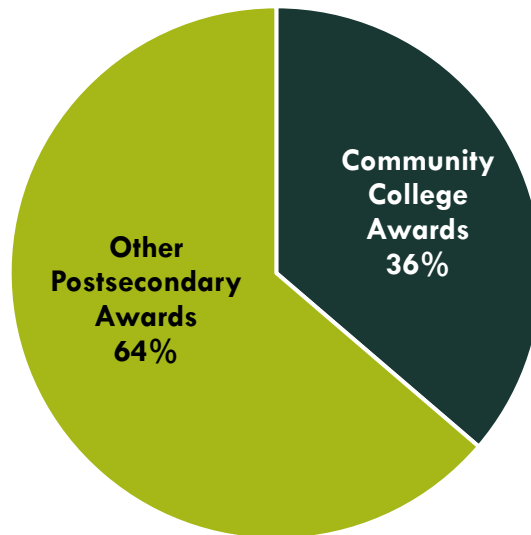
For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for sign language interpreting. Exhibit 11 shows the number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2022 to 2024. Between 2022 and 2024, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 137 bachelor's awards. There were no completions in the related CIP code: Sign Language Interpretation and Translation (16.1603).

**Exhibit 11: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2022-2024**

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	2023-24 Awards	3-Year Average
05.0211	Deaf Studies	CSU-Long Beach	42	27	25	31
		CSU-Northridge	128	99	89	105
<b>Supply Total/Average</b>			<b>170</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>137</b>

Exhibit 12 shows the proportion of community college awards conferred in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region compared to the number of other postsecondary awards for the programs in this report. The majority of awards conferred in these programs are awarded by other institutions in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

**Exhibit 12: Percentage of community college awards compared to other postsecondary institution awards in the Los Angeles/Orange County region**



**Contact information:**

Luke Meyer, Director

Los Angeles Center of Excellence

[Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu](mailto:Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu)

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**DATA SOURCES**

- O\*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

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