

Labor Market Analysis for Program Review:

Medical Coders in Greater Sacramento

Prepared by the North Far North Center of Excellence
June 2026



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Summary

The North Far North Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (NFN COE) prepared this report to provide an analysis of occupational demand and educational supply for selected occupations employed across the 22-county North Far North region. This report aims to determine if demand in the local labor market is unmet by the supply from existing community college programs and other postsecondary training providers, with a primary focus on training that leads to living wage jobs in middle-skilled occupations.¹

Key Findings

- **Medical coder jobs are projected to experience significant growth in Greater Sacramento, which is on par with growth in the state.** In both Greater Sacramento and California, medical coder jobs are projected to increase by 9%.
- **Medical coder jobs have strong wages that exceed the living wage for a single working adult.** Entry-level wages for medical coder jobs are between \$24.80 and \$35.94, which is above the living wage for a single working adult in the Los Rios Community College District of \$21.17 per hour.
- **Medical coding occupations align well with community college offerings.** Medical coding occupations require a postsecondary nondegree award for typical entry-level education, and between 23% and 57% of incumbent medical coders have some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.
- **There is a supply-demand gap for medical coding.** There are 152 annual openings and 104 annual awards, with 27 coming from community colleges.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the North Far North COE recommends that community colleges **proceed with creating new medical coding programs**. Key considerations include:

- Medical coding jobs have higher-than-average projected growth (9% by 2029) and high wages that exceed the living wage for a single working adult.
- Medical coding occupations align well with community college offerings, considering a postsecondary nondegree award is typically required for entry-level positions.
- A supply-demand gap exists for medical coding, with 152 annual openings and only 104 annual awards.

¹ Pursuant to California Education Code §78015, labor market information (LMI) is required for all new career education certificate and degree program proposals, and the North Far North Regional Consortium (NFNRC) requires LMI to come from the NFN COE. This report should serve to satisfy those requirements.

Introduction

The North Far North Center of Excellence (COE) was asked to provide labor market data to support a proposed new career education program or modifications to existing programs at a regional community college (see Appendix A for methodology and data sources).

This report focuses on the following Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) occupations and codes:

- Medical Records Specialists (29-2072)
- Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars (29-9021)

A review of related programs revealed the following Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) title(s) and code(s) are appropriate for inclusion in this report:

- Health Information Technology (1223.00)
- Health Information Coding (1223.10)

The corresponding Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) title(s) and code(s) are:

- Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician (51.0707)
- Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder (51.0713)

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 summarizes the five-year projected job growth for the targeted occupational groups in the Greater Sacramento subregion, the 22-county North Far North region, and California.²

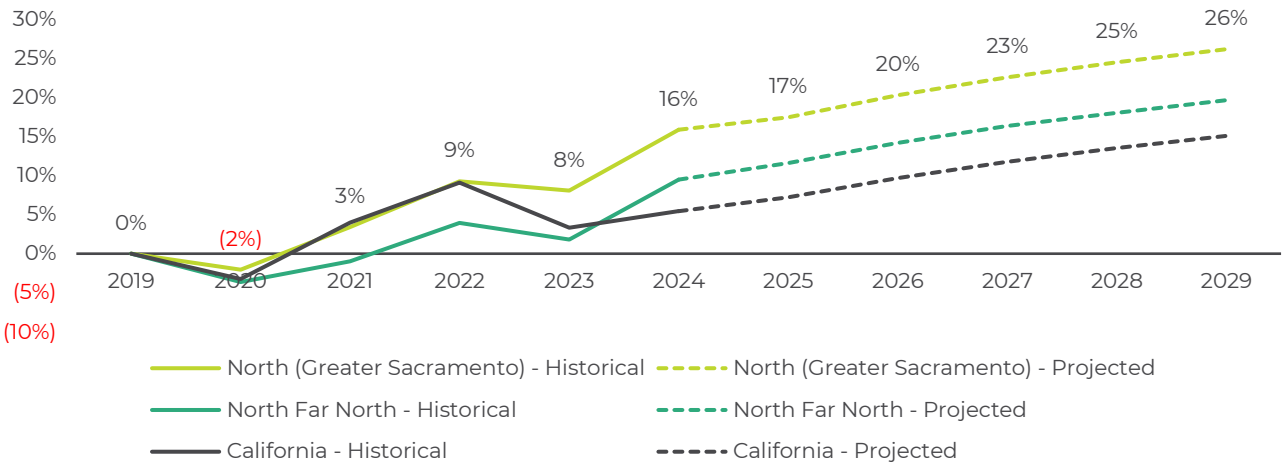
Exhibit 1. Current employment and projected occupational demand, 2024-2029

Occupational Group	2024 Jobs	2024-2029 Change	2024-2029 % Change	2024-2029 Annual Openings
Medical Records Specialists	1,563	128	8%	130
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	248	33	13%	22
Greater Sacramento	1,811	161	9%	152
Medical Records Specialists	1,955	170	9%	164
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	308	40	13%	27
North Far North	2,263	210	9%	191
Medical Records Specialists	20,366	1,700	8%	1,694
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	3,770	506	13%	333
California	24,136	2,206	9%	2,027

Exhibit 2 compares historical and projected annual change in employment for the period 2019 to 2029 with the base number of jobs in 2019 for Greater Sacramento, the 22-county North Far North region, and California.

² The 22-county North Far North is a dual region. It is represented by the North (Greater Sacramento) subregion that covers seven counties, including El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba, and the 15-county Far North subregion which includes Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity.

Exhibit 2. Changes in employment, 2019-2029

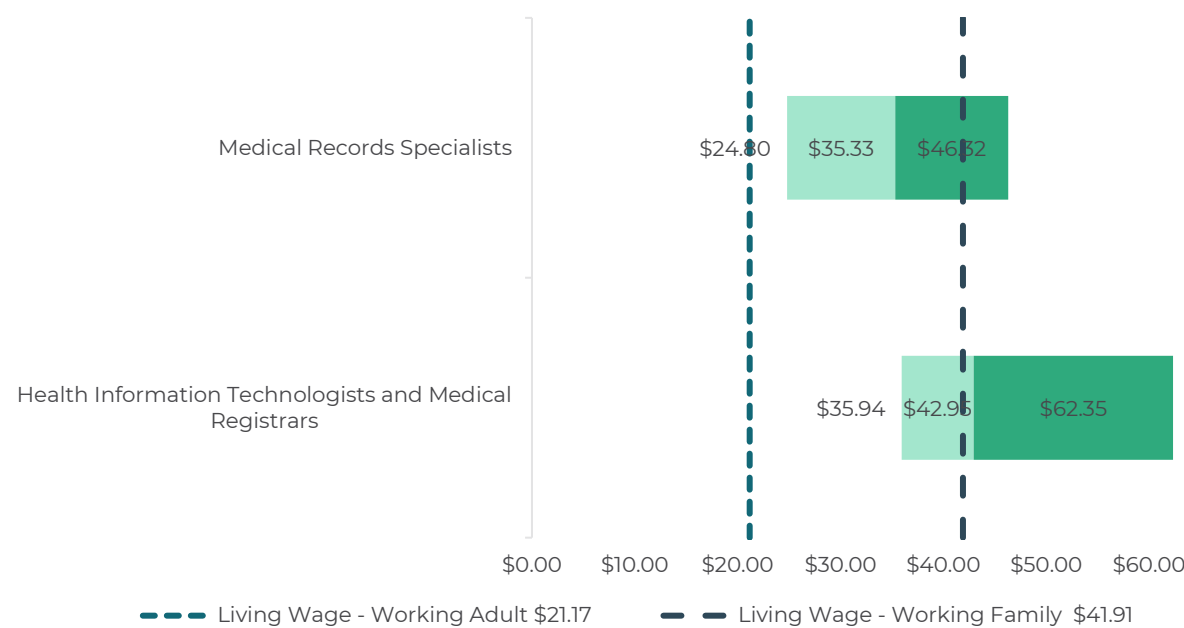


Earnings

Exhibit 3 compares the percentile hourly earnings for the selected occupations to the living wage for a single working adult and a working family residing in the county of the community college district that requested this report.^{3,4} Earnings data includes wages from employed and self-employed workers. Also, it's important to note that living wage thresholds vary by county, and in the Greater Sacramento subregion, range from \$17 to \$24 per hour for a single working adult.

Exhibit 3. Hourly earnings compared to the community college district's living wage

Requesting College	Living Wage – Working Adult	Living Wage – Working Family
Cosumnes River College	\$21.17	\$41.91



³ A “living wage” is defined as the level of income one working adult with no children must earn to meet basic needs, including food, housing, transportation, healthcare, taxes, and other miscellaneous basic needs. Please note that the 25th-percentile and 75th-percentile hourly wages are used as proxies for entry-level and experienced-level wages.

⁴ A “working family” is defined as one working adult and one infant (between the ages of 0 and 2 years).

Job Postings

Analysis of online job postings can offer additional insights into recent labor market changes not reflected in historical trends. However, it is important to note that job postings do not equate to actual labor market demand, which is based on projected annual job openings.

There are several limitations to interpreting online job postings. Employers may repost the same position multiple times to attract more applicants, or job postings may remain active even if the position is no longer being filled. Additionally, a single job posting can be used to hire for multiple openings, and not all job opportunities are advertised online. Despite these limitations, job posting analyses can be valuable for guiding community college curriculum development and identifying potential employers for targeted experiential learning opportunities.

The North Far North COE identified 344 online job postings for the selected occupations across the Greater Sacramento subregion. Job posting data comes from and represents unique advertisements posted online during the last 12 months, from June 2025 to May 2026.

Exhibit 4. Job postings by occupation

Occupation	Number of Job Postings	Share of Postings	Median Advertised Salary
Medical Records Specialists	287	83%	\$27.57
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	57	17%	\$26.95
Total	344	100%	\$27.57

Top employers

Exhibit 5 shows the employers with the most job postings for the selected occupations across Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 5. Employers with the most job postings

Employer	Number of Job Postings
Adventist Health	40
CommonSpirit Health	29
Sutter Health	12
UC Davis Health	9
Vituity	6
Mercy Health	6
Kaiser Permanente	5
CVS Health	5

Employer	Number of Job Postings
State of California	4
Applied Palliative and Hospice Services	4
Diagnostic Pathology Medical Group	4
One Community Health	4

Top titles

Exhibit 6 shows the job titles with the most job postings for the selected occupations across Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 6. Job titles with the most job postings

Job title	Number of Job Postings
Medical Records Assistants	39
Medical Billing Specialists	20
Coders	20
Certified Coders	16
Clinical Documentation Specialists	12
Health Information Management Technicians	11
Medical Billers	9
Business Officers	7
Billing Representatives	7
Medical Coders	6

Skills and qualifications

Exhibit 7 shows the most requested skills in job postings for the aligned occupations in Greater Sacramento.⁵

Exhibit 7. Most requested in-demand skills in job postings

Specialized Skills	Common or Employability Skills	Software and Technology Skills
Medical Records	Communication	Microsoft Office (Excel, Outlook, Word, PowerPoint)

⁵ Specialized skills are those primarily required to perform specific tasks in an occupation. Common skills are typically related to employability; these are skills that are prevalent across many occupations and usually include a mix of interpersonal attributes and soft skills. Software skills are specific to any software tool or programming component used to accomplish tasks in a job.

• Medical Terminology • Billing • ICD Coding (ICD-9/ICD-10) • Auditing • CPT Coding • Medicare • Anatomy • HIPAA Compliance • Revenue Cycle Management	• Detail Oriented • Management • Customer Service • Confidentiality • Research • Organizational Skills • Operations • Scheduling • Filing	• Epic EMR • Oracle Health HER • Productivity Software • eClinicalWorks • Reporting Tools • Spreadsheets • Dentrax
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Exhibit 8 shows the most requested certifications in job postings for the aligned occupations in Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 8. Most requested certifications in job postings

Certification	Number of Job Postings
Certified Coding Specialist (CCS)	65
Certified Coding Specialist – Physician Based (CCS-P)	50
Certified Professional Coder (CPC)	46
Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT)	43
Medical Coding Certification	42
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)	38
Certified Documentation Improvement Practitioner (CDIP)	19
Certified Clinical Documentation Specialist (CCDS)	18
Certified Outpatient Coder (COC)	18
Certified Interventional Radiology Cardiovascular Coder (CIRCC)	7
Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	6
Certified Professional Coder – Apprentice (CPC-A)	6

Exhibit 9 shows the employer-preferred minimum level of education in job postings related to the selected occupations in Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 9. Employer-preferred education levels for the studied occupations

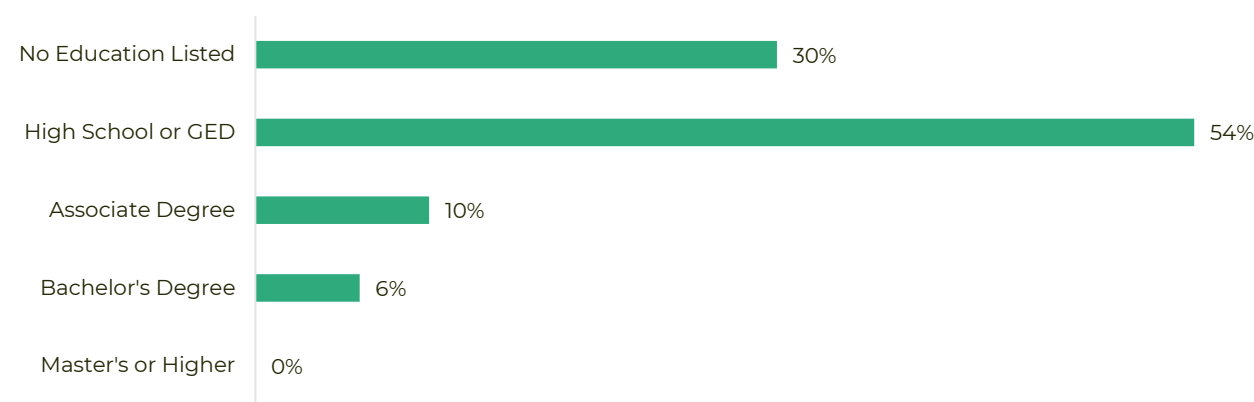
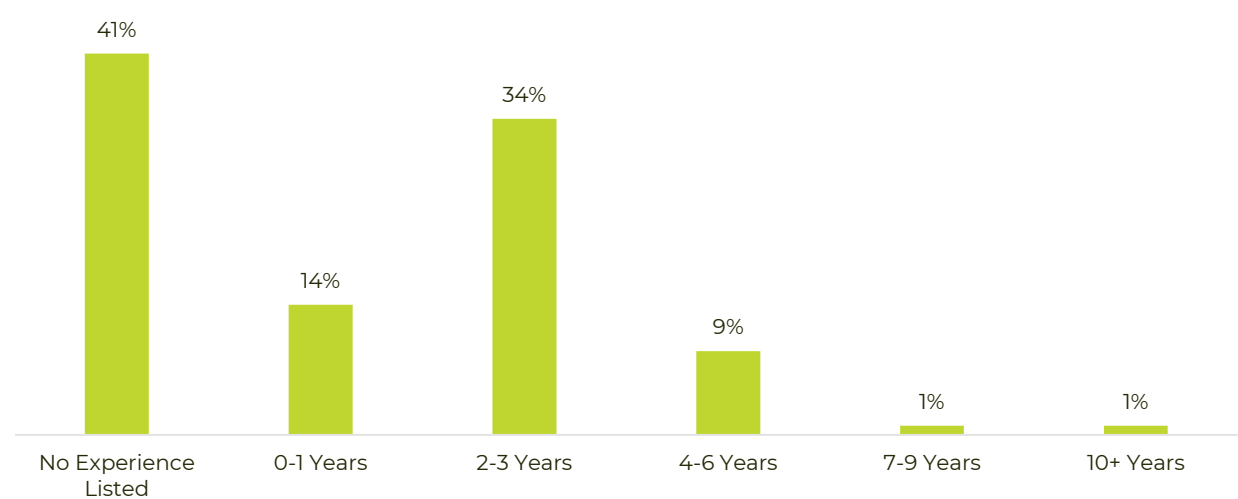


Exhibit 10 shows the employer-preferred minimum level of experience in job postings related to the selected occupations in Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 10. Employer-preferred experience levels for the studied occupations



Education and Training Requirements

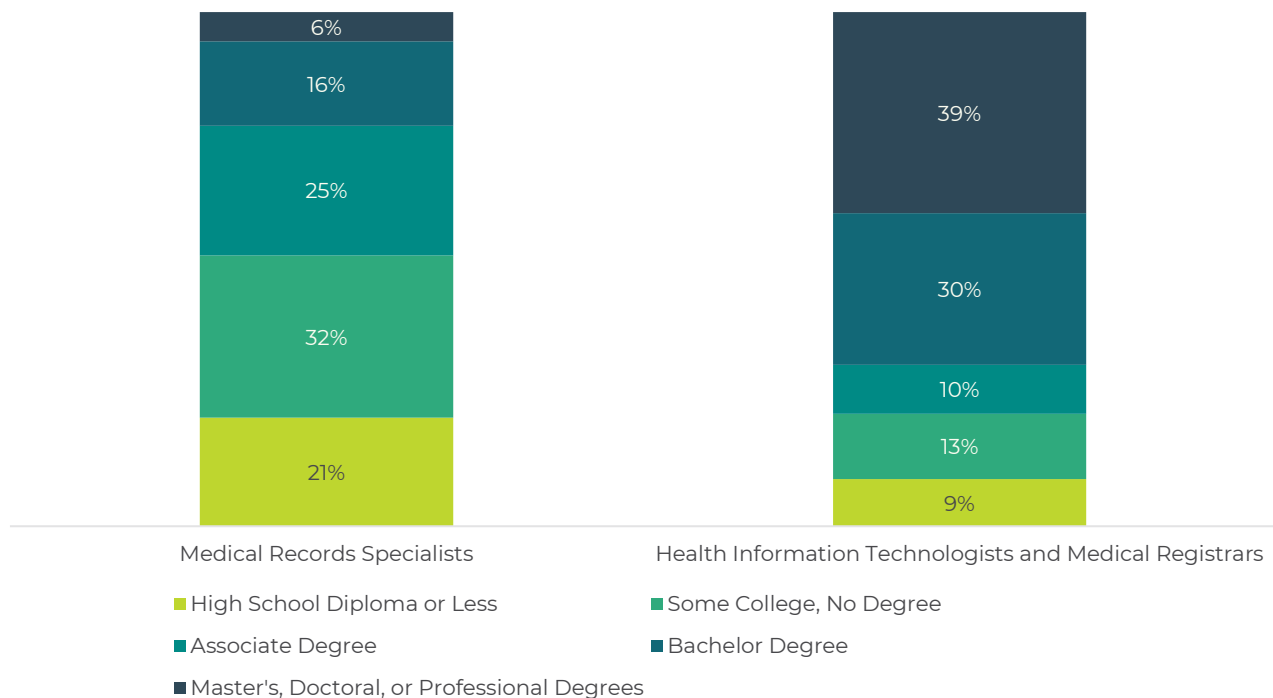
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) assigns each occupation a typical entry-level education, related work experience, and on-the-job training category in its projection data. Exhibit 11 summarizes these requirements by occupation.

Exhibit 11. Typical entry-level job requirements for the studied occupations

Occupation	Entry-Level Education	Work Experience	On-The-Job Training
Medical Records Specialists	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	None
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	None

The U.S. Census Bureau tracks the highest education level attained by workers in all occupations. Exhibit 12 presents this data for the current U.S. workforce in the studied occupations.

Exhibit 12. Educational attainment for workers 25 years and older by occupation, 2021-22



Third-Party Certifications

The proposed program at Cosumnes River College would satisfy the requirements for Certified Professional Coding (CPC) certification by the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC). To obtain the certification, students must pass an exam and have at least two years of coding experience. Those without two years of experience will earn the CPC-Apprentice (CPC-A) designation until the experience requirement is met.

Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards issued in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.

Community college supply

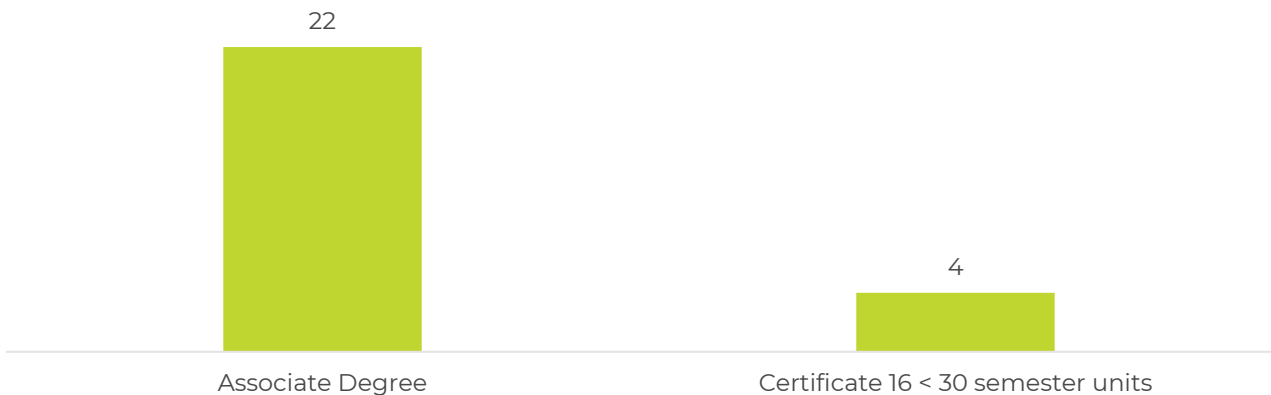
Exhibits 13 and 14 summarize the three-year average of awards (certificates and degrees) conferred by the Greater Sacramento community college programs relevant to the occupations studied.

Exhibit 13. Average annual community college awards by TOP program

TOP Program and Code	College	2022-23 Annual Awards	2023-24 Annual Awards	2024-25 Annual Awards	Three-Year Average Awards
Health Information Technology (1223.00)	Cosumnes River	29	17	21	22
Subtotal		29	17	21	22
Health Information Coding (1223.10)	Cosumnes River	5	3	5	4
Subtotal		5	3	5	4
Totals		34	20	26	27

Note: Values in the table are rounded to the nearest whole number. However, subtotals and totals are calculated using unrounded values.

Exhibit 14. Average annual community college awards by award type



Other postsecondary supply

Exhibit 15 summarizes the three-year average of awards conferred by postsecondary institutions outside of the community college system and located in Greater Sacramento.

Exhibit 15. Average annual community college awards by award type and program area

CIP Program and Code	Institution	Award Level	2021-2024 Average Annual Awards
Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician	Asher College	Certificate 1<2 yr	13
	Asher College	Associate	10
Subtotal			23
Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder (UEI College – Sacramento)	UEI College	Certificate 1<2 yr	54
Subtotal			54
Totals			77

Conclusion and Recommendations

Data insights

Demand— Medical coder jobs are projected to experience significant growth in Greater Sacramento, which is on par with growth in the state. In both Greater Sacramento and California, medical coder jobs are projected to increase by 9% through 2029.

Living Wage— Medical coder jobs have strong wages that exceed the living wage for a single working adult. Entry-level wages for medical coder jobs are between \$24.80 and \$35.94, which is above the living wage for a single working adult in Cosumnes River College's district of \$21.17 per hour.

Education— Medical coding occupations align well with community college offerings. Medical coding occupations require a postsecondary nondegree award for typical entry-level education, and between 23% and 57% of incumbent medical coders have some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Supply Gap—There is a supply-demand gap in medical coding. There are 152 annual openings and 104 annual awards, with 27 coming from community colleges.

Recommendation

Based on the current analysis, the North Far North COE recommends that community colleges **proceed** with creating new programs and modifying existing programs related to medical coding.

New Program Recommendation		
Proceed	Use Caution	Do Not Proceed
☒	☐	☐

Support for Program Modification	
Yes	No
☒	☐

Appendix A. Methodology and Data Sources

Labor market and educational supply data compiled in this report derive from a variety of sources. Occupations were identified by using the Center of Excellence TOP-to-CIP-to-SOC Crosswalk: <http://coeccc.net/>. This report's findings were primarily determined with labor market and educational supply data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the economic modeling firm and job postings aggregator Lightcast, and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Data Sources

The following table summarizes the data sources used in this study.

Data Type	Source
Labor Market Information and Job Postings	Traditional labor market information data is sourced from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm. Lightcast's occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and non-QCEW employee classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (self-employed and extended proprietors). For more information, see https://lightcast.io/ .
Living Wage	The living wage is derived from the Insight Center's California Family Needs Calculator, which measures the income necessary for an individual or family to afford basic expenses. The data assesses the cost of housing, food, childcare, health care, transportation, and taxes. The Chancellor's Office uses wage data to calculate the percentage of students who attained a regional living wage. For more information, visit https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California/ .
Typical Education Level, On-the-job Training, and Educational Attainment	The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) provides information about education and training requirements for hundreds of occupations. BLS uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education, work experience in a related occupation, and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data. For more information, visit https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/education/tech.htm .
Emerging Occupation Descriptions, Additional Education Requirements, and Employer Preferences	The O*NET database includes information on skills, abilities, knowledge areas, work activities, and interests associated with occupations. For more information, visit https://www.onetonline.org/help/online/ .
Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Estimates	The California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division is a source of labor market and workforce data. For more information, visit labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov .
Educational Supply	The CCCC Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes, and faculty and staff. For more information, visit https://datamart.cccco.edu. The Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory System (COCI) collects data on courses and programs offered by the California Community Colleges. For more information, visit https://coci2.ccctechcenter.org/. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) collects data from providers of postsecondary education, including the number of postsecondary awards earned (completions). For more information, visit https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data/survey-components/7/completions.
Student Metrics and Demographics	DataVista, a statewide data system supported by the Chancellor's Office and hosted by Cal-PASS Plus, provides data on progress, success, employment, and earnings outcomes for California community college students. For more information, visit https://datavista.cccco.edu/ .

Living Wage

Beginning in October 2024, to determine if an occupation meets the living wage threshold, the NFN COE compared the 25th percentile hourly wage of an occupation in the subregion to the living wage for a single adult (no dependents) living in the county where the requesting community college district was located.

This change aligned with the Chancellor's Office methodology for calculating the share of students earning a living wage after leaving the California Community College system, as reported in the Data Vista living wage metric (802S). For details, see the *DataVista Metric Definition Dictionary*.

The NFN COE updated this practice as needed to remain consistent with the Chancellor's Office. The table below summarizes hourly living wages by community college district and county.

2024 Single Adult Living Wage			
Community College District	County	Hourly	Annual
Butte-Glenn	Butte	\$16.77	\$35,416
Feather River	Plumas	\$15.11	\$31,909
Lake Tahoe	El Dorado	\$22.11	\$46,703
Lassen	Lassen	\$14.81	\$31,274
Los Rios	Sacramento	\$21.17	\$44,709
Mendocino-Lake	Mendocino	\$17.06	\$36,039
Redwoods	Humboldt	\$16.59	\$35,046
Shasta-Tehama-Trinity Joint	Shasta	\$16.99	\$35,874
Sierra Joint	Placer	\$23.92	\$50,519
Siskiyou Joint	Siskiyou	\$14.51	\$30,639
Yuba	Sutter	\$17.08	\$36,074
California Minimum Wages			
All industries, except fast food and healthcare (Effective January 2026)		\$16.90	\$35,152
Fast food (Effective April 2024)		\$20.00	\$41,600
Healthcare (Effective July 2025)		\$18.63-\$24.00, depending on facility type	\$38,750-\$49,920

Sources: University of Washington Self Sufficiency Standard and State of California Department of Industrial Relations, "Minimum Wage," https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/minimum_wage.htm

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