



Labor Market Analysis for Program Recommendation

Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations

Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion

Prepared by the Bay Region Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research

Certificate Program

August 2026

Recommendation Based on Labor Market Data: ☒ Yes ☐ With Reservations ☐ No		
	Earning Wage Meets Living Wage	Meets Demand
Bay Region	Entry Level Hourly Wage- \$30 Mid-Career Hourly Wage- \$34 Mid-Career Hourly Wage at or above the Bay Living Wage (\$27)? ☒ Yes ☐ No	Demand: 545 Supply: 62 (11% of Demand is Met) Gap: 483 In-Demand? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion	Entry Level Hourly Wage- \$26 Mid-Career Hourly Wage- \$28 Mid-Career Hourly Wage at or above the Subregion Living Wage (\$27)? ☒ Yes ☐ No	Demand: 50 Supply: 0 (0% of Demand is Met) Gap: 50 In-Demand? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Note: An occupation is considered to provide a living wage if the mid-career wage is at or above the amount required for a single adult to be economically self-sufficient within a specified region. As a rule of thumb, an occupation will be considered **in-demand** when the supply is less than 75% of the demand **and** the labor market gap exceeds 40 openings (a reasonable regional threshold for starting a new program), but this approach may not apply in all cases. For definitions of demand, supply, and living wage, please scroll to the bottom of the report under **Definitions**.

Recommendation

The labor market data supports this proposed program. The occupations meet both the Bay Region and Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion living wage at the mid-career level. An additional 483 students are needed in the Bay Region and 50 students in the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion to complete their program. Lastly, only 11% of labor market demand is being met in the Bay Region, and 0% of demand is being met in the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion overall.

Introduction

This report provides student outcomes data on employment and earnings for TOP 1222.00 - Physical Therapist Assistant programs in the state and region. It is recommended that these data be reviewed to better understand how outcomes for students taking courses on this TOP code compare to potentially similar programs at subregion in the state and region.

This report profiles Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the 12 county Bay Region and in the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion. The occupations classified as middle-skill occupations require a certificate, or an associate degree, or it may require a bachelor's degree, but 33% or fewer of current workers in these roles hold one. I

- **Physical Therapist Aides (31-2022):** Under close supervision of a physical therapist or physical therapy assistant, perform only delegated, selected, or routine tasks in specific situations. These duties include preparing the patient and the treatment area.
Typical Entry-Level Educational: High school diploma or equivalent
Skill Level: Middle-Skill
Work Experience Required: None
Percentage of individuals 25+ with an associate degree, certificate, or some postsecondary coursework as their highest level of education attainment: 58%
- **Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021):** Assist physical therapists in providing physical therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with state laws, assist in the development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, document the progress of treatment, and modify specific treatments in accordance with patient status and within the scope of treatment plans established by a physical therapist. Generally requires formal training.
Typical Entry-Level Educational: Associate's degree
Skill Level: Middle-Skill
Work Experience Required: None
Percentage of individuals 25+ with an associate degree, certificate, or some postsecondary coursework as their highest level of education attainment: 58%

Occupational Demand

Table 1. Employment Outlook for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Occupation	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	5-yr Change	5-yr % Change	5-yr Total Openings	Annual Openings	Entry Level Hourly	Mid-Career Hourly Wage
Physical Therapist Aides	1,326	1,385	58	4%	1,019	204	\$18	\$20
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,798	2,132	334	19%	1,703	341	\$38	\$45
Total	3,124	3,517	393	13%	2,722	545	\$30	\$34

Source: Lightcast 2026.3

The Bay Region includes: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma Counties

Table 2. Employment Outlook for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion

Occupation	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	5-yr Change	5-yr % Change	5-yr Total Openings	Annual Openings	Entry Level Hourly	Mid-Career Hourly Wage
Physical Therapist Aides	162	169	6	4%	123	25	\$17	\$18
Physical Therapist Assistants	128	154	25	20%	124	25	\$37	\$41
Total	290	323	33	11%	247	50	\$26	\$28

Source: Lightcast 2026.3

Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion includes: Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz Counties

Job Postings in the Bay Region and Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion

Table 3. Number of Job Postings by Occupation for the latest 12 months

Occupation	Bay Region	Santa Cruz and Monterey
Physical Therapist Assistants	2,811	841
Physical Therapist Aides	230	77

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Table 4a. Top Job Titles in Job Postings for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Title	Bay	Title	Bay
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,104	Physical Therapists/Physical Therapy Assistants	33
Physical Therapy Assistants	800	Rehabilitation Physical Therapy Assistants	33
Physical Therapy Aides	190	Allied Health Travel Physical Therapists	30
Skilled Nursing Facility Physical Therapy Assistants	108	Physical Therapy Technicians	27
Home Health Physical Therapy Assistants	108	Skilled Nursing Facility Physical Therapists	24
Home Health Physical Therapists	79	Physical Therapists/Rehabilitation Managers	21
Outpatient Physical Therapists	50	Physical Therapists	20
Chiropractic Assistants	41	Assistants	20
Travel Physical Therapist Assistants	39	Front Desk/Chiropractic Assistants	20

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Table 4b. Top Job Titles in Job Posting for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion

Title	Santa Cruz and Monterey	Title	Santa Cruz and Monterey
Physical Therapist Assistants	337	Physical Therapists/Physical Therapy Assistants	14

Title	Santa Cruz and Monterey	Title	Santa Cruz and Monterey
Physical Therapy Assistants	207	Chiropractic Assistants	14
Physical Therapy Aides	60	Travel Physical Therapist Assistants	13
Skilled Nursing Facility Physical Therapy Assistants	32	Physical Therapy Technicians	13
Home Health Physical Therapists	27	Allied Health Travel Physical Therapists	10
Outpatient Physical Therapists	21	Physical Therapists/Rehabilitation Managers	9
Rehabilitation Physical Therapy Assistants	20	Physical Therapists	7
Home Health Physical Therapy Assistants	17	Assistants	6
Skilled Nursing Facility Physical Therapists	16	Allied Health Physical Therapists	6

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Industry Concentration

Table 5. Industries Hiring for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Industry - 6 Digit NAICS (No. American Industry Classification) Codes	Jobs in Industry (2025)	Jobs in Industry (2030)	% Change (2025-30)	% Occupation Group in Industry (2025)
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	1,473	1,707	16%	47%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	313	300	-4%	10%
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	222	248	11%	7%
Hospitals (Local Government)	200	218	9%	6%
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	196	197	1%	6%
Home Health Care Services	166	225	35%	5%
Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals	108	133	24%	3%
HMO Medical Centers	93	103	11%	3%
Hospitals (State Government)	40	48	20%	1%
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	27	32	20%	1%

Source: Lightcast 2026.3

Table 6. Top Employers Posting Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region and the Santa Cruz and Monterey Subregion

Employer	Bay	Employer	Santa Cruz and Monterey
AMN Healthcare	127	AMN Healthcare	32
Medical Solutions Allied	90	CoreMedical Group	28
CoreMedical Group	63	Accountable Healthcare Staffing	25
Ardor Health Solutions	63	Ardor Health Solutions	24
Genesis HealthCare	63	Genesis HealthCare	23
Medical Solutions	57	CompHealth	21

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Educational Supply

There is one community college in the Bay Region issuing 19 awards on average annually (last 3 years ending 2024-25) on TOP 1222.00 - Physical Therapist Assistant. In the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion, there are no community colleges that issued awards on average annually (last 3 years) on this TOP code.

There are two other CTE educational institutions in the Bay Region issuing 43 awards on average annually (last 3 years ending 2023-24) on CIP 51.0806- Physical Therapy Assistant. There are no other CTE educational institutions in the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion issuing awards on average annually (last 3 years) on this CIP code.

Table 7a. Community College Awards on TOP 1222.00 - Physical Therapist Assistant in the Bay Region

College	Subregion	Associate Degree	Total
Ohlone	East Bay	19	19
Total	-	19	19

Source: Data Mart

Note: The annual average for awards is 2022-23 to 2025-25.

Table 7b. Other CTE Institutions Awards on CIP 51.0806- Physical Therapy Assistant. in the Bay Region

College	Subregion	Associate degree	Total
Carrington College-Pleasant Hill Campus	East Bay	19	19
Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts	Mid-Peninsula	24	24
Total	-	43	43

Source: IPEDS

Note: The annual average for awards is 2021-22 to 2023-24.

Gap Analysis

Based on the data included in this report, there is a labor market gap in the Bay Region with 545 annual openings for the Physical Therapy Assistant occupational cluster and 62 annual (3-year average) awards for an annual undersupply of 483 students. In the Santa Cruz and Monterey subregion, there is also a gap with 50 annual openings and no annual (3-year average) awards for an annual undersupply of 50 students.

Student Outcomes

Table 8. Four Employment Outcomes Metrics for Students Who Took Courses on TOP 1222.00 - Physical Therapist Assistant

Metric Outcomes	Bay All CTE Program	State 1222.00	Bay 1222.00	Santa Cruz and Monterey 1222.00
Students with a Job Closely Related to Their Field of Study	75%	76%	NA	NA
Median Annual Earnings for SWP Exiting Students	\$58,379	\$45,393	\$63,889	NA
Median Change in Earnings for SWP Exiting Students	31%	58%	96%	NA
Exiting Students Who Attained the Living Wage	50%	50%	54%	NA

Source: DataVista Program Median of 2020 to 2022.

Skills, Certifications and Education

Table 9. Top Skills in Job Postings for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Skill	Posting	Skill	Posting
Physical Therapy	2,355	Direct Patient Care	196
Rehabilitation	983	Medical Records	179
Treatment Planning	739	Infection Control	171
Exercise Therapy	459	Caregiving	157
Home Health Care	430	Medical Ultrasonography	147
Patient Treatment	403	Functional Training	134
Patient Education And Counseling	365	Billing	131
Patient Assistance	265	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	131
Nursing	222	Geriatrics	130
Orthopedics	205	Patient Observation	124

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Table 10. Certifications in Job Postings for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Certification	Posting	Certification	Posting
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	390	American Red Cross CPR Certification	11
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	364	Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Certification	6
First Aid Certification	32	American Red Cross (ARC) Certification	4
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification	18		

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Table 11. Education Requirements for Physical Therapy Assistant Occupations in the Bay Region

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Total
High school or GED	162	21%
Associate degree	462	59%
Bachelor's degree & higher	159	20%

Source: Lightcast 2026.3; "Job Posting Analytics." Aug. 2025 - Jul. 2026

Note: 76% of records have been excluded because they do not include a degree level. As a result, the chart above may not be representative of the full sample.

Methodology

Occupations for this report were identified by use of job descriptions and skills listed in O*Net. Labor demand data is sourced from Lightcast occupation and job postings data. Educational supply and student outcomes data is retrieved from multiple sources, including CCCCCO Data Mart and CTE Launchboard.

Definitions

Demand refers to average annual openings which includes a combination of both [new jobs and replacement jobs](#) between 2025 to 2030. New jobs represent the total number of additional workers required in an occupation, calculated as the difference between the current number of workers and the projected number of unfilled positions. Replacements are jobs that will need to be filled by [new hires](#) due to existing workers leaving the occupation. The average annual openings figure is derived by dividing total openings (2025 to 2030) by five years.

Supply refers to the average number of [graduates](#) between academic years 2021–2022 and 2023–2024. Graduates include students from community colleges, other two-year private and public institutions, as well as four-year institutions.

Living wage refers to the amount of income required for working families to meet basic needs at a minimally adequate level, considering family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs based on the Self-Sufficiency Standard methodology.

Entry-level wages are the hourly earnings paid to workers who are newly entering an occupation.

Mid-career wages are the hourly earnings paid to workers who have accumulated several years of experience in an occupation, reflecting increased productivity, skill proficiency, and responsibility beyond entry-level roles but short of late-career or senior positions.

Sources

O*Net Online

Lightcast

CTE LaunchBoard www.calpassplus.org

Statewide CTE Outcomes Survey

Employment Development Department Unemployment Insurance Dataset

CCCCCO Data Mart

Contacts

For more information, please contact:

- Yumi Huang, Research Analyst, Bay Region Center of Excellence, yumi@baccc.net or (831) 275-0043
- Marcela Reyes, Director, Research and Center of Excellence, marcela@baccc.net or (831) 219-8875