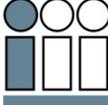


Interpreters and Translators

Labor Market Analysis: Imperial County

April 2025

Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL OF EDUCATION
 Proceed with Caution	 	 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Some College or Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> HS Diploma or Equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than a HS Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship
SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS	
<p>N/A</p>	<p>LOW</p> 	<p>LOW</p> 	

The San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) developed this brief to assist the region’s community colleges with strategic planning and program development. According to available data, *Interpreters and Translators* in Imperial County have a labor market demand of two annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in Imperial County is 14 annual job openings), and no institutions supply awards for this occupation, suggesting that there is a supply gap in the labor market. Entry-level wages are above the living wage. This brief recommends that the colleges proceed with caution developing a new program for this occupation because 1) there is a supply gap in the county; 2) this occupations’ entry-level wages are above the living wage; 3) no institution provides training for the occupation. However, annual job openings is low.

Introduction

This report provides labor market information in Imperial County for the following occupational code in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)¹ system:

Interpreters and Translators (SOC 27-3091): Interpret oral or sign language, or translate written text from one language into another. Sample reported job titles include:

- Deaf Interpreter
- Court Interpreter
- Spanish Interpreter
- Medical Interpreter
- American Sign Language Interpreter
- Technical Translator
- Spanish Translator
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Linguist

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2024 and 2029, *Interpreters and Translators* are projected to increase by **one** net job or **five** percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in Imperial County will need to hire **two** workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.

Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for *Interpreters and Translators* (2024-2029)²

Occupational Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024 – 2029 Net Jobs Change	2024 - 2029 % Net Jobs Change	Annual Job Openings (Demand)
Interpreters and Translators	20	21	1	5%	2

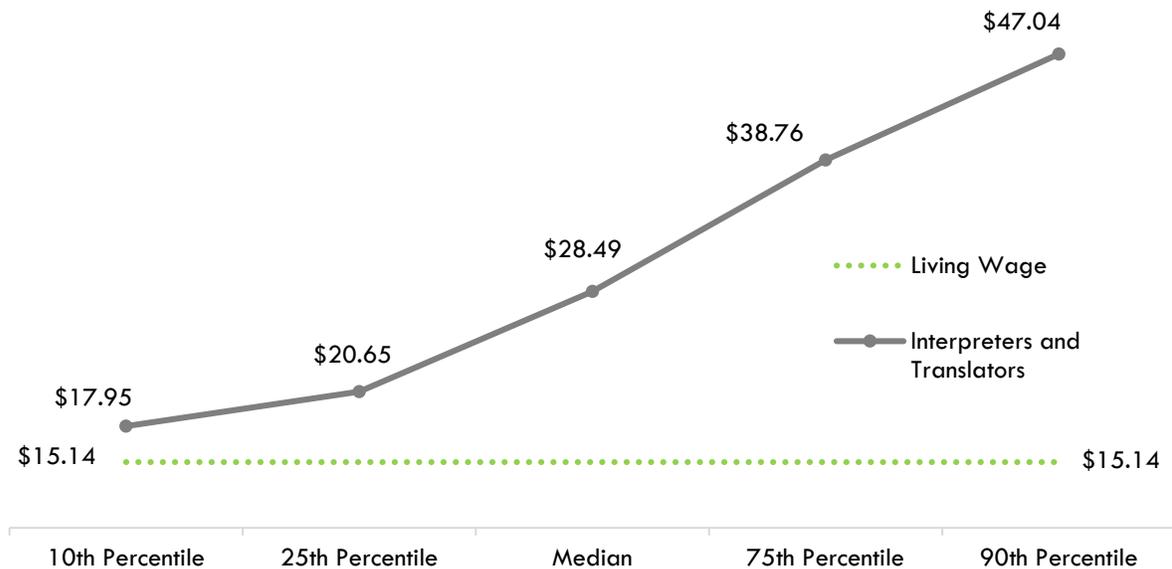
¹ The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating or disseminating data. <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>.

² Lightcast 2025.01; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Earnings

According to traditional³ labor market information (LMI), entry-level hourly earnings for *Interpreters and Translators* were \$17.95—or \$37,336.00 annual salary⁴; this is more than the living wage for a single adult in Imperial County, which is \$15.14 per hour (Exhibit 2).⁵

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings⁶ for *Interpreters and Translators* in Imperial County⁷



In online job postings, however, employers advertised between \$27 to \$35 per hour between January 1, 2022 and December 30, 2024 for *Interpreters and Translators* in Imperial County (Exhibit 3).⁸ This suggests a potential difference between reported earnings across the workforce and the initial compensation offered in the job market, as demonstrated in the previous exhibit.

³ Traditional LMI is generally historical data captured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or the California Employment Development Department (EDD). It does not account for recent technological, economic, or legislative changes that may affect labor market demand and wages.

⁴ Annualized salaries assume a full-time position with 2,080 hours. Multiplying the hourly wage with 2,080 yields the annual salary.

⁵ Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024. selfsufficiencystandard.org/California.

⁶ 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.

⁷ Lightcast 2025.01; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

⁸ Lightcast 2025.01; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

Exhibit 3: Entry-Level Advertised Salaries in Online Job Postings for *Interpreters and Translators* in Imperial County (2022-2024)*



*Hourly wages are rounded to the nearest dollar amount.

Expected Level of Education

According to traditional LMI (data reported to EDD and BLS), *Interpreters and Translators* have a national educational attainment of a [bachelor’s degree](#) (Exhibit 4).⁹

Exhibit 4: National Educational Attainment for *Interpreters and Translators*¹⁰

Occupational Title	Typical Entry-Level Education
Interpreters and Translators	Bachelor’s degree

Similarly, online job postings between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024 in Imperial County had a [high school or GED](#) as the most requested educational requirement for *Interpreters and Translators*; however, employers also expected the following certifications (Exhibit 5).¹¹

Exhibit 5: Top Certifications for *Interpreters and Translators* in Imperial County in Online Job Postings (2022-2024)¹²

1. Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)
2. Court Interpreter Certification

⁹ Lightcast 2025.01; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.
¹⁰ Lightcast 2025.01; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.
¹¹ Lightcast 2025.01; “Job Posting Analytics.” 2022-2024.
¹² Lightcast 2025.01; “Job Posting Analytics.” 2022-2024.

Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. There are **two** TOP codes and **three** CIP codes related to *Interpreters and Translators* (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Related TOP and CIP Codes for *Interpreters and Translators*¹³

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting
TOP 2140.00	Legal and Community Interpretation
CIP 16.0103	Language Interpretation and Translation
CIP 16.1603	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation
CIP 22.0304	Court Interpreter

According to TOP data, **no** community college or non-community college supplies the region with awards for this occupation (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions (Program Year 2020-21 Through Program Year 2023-24 Average)

TOP6 or CIP Code	TOP6 or CIP Program Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY20-21 to PY22-23)	Total Average Supply (PY20-21 to PY22-23)
0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting	0	0	0
2140.00	Legal and Community Interpretation	0	0	
16.0103	Language Interpretation and Translation	0	0	
16.1603	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation	0	0	
22.0304	Court Interpreter	0	0	
			Total	0

¹³ This brief uses a conservative estimate of program supply and only calculates awards from the TOP code listed in Exhibit 6.

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand with labor supply¹⁴ suggests that there is a small **supply gap** for this occupation in Imperial County, with **two** annual openings and **zero** awards. Comparatively, there are **1,175** annual openings in California and **394** awards, suggesting that there is an **supply gap** across the state (Exhibit 8).¹⁵

Exhibit 8: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Annual Awards)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
Imperial	2	0	2
California	1,175	394	781

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

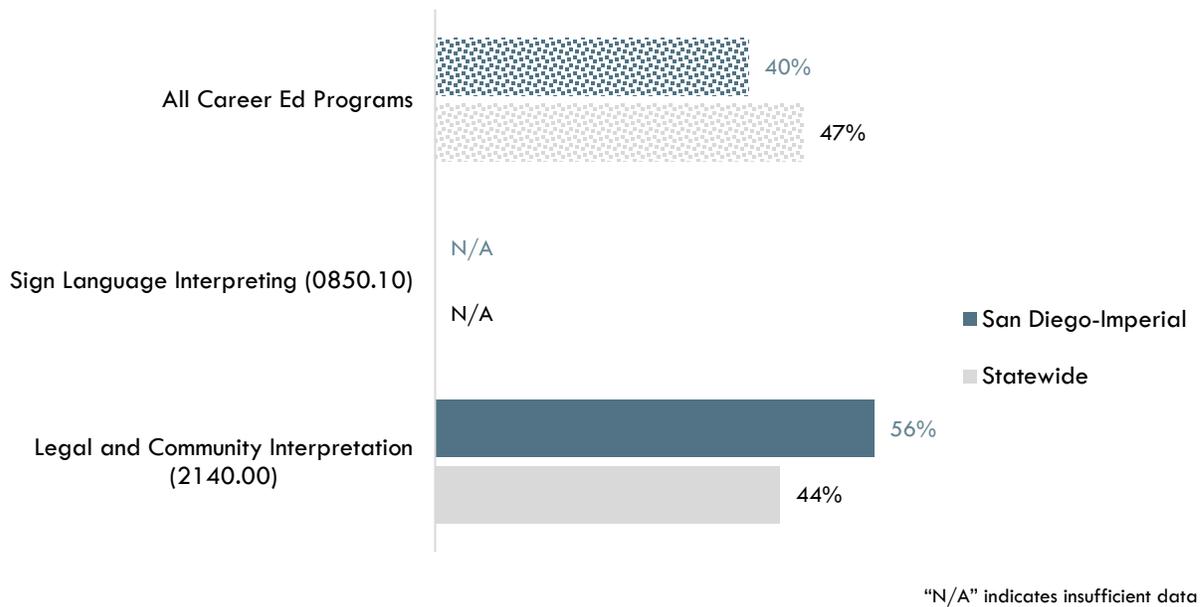
¹⁴ Labor supply can be found from two different sources: Lightcast or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. Lightcast uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

¹⁵ "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coecc.net/our-resources.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

According to the California Community Colleges DataVista, 56 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a program related to *for Interpreters and Translators*, compared to 44 percent statewide and 47 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 9).¹⁶

Exhibit 9: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program, PY2022-23¹⁷

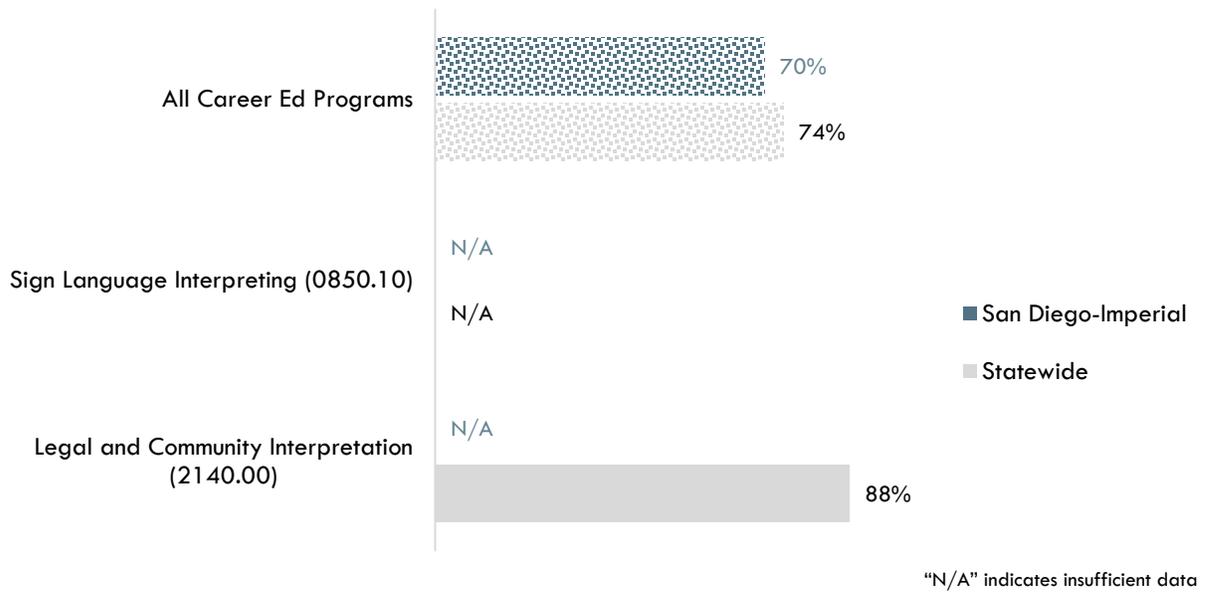


¹⁶ DataVista, California Community Colleges, datavista.cccco.edu/.

¹⁷ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2022-23. Among completers and skills builders who exited, the percentage of students who attained a living wage.

According to the California Community Colleges DataVista, 88 percent of students statewide obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a program related to *Interpreters and Translators*, compared to 74 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 10).¹⁸

Exhibit 10: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program, PY2021-22¹⁹



¹⁸ DataVista, California Community Colleges, datavista.cccco.edu/.

¹⁹ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2021-22. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.

Employers

Between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024, the top five employers in Imperial County for *Interpreters and Translators* were [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#), [Imperial Valley College](#), [Superior Court California](#), [Flex](#), and [Kace](#) based on online job postings (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11: Top Employers for Interpreters and Translators in Imperial County²⁰

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Bureau of Investigation • Imperial Valley College • Superior Court California • Flex • Kace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Judge Group • Lee Company • El Centro Regional Medical Center • Union Elementary School • In Compass Health

Skills

Exhibit 12 lists the top specialized, soft, and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024.

Exhibit 12: Top Skills for Interpreters and Translators in Imperial County²¹

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Translation • Language Interpretation • Cybercrime • Human Trafficking Issues • American Sign Language • Counterintelligence • Espionage • Bilingual (Spanish/English) • Farsi Language • Somali Language • Punctuation and Capitalization • Vocabulary • Lecturing • Sign Language Interpretation • Court Proceedings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language • Communication • Spanish Language • Foreign Language • Writing • Grammar • Interpersonal Communications • Investigation • Tactfulness • Patience • Confidentiality • Haitian Creole • Arabic Language • French Language • Pashto Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Office

²⁰ Lightcast 2025.01; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

²¹ Lightcast 2025.01; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

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