








Medical Appliance Technicians

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

November 2025

Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL OF EDUCATION
 Do Not Proceed with New Program	 	 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Some College or Certificate <input checked="" 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	
The COE defers to the region	LOW 	LOW 	

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, *Medical Appliance Technicians* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 35 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 289 annual job openings), and one institution supplies 13 awards for this occupation. Entry-level, median, and experienced wages are below the living wage. This brief recommends that the colleges do not proceed with developing a new program and defers to the region for a program modification for this occupation because although 1) a supply gap exists for this position, 2) a low number of annual openings exist, and 3) entry-level, median, and experienced wages are below the living wage.

Additionally, online job posting data show that the related job title Orthopedic Technicians, which falls within the broader Medical Appliance Technicians SOC (51-9082), advertised higher wages between \$24 and \$28 per hour during the same period—indicating that certain specialized roles within this occupation may offer stronger wage potential due to higher skill requirements or niche demand.

## Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational code in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)<sup>1</sup> system:

**Medical Appliance Technicians (SOC 51-9082):** Construct, maintain, or repair medical supportive devices such as braces, orthotics and prosthetic devices, joints, arch supports, and other surgical and medical appliances. Sample reported job titles include:

- Prosthetics Technician
- Prosthetics Fabrication Technician
- Orthotic Fabricator Technician
- Hearing Aid Repair Technician
- Prosthetic Technician
- Orthopedic Technician
- Orthotics Fitter
- Orthopaedic Technician
- Registered Prosthetic Orthotic Technician
- Prosthetic Lab Technician

## Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2024 and 2029, *Medical Appliance Technicians* are projected to decrease by **five** net jobs or **two** percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire **35** 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 Medical Appliance Technicians (2024-2029)<sup>2</sup>**

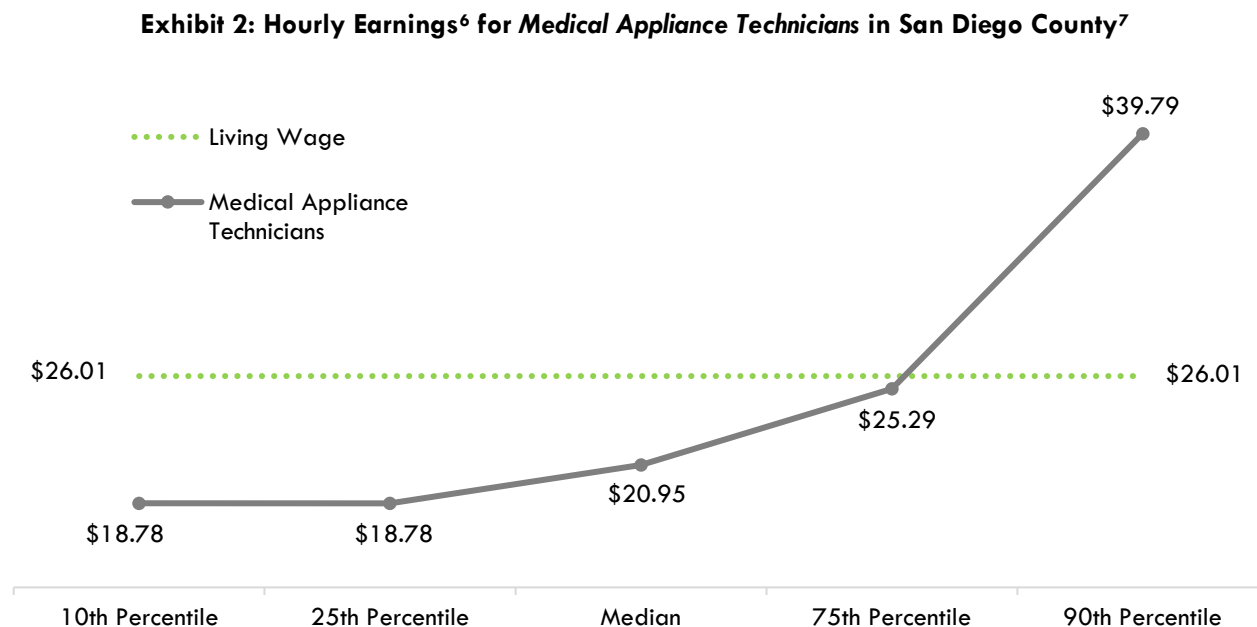
Occupational Title	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	2024 - 2029 Net Jobs Change	2024 - 2029 % Net Jobs Change	Annual Job Openings (Demand)
Medical Appliance Technicians	316	311	-5	-2%	35

<sup>1</sup> 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/>.

<sup>2</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

## Earnings

According to traditional<sup>3</sup> labor market information (LMI), entry-level hourly earnings for *Medical Appliance Technicians* were \$18.78—or \$39,062.40 annual salary<sup>4</sup>; this is less than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$26.01 per hour (Exhibit 2).<sup>5</sup>



In online job postings, employers advertised \$19 per hour between January 1, 2022 and December 30, 2024 for *Medical Appliance Technicians* in San Diego County (Exhibit 3);<sup>8</sup> This indicates that advertised wages have remained stable in recent years, suggesting limited wage growth despite ongoing labor market adjustments that may not yet be reflected in traditional LMI sources.

It is important to note that *Medical Appliance Technicians* represent the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC 51-9082) category, which includes multiple related job titles. One of these job titles, Orthopedic Technicians, when separated in online postings, advertised wages between \$24 to \$28 per hour over the same period (Exhibit 3). This suggests that some specialized job titles within the broader SOC may command higher wages due to specific skill requirements or labor market demand not captured in the aggregate LMI data.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

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

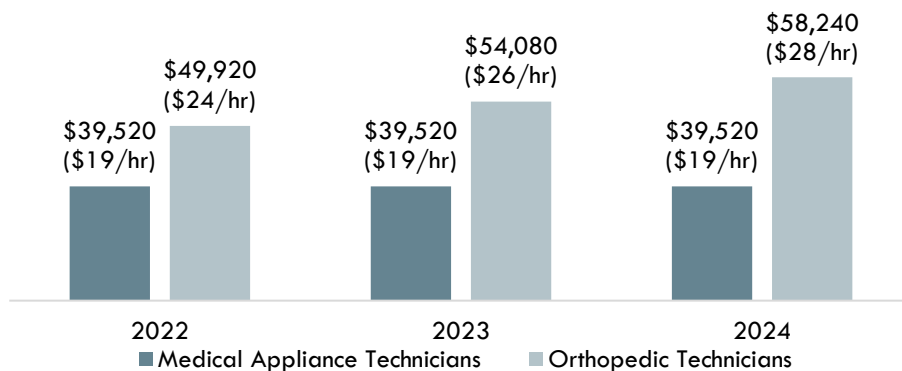
<sup>5</sup> Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024. [selfsufficiencystandard.org/California](https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California).

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>8</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

**Exhibit 3: Entry-Level Advertised Salaries in Online Job Postings for *Medical Appliance Technicians* (SOC 51-9082) and *Orthopedic Technicians* (Job Title) in San Diego 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), *Medical Appliance Technicians* have a national educational attainment of a [high school diploma or equivalent](#) (Exhibit 4).<sup>9</sup>

**Exhibit 4: National Educational Attainment for *Medical Appliance Technicians*<sup>10</sup>**

Occupational Title	Typical Entry-Level Education
Medical Appliance Technicians	High school diploma or equivalent

Similarly, online job postings between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024 in San Diego County had a [high school or GED](#) as the most requested educational requirement for *Medical Appliance Technicians*; however, employers also expected the following certifications (Exhibit 5).<sup>11</sup>

**Exhibit 5: Top Certifications for *Medical Appliance Technicians* in San Diego County in Online Job Postings (2022-2024)<sup>12</sup>**

1. Registered Orthopedic Technologist
2. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
3. Security Clearance
4. Six Sigma Certification
5. National Board For Certification In Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) Certified
6. Forklift Certification
7. Oracle Certified Master (OCM)

<sup>9</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>10</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>11</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

<sup>12</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; "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 is **one** TOP code and **two** CIP codes related to *Medical Appliance Technicians* (Exhibit 6).

**Exhibit 6: Related TOP and CIP Codes for Medical Appliance Technicians<sup>13</sup>**

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 1214.00	Orthopedic Assistant
CIP 51.2307	Orthotist/Prosthetist
CIP 51.2312	Assistive/Augmentative Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering

According to TOP data, **one** community college supplies San Diego County with awards for this occupation: **Grossmont College**. According to CIP data, **zero** non-community-college institutions supply the region with awards (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 PY23-24)
1214.00	Orthopedic Assistant	13	0	13
	Grossmont	13	0	
	• Associate degree	6	0	
	• Certificate 30 < 60 units	2	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	5	0	
<b>Total</b>				<b>13</b>

<sup>13</sup> 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 supply<sup>14</sup> suggests that there is a **supply gap** for this occupation in San Diego County, with **35** annual openings and **13** awards. Comparatively, there are **190** annual openings in California and **48** awards, suggesting that there is a **supply gap** across the state (Exhibit 8).<sup>15</sup>

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

	<b>Demand</b> (Annual Openings)	<b>Supply</b> (Annual Awards)	<b>Supply Gap or Oversupply</b>
San Diego	35	13	<b>22</b>
California	190	48	<b>142</b>

**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.

<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, [coeccc.net/our-resources](http://coeccc.net/our-resources).

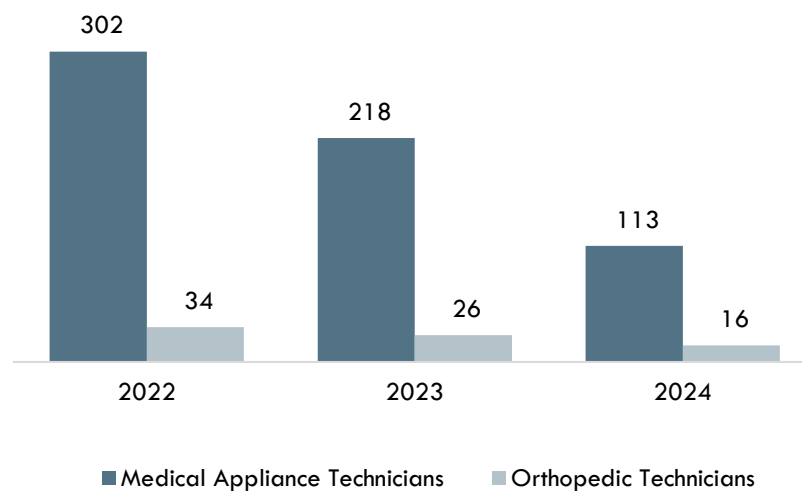
## Other LMI to Consider for Program Development

### Online Job Postings

This report analyzes not only historical and projected (traditional LMI) data, but also recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight about recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical data. Between 2022 and 2024, there was an average of 211 online job postings per year for *Medical Appliance Technicians* in San Diego County. During the same period, employers also posted an average of 25 online job postings per year for the job title *Orthopedic Technicians* (Exhibit 9).

Please note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (see Exhibit 1). While this brief includes online jobs postings data to help with curriculum development, the community colleges should note that this type of data is impacted by several variables: employers may post a position multiple times to increase the pool of applicants; a job posting can remain posted after a business decides not to fill a position; or an employer may use one posting to fill multiple positions, for example.

**Exhibit 9: Number of Online Job Postings for *Medical Appliance Technicians* (SOC 51-9082) and *Orthopedic Technicians* (Job Title) in San Diego County (2022-2024)<sup>16</sup>**

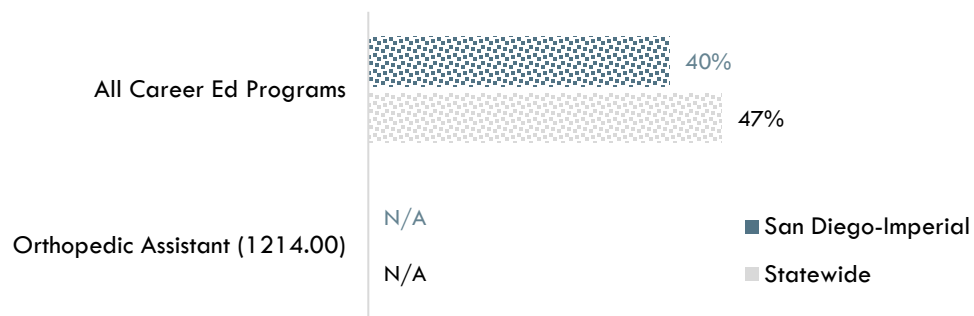


<sup>16</sup> Lightcast; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

## Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

There is insufficient data available in the California Community Colleges DataVista regarding students in the San Diego-Imperial region who earned a living wage after completing an Orthopedic Assistant (TOP 1214.00) program, compared to 47% of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 10).<sup>17</sup>

**Exhibit 10: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage After Completing an Orthopedic Assistant (TOP 1214.00) Program, PY2022-23<sup>18</sup>**



"N/A" indicates insufficient data

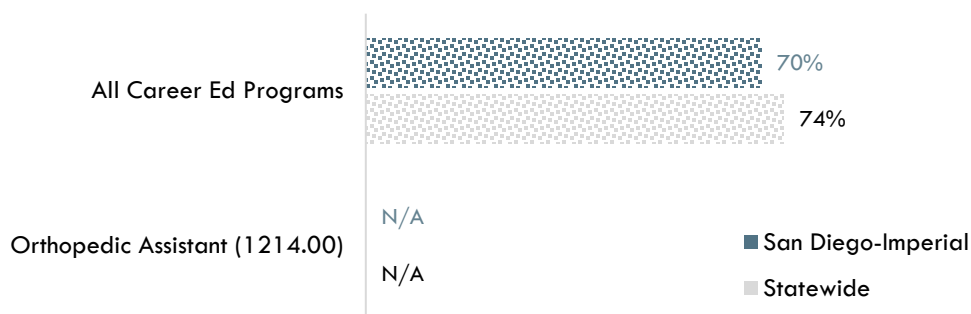
<sup>17</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](https://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>18</sup> 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.



There is insufficient data available in the California Community Colleges DataVista regarding students statewide who obtained a job closely related to their field of study after an Orthopedic Assistant (TOP 1214.00) program, compared to 74% of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 11).<sup>19</sup>

**Exhibit 11: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study After Completing an Orthopedic Assistant (TOP 1214.00) Program, PY2021-22<sup>20</sup>**



"N/A" indicates insufficient data

## Employers

Between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024, the top five employers in San Diego County for *Medical Appliance Technicians* were [Aerotek](#), [Online Technical Services](#), [Adecco](#), [Kaiser Permanente](#), and [Eastridge](#) based on online job postings (Exhibit 12).

**Exhibit 12: Top Employers for Medical Appliance Technicians in San Diego County<sup>21</sup>**

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerotek</li> <li>• Online Technical Services</li> <li>• Adecco</li> <li>• Kaiser Permanente</li> <li>• Eastridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marquee Staffing</li> <li>• CorTech</li> <li>• Kelly Services</li> <li>• Quidel Corporation</li> <li>• ManpowerGroup</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](https://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

## Skills

Exhibit 13 lists the top specialized and soft skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024; Software Skills are not listed because percent of total postings for all software skills that appeared in online job postings were less than 10 percent.

**Exhibit 13: Top Skills for Medical Appliance Technicians in San Diego County<sup>22</sup>**

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical Devices</li><li>• Medical Device Assembly</li><li>• Microscopy</li><li>• Standard Operating Procedure</li><li>• Current Good Manufacturing Practices</li><li>• Good Documentation Practices</li><li>• Good Manufacturing Practices</li><li>• Development Environment</li><li>• Cleanrooms</li><li>• Medical Device Manufacturing</li><li>• Prototyping</li><li>• Network Routing</li><li>• Assembly Lines</li><li>• Hand Tools</li><li>• Automation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Packaging And Labeling</li><li>• Communication</li><li>• Operations</li><li>• English Language</li><li>• Detail Oriented</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N/A</li></ul>

<sup>22</sup> Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022-2024.

Prepared by:

Tina Ngo Bartel, Executive Director ([tngobartel@miracosta.edu](mailto:tngobartel@miracosta.edu))

John Edwards, Research Analyst ([jedwards@miracosta.edu](mailto:jedwards@miracosta.edu))

Tasi Rodriguez, Regional Professional Development Manager ([trodriguez@miracosta.edu](mailto:trodriguez@miracosta.edu))

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### Important Disclaimers

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.