

Labor Market Analysis for Program Recommendation:
 1402.00/Paralegal
 (eDiscovery & Technology)
 (Law School Track (1st Year Prep))
 (Real Estate Law) (Criminal Law)



Orange County Center of Excellence, March 2024

Summary

Program LMI Endorsement	Endorsed: All LMI Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some LMI Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Not LMI Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
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Program LMI Endorsement Criteria

	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Supply Gap:	<i>Comments:</i> There is projected to be 4,270 annual job openings throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties for these paralegal occupations, which is more than the 764 awards conferred by educational institutions.	
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25 th)	<i>Comments:</i> Slightly over half (50.1%) of all annual job openings for these paralegal occupations have entry-level hourly wages above the OC living wage of \$20.63. Additionally, a large majority (90%) have entry-level hourly wages ranging from \$20.62 to \$25.27.	
Education:	<i>Comments:</i> The majority of job openings (60%) typically require an associate degree and a significant percentage of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education.	

Emerging Occupation(s)		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Comments:</i> N/A		

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (OC COE) prepared this report to determine whether there is a supply gap in the Los Angeles/Orange County regional labor market related to three middle-skill occupations:

- *Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)*
- *Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)*
- *Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)*

Based on the available data there appears to be a supply gap for these paralegal occupations and typical education requirements for these occupations align with a community college education. Additionally, a slight majority of annual job openings have entry-level wages above the living wage. **Therefore, due all regional labor market criteria being met, the COE endorses this proposed program.**

Exhibit 1 lists the occupational demand, supply, typical entry-level education, and educational attainment for the occupations included in this report.

Exhibit 1: Labor Market Endorsement Summary

Occupation (SOC)	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (CC and Non-CC)	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Typical Entry-Level Education	Community College Educational Attainment
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)	LA: 1,666	LA: 407			
	OC: 490	OC: 255	OC: \$25.27	Associate diploma	42%
	<i>TTL: 2,156</i>	<i>TTL: 655</i>			
Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (43-6012)	LA: 1,305	LA: 12			
	OC: 394	OC: 2	OC: \$20.62	High school diploma	52%
	<i>TTL: 1,699</i>	<i>TTL: 14</i>			
Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)	LA: 322	LA: 67			
	OC: 93	OC: 28	OC: \$19.73	Associate degree	25%
	<i>TTL: 415</i>	<i>TTL: 95</i>			
Total	4,279	764	N/A	N/A	N/A

Demand:

- The number of jobs related to these paralegal occupations is projected to increase 3% through 2027, equating to 4,270 annual job openings.
- Hourly entry-level wages for these paralegal occupations range from \$19.73 to \$25.27 in Orange County; slightly over half of annual job openings have entry-level wages above the living wage.
- There were 8,128 online job postings for these paralegal occupations over the past 12 months. The highest number of postings were for paralegals, legal assistants, and litigation paralegals.
- The typical entry-level education for these paralegal occupations ranges from a high school diploma or equivalent to an associate degree.
- Between 25% and 52% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Supply:

- There was an average of 700 awards conferred by 19 community colleges in Los Angeles and Orange Counties from 2019 to 2022.
- Non-community college institutions conferred an average of 64 awards from 2019 to 2021.
- Orange County community college students that exited paralegal programs in the 2020-21 academic year had a median annual wage of \$45,284 (\$21.77 per hour) after exiting the program and 55% attained the regional living wage.
- Throughout Orange County, 76% of paralegal students that exited their program in 2019-20 reported that they are working in a job closely related to their field of study.

Demand

Occupational Projections:

Exhibit 2 shows the annual percent change in jobs for these paralegal occupations from 2017 through 2027. Though there was a 7% decline across all occupations in Los Angeles and Orange counties from 2019 to 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employment in these paralegal occupations decreased only 1% during the same period. These paralegal occupations are projected to grow at a lower rate relative to all occupations through 2027.

Exhibit 2: Annual Percent Change in Jobs for Paralegal Occupations, 2017-2027

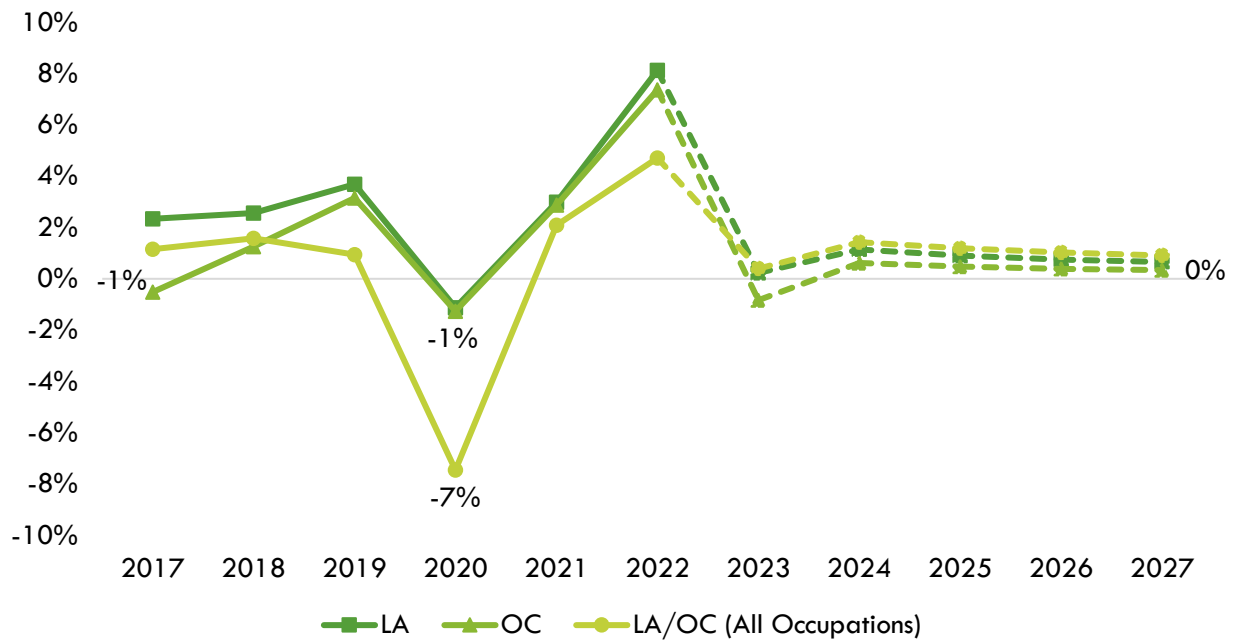


Exhibit 3 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these paralegal occupations. In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 3% through 2027. There is projected to be 4,270 jobs available annually.

Exhibit 3: Occupational Demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties¹

Geography	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	27,798	28,835	1,037	4%	3,293
Orange	8,591	8,676	84	1%	977
Total	36,389	37,511	1,122	3%	4,270

¹ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

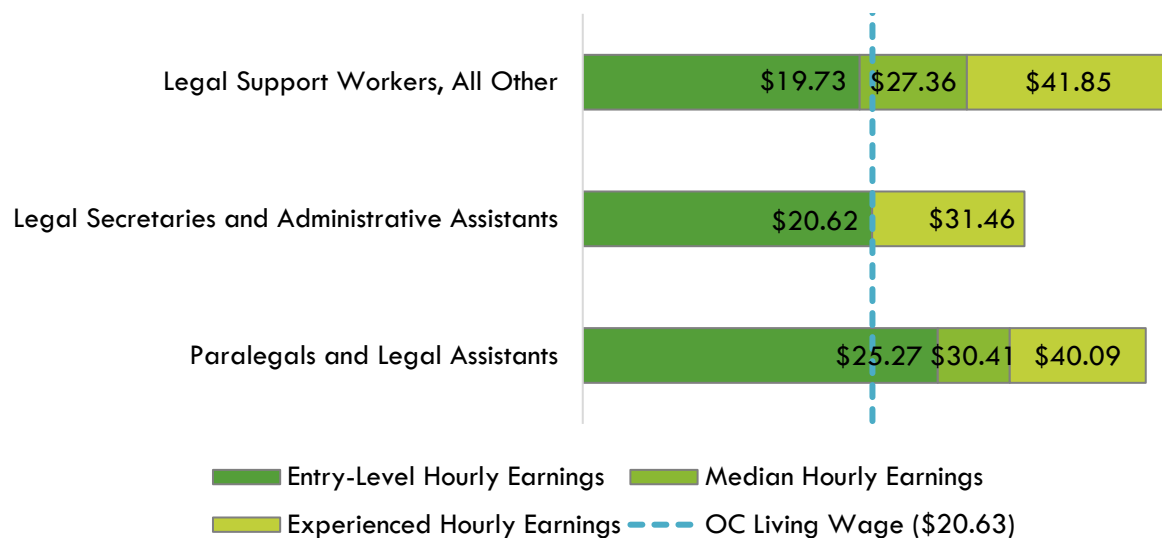
Wages:

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these paralegal occupations in Orange County as they relate to the county's living wage. Los Angeles County wages are included below to provide a complete analysis of the LA/OC region.

Approximately half of annual openings for these paralegal occupations have entry-level wages above the living wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages range between \$19.73 and \$25.27. Notably, entry-level hourly wages for *legal secretaries and administrative assistants* are \$20.62, which is only one cent below the living wage. Additionally, entry-level and median hourly wages for this occupation are identical.

Orange County's average wages (\$29.37) are below the average statewide wage of \$33.33 for these occupations. Exhibit 4 shows the wage range for each of these paralegal occupations in Orange County and how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

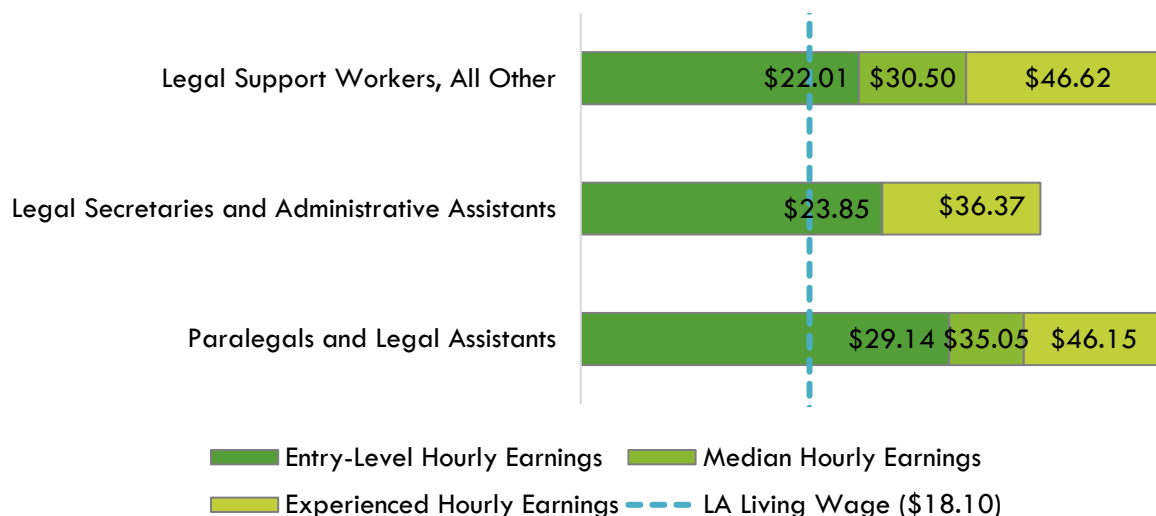
Exhibit 4: Wages by Occupation in Orange County



All annual openings for these paralegal occupations have entry-level wages above the living wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$22.01 and \$29.14. Notably, entry-level and median hourly wages for *legal secretaries and administrative assistants* are identical (\$23.85). Los Angeles County's average wages are slightly above the average statewide wage of \$33.33 for these occupations. Exhibit 5 shows the wage range for each of these

paralegal occupations in Los Angeles County how they compare to the regional living wage, sorted from lowest to highest entry-level wage.

Exhibit 5: Wages by Occupation in Los Angeles County



Job Postings:

Important Online Job Postings Data Note: Online job postings data is sourced from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm that scrapes, collects, and organizes data from online job boards such as LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor, Monster, GovernmentJobs.com, and thousands more. Lightcast uses natural language processing (NLP) to determine the related company, industry, occupation, and other information for each job posting. However, NLP has limitations that include understanding contextual words or phrases; determining differences in words that can be used as nouns, verbs, and/or adjectives; and misspellings or grammatical errors.² For these reasons, job postings could be assigned to the wrong employer, industry, or occupation within Lightcast’s database.

Additionally, there are several limitations when analyzing job postings. A single job posting may not represent a single job opening, as employers may be creating a pool of candidates for future openings or hiring for multiple positions with a single posting. Additionally, not all jobs are posted online, and jobs may be filled through other methods such as internal promotion, word-of-mouth advertising, physical job boards, or a variety of other channels.

There were 8,128 online job postings related to these paralegal occupations listed in the past 12 months. Exhibit 6 shows the number of job postings by occupation. Nearly 78% of job postings were for paralegals and legal assistants and approximately 15% were for legal secretaries and administrative assistants.

Exhibit 6: Number of Job Postings by Occupation (n=8,128)

Occupation	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Paralegal and Legal Assistants	6,332	77.9%
Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1,183	14.6%
Legal Support Workers, All Other	613	7.5%
Total Postings	8,128	100%

² K. R. Chowdhary, Fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence (Basingstoke: Springer Nature, 2020), <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-81-322-3972-7>.

The top employers in the region, by number of job postings, are shown in Exhibit 7.

Exhibit 7: Top Employers by Number of Job Postings (n=8,128)

Employer	Job Postings	Percentage of Job Postings
Robert Half	318	4%
GPAC	240	3%
Adams & Martin Group	102	1%
AppleOne	82	1%
Wilshire Law Firm	48	1%
Avata Partners	47	1%
Disney	45	1%
Wisner Baum	44	1%
CyberCoders	37	0%
Kent Daniels & Associates	36	0%

The top specialized, soft, and computer skills listed by those most frequently mentioned in job postings (denoted in parentheses) are shown in Exhibit 8.

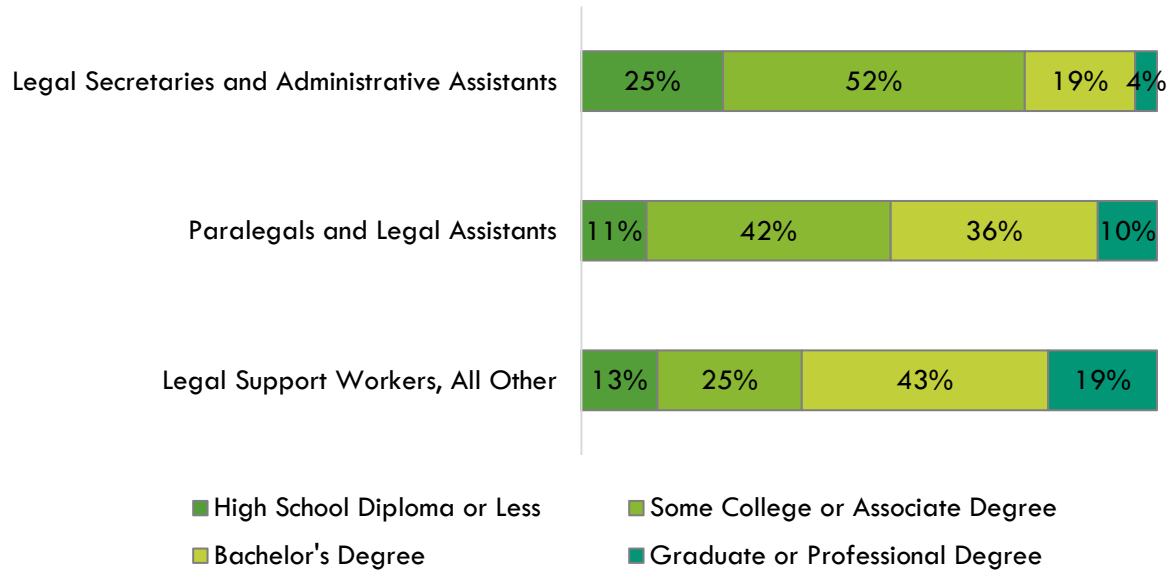
Exhibit 8: Top Skills by Number of Job Postings (n=8,128)

Top Specialized Skills	Top Soft Skills	Top Computer Skills
Lawsuits (3,166)	Filing (2,550)	Microsoft Office (1,309)
Legal Discovery (1,972)	Detail Oriented (2,490)	Microsoft Excel (1,208)
Legal Pleadings (1,557)	Communication (2,329)	Microsoft Outlook (1,111)
Legal Depositions (1,074)	Microsoft Office (1,309)	Microsoft Word (706)
Legal Research (1,006)	Organizational Skills (1,266)	Microsoft PowerPoint (612)
Personal Injury Law (938)	Microsoft Excel (1,208)	Document Management Systems (330)
Trial Preparation (877)	Writing (1,130)	Westlaw (253)
Proofreading (820)	Microsoft Outlook (1,111)	Spreadsheets (220)
Legal Hearings (731)	Multitasking (1,088)	Law Practice Management Software (207)
Civil Law (711)	Research (1,078)	Adobe Acrobat (108)

Educational Attainment:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for *legal secretaries and administrative assistants* and an associate degree for *paralegals and legal assistants* and *legal support workers, all other*. However, the national-level educational attainment data indicates between 25% and 52% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of education. Exhibit 9 shows the educational attainment for each occupation, sorted by highest community college educational attainment to lowest.

Exhibit 9: National-level Educational Attainment for Occupations



Of the 43% of the cumulative job postings for these paralegal occupations that listed a minimum education requirement in Los Angeles/Orange County, 42% (1,464) requested a high school diploma or an associate degree and 55% (1,921) requested a bachelor's degree.

Educational Supply

Community College Supply:

Exhibit 10 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP codes: Legal Office Technology (0514.10), Sign Language Interpreting (0850.10), Paralegal (1402.00), and Legal and Community Interpretation (2140.00). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Santa Ana, Mt. San Antonio, and Pasadena. Over the past 12 months, there were four other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

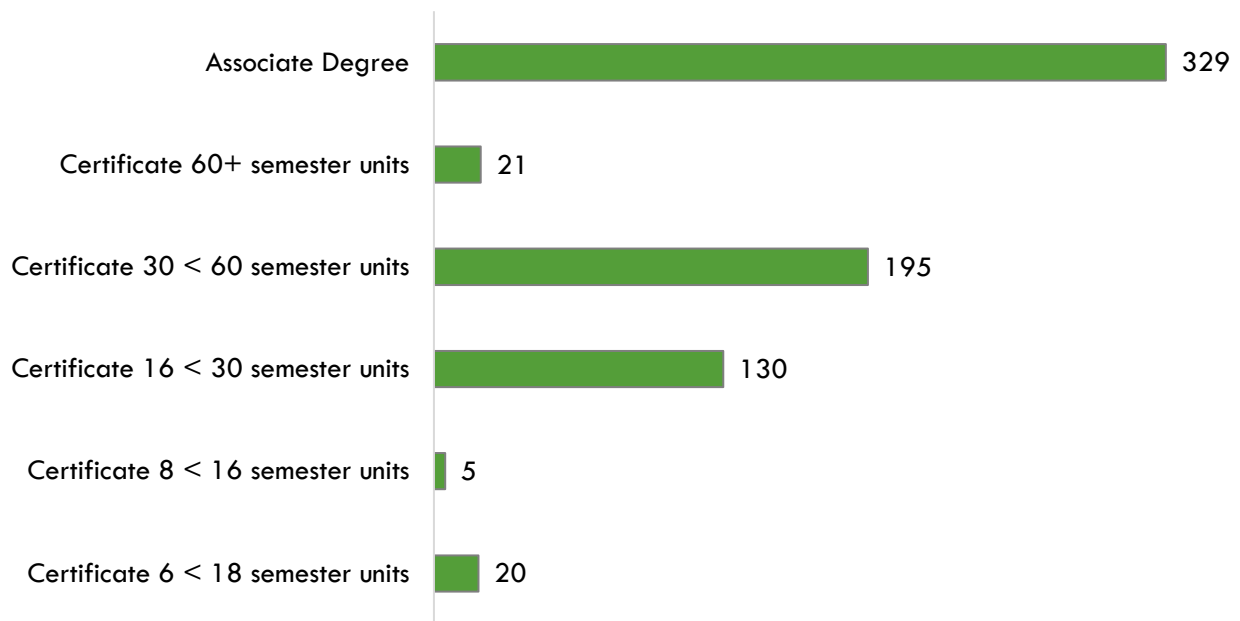
Exhibit 10: Regional Community College Awards (Certificates and Degrees), 2019-2022

TOP Code	Program	College	2019-2020 Awards	2020-2021 Awards	2021-2022 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0514.10	Legal Office Technology	Cerritos	0	2	0	0
		East LA	0	1	0	0
		LA City	0	1	0	0
		LA Pierce	0	0	3	0
		Santa Monica	12	3	7	7
		West LA	5	7	4	5
		LA Subtotal	17	14	14	12
		Cypress	0	0	1	0
		Santa Ana	1	3	1	2
		OC Subtotal	1	3	2	2
Supply Subtotal/Average			18	17	16	14
0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting	East LA	0	1	5	2
		El Camino	18	15	10	14
		LA Pierce	23	12	18	18
		Mt San Antonio	49	23	25	32
		Rio Hondo	0	1	1	1
		LA Subtotal	90	52	59	67
		Golden West	23	20	18	21
		Santiago Canyon	0	2	0	1
		OC Subtotal	23	22	18	22
Supply Subtotal/Average			113	74	77	89
1402.00	Paralegal	Cerritos	60	56	66	60
		East LA	41	31	41	37
		El Camino	31	42	39	38
		LA City	34	43	38	38
		LA Mission	24	36	36	32
		LA Trade	7	5	6	6
		Mt San Antonio	42	63	41	49

TOP Code	Program	College	2019-2020 Awards	2020-2021 Awards	2021-2022 Awards	3-Year Award Average
		Pasadena	49	68	94	70
		West LA	24	38	47	36
		LA Subtotal	312	382	408	366
		Coastline	60	48	51	53
		Fullerton	49	76	41	55
		Irvine	32	26	60	40
		Santa Ana	72	86	73	77
		OC Subtotal	213	236	225	225
		Supply Subtotal/Average	525	618	633	591
2140.00	Legal and Community Interpretation	-	-	-	-	-
		LA Subtotal	-	-	-	-
		Santa Ana	3	10	6	6
		OC Subtotal	3	10	6	6
		Supply Subtotal/Average	3	10	6	6
		Supply Total/Average	659	719	732	700

Exhibit 11 shows the annual average community college awards by type from 2019-20 to 2021-22. The plurality of the awards are for associate degrees, followed by certificates between 30 and less than 60 semester units and certificates between 16 and less than 30 semester units.

Exhibit 11: Annual Average Community College Awards by Type, 2019-2022



Community College Student Outcomes:

Exhibit 12 shows the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics for paralegal programs in North Orange County Community College District (NOCCCD), the Orange County Region, and California. Of the 1,316 paralegal students in the 2020-21 academic year, 28% (367) attended an NOCCCD college.

NOCCCD students that exited paralegal programs in the 2020-21 academic year had lower median annual earnings (\$43,034 or \$20.69 per hour) compared to all paralegal students in Orange County (\$45,284 or \$21.77 per hour). A lower percentage of NOCCCD paralegal students attained the living wage (49%) when compared to all paralegal students in Orange County (55%).

Exhibit 12: Paralegal (1402.00) Strong Workforce Program Metrics, 2020-21³

SWP Metric	SOCCCD	OC Region	California
SWP Students	367	1,316	9,893
SWP Students Who Earned 9 or More Career Education Units in the District in a Single Year	35%	38%	40%
SWP Students Who Completed a Noncredit CTE or Workforce Preparation Course	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	80%
SWP Students Who Earned a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	48	144	886
SWP Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Postsecondary Institution (2019-20)	15	46	566
SWP Students with a Job Closely Related to Their Field of Study (2019-20)	71%	76%	71%
Median Annual Earnings for SWP Exiting Students	\$43,034	\$45,284	\$44,978
Median Change in Earnings for SWP Exiting Students	16%	31%	24%
SWP Exiting Students Who Attained the Living Wage	49%	55%	59%

Non-Community College Supply:

To comprehensively analyze the regional supply, it is crucial to include data from other institutions offering paralegal programs. Exhibit 13 displays the annual and two-year average awards granted by these institutions under the related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: Legal Assistant/Paralegal (22.0302). No metrics were available for the following CIP Codes: Legal Administrative Assistant/Secretary (22.0301) Court Interpreter (22.0304). The available data covers 2019 to 2021. During this period, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 64 awards annually in related programs.

Exhibit 13: Regional Non-Community College Awards, 2019-2021

CIP Code	Program	College	2019-2020 Awards	2020-2021 Awards	2-Year Award Average
22.0302	Legal Assistant/Paralegal	Abraham Lincoln University	6	5	6
		Downey Adult School	12	19	16
		Fremont College	20	18	19

³ All SWP metrics are for 2020-21 unless otherwise noted.

CIP Code	Program	College	2019-2020 Awards	2020-2021 Awards	2-Year Award Average
		South Coast College	10	2	6
		University of La Verne	1	0	0
		University of Massachusetts Global	14	21	17
Supply Total/Average			63	65	64

Regional Demographics

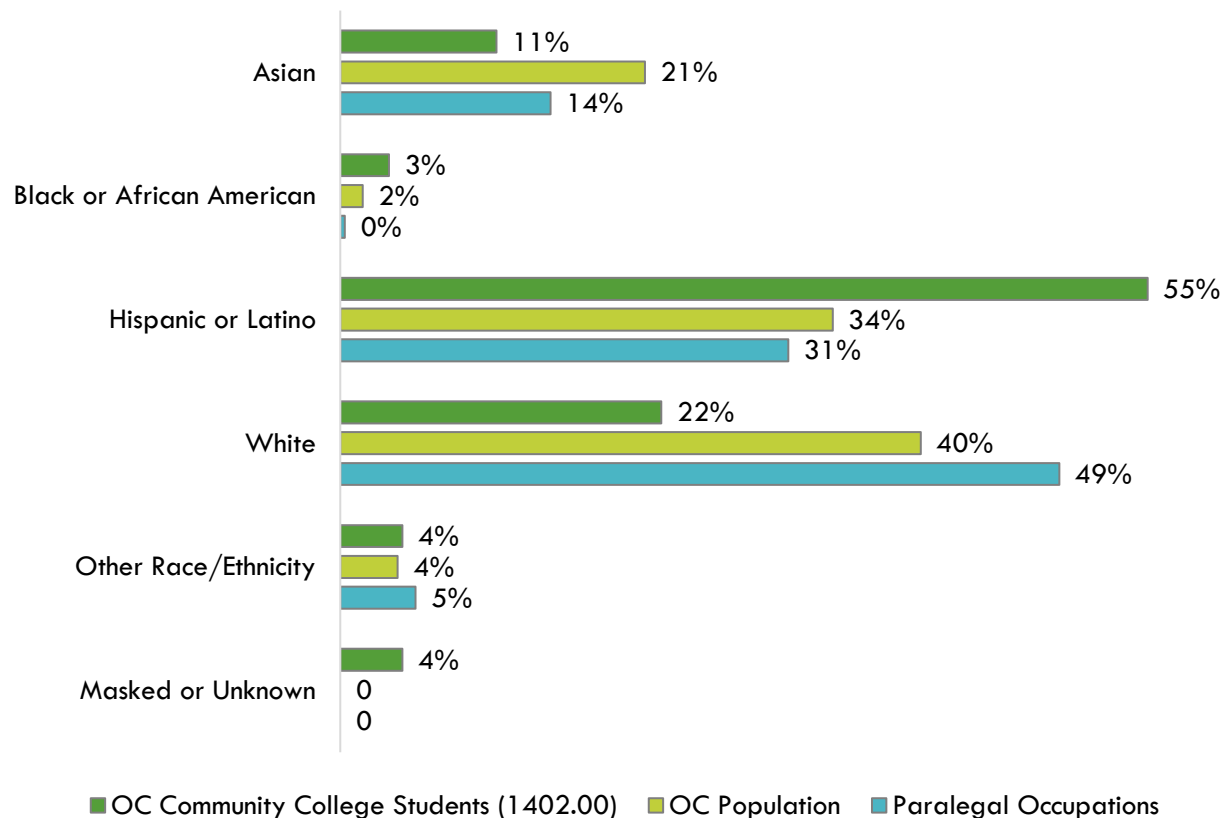
This section examines demographic data for Orange County community college students in paralegal programs compared to the OC population, along with occupational data, to identify potential diversity and equity issues addressable by community college programs.

Ethnicity:

Exhibit 14 compares the ethnicity of Orange County community college students enrolled in paralegal programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for the three paralegal occupations included in this report. The plurality (49%) of workers in the field are white, more than their share of the county population (40%) and more than double their share among community college paralegal students (22%). Conversely, a majority of community college paralegal students are Hispanic or Latino (55%), significantly higher than their shares in the county population (34%) and among workers in the field (31%).

Examining disaggregated data for each occupation (not shown), white individuals account the plurality of workers across all three occupations. The occupations with the highest percentage of Hispanic or Latino workers is *paralegals and legal assistants* (33%), which has the highest entry-level wages of all three paralegal occupations. *Legal support workers, all other* has the highest percentage of white workers (60%). This occupation has the lowest entry-level wages of all three occupations. Despite the difference in wages between the two occupations, both *paralegals and legal assistants* and *legal support workers, all other* typically require an associate degree as entry-level education requirements.

Exhibit 14: Program and County Demographics by Ethnicity

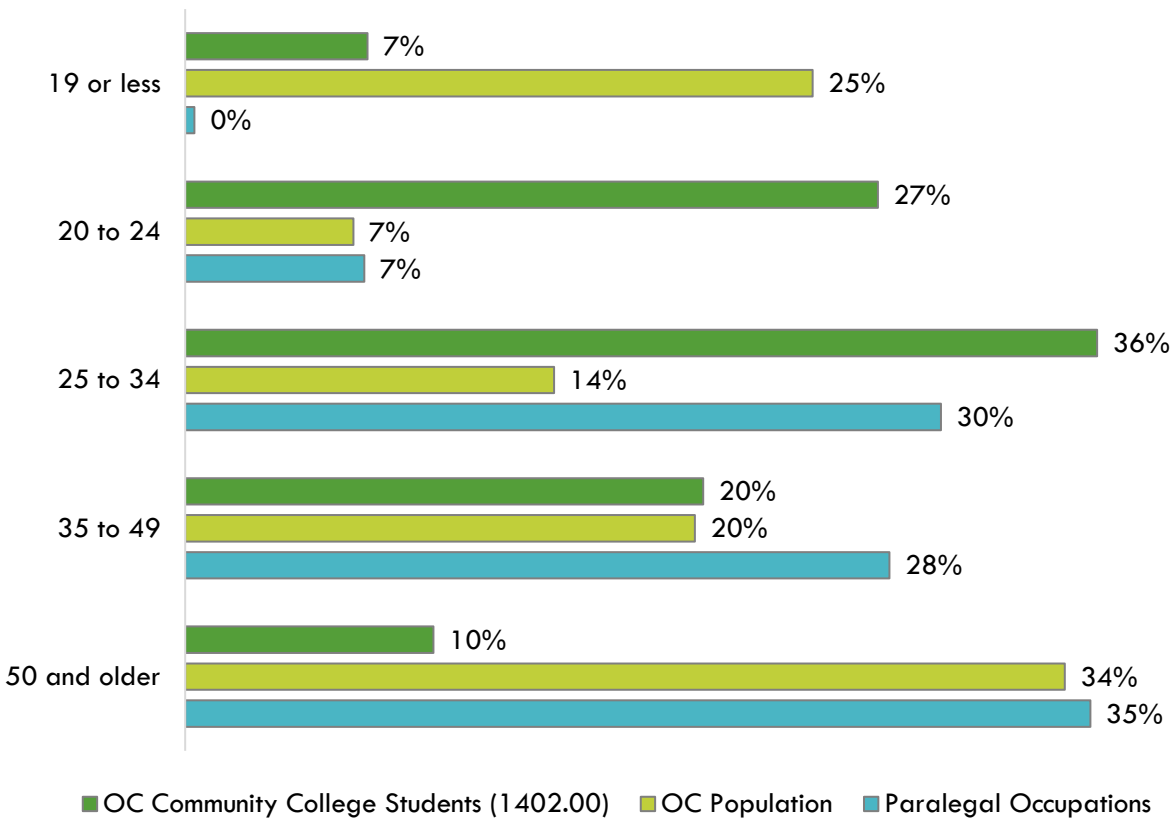


Age:

Exhibit 15 compares the age of Orange County community college students enrolled in paralegal programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for the three paralegal occupations included in this report. Though individuals 50 or older represent 34% of the county population and 35% of workers in the field, persons in this age group comprise only 10% of the community college paralegal student body. Conversely, while the percentages of individuals 20 to 24 align within the county population (7%) and amongst workers in these occupations (7%), this age group represents 27% of all community college paralegal students.

Examining disaggregated data for each occupation (not shown), individuals 50 or older comprise the plurality of workers across all three occupations. The occupation with the highest percentage of workers age 39 or younger is *paralegals and legal assistants* (49%), which has the highest entry-level wages of all three occupations. Conversely, the occupation with the highest percentage of workers age 40 and older is *legal secretaries and administrative assistants* (70%). This occupation also has the lowest typical entry-level education requirements with entry level wages slightly below the regional living wage of \$20.62.

Exhibit 15: Program and County Demographics by Age

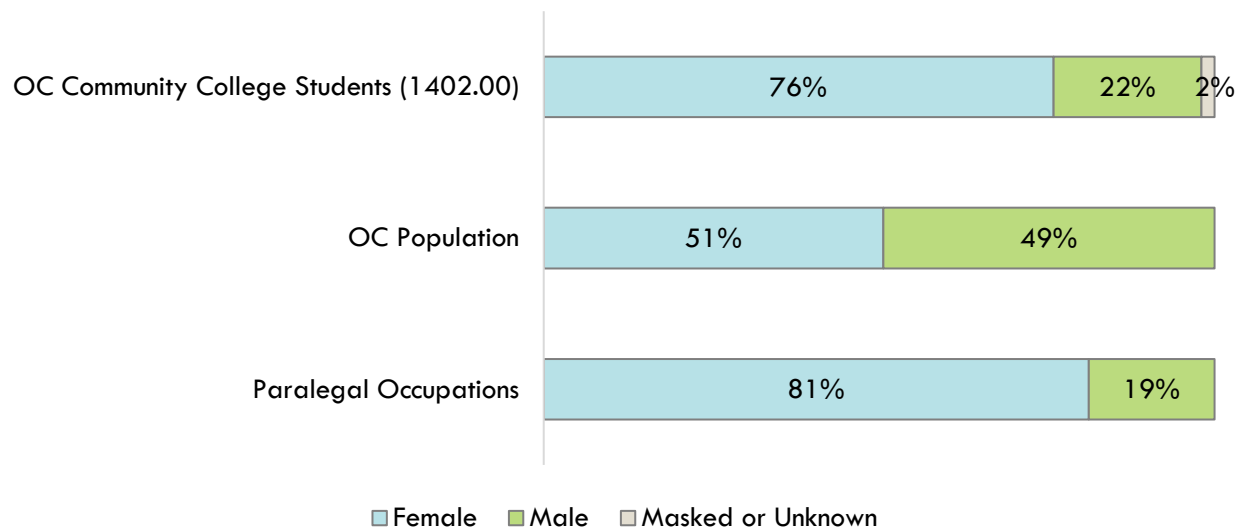


Sex:

Exhibit 16 compares the sex of Orange County community college students enrolled in paralegal programs, the overall Orange County population, and occupation-specific data for these paralegal occupations.

Though the population is largely split evenly between women and men, there are significantly larger percentages of women than men among community college paralegal students (76%) and within the three occupations (81%). When examining disaggregated data for each occupation (not shown), the occupation with the highest percentage of men is *legal support workers, all other*, which typically requires an associate degree as its entry-level education and has the lowest entry-level earnings of the three paralegal occupations.

Exhibit 16: Program and County Demographics by Sex



Appendix A: Methodology

The OC COE prepared this report by analyzing data from occupations and education programs. Occupational data is derived from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm that consolidates data from the California Employment Development Department (EDD), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and other government agencies. Program supply data is drawn from two systems: Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP).

Using a TOP-SOC crosswalk, the OC COE identified middle-skill jobs for which programs within these TOP codes train. Middle-skill jobs include:

- 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.

The OC COE determined labor market supply for an occupation or SOC code by analyzing the number of program completers or awards in a related TOP or CIP code. The COE developed a “supply table” with this information, which is the source of the program supply data for this report. TOP code data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart (datamart.cccco.edu) and CIP code data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data), also known as IPEDS. TOP is a system of numerical codes used at the state level to collect and report information on California community college programs and courses throughout the state that have similar outcomes. CIP codes are a taxonomy of academic disciplines at institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada. Institutions outside of the California Community College system do not use TOP codes in their reporting systems.

Data included in this analysis represent the labor market demand for relevant positions most closely related to the proposed program as expressed by the requesting college in consultation with the OC COE. Traditional labor market information was used to show current and projected employment based on data trends, as well as annual average awards granted by regional community colleges. Real-time labor market information captures job post advertisements for occupations relevant to the field of study which can signal demand and show what employers are looking for in potential employees, but is not a perfect measure of the quantity of open positions.

All representations have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. The most recent data available at the time of the analysis was examined; 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 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.

Appendix B: Data Sources

Data Type	Source
Occupational Projections, Wages, and Job Postings	<p>Traditional labor market information data is sourced from Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm. Lightcast occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics and the American Community Survey. For more information, see https://lightcast.io/</p>
Living Wage	<p>The living wage is derived from the Insight Center’s California Family Needs Calculator, which measures the income necessary for an individual of family to afford basic expenses. The data assesses the cost of housing, food, child care, health care, transportation, and taxes. For more information, see: https://insightccd.org/family-needs-calculator/</p> <p>The living wage for one adult in Orange County is \$20.63 per hour (\$42,910.40 annually). This figure is used by the CCCCCO to calculate the percentage of students that attained the regional living wage.</p>
Typical Education and Training Requirements, and Educational Attainment	<p>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, see https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/education/tech.htm</p>
Emerging Occupation Descriptions, Additional Education Requirements, and Employer Preferences	<p>The O*NET database includes information on skills, abilities, knowledges, work activities, and interests associated with occupations. For more information, see https://www.onetonline.org/help/online/</p>
Educational Supply	<p>The CCCCCO Data Mart provides information about students, courses, student services, outcomes and faculty and staff. For more information, see: https://datamart.cccco.edu</p> <p>The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Integrated Data System (IPEDS) collects data on the number of postsecondary awards earned (completions). For more information, see https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data/survey-components/7/completions</p>
Student Metrics and Demographics	<p>LaunchBoard, a statewide data system supported by the California Community Colleges 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, see: https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/Home.aspx</p>

Data Type	Source
Population and Occupation Demographics	<p>The Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the premier source for detailed population and housing information. For more information, see: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs</p> <p>Data is sourced from IPUMS USA, a database providing access to ACS and other Census Bureau data products. For more information, see: https://usa.ipums.org/usa/about.shtml</p>

For more information, please contact the Orange County Center of Excellence:

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