

Labor Market Analysis: 1240.10 – Dental Assistant Dental Assisting (Certificate)

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, October 2022

Summary

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not Endorsed <input type="checkbox"/>
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25th)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education:	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emerging Occupation(s)			
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to one middle-skill occupation:

- **Dental Assistants (31-9091):** Perform limited clinical duties under the direction of a dentist. Clinical duties may include equipment preparation and sterilization, preparing patients for treatment, assisting the dentist during treatment, and providing patients with instructions for oral healthcare procedures. May perform administrative duties such as scheduling appointments, maintaining medical records, billing, and coding information for insurance purposes.¹

Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree.² This report is intended to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from community college programs that align with the relevant occupation.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap in the region for *dental assistants*. Although the entry-level wage for *dental assistants* is below the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a postsecondary nondegree award as the typical entry-level education. **Therefore, due to some of the criteria being met, the LA COE endorses this proposed program.** Detailed reasons include:

¹ [Dental Assistants \(bls.gov\)](#)

² The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- 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.

Demand:

- **Supply Gap Criteria** – Over the next five years, **2,128 jobs are projected to be available annually** in the region due to new job growth and replacements, **which is more than the three-year average of 891 awards conferred** by educational institutions in the region.
- **Living Wage Criteria** – In Los Angeles County, the **typical entry-level hourly wage** for *dental assistants* is **\$17.75, which is below the self-sufficiency standard wage** for one adult in the region (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County).³
- **Educational Criteria** – The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a **postsecondary nondegree award** as the **typical entry-level education** for *dental assistants*.
 - National-level educational attainment data indicates that **57% of workers in the field have completed some college, no degree or an associate degree.**

Supply:

- Between 2018 and 2021, **six (6) community colleges** in the greater LA/OC region issued awards in dental assistant programs, conferring an average of **151 awards**.
- Between 2017 and 2020, non-community college institutions throughout the greater LA/OC region conferred an average of **740 awards in relevant programs**.

³ Self-Sufficiency Standard wage data was pulled from The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool for California. For more information, visit: <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/california>.

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for *dental assistants*. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to this occupation is projected to increase by 5% through 2026. There will be more than 2,100 job openings per year through 2026 due to job growth and replacements.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties⁴

Geography	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2021-2026 Change	2021-2026 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	11,291	11,864	573	5%	1,456
Orange	5,130	5,431	301	6%	672
Total	16,421	17,296	875	5%	2,128

Wages

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wage for *dental assistants* in Los Angeles County, as it relates to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater LA/OC region. Detailed wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

Los Angeles County – The typical entry-level hourly wage for *dental assistants* is \$17.75, which is **below** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$18.10 in Los Angeles County). Experienced workers can expect to earn approximately \$22.59, which is above the self-sufficiency standard wage estimate.

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings for Dental Assistants in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Dental Assistants (31-9091)	\$17.75	\$22.35	\$22.59

Orange County – The typical entry-level hourly wage for *dental assistants* is \$18.50, which is **below** the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$20.63 in Orange County). Experienced workers can expect to earn approximately \$23.53, which is above the self-sufficiency standard wage estimate.

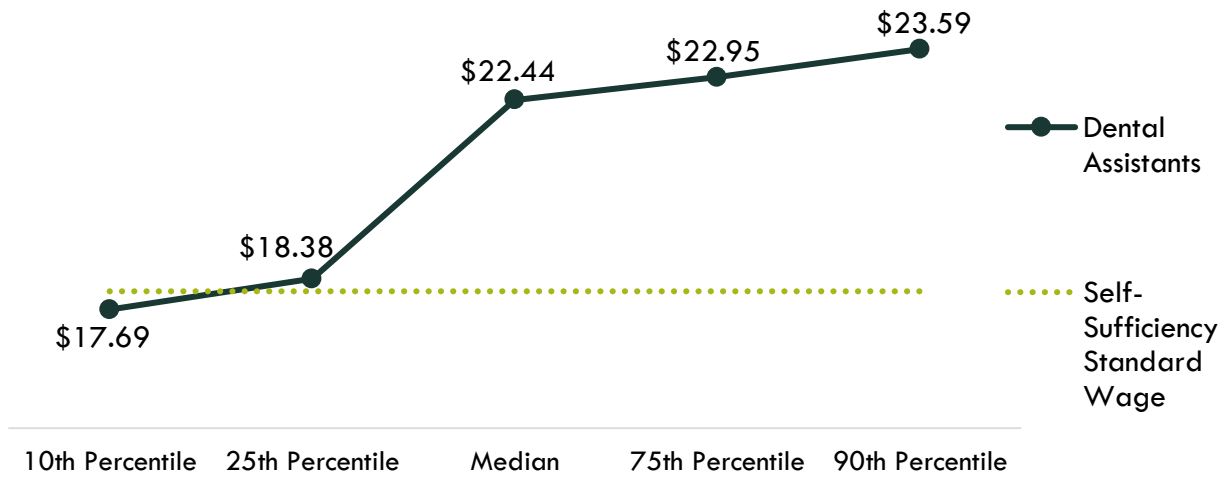
Exhibit 3: Hourly Earnings for Dental Assistants in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Dental Assistants (31-9091)	\$18.50	\$23.29	\$23.53

⁴ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

On average, the entry-level wage for *dental assistants* is \$18.38; this is above the self-sufficiency standard wage estimate for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$18.10). Exhibit 4 shows the average wages for *dental assistants*, from entry-level to experienced workers.

Exhibit 4: Average Hourly Earnings for *Dental Assistants* in LA/OC



Job Postings

Over the past 12 months, there have been 8,681 online job postings in the region for *dental assistants*. The highest number of job postings were for dental assistants, registered dental assistants, orthodontic assistants, dental assistants/receptionists, and orthodontic dental assistants. The top skills were knowledge of dentistry, sterilization, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), patient preparation, and coronal polishing. The top employers, by number of job postings, in the region were Western Dental Services, Pacific Dental Services, and Coast Dental Services.

Educational Attainment

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a postsecondary nondegree award as the typical entry-level education for *dental assistants*. National-level educational attainment data indicates that 57% of workers in the field have completed some college, no degree or an associate degree.

Educational Supply

Community College Supply – Exhibit 5 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in Dental Assistant programs (TOP 1240.10). The colleges with the most completions in the region are Cerritos and Orange Coast.

Exhibit 5: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2018-2021

TOP	Program	College	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	2020-21 Awards	3-Year Average
1240.10	Dental Assistant	Cerritos	34	45	38	39
		Citrus	24	4	50	26
		Pasadena	22	1	21	15
		West LA	16	12	24	17
		LA Subtotal	96	62	133	97
		Cypress	25	27	17	23
		Orange Coast	35	35	24	31
		OC Subtotal	60	62	41	54
Supply Total/Average			156	124	174	151

Non-Community College Supply – For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that may provide training programs for *dental assistants*. Exhibit 6 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by these institutions in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2017 to 2020. Between 2017 and 2020, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 740 awards.

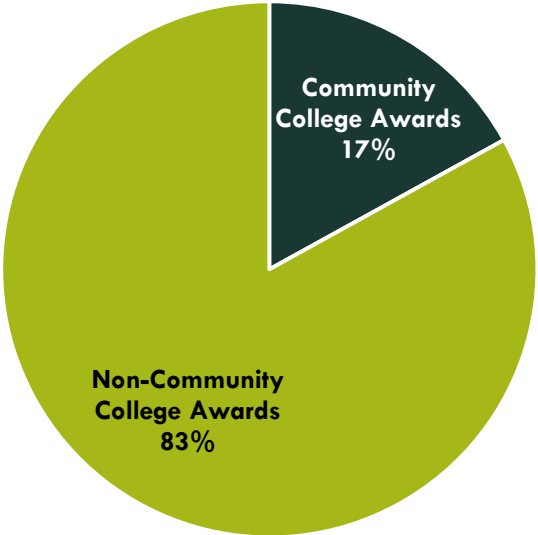
Exhibit 6: Regional non-community college awards, 2017-2020

CIP	Program	Institution	2017-18 Awards	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	3-Year Average
51.0601	Dental Assisting/ Assistant	American Career College-Anaheim	48	46	-	31
		American Career College-Los Angeles	97	97	70	88
		California Healing Arts College	3	-	-	1
		Career Care Institute	29	21	19	23
		CBD College	-	10	12	7
		Concorde Career College-Garden Grove	68	74	49	64

CIP	Program	Institution	2017-18 Awards	2018-19 Awards	2019-20 Awards	3-Year Average
		Concorde Career College-North Hollywood	46	50	33	43
		Downey Adult School	35	39	-	25
		Galaxy Medical College	4	-	-	1
		Hacienda La Puente Adult Education	21	14	10	15
		Healthcare Career College	-	2	4	2
		National Career College	4	23	15	14
		North-West College-Anaheim	-	-	7	2
		North-West College-Glendale	16	26	19	20
		North-West College-Pomona	23	33	13	23
		North-West College-Van Nuys	3	7	22	11
		North-West College-West Covina	33	40	31	35
		Palladium Technical Academy	2	4	1	2
		PCI College	7	5	-	4
		UEI College-Gardena	56	87	58	67
		United Education Institute-Anaheim	53	74	31	53
		United Education Institute-Encino	64	79	63	69
		United Education Institute-Huntington Park Campus	82	113	91	95
		United Education Institute-West Covina	56	53	25	45
Supply Total/Average			750	897	573	740

Exhibit 7 shows the percentage of community college awards conferred in LA/OC versus the percentage of non-community college awards conferred. Non-community college institutions in the region conferred more than four-fifths of all awards in relevant programs.

Exhibit 7: Community College Awards Compared to Non-Community College Awards in LA/OC Region, 3-Year Average



Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 8. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75th Percentile)
Dental Assistants (31-9091)	11,291	11,864	573	5%	1,456	\$17.75	\$22.35	\$22.59

Exhibit 9. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75th Percentile)
Dental Assistants (31-9091)	5,130	5,431	301	6%	672	\$18.50	\$23.29	\$23.53

Exhibit 10. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Typical Entry-Level Education
Dental Assistants (31-9091)	16,421	17,296	875	5%	2,128	Postsecondary nondegree award

Appendix B: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Labor Insight (Burning Glass Technologies)
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

For more information, please contact:

Luke Meyer, Director
Los Angeles Center of Excellence
Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu



C·O·E

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH