

Program Endorsement Brief: 1303.20/Fashion Merchandising *Fashion Merchandising*

Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence, April 2020

Summary Analysis

The Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) prepared this report to provide Los Angeles/Orange County regional labor market supply and demand data related to one middle-skill occupation: sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products (41-4012); and two below middle-skill occupations: merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026) and retail salespersons (41-2031). Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree.¹ 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 occupations.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for fashion merchandising-related occupations in the region. However, two occupations are considered below middle-skill. Additionally, only one of the three occupations has entry-level wages above the living wage for one adult in the region. **Therefore, the COE cautiously endorses this proposed program.**

Reasons include:

Demand:

- Over the next five years, there is projected to be **31,585 jobs available annually** in the region due to retirements and workers leaving the field, **which is more than the 839 awards conferred annually** by educational institutions in the region.
 - **Note: all three of the occupations are present in a variety of industries, not solely the fashion industry. Since the SOC code does not solely represent fashion merchandising occupations, the number of annual job openings is likely overstated.**
- Over the past 12 months, there were **12,496 online job postings for the three fashion merchandising-related occupations**. The highest number of job postings were for sales associate, sales consultant, sales professional, and merchandiser.
- The national-level educational attainment data indicates **between 29% and 37.8% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree**.
- **Wages: Typical entry-level hourly wages** for fashion merchandising occupations throughout the region are between **\$11.64 and \$17.96**.

¹ 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.

- **Entry-level wages** for merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026); and retail salespersons (41-2031) **are lower than the California Family Needs Calculator hourly wage (living wage) for one adult in the region** (\$15.04 in Los Angeles County and \$17.36 in Orange County).²
- **Sales representatives**, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products (41-4012) **earn entry-level wages that exceed the hourly living wage** in both Los Angeles and Orange Counties.
- **Experienced workers** in all three fashion merchandising-related occupations can expect to **earn between \$16.61 and \$41.20, which is higher than Los Angeles County's living wage estimate.**
- Experienced merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026) and experienced sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products (41-4012) can expect to earn hourly wages that are **higher than the Orange County's living wage**, while **experienced retail salespersons (41-2031) do not typically earn wages higher than the county's living hourly wage.**

Supply:

- **Ten community colleges** in the region offer programs that have historically trained for the occupations of interest, conferring an average of **158 awards annually** between 2016 and 2019.
- Between 2014 and 2017, an average of **681 awards were conferred annually** in related training programs by non-community college institutions.

² Living wage data was pulled from California Family Needs Calculator. For more information, visit the California Family Needs Calculator website: <https://insightcced.org/2018-family-needs-calculator/>.

Occupational Demand

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for the three fashion merchandising-related occupations. In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to decrease by 2% through 2023. However, there will be 31,585 job openings per year through 2023 due to retirements and workers leaving the field.

Note: It is important to note that all three occupations are present in a variety of industries, and not solely the fashion industry. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is likely overstated for fashion merchandising.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties³

Geography	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2018-2023 Change	2018-2023 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	175,538	171,599	(3,939)	(2%)	23,183
Orange	63,457	62,661	(796)	(1%)	8,402
Total	238,994	234,260	(4,734)	(2%)	31,585

Wages — Typical entry-level hourly wages for fashion merchandising-related occupations throughout the region are between \$11.64 and \$17.96. Entry-level wages for merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026) and retail salespersons (41-2031) are lower than the California Family Needs Calculator hourly wage (living wage) for one adult in the region (\$15.04 in Los Angeles County and \$17.36 in Orange County). Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products (41-4012) have entry-level wages that exceed the hourly living wage in both Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

In Los Angeles County, experienced workers in all three fashion merchandising occupations can expect to earn between \$16.61 and \$41.20, which is higher than the county's living wage estimate. In Orange County, experienced merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026) and experienced sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products (41-4012) can expect to earn hourly wages that are higher than the county's living wage, while experienced retail salespersons (41-2031) do not typically earn wages higher than the county's living hourly wage. Wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

Job Postings — There were 12,496 online job postings for fashion merchandising-related occupations listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings were for sales associate, sales consultant, sales professional, and merchandiser. The top skills were: sales, retail industry knowledge, customer service, and merchandising. The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region were: Nordstrom, Macy's, and Bloomingdale's. Of the 12,496 online job postings, 32% list a minimum education requirement.

³ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

Educational Attainment — The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma as the typical entry-level education for merchandise displayers and window trimmers (27-1026), and sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific (41-4012); no formal educational credential for retail salespersons (41-2031). The national-level educational attainment data indicates between 29% and 37.8% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. Of the 32% of fashion merchandising job postings listing a minimum education requirement in Los Angeles/Orange County, 94% (3,807) requested a high school diploma and 6% (231) requested an associate degree.

Supply

Community College Supply — Exhibit 2 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by programs that have historically trained for the occupations of interest. Supply data is provided for: sales and salesmanship (0509.40), display (0509.60), and fashion merchandising (1303.20). The colleges with the most completions in the region are: Santa Monica, LA Trade-Tech, and Orange Coast. Over the past 12 months, there were two other related program recommendation request from regional community colleges.

Exhibit 2: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2016-2019

TOP Code	Program	College	2016-2017 Awards	2017-2018 Awards	2018-2019 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0509.40	Sales and Salesmanship	Cerritos	10	-	-	3
		Santa Monica	14	16	13	14
		LA Subtotal	24	16	13	18
		Orange Coast	-	11	3	5
		Santa Ana	-	1	-	0
		OC Subtotal	-	12	3	5
Supply Subtotal/Average			24	28	16	23
0509.60	Display	Orange Coast	-	-	2	1
		OC Subtotal	-	-	2	1
		Supply Subtotal/Average	-	-	2	1
1303.20	Fashion Merchandising	El Camino	5	1	5	4
		LA Trade-Tech	34	23	20	26
		Long Beach	10	12	16	13
		Mt San Antonio	17	33	11	20
		Santa Monica	19	34	25	26
		LA Subtotal	85	103	77	88
		Fullerton	11	8	8	9
		Orange Coast	20	16	19	18
		Saddleback	23	7	16	15
		Santa Ana	10	2	-	4
		OC Subtotal	64	33	43	47
		Supply Subtotal/Average			149	136
Supply Total/Average			173	164	138	158

Non-Community College Supply — It is important to consider the supply from non-community college institutions in the region that provide training programs for fashion merchandising occupations. Exhibit 3 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by these institutions in the related Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Codes: apparel and textile marketing management (19.0905), marketing/marketing management, general (52.1401), and fashion merchandising (52.1902).

Due to different data collection periods, the most recent three-year period of available data is from 2014 to 2017. Between 2014 and 2017, non-community college institutions in the region conferred an average of 681 awards annually in related training programs.

Exhibit 3: Regional Non-Community College awards, 2014-2017

CIP Code	Program	College	2014-2015 Awards	2015-2016 Awards	2016-2017 Awards	3-Year Award Average
52.1401	Marketing/Marketing Management, General	FIDM-Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising-Los Angeles	5	20	32	19
		Fremont College	-	1	5	2
		University of Phoenix-California	-	-	5	2
19.0905	Apparel and Textile Marketing Management	FIDM-Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising-Los Angeles	88	70	61	73
		Argosy University-The Art Institute of California-Hollywood	17	11	9	12
		Argosy University-The Art Institute of California-Los Angeles	3	-	-	1
52.1902	Fashion Merchandising	Argosy University-The Art Institute of California-Orange County	2	-	1	1
		FIDM-Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising-Los Angeles	683	589	440	571
Supply Total/Average			798	691	553	681

Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 4. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers (27-1026)	4,935	4,997	62	1%	509	\$11.81	\$13.88	\$18.08
Retail Salespersons (41-2031)	121,791	119,968	(1,823)	(1%)	17,627	\$11.69	\$13.27	\$16.61
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012)	48,811	46,634	(2,177)	(4%)	5,048	\$17.54	\$27.06	\$41.20
Total	175,538	171,599	(3,939)	(2%)	23,183			

Exhibit 5. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers (27-1026)	1,526	1,525	(1)	(0%)	154	\$11.68	\$13.65	\$17.66
Retail Salespersons (41-2031)	43,448	43,057	(391)	(1%)	6,317	\$11.54	\$12.94	\$15.86
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012)	18,483	18,079	(404)	(2%)	1,931	\$19.13	\$29.53	\$44.90
Total	63,457	62,661	(796)	(1%)	8,402			

Exhibit 6. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers (27-1026)	6,461	6,521	60	1%	663	\$11.77	\$13.82	\$17.98
Retail Salespersons (41-2031)	165,240	163,025	(2,215)	(1%)	23,944	\$11.64	\$13.18	\$16.37
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012)	67,294	64,713	(2,581)	(4%)	6,979	\$17.96	\$27.72	\$42.22
Total	238,994	234,260	(4,734)	(2%)	31,585			

Appendix B: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- Employment Development Department, Unemployment Insurance Dataset
- Living Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- California Family Needs Calculator, Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

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