



Sign Language Interpreting TOP: 0850.10

June 2021

Prepared by the South Central Coast Center of Excellence for
Labor Market Research

Program Recommendation

This report was compiled by the South Central Coast¹ Center of Excellence to provide regional labor market data for the program recommendation – Sign Language Interpreting. This report can help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from programs of study (CCC and non-CCC) that align with this occupation group.

Key Findings

- In the South Central Coast region, **the number of jobs related to Sign Language Interpreting are expected to remain steady** for Interpreters and Translators.
- Sign Language Interpreting is anticipated to experience a **low risk of automation** for Interpreters and Translators.
- In 2019 there were 167 regional completions in programs related to the occupations identified as aligned with Sign Language Interpreting and 126 openings.
- Typical entry-level education is a **Bachelor's degree*** for the related occupation.
*A Bachelor's degree is only required to take the National certification test (known as the National Interpreter Certification). National certification is only required (in California) for K-12 and court interpreting. The vast majority of interpreting assignments/ gigs do not require national certification nor a BA degree.
- Completers of Sign Language Interpreting programs from the 2017-2018 academic year in the South Central Coast region had a **median annual wage upon completion of \$19,020**.
- 78% of students are **employed within a year** after completing a program.
- 69% of students were **part time**, 8% **skill builders**, 43% **first-generation**, and 83% **economically disadvantaged**.

¹ The South Central Coast Region consists of San Luis Obispo County, Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, and the following cities from North Los Angeles County: Canyon Country, Castaic, Lake Hughes, Lancaster, Littlerock, Llano, Newhall, Palmdale, Pearblossom, Santa Clarita, Stevenson Ranch, and Valencia.

Occupation Codes and Descriptions

There is one occupation in the standard occupational classification (SOC) system that was identified as related to Sign Language Interpreting for this analysis. The occupation title and description, as well as reported job titles are included in Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1 – Occupation, description, and sample job titles

SOC Code	Title	Description	Sample of Reported Job Titles
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	Interpret oral or sign language, or translate written text from one language into another.	Court Interpreter, Deaf Interpreter, Educational Interpreter, Interpreter, Medical Interpreter, Paraprofessional Interpreter, Sign Language Interpreter, Spanish Interpreter, Technical Translator, Translator

Source: O*NET Online

Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs related to Sign Language Interpreting are expected to remain steady for Interpreters and Translators

Exhibit 2 – Five-year projections for Sign Language Interpreting in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2019-2024 Change	2019-2024 % Change
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	637	655	18	3%

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

Earnings

In the South Central Coast region, the average wage for the listed occupations is \$26.61 per hour.

Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages and annual average earnings for these occupations. Entry-level hourly earnings are represented by the 25th percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50th percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 75th percentile of wages, demonstrating various levels of employment.

Exhibit 3 – Earnings for Sign Language Interpreting in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	\$20.08	\$26.61	\$38.75

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

Employer Job Postings

In this research brief, real-time labor market information is used to provide a more nuanced view of the current job market, as it captures job advertisements for occupations relevant to the field of study. Employer job postings are consulted to understand who is looking for interpreters and what they are looking for in potential candidates. To identify job postings related to Sign Language Interpreting the following standard occupational classification was used:

27-3091 Interpreters and Translators

Top Occupations

In 2019, there were 181 employer postings for the occupations related to Sign Language Interpreting.

Exhibit 4 – Top occupations in job postings and risk of automation tables

SOC Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Full Year 2019
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	181

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

SOC Code	Occupation	Risk of Automation
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	Low

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for jobs related to Sign Language Interpreting are listed in Exhibit 5. Educational Sign Language Interpreter is mentioned as the job title in 6% of all relevant job postings (10 postings).

Exhibit 5 –Job Titles

Title	Job Postings, Full Year 2019
Educational Sign Language Interpreter	10
Sign Language Interpreter	10
American Sign Language Interpreter	6
Trilingual District Translator	4
Behavioral Wellness Practitioner I, English/English-Spanish	3

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the major employers hiring professionals in the Sign Language Interpreting field. The top employer posting job ads was Santa Maria Bonita School District. The top worksite cities in the region for these occupations were Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Ventura.

Exhibit 6 – Top Employers (n=94)

Employer	Job Postings, Full Year 2019
Santa Maria Bonita School District	11
Simi Valley Unified School District	7
Cottage Health System	5
Homeland Language Services	5
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District	5

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Skills

Teaching is the most sought after skill for employers hiring for jobs related to Sign Language Interpreting.

Exhibit 7 –Job Skills (n=75)

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2019
Teaching	13
Scheduling	12
Customer Service	7
Broadcast Industry Knowledge	6
Clerical Duties	6
Patient Privacy	6
Proofreading	6

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Industry Concentration

Exhibit 8 shows the industries with the most Sign Language Interpreting postings in the South Central Coast. Note: 12% of records have been excluded because they do not include an industry. As a result, the chart below may not be representative of the full sample.

Exhibit 8 – Industries employing the most in the Sign Language Interpreting field, 2019

Industry	Occupation Group Jobs in Industry	% of Occupation Group in Industry
Educational Services	54	33.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	38	23.5%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	35	21.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	19	11.7%

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Education and Training

Exhibit 9 shows the typical entry-level education requirement for the occupations of interest, along with the typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the occupation.

Exhibit 9 – Education and Training Requirements

SOC	Occupation	Typical entry-level education	Typical on-the-job training
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	Bachelor's degree*	None

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projections (Educational Attainment)

*A Bachelor's degree is only required to take the National certification test (known as the National Interpreter Certification). National certification is only required (in California) for K-12 and court interpreting. The vast majority of interpreting assignments/ gigs do not require national certification nor a BA degree.

Regional Completions and Openings

There were 167 regional completions (2019) and 126 regional openings (2019) in the South Central Coast region in programs related to the occupations identified as related to Sign Language Interpreting.

Exhibit 10 – Completions and Openings

6 Regional Institutions had Related Programs (2019)	167 Regional Completions (2019)	126 Annual Openings (2019)
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Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

Related Programs

CIP Code	Program	Completions (2019)
16.0102	Linguistics	61
16.1603	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation	38
13.1001	Special Education and Teaching, General	37
16.1601	American Sign Language (ASL)	31
16.0103	Language Interpretation and Translation	0

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

Student Outcomes

The CTE LaunchBoard provides student outcome data on the effectiveness of CTE programs. The following student outcome information was collected from exiters of Sign Language Interpreting Programs (TOP: 2104.40) in the South Central Coast region for the 2017-18 academic year.

- Completers of Sign Language Interpreting programs from the 2017-2018 academic year in the South Central Coast region had a **median annual wage upon completion of \$19,020**.
- 78% of students are **employed within a year** after completing a program.
- 69% of students were **part time**, 8% **skill builders**, 43% **first-generation**, and 83% **economically disadvantaged**.

Source: CTE LaunchBoard

Sources

O*Net Online, Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass), Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), MIT Living Wage Calculator, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Education Attainment, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart, CTE LaunchBoard, Statewide CTE Outcomes Survey, Employment Development Department Unemployment Insurance Dataset

Notes

Data included in this analysis represent the labor market demand for relevant positions most closely related to Sign Language Interpreting. 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 and 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.