



## **Interior Design and Merchandising (TOP 1302.00)**

**December 2024**

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

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### **Program Recommendation**

This report was compiled by the South Central Coast<sup>1</sup> Center of Excellence to provide regional labor market data for the program recommendation – Interior Design and Merchandising. 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 that align with the following occupations:

- Interior Designers (SOC 27-1025)
- Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers (SOC 27-1026)

### **Key Findings**

- In 2023, there were 1,301 jobs for the two occupations of interest in the South Central Coast Region.
- The number of new jobs is expected to increase by 1% through 2028.
- Projections show approximately 146 annual openings in the region. There were 42 awards conferred in relevant programs, indicating an undersupply.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Interior Designers typically require a bachelor's degree while Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers typically require a high school diploma or equivalent.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 are two occupations in the standard occupational classification (SOC) system that were identified for this analysis. The occupation titles and descriptions, as well as reported job titles, are included in Exhibit 1.

**Exhibit 1 – Occupations, Descriptions, and Sample Job Titles**

| SOC Code | Title                                      | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Sample of Reported Job Titles                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 27-1025  | Interior Designers                         | Plan, design, and furnish the internal space of rooms or buildings. Design interior environments or create physical layouts that are practical, aesthetic, and conducive to the intended purposes. May specialize in a particular field, style, or phase of interior design. | Certified Kitchen Designer, Color and Materials Designer, Commercial Interior Designer, Decorating Consultant, Designer, Interior Decorator, Interior Design Consultant, Interior Design Coordinator, Interior Designer, Registered Interior Designer |
| 27-1026  | Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers | Plan and erect commercial displays, such as those in windows and interiors of retail stores and at trade exhibitions.                                                                                                                                                        | Decorator, Display Associate, Display Decorator, Display Specialist, In-Store Marketing Associate, Merchandiser, Visual Merchandiser (VM), Visual Merchandising Specialist                                                                            |

Source: O\*NET Online

## Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs for Interior Design-related occupations is expected to increase by 1% through 2028. Approximately 146 annual openings are expected through 2028.

**Exhibit 2a – Five-Year Projections for Interior Design-related workers  
in the South Central Coast Region**

| <b>SOC</b> | <b>Occupation</b>                             | <b>2023<br/>Jobs</b> | <b>2028<br/>Jobs</b> | <b>2023-2028<br/>Change</b> | <b>2023-2028<br/>% Change</b> | <b>Annual<br/>Openings</b> |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 27-1025    | Interior Designers                            | 603                  | 603                  | 0                           | 0%                            | 58                         |
| 27-1026    | Merchandise Displayers and<br>Window Trimmers | 698                  | 717                  | 19                          | 3%                            | 88                         |
|            |                                               | <b>1,301</b>         | <b>1,320</b>         | <b>19</b>                   | <b>1%</b>                     | <b>146</b>                 |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

## Earnings

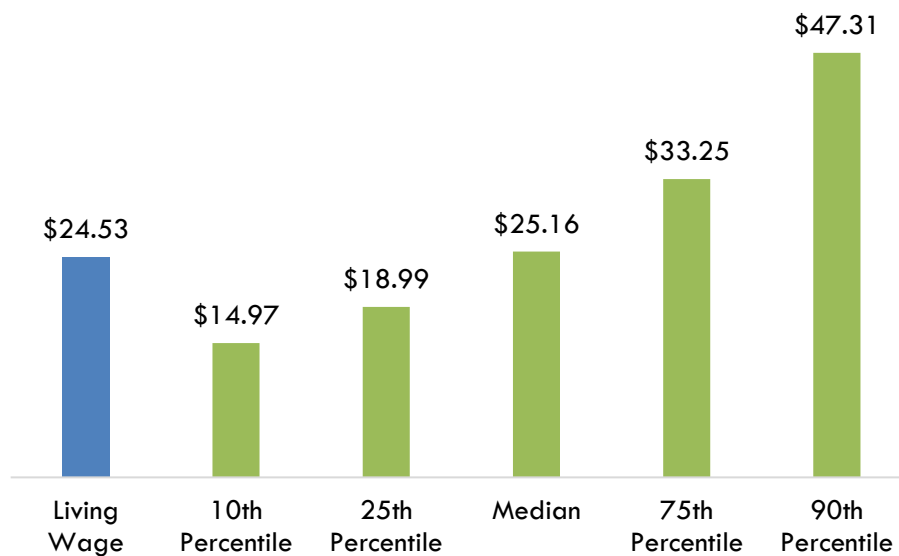
Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages for the occupations of interest. Entry-level hourly earnings are represented by the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages, demonstrating various levels of employment.

**Exhibit 3 – Earnings in the South Central Coast Region**

| SOC     | Occupation                                 | Entry-Level<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Median<br>Hourly<br>Earnings | Experienced<br>Hourly<br>Earnings |
|---------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 27-1025 | Interior Designers                         | \$21.08                           | \$31.67                      | \$45.22                           |
| 27-1026 | Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers | \$16.89                           | \$18.66                      | \$21.27                           |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

**Exhibit 3b – Earnings in the South Central Coast Region**



Source: Family Needs Calculator (Living wage is based on Single Adult households with no children); Lightcast™ Analyst

### 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 the occupations relevant to the field of study. Employer job postings are consulted to understand who is looking for professionals in a given field, and what they are looking for in potential candidates. To identify relevant job postings, the following occupations were used:

|         |                                            |
|---------|--------------------------------------------|
| 27-1025 | Interior Designers                         |
| 27-1026 | Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers |

### Top Occupations

Over the past 12 months (December 2023 to November 2024), there have been 1,316 employer job postings for the two occupations of interest.

**Exhibit 4 – Job Postings by Occupation**

| SOC Code | Occupation                                 | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|----------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 27-1026  | Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers | 1,247                           |
| 27-1025  | Interior Designers                         | 69                              |
|          | <b>Total</b>                               | <b>1,316</b>                    |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

### Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for Interior Design-related occupations are listed in Exhibit 5.

**Exhibit 5 – Job Titles**

| Title                            | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Retail Merchandisers             | 419                             |
| Merchandisers                    | 195                             |
| Retail Sales Merchandisers       | 57                              |
| Merchandising Specialists        | 38                              |
| Interior Designers               | 37                              |
| Merchandise Specialists          | 32                              |
| Merchandising Service Associates | 31                              |
| Lead Merchandisers               | 17                              |
| Visual Merchandisers             | 16                              |
| Merchandise Planners             | 13                              |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

## Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the major employers hiring professionals in the field of interest. The top employers posting job ads were Crossmark and SAS Retail Services.

**Exhibit 6 – Top Employers**

| Employer            | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Crossmark           | 123                             |
| SAS Retail Services | 123                             |
| Retail Odyssey      | 50                              |
| Walmart             | 40                              |
| American Greetings  | 37                              |
| Lowe's              | 35                              |
| Advantage Solutions | 30                              |
| Acosta Group        | 30                              |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

## Skills

The tables in Exhibit 7 list employers' most commonly requested skills in job postings related to the two occupations of interest. Merchandising is the most sought-after specialized skill for employers. Management was the most requested baseline skill. Microsoft Excel was the most requested software skill.

**Exhibit 7 – Specialized Skills**

| Skills                         | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Merchandising                  | 881                             |
| Smart Devices                  | 162                             |
| Planogram                      | 156                             |
| Mobile Application Development | 141                             |
| Marketing                      | 109                             |
| Construction                   | 92                              |
| Stock Rotation                 | 91                              |
| Auditing                       | 89                              |
| Inventory Management           | 79                              |
| Stocking Merchandise           | 78                              |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

### Exhibit 7b – Baseline Skills

| Skills               | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Management           | 486                             |
| Lifting Ability      | 453                             |
| Sales                | 425                             |
| Communication        | 355                             |
| Customer Service     | 313                             |
| Professionalism      | 183                             |
| Detail Oriented      | 179                             |
| Smartphone Operation | 153                             |
| Leadership           | 117                             |
| Time Management      | 107                             |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

### Exhibit 7c – Software and Programming Skills

| Skills               | Job Postings,<br>Last 12 months |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Microsoft Excel      | 62                              |
| Microsoft Outlook    | 37                              |
| SAS (Software)       | 36                              |
| Microsoft Office     | 32                              |
| Microsoft PowerPoint | 32                              |

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

### Education and Training

Exhibit 8 shows the typical entry-level education requirement for the two occupations included in this report. Interior Designers typically require a bachelor's degree while Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers typically require a high school diploma or equivalent.

### Exhibit 8 – Education and Training Requirements

| SOC     | Occupation                                 | Typical entry-level education     | Typical on-the-job training |
|---------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 27-1025 | Interior Designers                         | Bachelor's degree                 | None                        |
| 27-1026 | Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers | High school diploma or equivalent | Short-term                  |

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

## Regional Completions and Openings

Between 2020 and 2023, there were 42 awards conferred in the South Central Coast region aligned with the programs that have historically trained for the occupations of interest.

**Exhibit 9 – Three-Year Average of Awards Conferred in the Region**

| TOP/CIP Code | Program                           | 3-Year Average (2020-2023) |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1302.00      | Interior Design and Merchandising | 42                         |
| 50.0408      | Interior Design                   | -                          |
|              | <b>Total</b>                      | <b>42</b>                  |

Source: Datamart and IPEDS

## CCC Awards

Exhibit 10 shows the average number of awards granted by community colleges within programs historically dedicated to training for the occupations included in this report.

**Exhibit 10 – CCC Awards in the South Central Coast Region, 2020-2023 Average**

| CCC Programs    | 3-Year Average |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Allan Hancock   | 3              |
| Antelope Valley | 1              |
| Canyons         | 25             |
| Santa Barbara   | 13             |

Source: DataMart

## **Sources**

O\*Net Online, Lightcast™ Analyst, 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 Interior Design and Merchandising. 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.