



Dental Hygienist (TOP 1240.20)

December 2024

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 – Dental Hygienist. 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 occupation:

- Dental Hygienists (SOC 29-1292)

Key Findings

- In 2023, there were 1,491 jobs for Dental Hygienists in the South Central Coast Region.
- The number of new jobs is expected to increase by 5% through 2028.
- Projections show approximately 123 annual openings in the region. There were 17 awards conferred in relevant programs, indicating an undersupply.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an associate degree is typically required for Dental Hygienists.

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 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
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	Administer oral hygiene care to patients. Assess patient oral hygiene problems or needs and maintain health records. Advise patients on oral health maintenance and disease prevention. May provide advanced care such as providing fluoride treatment or administering topical anesthesia.	Dental Hygienist, Hygienist, Licensed Dental Hygienist, Pediatric Dental Hygienist, Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH)

Source: O*NET Online

Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs for Dental Hygienists is expected to increase by 5% through 2028. Approximately 123 annual openings are expected through 2028.

Exhibit 2 – Five-Year Projections for Dental Hygienists in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	2023 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 % Change	Annual Openings
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	1,491	1,565	74	5%	123
		1,491	1,565	74	5%	123

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Earnings

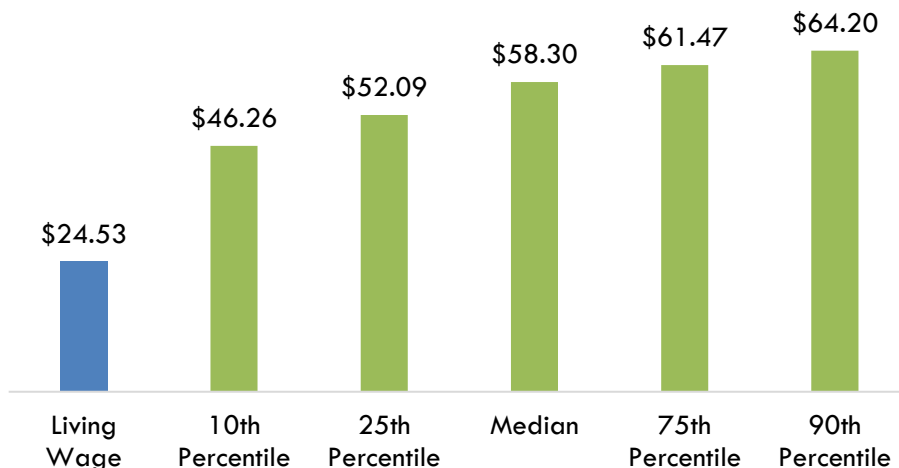
Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages for the occupation of interest. Entry-level hourly earnings are represented by the 25th percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50th percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 75th percentile of wages, demonstrating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

Exhibit 3 – Earnings for Dental Hygienists in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	\$52.09	\$58.30	\$61.47

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Exhibit 3b – Earnings for Dental Hygienists 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 occupation 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 occupation was used:

29-1292 Dental Hygienists

Top Occupations

Over the past 12 months (December 2023 to November 2024), there have been 122 employer job postings for Dental Hygienists.

Exhibit 4 – Job Postings by Occupation

SOC/ONET Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Last 12 months
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	122
	Total	122

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for Dental Hygienists are listed in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5 – Job Titles

Title	Job Postings, Last 12 months
Dental Hygienists	62
Registered Dental Hygienists	35
Hygienists	21
Hygiene Coordinators	1

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 Smile Brands and Western Dental Orthodontics.

Exhibit 6 – Top Employers

Employer	Job Postings, Last 12 months
Smile Brands	12
Western Dental Orthodontics	8
Pacific Dental Services	7
Johnson Family Dental	5
Sonrava Health	4

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Skills

The tables in Exhibit 7 list employers' most commonly requested skills in job postings related to Dental Hygienists. Dental Hygiene is the most sought-after specialized skill for employers. Communication was the most requested baseline skill. Dentrax was the most requested software/programming skill.

Exhibit 7 – Specialized Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Last 12 months
Dental Hygiene	98
Oral Hygiene	46
Patient Education and Counseling	40
Dental Plaque Removal	19
Oral Health	18
Dental Procedures	17
Periodontology	17
Oral Cancer Screening	15
Billing	14
Call Center Experience	12

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Exhibit 7b – Baseline Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Last 12 months
Communication	24
Apple iPad	12
Customer Service	9
Detail Oriented	9
Enthusiasm	4
Organizational Skills	2
Compassion	2
Self-Motivation	2
Spanish Language	2
Empathy	1

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Exhibit 7c – Software and Programming Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Last 12 months
Dentrix	4
Epic EMR	1
Project Management Software	1
Open Dental	1

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst

Education and Training

Exhibit 8 shows the typical entry-level education requirement for Dental Hygienists along with the typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the occupation.

Exhibit 8 – Education and Training Requirements

SOC	Occupation	Typical entry-level education	Typical on-the-job training
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	Associate degree	None

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

Regional Completions and Openings

Between 2020 and 2023, there were 17 awards conferred in the South Central Coast region aligned with the programs that have historically trained for the occupation of interest.

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

TOP/CIP Code	Program	3-Year Average (2020-2023)
1240.20	Dental Hygienist	17
51.0602	Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	-
	Total	17

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
Oxnard	17

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 Dental Hygienists. 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.