Fashion Merchandising (TOP 1303.20)

January 2024

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

Program Recommendation

This report was compiled by the South Central Coast[1] Center of Excellence to provide regional labor market data for the program recommendation – Fashion 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 (CCC and non-CCC) that align with this occupation group.

Key Findings

- In 2022, there were 28,931 jobs related to Fashion Merchandising in the South Central Coast Region.

- This number is expected to increase by 2% through 2027.

- Projections show approximately 4,052 annual openings in the region. An average of 53 awards were conferred in relevant programs, indicating an undersupply.

- Typical entry-level education ranges from no formal educational credential for Retail Salespersons to high school diploma or equivalent for First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers and Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers, to a bachelor's degree for Fashion Designers.

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[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 are four occupations in the standard occupational classification (SOC) system that were identified as related to Fashion Merchandising for this analysis. The occupation titles and descriptions, 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
27-1022	**Fashion Designers**	Design clothing and accessories. Create original designs or adapt fashion trends.	Apparel Fashion Designer, Clothing Designer, Costume Designer, Dance Costume Designer, Designer, Fashion Designer, Historic Clothing and Costume Maker, Latex Fashions Designer, Product Developer
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

SOC Code	Title	Description	Sample of Reported Job Titles
41-1011	**First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers**	Directly supervise and coordinate activities of retail sales workers in an establishment or department. Duties may include management functions, such as purchasing, budgeting, accounting, and personnel work, in addition to supervisory duties.	Bakery Manager, Delicatessen Manager, Department Manager, Department Supervisor, Grocery Manager, Key Carrier, Meat Department Manager, Parts Sales Manager, Shift Manager, Store Manager
41-2031	**Retail Salespersons**	Sell merchandise, such as furniture, motor vehicles, appliances, or apparel to consumers.	Car Salesman, Customer Assistant, Retail Salesperson, Sales Associate, Sales Clerk, Sales Consultant, Sales Person, Sales Representative, Salesman

Source: O*NET Online

Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs related to Fashion Merchandising occupations are expected to grow between 1% and 9% through 2027.

Exhibit 2 – Five-Year Projections for Fashion Merchandising in the South Central Coast Region

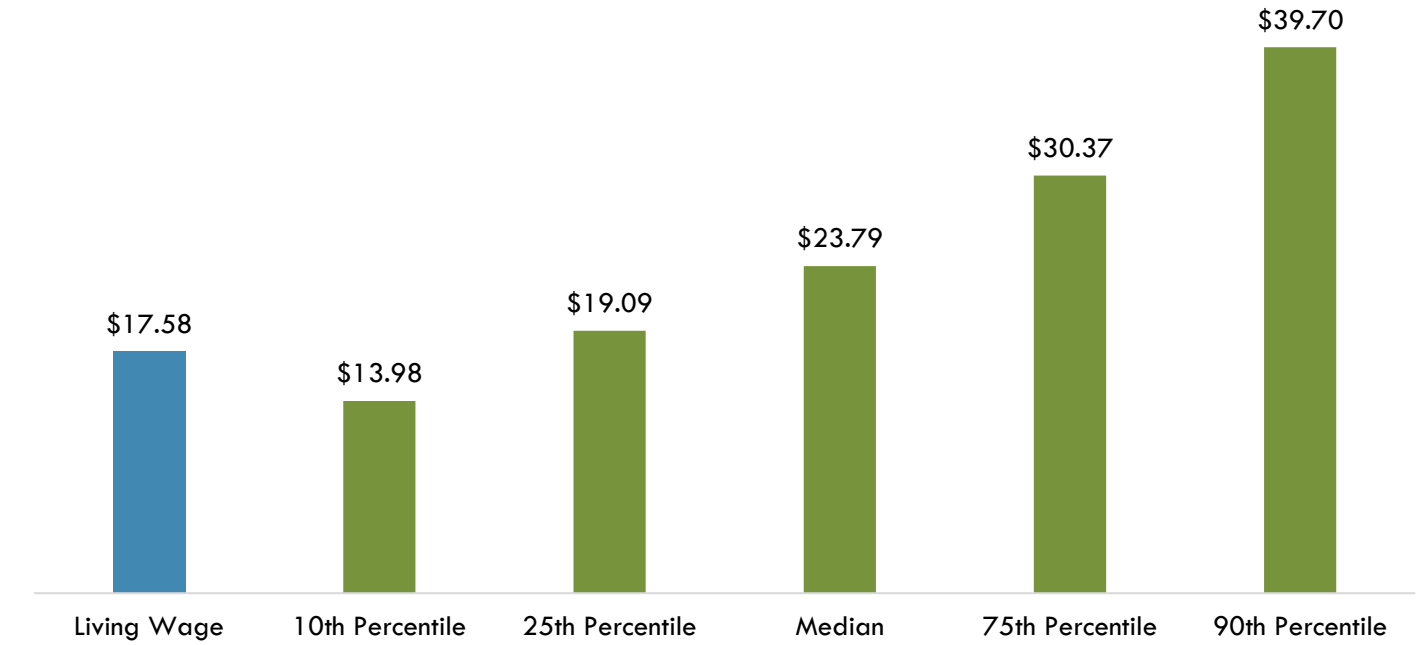| SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change	Annual Openings
41-2031	**Retail Salespersons**	20,174	20,761	587	3%	3,116
41-1011	**First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers**	7,755	7,808	53	1%	802
27-1026	**Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers**	807	876	69	9%	112
27-1022	**Fashion Designers**	196	206	10	5%	21

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Earnings

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 Fashion Merchandising in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
41-2031	**Retail Salespersons**	$15.14	$16.45	$17.91
41-1011	**First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers**	$17.62	$21.78	$28.55
27-1026	**Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers**	$16.79	$18.36	$21.47
27-1022	**Fashion Designers**	$26.81	$38.57	$53.53

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 3b – Earnings for Fashion Merchandising in the South Central Coast Region

Source: Family Needs Calculator (Living wage is based on Single Adult households with no children); Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

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 professionals in a given field, and what they are looking for in potential candidates. To identify job postings related to Fashion Merchandising the following standard occupational classifications were used:

41-2031	Retail Salespersons
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers
27-1022	Fashion Designers

Top Occupations

In 2023, there were 11,964 employer postings for occupations related to Fashion Merchandising.

Exhibit 4 – Top Occupations by Job Postings

SOC Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	6,368
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	4,253
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	1,332
27-1022	Fashion Designers	11

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for jobs related to Fashion Merchandising are listed in Exhibit 5. Sales Associates is mentioned as the job title in 8% of all relevant job postings (914 postings).

Exhibit 5 – Job Titles

Title	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Sales Associates	914
Retail Sales Associates	845
Assistant Store Managers	524
Retail Merchandisers	370
Store Managers	303

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the major employers hiring professionals in the Fashion Merchandising field. The top employer posting job ads was TJX. The top worksite cities for these occupations were Thousand Oaks, Santa Barbara, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Ventura.

Exhibit 6 – Top Employers

Employer	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
TJX	269
Macy's	191
SAS Retail Services	154
Ross Stores	146
Gap	95
Nordstrom	92
Crossmark	88
Ulta Beauty	83

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Skills

The tables in Exhibit 7 list employers' most commonly requested skills in job postings related to Fashion Merchandising. Merchandising is the most sought-after specialized skill for employers. Sales, Customer Service, and Communication were the most requested baseline skills. Microsoft Office was the most requested software and programming skill.

Exhibit 7 – Specialized Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Merchandising	5,252
Selling Techniques	2,142
Product Knowledge	1,318
Retail Operations	1,169
Loss Prevention	1,130
Cash Register	1,013
Visual Merchandising	995
Cash Handling	773
Marketing	724
Inventory Management	716

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 7b – Baseline Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Sales	7,669
Customer Service	6,631
Communication	3,713
Management	3,333
Retail Sales	2,501
Leadership	2,500
Operations	2,230
Lifting Ability	1,842
Coaching	1,054
Multitasking	908

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 7c – Software and Programming Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Microsoft Office	404
Microsoft Excel	299
Microsoft Outlook	215
Microsoft PowerPoint	185
Markdown	100
Microsoft Word	99
Enterprise Application Software	95
Inventory Management System	48
Adobe Photoshop	38
SAS (Software)	36

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Education and Training

Exhibit 8 shows the typical entry-level education requirement for occupations of interest, 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
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	No formal educational credential	Short-term
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	High school diploma or equivalent	None
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term
27-1022	Fashion Designers	Bachelor's degree	None

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

Regional Completions and Openings

Between 2019 and 2022, there were 53 awards conferred in the South Central Coast region aligned with programs related to the occupations in this report.

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

TOP Code	Program	3-Year Average (2019-2022)
0506.50	Retail Store Operations and Management	1
0509.40	Sales and Salesmanship	5
0509.70	E-Commerce (business emphasis)	6
1303.00	Fashion	36
1303.20	Fashion Merchandising	0
1303.30	Fashion Production	5
	Average	**53**

Source: Datamart

CCC and Non-CCC Awards

Exhibit 10 lists the number of awards conferred from programs related to the four occupations included in this report. There were 0 non-community college awards conferred in related programs.

Exhibit 10 – CCC Awards in the South Central Coast Region, 2019-2022 Average

CCC Programs	3-Year Average
Allan Hancock College	23
Antelope Valley College	18
Canyons College	7
Cuesta College	5

Source: DataMart, 2023

Sources

O*Net Online, Lightcast™ Analyst 2023, 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 Fashion 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.