



Forensics, Evidence, and Investigation (TOP: 2105.40) November 2023

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 – Forensic Sciences. 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 Forensic Sciences are expected to increase** for Forensic Science Technicians and **decrease** for Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators.
- Forensic Sciences is anticipated to experience a **low risk of automation** for both related occupations.
- In 2022 there were 324 regional completions in programs related to the occupations identified as aligned with Forensic Sciences and 79 openings, indicating an **oversupply**.
- Typical entry-level education includes a **high school diploma or equivalent** Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators and a **Bachelor's degree** for Forensic Science Technicians.
- Completers of statewide Forensic Sciences programs from the 2019-2020 academic year had a **median annual wage upon completion of \$32,584**.
- 63% of students are **employed within a year** after completing a program.
- 44% of students **attained a living wage** within a year of completion.
- Completers experienced an average of +38% **change in earnings after exiting**.
- 56% of students were **part-time**, 10% **skill builders**, 42% **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 are two occupations in the standard occupational classification (SOC) system that were identified as related to Forensic Sciences 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
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	Review settled claims to determine that payments and settlements are made in accordance with company practices and procedures. Confer with legal counsel on claims requiring litigation. May also settle insurance claims.	Claims Adjuster, Claims Analyst, Claims Examiner, Claims Representative, Claims Specialist, Corporate Claims Examiner, Field Claims Adjuster, General Adjuster, Home Office Claims Specialist, Litigation Claims Representative
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	Collect, identify, classify, and analyze physical evidence related to criminal investigations. Perform tests on weapons or substances, such as fiber, hair, and tissue to determine significance to investigation. May testify as expert witnesses on evidence or crime laboratory techniques. May serve as specialists in area of expertise, such as ballistics, fingerprinting, handwriting, or biochemistry.	Crime Lab Analyst (Crime Laboratory Analyst), Crime Scene Analyst (CSA), Crime Scene Technician (Crime Scene Tech), Criminalist, CSI (Crime Scene Investigator), Evidence Technician (Evidence Tech), Forensic Science Examiner, Forensic Scientist, Forensic Specialist, Latent Print Examiner

Source: O*NET Online

Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs related to Forensic Sciences are expected to increase for Forensic Science Technicians and decrease for Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators.

Exhibit 2 – Five-Year Projections for Forensic Sciences in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	689	656	-33	-5%
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	180	198	18	10%

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Earnings

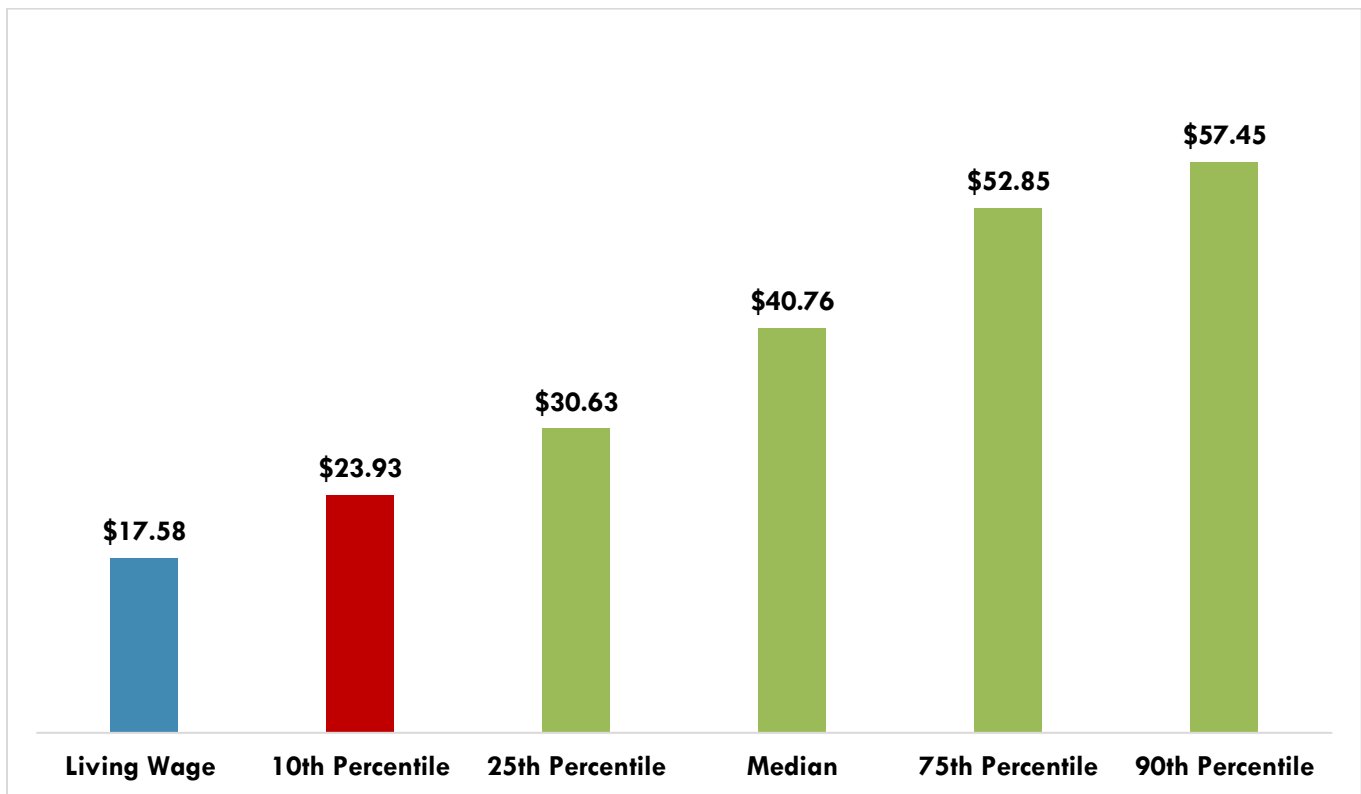
Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages and average earnings for these occupations. Entry-level hourly earnings are represented by the 25th percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50th percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 75th percentile of wages,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

Exhibit 3 – Earnings for Forensic Sciences in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	\$26.81	\$36.37	\$45.04
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	\$34.45	\$45.16	\$60.66

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Exhibit 3b – Earnings for Forensic Sciences in the South Central Coast Region



Source: Family Needs Calculator (Living wage is based on Single Adult households with no children); Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

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 Forensic Sciences the following standard occupational classifications were used:

13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians

Top Occupations

In 2022, there were 312 employer postings for the occupations related to Forensic Sciences.

Exhibit 4 – Top Occupations by Job Postings

SOC Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	309
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	3

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Exhibit 4b – Top Occupations and Risk of Automation

SOC Code	Occupation	Risk of Automation
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	Low
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	Low

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for jobs related to Forensic Sciences are listed in Exhibit 5. Claims Examiners is mentioned as the job title in 8% of all relevant job postings (22 postings).

Exhibit 5 – Job Titles

Title	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Claims Examiners	22
Claims Specialists	20
Insurance Claims Adjusters	19
Workers' Compensation Managers	15
Property Inspectors	15

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the major employers hiring professionals in the Forensic Sciences field. The top employer posting job ads was Chubb. The top worksite cities for these occupations were Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Santa Clarita, Santa Barbara, and Westlake Village.

Exhibit 6 – Top Employers (n=246)

Employer	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Chubb	20
Milehigh Adjusters Houston	19
Elevance Health	15
Sedgwick	12
Cis Group	10

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Skills

The tables in Exhibit 7 list employers' most commonly requested skills in job postings related to Forensic Sciences. Workers' Compensation is the most sought-after specialized skill for employers, followed by Claims Processing and Lawsuits. Customer Service, Management, and Communications were the most requested baseline skills. Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Office, and Microsoft Outlook were the most commonly requested software and programming skills.

Exhibit 7 – Specialized Skills (n= 940)

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Workers' Compensation	61
Claims Processing	53
Lawsuits	42
Auditing	41
Claims Resolution	29
Underwriting	26
Liability Insurance	26
Adjudication	26
Medical Terminology	23
Subrogation	23
Data Entry	19
Mediation	19
Billing	18
Risk Management	18
Data Analysis	17

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Exhibit 7b – Baseline Skills (n= 1,595)

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Customer Service	123
Management	116
Communications	81
Writing	67
Interpersonal Communications	63
Investigation	57
Detail Oriented	50
Organizational Skills	48
Microsoft Excel	48
Professionalism	47

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Exhibit 7c – Software and Programming Skills (n= 224)

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Microsoft Excel	48
Microsoft Office	37
Microsoft Outlook	29
Microsoft Word	17
Microsoft PowerPoint	16
Xactimate (Claims Estimating Software)	14
Apple IOS	9
Operating Systems	9
Microsoft Windows 10	8
Spreadsheets	5

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Industry Concentration

Exhibit 8 shows the industries with the most Forensic Sciences postings in the South Central Coast region. Note: 30% 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 Forensic Sciences Field, 2022

Industry	Occupation Group Jobs in Industry	% of Occupation Group in Industry
Finance and Insurance	109	50%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	28	13%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	27	12%
Public Administration	12	6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11	5%

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Certifications

Exhibit 9 lists the most in-demand certifications in the Forensic Sciences field. The top requested certification in job postings was Valid Driver's License.

Exhibit 9 – Certifications (n= 104)

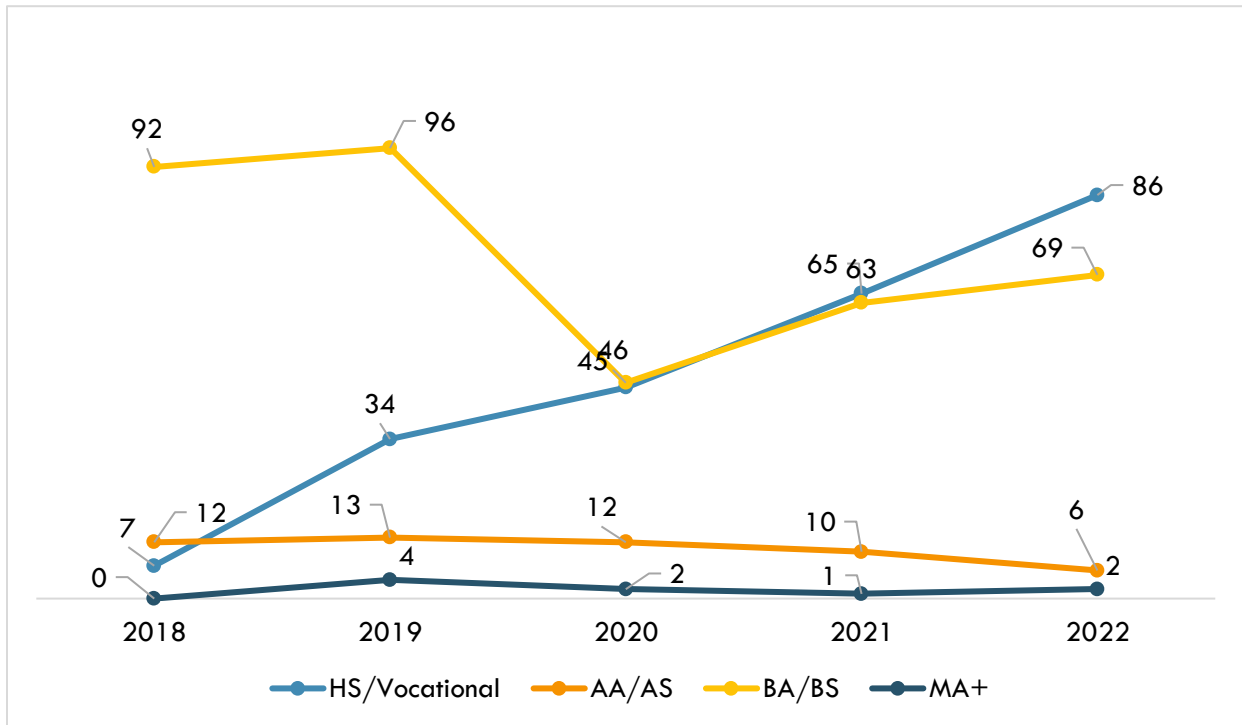
Certifications	Job Postings, Full Year 2022
Valid Driver's License	52
Adjuster License	26
State Bar Membership	8
Security Clearance	8
Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter	1

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Job Postings - Minimum Educational Attainment Over Time

Exhibit 10 displays the change in job advertisements over the last five years for Forensic Sciences, according to the minimum advertised education. In 2022, there were 163 total job ads posted with a minimum advertised education, with 86 of them requiring a high school diploma or vocational training.

Exhibit 10 – Educational Demand, Minimum Advertised



Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Job Postings – Proportion of Job Postings by Minimum Educational Attainment Required

To gauge employer preference for candidates with particular education levels, the proportion of job postings by minimum advertised education appears in Exhibit 11. Employers posting job ads for Forensic Sciences have frequently sought candidates with a high school diploma or vocational training.

Exhibit 11 – Occupational Demand by Education, Minimum Advertised

Minimum Education Requirement	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
HS Diploma / Vocational Training	6%	23%	43%	47%	53%
Associate Degree	11%	9%	11%	7%	4%
Bachelor’s Degree	83%	65%	44%	45%	42%
Graduate Degree	0%	3%	2%	1%	1%

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Education and Training

Exhibit 12 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 12 – Education and Training Requirements

SOC	Occupation	Typical entry-level education	Typical on-the-job training
13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term on-the-job training
19-4092	Forensic Science Technicians	Bachelor's degree	Moderate-term on-the-job training

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

Regional Completions and Openings

There were 324 regional completions (2022) and 79 regional openings (2022) in the South Central Coast region aligned with programs related to the occupations in this report.

Exhibit 13 – Completions and Openings

11 Regional Institutions had Related Programs (2022)	324 Regional Completions (2022)	79 Annual Openings (2022)
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Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

Related Programs

CIP Code	Program	Completions (2022)
40.0501	Chemistry, General	301
52.0801	Finance, General	23
40.0101	Physical Sciences, General	0

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

CCC and Non-CCC Awards

Exhibit 14 lists the number of completers from programs related to Forensic Sciences in the South Central Coast region.

Exhibit 14 – CCC and Non-CCC Awards in the South Central Coast, 2022

CCC Programs		Completers
Moorpark College		28
Antelope Valley Community College District		23
Santa Barbara City College		21
Allan Hancock College		8
Oxnard College		5
Cuesta College		3
Non-CCC Programs		Completers
University of California-Santa Barbara		136
California Lutheran University		33
California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo		26
California State University-Channel Islands		25
Westmont College		16

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2022

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 the statewide Forensic Sciences Programs (TOP: 2105.40) for the 2019-2020 academic year.

- Completers of statewide Forensic Sciences programs from the 2019-2020 academic year had a **median annual wage upon completion of \$32,584.**
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- Completers experienced an average of **+38% change in earnings after exiting.**
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Sources

O*Net Online, Lightcast™ Analyst 2022, 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 Forensic Sciences. 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.