



Physical Therapy (TOP 1222.00)

February 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 – Physical Therapy. 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 this occupation group.

Key Findings

- In 2022, there were 1,032 jobs for Physical Therapy-related occupations in the South Central Coast Region.
- This number is expected to increase by 13% through 2027.
- Projections show approximately 178 annual openings in the region. There were no awards conferred in relevant programs, indicating an undersupply.
- Typical entry-level education ranges from high school diploma or equivalent for Physical Therapist Aides to an associate degree for Physical Therapist Assistants.

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 Physical Therapy 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
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	Assist physical therapists in providing physical therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with state laws, assist in the development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, document the progress of treatment, and modify specific treatments in accordance with patient status and within the scope of treatment plans established by a physical therapist. Generally requires formal training.	Certified Physical Therapist Assistant (CPTA), Home Care Physical Therapy Assistant, Home Health Physical Therapist Assistant, Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (LPTA), Licensed Physical Therapy Assistant, Outpatient Physical Therapist Assistant, Per Diem Physical Therapist Assistant (Per Diem PTA), Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA), Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA)
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	Under close supervision of a physical therapist or physical therapy assistant, perform only delegated, selected, or routine tasks in specific situations. These duties include preparing the patient and the treatment area.	Physical Therapist Aide (PTA), Physical Therapy Aide (PTA), PT Attendant (Physical Therapy Attendant), PT Tech (Physical Therapist Technician), PT Tech (Physical Therapy Technician), Rehabilitation Aide, Rehabilitation Attendant, Rehabilitation Technician (Rehabilitation Tech), Restorative Aide (RA), Therapy Aide

Source: O*NET Online

Current and Future Employment

In the South Central Coast region, the number of jobs related to Physical Therapy occupations are expected to grow 13% through 2027. The occupation – Physical Therapist Assistants – is expected to grow the fastest, 23%.

Exhibit 2 – Five-Year Projections for Physical Therapy Occupations in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	2022 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2022-2027 Change	2022-2027 % Change	Annual Openings
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	473	580	107	23%	92
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	559	582	24	4%	85
		1,032	1,163	131	13%	178

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Earnings

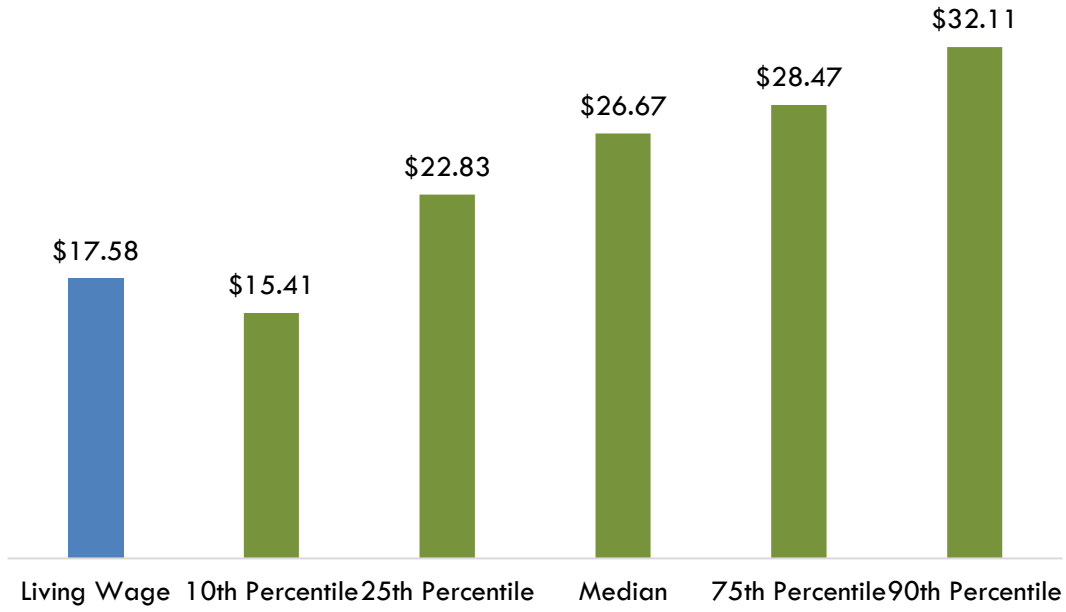
Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages and annual average earnings for these occupations. Entry-level hourly earnings are represented by the 25th percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50th percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 75th percentile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

Exhibit 3 – Earnings for Physical Therapy Occupations in the South Central Coast Region

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	\$30.59	\$37.43	\$40.16
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	\$15.07	\$15.92	\$16.78

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 3b – Earnings for Physical Therapy Occupations 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 Physical Therapy the following standard occupational classifications were used:

31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides

Top Occupations

In 2023, there were 470 employer postings for occupations related to Physical Therapy.

Exhibit 4 – Top Occupations by Job Postings

SOC Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	281
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	189
	Total	470

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting ads for jobs related to Physical Therapy are listed in Exhibit 5. Physical Therapy Aides is mentioned as the job title in 148 job postings.

Exhibit 5 – Job Titles

Title	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Physical Therapy Aides	148
Physical Therapy Assistants	103
Physical Therapist Assistants	82
Physical Therapy Technicians	39
Home Health Physical Therapy Assistants	29
Home Health Physical Therapists	14
Administrative Assistants	12
Physical Therapist Aides	11

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the major employers hiring professionals in the Physical Therapy field. The top employer posting job ads was Two Trees Physical Therapy. The top worksite cities for these occupations were Santa Barbara, Thousand Oaks, Ventura, Santa Maria, and Oxnard.

Exhibit 6 – Top Employers

Employer	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Two Trees Physical Therapy	27
FeldCare Connects	20
Ensign Group	16
EmpowerMe Wellness	12
Ventura Orthopedics Medical Group	11
Home Health Links	9
Kindred Healthcare	9
Marian Regional Medical Center	9

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Skills

The tables in Exhibit 7 list employers' most commonly requested skills in job postings related to Physical Therapy. Physical Therapy is the most sought-after specialized skill for employers. Communication was the most requested baseline skill. Microsoft Office was the most requested software and programming skill.

Exhibit 7 – Specialized Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Physical Therapy	354
Patient Treatment	90
Home Health Care	74
Kinesiology	70
Rehabilitation	62
Patient Preparation	59
Patient Assistance	53
Patient Education and Counseling	49
Patient Positioning	47
Sterilization	43

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 7b – Baseline Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Communication	120
Customer Service	59
Coordinating	55
Interpersonal Communications	54
Writing	54
Operations	52
Fine Motor Skills	41
Active Listening	40
Calculators	39
Clerical Works	36

Source: Lightcast™ Analyst 2023

Exhibit 7c – Software and Programming Skills

Skills	Job Postings, Full Year 2023
Microsoft Office	21
Microsoft Excel	15
Aperture	13
Microsoft PowerPoint	13
Git (Version Control System)	11

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
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	Associate degree	None
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term

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

Regional Completions and Openings

Between 2019 and 2022, there were 0 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/CIP Code	Program	3-Year Average (2019-2022)
1222.00	Physical Therapist Assistant	N/A
51.0806	Physical Therapy Assistant	N/A
	Average	N/A

Source: Datamart

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 Physical Therapy. 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.