

**Program Endorsement Brief: 0850.10/Sign Language Interpreting
American Sign Language (Certificate of Achievement); Deaf Studies;
Foundations in Interpreting**

Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence, February 2019

Summary:

The Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to American Sign Language (ASL). This report is intended to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from community college programs that align with relevant occupations.

The following summarizes key findings from this data brief:

- The number of jobs for interpreters and translators is projected to increase by 8% over the next five years. There are projected to be nearly 530 job openings annually due to new job growth and replacement need (e.g. retirements).
- Over the past 12 months, there have been 116 online job postings related to ASL interpreting in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.
- Seven colleges in the region have programs closely related to ASL interpreting.
- Between 2014 and 2017, community colleges in the region conferred an average of 95 awards annually (associate degrees and certificates) in related training programs.

Occupational Demand—In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs for interpreters and translators is projected to increase by 8%. There will be more than 500 job openings per year through 2022 (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties¹

Geography	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2017-2022 Change	2017-2022 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	3,708	4,025	317	9%	406
Orange	1,118	1,208	90	8%	121
Total	4,826	5,233	407	8%	527

¹ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

Wages—Entry-level hourly wages for interpreter and translator positions in the region are between \$13.11 and \$16.55. Entry-level wages are higher than the MIT Living hourly wage for one adult in Los Angeles County, yet lower in Orange County (\$13.54 in Los Angeles County, \$15.31 in Orange County). Experienced workers earn approximately \$31.52/hour.

Job Postings—There were 116 online job postings related to ASL interpreting in the past 12 months. The majority of job postings are for sign language interpreters, educational interpreters, and sign language specialists. Top specialized skills are: communication skills, positive disposition, and teaching. The top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region are: the California State University system, Sorenson Communications, and Purple Communications.

Educational Attainment—The BLS lists a bachelor’s degree as the typical entry-level education for this occupation. The national-level educational attainment data indicates 36% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. In Los Angeles/Orange County, 67% of job postings request high school or vocational training.

Community College Supply—Appendix A shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Sign Language Interpreting (0850.10). The colleges with the most completions in the region are: El Camino, Golden West, and Saddleback. Between January and December 2018, there was one other community college request for data related to a similar program.

Appendix A: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2014-2017

TOP Code	Program	College	2014-15 Awards	2015-16 Awards	2016-2017 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting	Compton	4	2	3	3
		El Camino	42	19	30	30
		Golden West	29	30	25	28
		LA Pierce	5	9	3	6
		Mt San Antonio	16	8	12	12
		Saddleback	11	20	13	15
		Santiago Canyon	2	1	2	2
		Total	109	89	88	95

Appendix B: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 3. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
Interpreters and Translators (27-3091)	3,708	4,025	317	9%	406	\$16.55	\$24.61	\$31.98

Exhibit 4. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
Interpreters and Translators (27-3091)	1,118	1,208	90	8%	121	\$13.11	\$22.47	\$29.29

Exhibit 5. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
Interpreters and Translators (27-3091)	4,827	5,233	406	8%	527	\$14.42	\$24.02	\$31.52

Appendix C: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (EMSI)
- Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- Employment Development Department, Unemployment Insurance Dataset
- Living Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- MIT Living Wage

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