










# Social Work Occupations

## Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

October 2022

### Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED EDUCATION FOR MAJORITY OF OCCUPATIONS ANALYZED
 <p><b>Proceed with Caution</b></p>	 	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree+</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Some College or Certificate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HS Diploma or Equivalent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Less than a HS Diploma</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apprenticeship</li> </ul>
SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS	
 	<p>HIGH</p> 	<p>HIGH</p> 	

This brief provides labor market information about *Social Work Occupations* to assist the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges with program development and strategic planning. *Social Work Occupations* include “Child, Family, and School Social Workers,” “Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other,” “Social and Human Service Assistants,” and “Social Workers, All Other.” According to available labor market information, *Social Work Occupations* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 1,184 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 245 annual job openings), and 11 institutions supply 792 awards for these occupations, suggesting that there is a supply gap in the labor market. Entry-level wages except for “Social and Human Service Assistants,” and median wages for these occupations are above the living wage. This brief recommends that the colleges proceed with caution with developing a new program for these occupations but supports a program modification because 1) a high number of annual job openings exist for these occupations; 2) on average, these occupations’ entry-level wages are above the living wage; and 3) there is a supply gap in San Diego County. Colleges should note that **the percentage of students who complete a related program and earn a living wage is lower than students who complete Career Education programs in general.**

## Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational codes in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)<sup>1</sup> system:

- **Child, Family, and School Social Workers** (SOC 21-1021): Provide social services and assistance to improve the social and psychological functioning of children and their families and to maximize the family well-being and the academic functioning of children. May assist parents, arrange adoptions, and find foster homes for abandoned or abused children. In schools, they address such problems as teenage pregnancy, misbehavior, and truancy. May also advise teachers.
- **Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other** (SOC 21-1099): All community and social service specialists not listed separately.
- **Social and Human Service Assistants** (SOC 21-1093): Assist other social and human service providers in providing client services in a wide variety of fields, such as psychology, rehabilitation, or social work, including support for families. May assist clients in identifying and obtaining available benefits and social and community services. May assist social workers with developing, organizing, and conducting programs to prevent and resolve problems relevant to substance abuse, human relationships, rehabilitation, or dependent care.
- **Social Workers, All Other** (SOC 21-1029): All social workers not listed separately.

For the purpose of this report, these occupations are referred to as *Social Work Occupations*.

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<sup>1</sup> The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc).

## Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2021 and 2026, *Social Work Occupations* are projected to increase by 915 net jobs or 10 percent (Exhibit 1a). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 1,184 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.

**Exhibit 1a: Number of Jobs for Social Work Occupations (2011-2026)<sup>2</sup>**

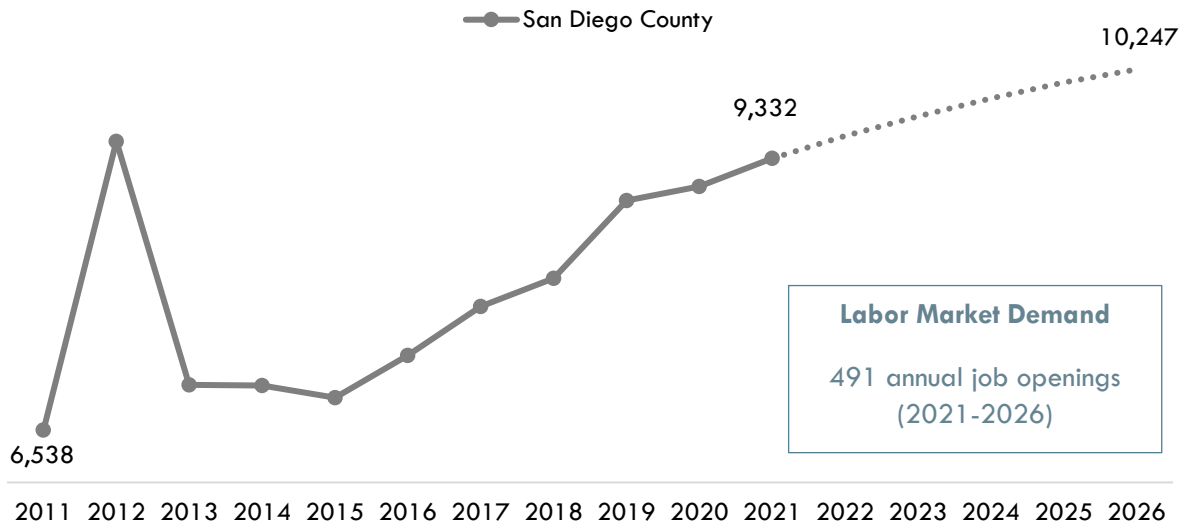


Exhibit 1b disaggregates the projected number of jobs change by occupation. “Social and Human Service Assistants” are projected to have the most labor market demand between 2021 and 2026, with 593 annual job openings.

**Exhibit 1b: Number of Jobs for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County (2021-2026)<sup>3</sup>**

Occupational Title	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2021 - 2026 Net Jobs Change	2021-2026 % Net Jobs Change	Annual Job Openings (Demand)
Social and Human Service Assistants	4,045	4,551	506	13%	593
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	3,387	3,676	289	9%	378
Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	945	1,010	65	7%	113
Social Workers, All Other	955	1,010	55	6%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,332</b>	<b>10,247</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1,184</b>

<sup>2</sup> EMSI 2022.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>3</sup> EMSI 2022.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

## Earnings

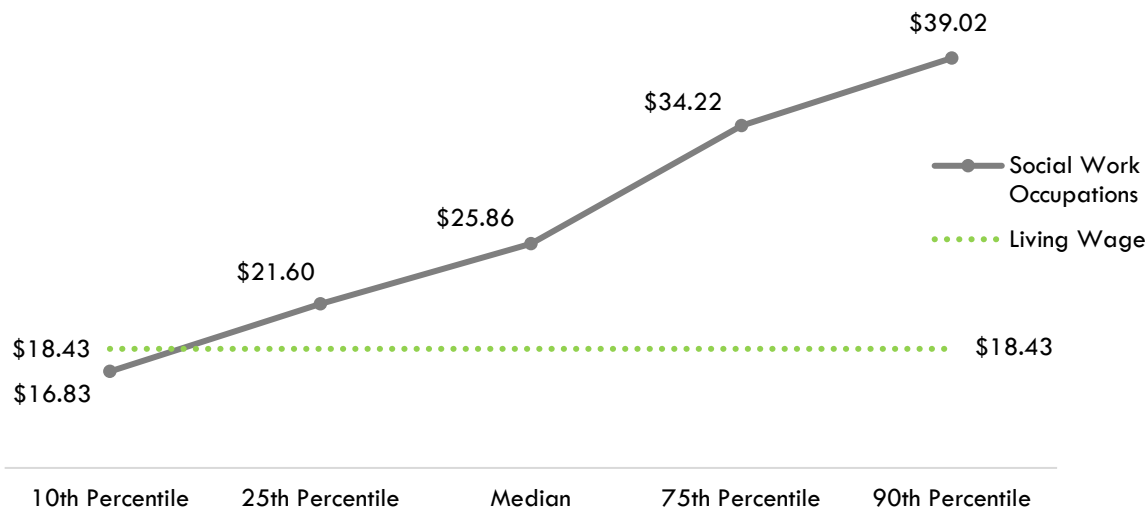
Exhibit 2a disaggregates hourly earnings by occupation. The entry-level hourly earnings for *Social Work Occupations* range from \$17.90 to \$27.82.

**Exhibit 2a: Hourly Earnings for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>4</sup>**

Occupational Title	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile)
Social Workers, All Other	\$27.82	\$29.64	\$45.33
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	\$21.98	\$29.58	\$37.67
Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	\$18.70	\$23.54	\$30.38
Social and Human Service Assistants	\$17.90	\$20.68	\$23.51

On average, the entry-level hourly earnings for *Social Work Occupations* are \$21.60; this is more than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is \$18.43 per hour (Exhibit 2b).<sup>5</sup>

**Exhibit 2b: Average Hourly Earnings<sup>6</sup> for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>7</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> EMSI 2022.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

<sup>5</sup> "Family Needs Calculator (formerly the California Family Needs Calculator)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2021. [insightccd.org/family-needs-calculator/](https://insightccd.org/family-needs-calculator/).

<sup>6</sup> 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.

<sup>7</sup> EMSI 2022.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

## Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.<sup>8</sup> There are **seven** TOP codes and **eight** CIP codes related to *Social Work Occupations* (Exhibit 3).

**Exhibit 3: Related TOP and CIP Codes for Social Work Occupations<sup>9</sup>**

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 1261.00	Community Health Care Worker
TOP 1305.60	Parenting and Family Education
TOP 1305.70	Foster and Kinship Care
TOP 1308.00	Family Studies
TOP 2104.00	Human Services
TOP 2104.40	Alcohol and Controlled Substances
TOP 2104.50	Disability Services
CIP 19.0101	Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences, General
CIP 19.0401	Family Resource Management Studies, General
CIP 19.0701	Human Development and Family Studies, General
CIP 19.0707	Family and Community Services
CIP 44.0000	Human Services, General
CIP 44.0701	Social Work
CIP 51.1501	Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling
CIP 51.2208	Community Health and Preventive Medicine

According to TOP data, **four** community colleges supply the region with awards for these occupations: **Cuyamaca College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, and Southwestern College**. According to CIP data, **seven** non-community-college institutions supply the region with awards: **Ashford University, California State University-San Marcos, National University, Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego Christian College, San Diego State University, and University of California-San Diego** (Exhibit 4).

<sup>8</sup> TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart ([datamart.cccco.edu](http://datamart.cccco.edu)) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System ([nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data)).

<sup>9</sup> This brief uses a conservative estimate of program supply and only calculates awards from the TOP codes in Exhibit 3.

**Exhibit 4: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions  
(Program Year 2017-18 through Program Year 2020-21 Average)**

TOP6 or CIP Code	TOP6 or CIP Program Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY18-19 to PY20-21)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY17-18 to PY19-20)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY17-18 to PY20-21)
1305.60	Parenting and Family Education	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
	• Palomar	11	0	
1308.00	Family Studies	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>
	• Southwestern	33	0	
2104.00	Human Services	<b>116</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>116</b>
	• Cuyamaca	40	0	
	• Palomar	1	0	
	• San Diego City	48	0	
	• Southwestern	27	0	
2104.40	Alcohol and Controlled Substances	<b>73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>
	• Palomar	28	0	
	• San Diego City	45	0	
19.0401	Family Resource Management Studies, General	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
	• Ashford University	0	9	
19.0701	Human Development and Family Studies, General	<b>0</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>352</b>
	• California State University-San Marcos	0	278	
	• San Diego Christian College	0	9	
	• University of California-San Diego	0	65	
44.0701	Social Work	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>118</b>
	• Point Loma Nazarene University	0	11	
	• San Diego State University	0	107	

TOP6 or CIP Code	TOP6 or CIP Program Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY18-19 to PY20-21)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY17-18 to PY19-20)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY17-18 to PY20-21)
51.1501	Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling	0	2	2
	• National University	0	2	
51.2208	Community Health and Preventive Medicine	0	78	78
	• National University	0	78	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>792</b>

## Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply<sup>10</sup> suggests that there is a **supply gap** for these occupations in San Diego County, with **1,184** annual openings and **792** awards. Comparatively, there are **16,406** annual openings in California and **10,652** awards, suggesting that there is also a supply gap across the state<sup>11</sup> (Exhibit 5).

### Exhibit 5: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply <sup>12</sup> (Total Annual Average Supply)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
San Diego	1,184	792	<b>392</b>
California	16,406	10,684	<b>5,722</b>

**Please note:** This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

<sup>10</sup> Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.

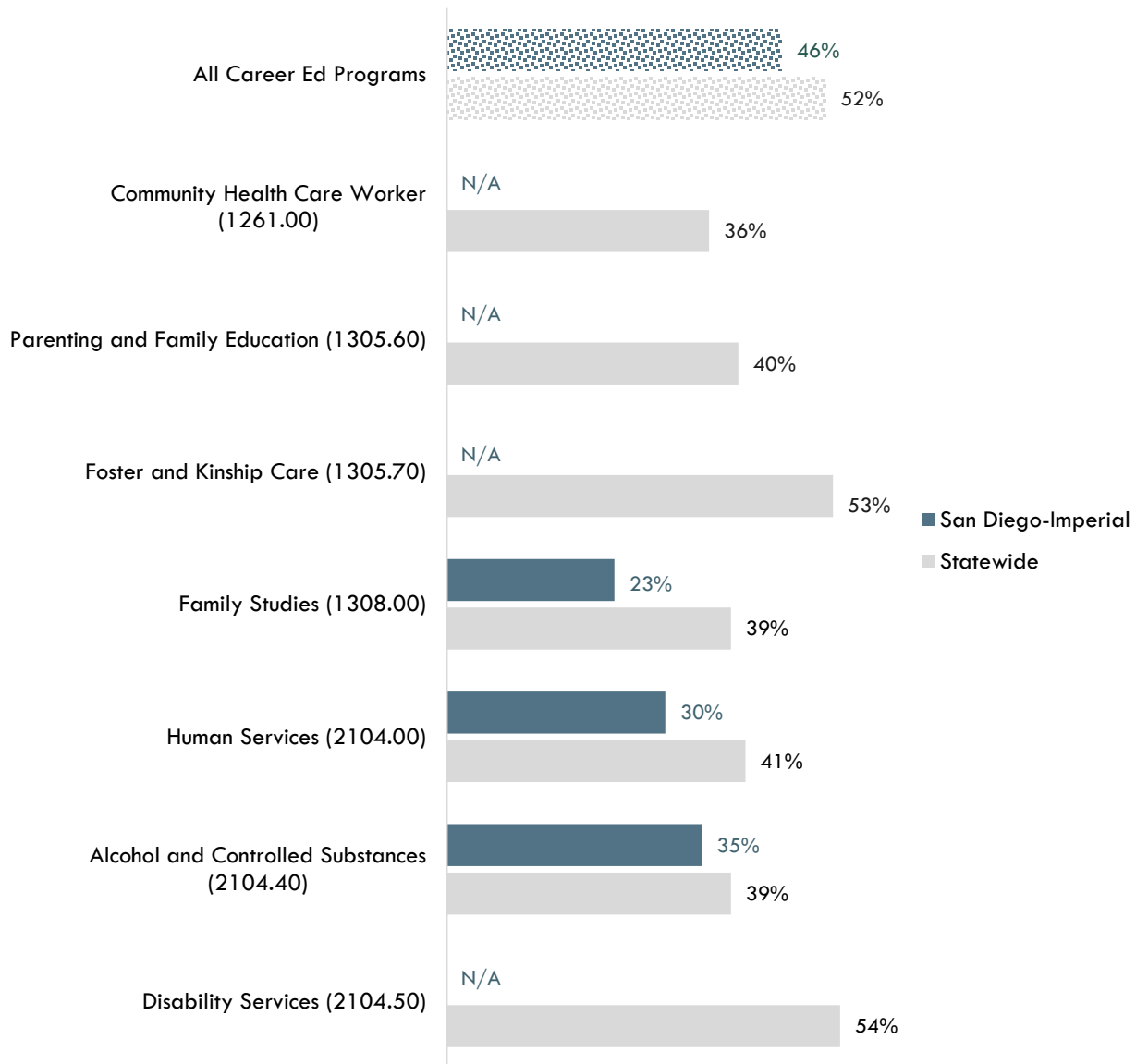
<sup>11</sup> "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, <https://coecc.net/our-resources/>.

<sup>12</sup> Awards included: associate degree; award <1 year; award 1<2 years; and postsecondary awards

## Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 23 to 35 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a program related to *Social Work Occupations*, compared 36 to 54 percent statewide and 52 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6a).<sup>13</sup>

**Exhibit 6a: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program, PY2019-20<sup>14</sup>**



"N/A" indicates insufficient data

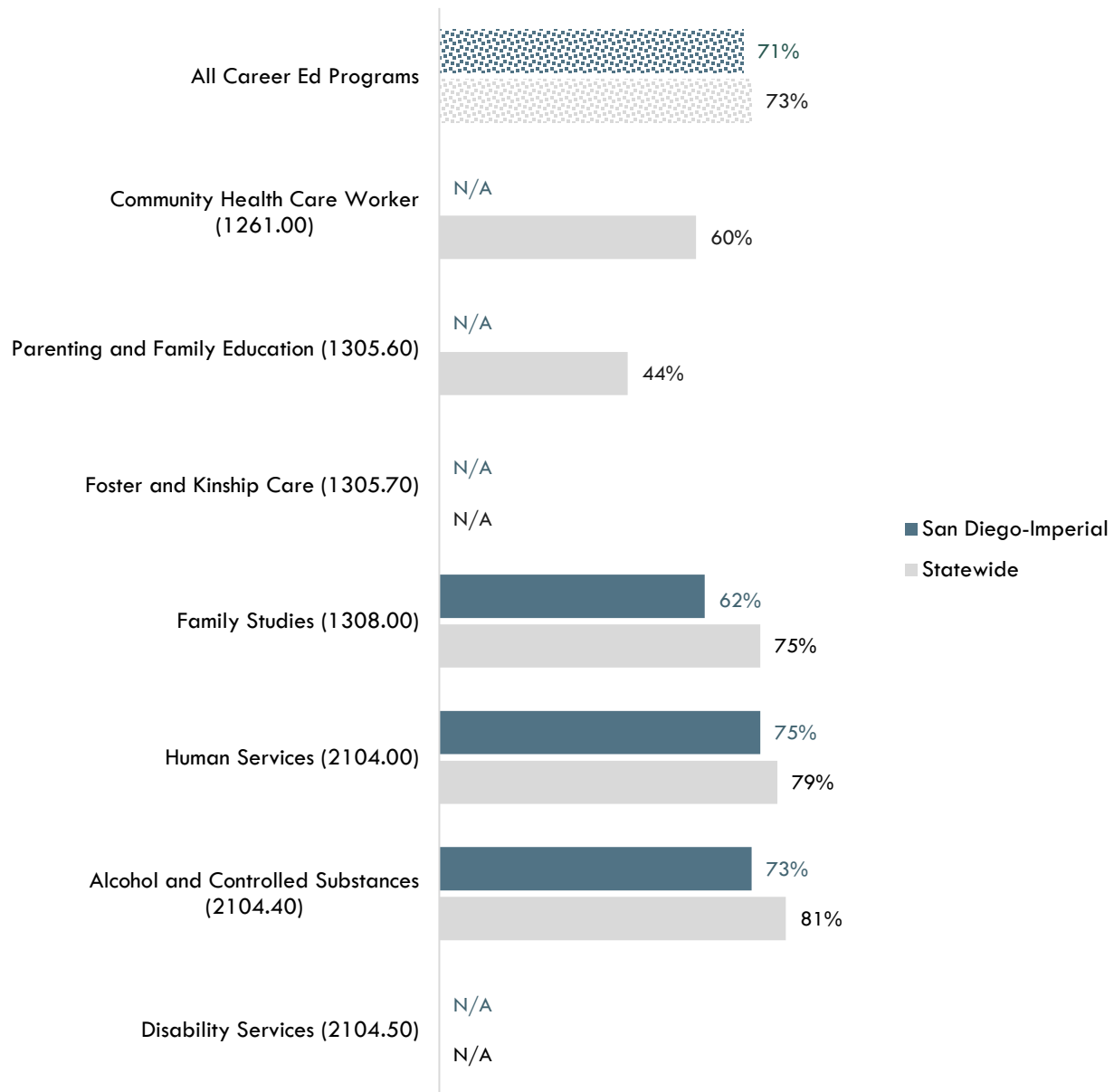
<sup>13</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>14</sup> Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2019-20. Among completers and skills builders who exited, the percentage of students who attained a living wage.



According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 62 to 75 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a program related to *Social Work Occupations*, compared to 44 to 81 percent statewide and 73 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6b).<sup>15</sup>

**Exhibit 6b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program, PY2018-19<sup>16</sup>**



"N/A" indicates insufficient data

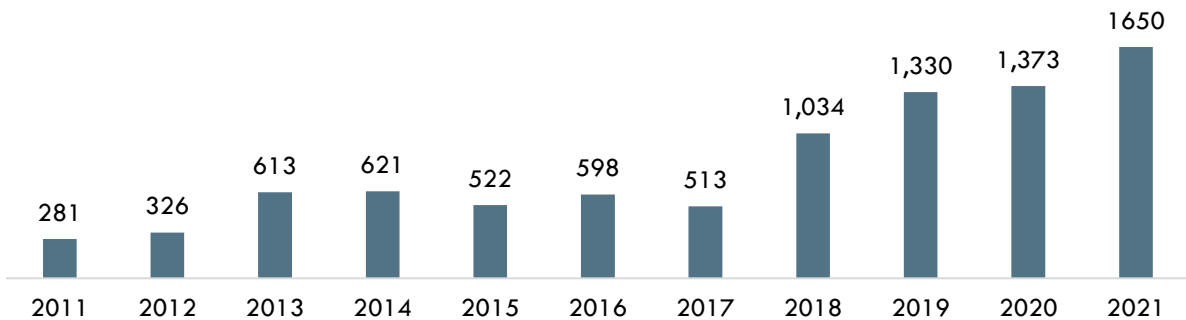
<sup>15</sup> "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, [calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx](http://calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx).

<sup>16</sup> Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2018-19. Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study: Among students who responded to the CTEOS, the percentage reporting employment in the same or similar field as their program of study.

## Online Job Postings

This report analyzes not only historical and projected (traditional LMI) data, but also recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight about recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical data. Between 2011 and 2021, there was an average of 806 online job postings per year for *Social Work Occupations* in San Diego County (Exhibit 7). Please note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (see Exhibit 1b). While this brief includes online jobs postings data to help with curriculum development, the community colleges should note that this type of data is impacted by several variables: employers may post a position multiple times to increase the pool of applicants; a job posting can remain posted after a business decides not to fill a position; or an employer may use one posting to fill multiple positions, for example.

**Exhibit 7: Number of Online Job Postings for Social Work Occupations  
in San Diego County (2011-2021)<sup>17</sup>**



<sup>17</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2011-2021.

## Top Employers

Between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2021, the top five employers in San Diego County for *Social Work Occupations* were [Rady Children's Hospital](#), [Sharp Healthcare](#), [University of California San Diego](#), [Public Consulting Group](#), and [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) based on online job postings (Exhibit 8).

**Exhibit 8: Top Employers for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>18</sup>**

Top Employers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rady Children's Hospital</li><li>• Sharp Healthcare</li><li>• University of California San Diego</li><li>• Public Consulting Group</li><li>• Department of Veterans Affairs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family Health Centers of San Diego</li><li>• San Ysidro Health</li><li>• Prime Healthcare Services</li><li>• Volunteers of America</li><li>• Scripps Health</li></ul>

## Education, Skills, and Certifications

*Social Work Occupations* have a national educational attainment ranging from a [high school diploma or equivalent](#) to a [bachelor's degree](#) (Exhibit 9a).

**Exhibit 9a: National Educational Attainment for Social Work Occupations<sup>19</sup>**

Occupational Title	Typical Entry-Level Education
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	Bachelor's degree
Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	Bachelor's degree
Social Workers, All Other	Bachelor's degree
Social and Human Service Assistants	High school diploma or equivalent

<sup>18</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2019-2021.

<sup>19</sup> EMSI 2022.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Based on online job postings between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2021 in San Diego County, employers posted a **master's degree** as the educational requirement for *Social Work Occupations* (Exhibit 9b).<sup>20</sup>

**Exhibit 9b: Educational Requirements for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>21</sup>**

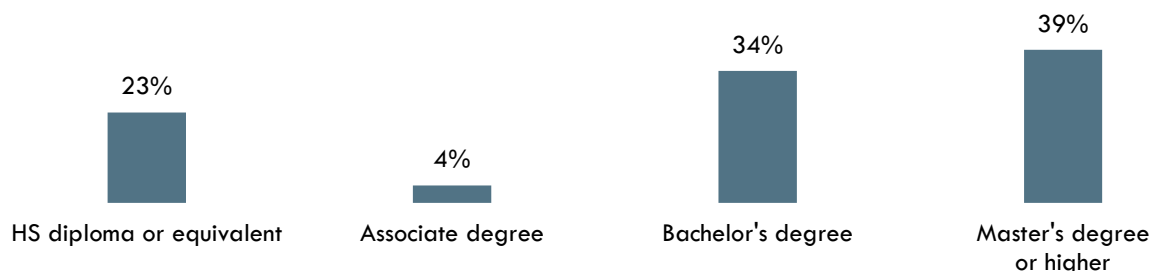


Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized, soft, and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2021.

**Exhibit 10: Top Skills for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>22</sup>**

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Work</li> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• Treatment Planning</li> <li>• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</li> <li>• Behavioral Health</li> <li>• Crisis Intervention</li> <li>• Discharge Planning</li> <li>• Psychology</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Trauma</li> <li>• Data Entry</li> <li>• Family Therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Spanish</li> <li>• Bilingual</li> <li>• Teamwork / Collaboration</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Computer Literacy</li> <li>• Organizational Skills</li> <li>• Building Effective Relationships</li> <li>• Writing</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Physical Abilities</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Written Communication</li> <li>• Detail-Oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microsoft Excel</li> <li>• Microsoft Word</li> <li>• Microsoft PowerPoint</li> <li>• Microsoft Outlook</li> <li>• Word Processing</li> <li>• Microsoft Access</li> <li>• Database Software</li> <li>• Microsoft Windows</li> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP)</li> <li>• Salesforce</li> <li>• ICD-10</li> <li>• Prognosis</li> <li>• Microsoft SharePoint</li> <li>• Social Media Platforms</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2019-2021.

<sup>21</sup> "Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation," Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified April 9, 2021. [bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm](https://bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm).

<sup>22</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2019-2021.

Exhibit 11 lists the top certification that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2021.

**Exhibit 11: Top Certification for Social Work Occupations in San Diego County<sup>23</sup>**

Top Certification in Online Job Postings

1. Social Work License
  2. First Aid CPR AED
  3. Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
  4. Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW)
  5. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
  6. Basic Life Saving (BLS)
  7. Security Clearance
  8. Basic Cardiac Life Support Certification
  9. American Heart Association Certification
  10. Licensed Master Social Worker - Advanced Generalist (LMSW-AG)
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<sup>23</sup> Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2019-2021.

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### Important Disclaimers

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; 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 the report 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.

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data that was developed before the economic impact of COVID-19. The COE is monitoring the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. Please consult with local employers to understand their current employment needs.