

Dental Assisting

Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area)

Summary

- Dental assistant jobs are expected to increase by **14% between 2017 and 2022** in the Inland Empire/Desert region. **A total of 3,591 job openings** will be available over the five-year timeframe.
- The entry-level hourly wage for dental assistants is **above the MIT Living Wage estimate of \$12.30 per hour** for a single adult living in the Inland Empire/Desert region.
- **There appears to be an opportunity for program expansion** based on the average annual number of program completers for the selected community college program (**37 community colleges credentials, 483 other educational institution credentials, 520 total annual average credentials**), and the annual openings for dental assistants in the region (**718 annual job openings**).

Introduction

The occupation detailed in this report is listed below along with its corresponding definition/description, sample job titles, education and training requirements, as well as the community college educational attainment of current workers within this occupation:

Dental Assistants (31-9091)

Assist dentist, set up equipment, prepare the patient for treatment, and keep records.

Sample job titles: *Certified Dental Assisting (CDA), Certified Registered Dental Assisting, Dental Assisting (DA), Expanded Duty Dental Assisting (EDDA), Expanded Function Dental Assisting, Oral Surgery Assisting, Orthodontic Assisting (Ortho Assisting), Orthodontic Technician, Registered Dental Assisting (RDA), Surgical Dental Assisting*

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: *Postsecondary nondegree credential*

Training Requirement: *None*

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework: *61%*

The dental assistant program prepares students for careers in dental assisting through the instruction of techniques used in clinical chairside procedures of dentistry.¹ In addition to a dental assistant program, employers in the region are seeking individuals with their dental assistant certification.

Job Opportunities

In 2017, there were 4,997 dental assistant jobs in the Inland Empire/Desert region. Across the region, employment related to this occupation is expected to increase by 14% through 2022. Employers will need to hire 3,591 workers over the next five years to fill new jobs and to backfill jobs that workers are leaving – including retirements. Exhibit 1 displays the projected growth for dental assistants in the region.

Exhibit 1: Five-year projections for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region

Region	2017 Jobs	5-Yr % Change (New Jobs)	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
Inland Empire/Desert	4,997	14%	3,591	718	8%

Source: EMSI 2018.3

Earnings

The entry-level wage for dental assistants is above the MIT Living Wage estimate of \$12.30 per hour, or \$25,584 annually for a single adult living in the Inland Empire/Desert region. This wage is also sufficient for an adult living in a household with one other working adult and one child (\$14.50 per hour, per adult or \$30,160 annually for each adult). See Exhibit 2 for wage information.

Exhibit 2: Earnings for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region

Occupation	Entry to Experienced Hourly Earnings Range*	Median Wage*	Avg. Annual Earnings
Dental Assistants	\$13.14 to \$19.49	\$15.55	\$35,400

Source: EMSI 2018.3

*Entry Hourly is 25th percentile wage, the median is 50th percentile wage, experienced is 75th percentile wage.

¹ The Taxonomy of Programs, 6th Edition, February 2004

Job Postings, Employers, Skills, Education, and Certifications

On average, local employers fill online job posting for dental assistants within 40 days. When compared to the national average, it takes four days longer for local employers to find qualified candidates to fill open positions in the Inland Empire/Desert region. Exhibit 3 shows the number of job ads posted during the last 12 months for dental assistants along with the regional and national average time to fill.

Exhibit 3: Employer job ads and time to fill for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region during the last 12 months, November 2017 – October 2018

Occupation	Job Ads	Regional Average Time to Fill (Days)	National Average Time to Fill (Days)
Dental Assistants	548	40	36

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 4 displays the top employers posting job ads from the last 12 months for the Inland Empire/Desert region.

Exhibit 4: Sample of employers posting job ads for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region during the last 12 months, November 2017 – October 2018

Occupation	Sample of Employers
Dental Assistants (n=445)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific Dental Services Inc. • Western Dental Services Inc. • Smile Brands Inc.

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 5 lists the in-demand skills that employers are seeking when looking for workers to fill dental assistant positions. The skills reported in job postings may be utilized as a helpful guide for curriculum development. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills employers are requesting for industry or job competency. Employability skills are foundational skills that transcend industries and occupations; this category is commonly referred to as “soft skills.”

Exhibit 5: In-demand skills from employer job ads for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region, November 2017 – October 2018

Occupation	Specialized skills	Soft skills	Software and Programming skills
Dental Assistants (n=439)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X-Rays • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) • Patient Preparation/Care • Fissure • Coronal Polish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Starter • Time Management • Spanish/Bilingual • Teamwork/Collaboration • Communication Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ActiveX • Dentrix • Microsoft Office

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 6 displays the entry-level education typically required to enter this occupation according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, educational attainment for incumbent workers with “some college, no degree” and an “associate degree” according to the U.S. Census, and the minimum advertised education requirement requested by employers in online job ads.

Exhibit 6: Educational attainment and online job ads with minimum advertised education requirements for dental assistants in the Inland Empire/Desert region, November 2017 – October 2018

Occupation	Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement	Two-Year Postsecondary Level of Educational Attainment*	Minimum Advertised Education Requirement from Job Ads			
			Number of Job Postings (n=)	High school diploma or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor’s degree or higher
Dental Assistants	Postsecondary nondegree award	61%	108	94%	6%	-

Source: EMSI 2018.3, Current Population Survey, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework



Exhibit 7 displays the top certifications required by employer job ads in the Inland Empire/Desert region. Most job ads request that applicants obtain certification through the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB). More information about California licensing requirements is available at the Dental Board of California: <https://www.dbc.ca.gov/>.

Exhibit 7: Top certifications required for dental assistants by employers' job ads in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, November 2017 – October 2018

Occupation	Certifications
Dental Assistants (n=439)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid CPR AED • Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) • Certified Infection Control (ICE)

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Student Completions

Exhibit 8 shows the annual average regional community college credentials (associate degrees and certificates) conferred during the three academic years between 2014 and 2017, with the relevant TOP code as well as the program title used at each college, sourced from the Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI). Credentials granted from other educational institutions from 2013 to 2016 are displayed in Exhibit 9, along with the relevant CIP code. Please note, a credential is not equivalent to a single person in search of a job opening since a student may earn more than one credential, such as an associate degree in addition to a certificate. Community College student outcome information is from the CTE LaunchBoard based on the selected TOP code and region.

Exhibit 8: Annual average community college student completions for dental assistant programs in the Inland Empire/Desert region

1240.10 Dental Assistant	Annual Community College Headcount (2016-17)	Community College Annual Average Credentials (2014-17)
Chaffey – Dental Assistant/Dental Assisting	36	
Associate Degree		4
Certificate 18 to < 30 semester units		17
Moreno Valley – Dental Assistant	22	
Associate Degree		3
Certificate 30 to < 60 semester units		13
Total community college headcount (2016-17)	58	
Total annual average community college credentials (2014-17)		37

Source: LaunchBoard, IPEDS, COCI

1240.10 - Dental Assistant program Strong Workforce outcomes in the Inland Empire/Desert region in the academic year 2015-16 [unless noted otherwise]:

- Number of course enrollments: 259 (California median: 278) [2016-17]
- Employed in the second fiscal quarter after exit: 86% (CA: 81%)
- Median earnings in the second fiscal quarter after exit: \$5,205 (CA: \$6,489)
- Employed in the fourth fiscal quarter after exit: 79% (CA: 78%)
- Median annual earnings: \$21,033 (CA: \$25,508)
- The percentage in a job closely related to the field of study: 80% (CA: 100%) [2014-15]
- Median change in earnings: N/A (CA: 153%)
- The proportion of students who attained a living wage: N/A (65%)

Exhibit 9: Annual average other educational institutions student completions for dental assisting/assistant programs in the Inland Empire/Desert region

51.0601 – Dental Assisting/Assistant (CIP)	Other Educational Institutions Annual Average Certificates or Other Credit Credentials (2013-16)
American Career College-Ontario	
Award < 1 academic yr	83
Brightwood College-Palm Springs	
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	45
Brightwood College-Riverside	
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	27
Concorde Career College-San Bernardino	
Award < 1 academic yr	135
InterCoast Colleges-Riverside	
Award < 1 academic yr	2
Milan Institute-Palm Desert	
Award < 1 academic yr	26
Riverside County Office of Education-School of Career Education	
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	52
Award < 1 academic yr	9
Summit College	
Award < 1 academic yr	33
UEI College-Riverside	
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	45
United Education Institute-Ontario	
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	27
Total annual average other credentials (2013-16)	483

Source: IPEDS



Sources

CTE LaunchBoard

Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI, version 2.0)

Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

O*Net Online

MIT Living Wage Calculator

Taxonomy of Programs, 6th Edition

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