

# Rehabilitation Aides

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

## Summary

- Employment for rehabilitation occupations is expected to **increase by 26% through 2022, more than 212 job openings** will be available in the Inland Empire/ Desert Region.
- The median hourly wage for rehabilitation occupations 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 growth based on the average annual number of program completions for the selected community college programs (44 average credentials) and the annual openings for rehabilitation occupations in the region (212 annual job openings).

## Introduction

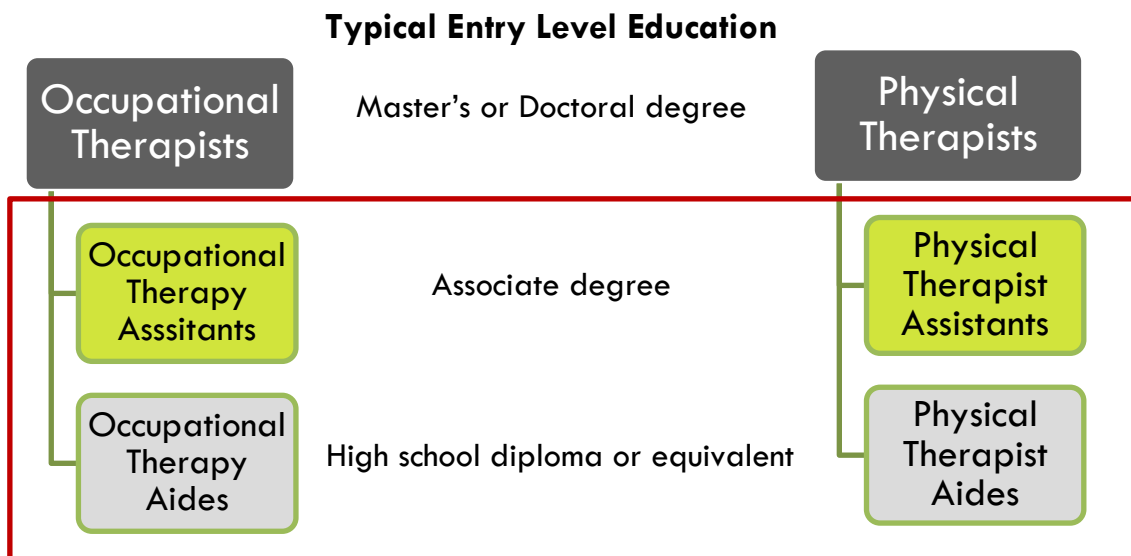
“Rehabilitation Aide” is a job title that maps to a few different, but closely related occupations. In order to determine which occupations are the most accurate representation of rehabilitation aides, the O\*NET database of alternative job titles was queried.<sup>1</sup> The occupation with the most unique job titles containing “rehabilitation aide” was occupational therapy aides (SOC 31-2012). Other closely related occupations that had fewer job title matches were physical therapy aides (SOC 31-2022), physical therapy assistants (SOC 31-2021), and occupational therapy assistants (SOC 32-2011). A large portion of all four of these occupations work within occupational and physical therapy medical offices, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and for home health agencies. Occupational therapy aides and physical therapist aides are likely the best overall match with the job title, “rehabilitation aide,” but their assistant counterparts are also included in this report in order to demonstrate the close relationship between these occupations.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.onetcenter.org/dictionary/20.3/excel/alternate\\_titles.html](https://www.onetcenter.org/dictionary/20.3/excel/alternate_titles.html)

Occupational and physical therapy assistants typically require an associate degree as well as a state certification for employment. Meanwhile, occupational and physical therapy aides only require a high school diploma and receive on-the-job training. As the typical entry-level of education required for each occupation increases, so does the income (see Exhibit 4 for wage information for each occupation). Exhibit 1 displays the hierarchical relationship of occupational and physical therapists and their corresponding assistants and aides. The occupations within the red rectangle are detailed in the following pages and are referred to collectively as “rehabilitation occupations” for the remainder of this report.

*Exhibit 1: Hierarchical relationship of occupational and physical therapy occupations*



For an occupational outlook from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, please visit the following links for additional information about these occupations.

- Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides:  
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapy-assistants-and-aides.htm>
- Physical Therapist Assistants and Aides:  
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physical-therapist-assistants-and-aides.htm>

## Job Opportunities

In 2017, there were 1,147 rehabilitation occupational jobs in the Inland Empire/Desert region. Across the region, employment related to this occupational group is expected to increase by 26% through 2022. Employers will need to hire 1,062 workers over the next five years to fill new jobs and to backfill jobs that workers are leaving – including retirements. Exhibit 2 displays the projected growth for rehabilitation occupations in the region.

*Exhibit 2: Five-year projections for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region*

|                      | 2017 Jobs | 5-Yr % Change (New Jobs) | 5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs) | Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs) | % of workers age 55+ |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Rehabilitation Aides | 1,147     | 26%                      | 1,062                                  | 212                                      | 11%                  |

Source: EMSI 2018.3

Over the last 12 months (October 2017 to September 2018), there were 372 advertisements (ads) for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. The average time to fill for these occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region is about four days longer than the nation as a whole. This indicates that it is somewhat more difficult for a local employer to find qualified candidates to fill their open positions than it is nationally. Exhibit 3 shows the number of job ads posted during the last 12 months along with the regional and national average time to fill for rehabilitation occupations.

*Exhibit 3: Employer job ads and time to fill for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region during the last 12 months, October 2017 – September 2018*

| Occupation                      | Job Ads    | Regional Average Time to Fill (Days) | National Average Time to Fill (Days) |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Physical Therapist Assistants   | 203        | 43                                   | 39                                   |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants | 137        | 50                                   | 45                                   |
| Occupational Therapy Aides      | 22         | 31                                   | 28                                   |
| Physical Therapist Aides        | 10         | 29                                   | 26                                   |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>372</b> | <b>-</b>                             | <b>-</b>                             |

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

## Earnings

The median wage for rehabilitation occupations 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. Except for physical therapist aides, this median wage is also sufficient for two adults and one child (\$14.50 per hour, per adult or \$30,160 annually for each adult). See Exhibit 4 for wage information.

*Exhibit 4: Earnings for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region*

| Occupation                      | Entry to Experienced Hourly Earnings Range* | Median Wage* | Avg. Annual Earnings |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|----------------------|
| Occupational Therapy Assistants | \$30.85 to \$37.11                          | \$34.07      | \$68,500             |
| Physical Therapist Assistants   | \$29.42 to \$37.16                          | \$33.30      | \$69,300             |
| Occupational Therapy Aides      | \$13.59 to \$16.85                          | \$15.21      | \$32,700             |
| Physical Therapist Aides        | \$11.62 to \$15.62                          | \$13.42      | \$30,100             |

Source: EMSI 2018.3

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

## Work Locations, Employers, Skills, Education, and Certifications

Exhibit 5 displays the top employers posting job ads for rehabilitation occupations during the last 12 months.

*Exhibit 5: The top employers posting job ads for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region during the last 12 months, October 2017 – September 2018*

| Occupation                             | Top Employers  |
|--|--|
| Physical Therapist Assistants (n=141)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loma Linda University Health/Hospital</li> <li>• FeldCare Connects</li> </ul> |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants (n=89) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCR ManorCare</li> <li>• Loma Linda University Health/Hospitals</li> </ul>    |
| Occupational Therapy Aides (n=22)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select Medical</li> <li>• Vibra Healthcare</li> </ul>                         |
| Physical Therapist Aides (n=9)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapy Pros Physical Therapy</li> <li>• Arrowhead Orthopaedics</li> </ul>    |

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 6 lists the in-demand skills that employers are seeking when looking for workers to fill positions with occupational therapy aides. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills employers are requesting for industry or job competency. Employability skills are general abilities that employers are looking for beyond job-specific skills and work experience to help drive business activity. These are often referred to as “soft skills.”

*Exhibit 6: In-demand skills from employer job ads for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, October 2017 – September 2018*

| Occupation                             | Specialized skills  | Employability skills  |
|--|---|---|
| Physical Therapist Assistants (n=153)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Treatment Planning</li> <li>• Acute Care</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Teamwork/Collaboration</li> <li>• Detail-Oriented</li> <li>• Microsoft Office</li> </ul> |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants (n=80) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatment Planning</li> <li>• Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Teamwork/Collaboration</li> <li>• Energetic</li> <li>• Microsoft Office</li> </ul>       |
| Occupational Therapy Aides (n=22)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Physical Therapy</li> <li>• Recreational Therapy</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• Teamwork/Collaboration</li> <li>• Detail-Oriented</li> </ul>                             |
| Physical Therapist Aides (n=9)         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)</li> <li>• Scheduling</li> <li>• Therapeutic Exercise</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bilingual</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Building Effective Relationships</li> </ul>                              |

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Exhibit 7 displays the entry-level education typically required to enter each 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. Employers posting job ads unanimously prefer candidates with a high school diploma or vocational training.

*Exhibit 7: Educational attainment and online job ads with minimum advertised education requirements for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, October 2017 – September 2018*

| Occupation                      | Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement | Educational Attainment (Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College-level Education)* | 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 |
| Physical Therapist Assistants   | Associate degree                          | 65%  | 50  | -  | 100%             | -                           |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants | Associate degree                          | 82%  | 27  | -  | 100%             | -                           |
| Occupational Therapy Aides      | High school diploma or equivalent         | 82%  | 22  | 100%                                       | -                | -                           |
| Physical Therapist Aides        | High school diploma or equivalent         | 65%  | 4   | 100%                                       | -                | -                           |

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

\*Some college-no degree, postsecondary nondegree credential, or an associate degree.

Exhibit 8 displays the top certifications required by employers posting job ads for rehabilitation occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. Not all employers requested certifications for their rehabilitation occupations.

*Exhibit 8: Top certifications required for rehabilitation occupations by employers' job ads in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, October 2017 – September 2018*

| Occupation                                 | Certifications  |
|--|---|
| Physical Therapist Assistants<br>(n=87)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Life Saving (BLS)</li> <li>• American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Certification</li> </ul> |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants<br>(n=128) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)</li> <li>• Basic Life Saving (BLS)</li> </ul>            |
| Occupational Therapy Aides<br>(n=12)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)</li> <li>• Basic Life Saving (BLS)</li> </ul>            |
| Physical Therapist Aides (n=10)            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Therapy Aide Certification</li> <li>• First Aid/CPR/AED</li> </ul>                              |

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

For more information regarding the importance of certifications for these occupations, as well as how to obtain them, please see the following resources:

- Occupational Therapy: <https://www.nbcot.org/en/Public/Occupational-Therapy#ImportanceofCertificationinOccupationalTherapy>
- Physical Therapy: [https://www.fsbpt.org/examcandidates/nationalexam\(nppt\).aspx](https://www.fsbpt.org/examcandidates/nationalexam(nppt).aspx)



## Student Completions

According to LaunchBoard, the only college in the region with students taking courses in a physical therapy assistant program (TOP 1222.00) is San Bernardino Valley. In 2016-17, there was a headcount of 25 students taking one or more courses in this program at this college. Across the region, the only school issuing credentials for a physical therapy program is Loma Linda University. Exhibit 9 summarizes the most recent completion data for this program.

*Exhibit 9: Annual average student completions for physical therapy technician/assistant in the Inland Empire/Desert Region*

| <b>51.0806 Physical Therapy Technician/Assistant (CIP Program)</b> | <b>Annual Average Certificates or Other Credit Awards (2013-16)</b> |
|--|---|
| <b>Loma Linda University</b>                                       |   |
| Associate degree   | 44  |
| <b>Total annual average other awards</b>                           | <b>44</b>   |

Source: IPEDS

According to the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI), there are no occupational therapy technology (TOP: 1218.00) courses or programs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. The colleges listed Exhibit 10 are the only five programs throughout the state.

*Exhibit 10: Occupational therapy technology programs in California*

| <b>College</b>     | <b>Program Title</b>           | <b>Associated TOP code</b>              | <b>Award</b>                               |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Grossmont          | Occupational Therapy Assistant | 1218.00 Occupational Therapy Technology | A.S. Degree                                |
| Monterey Peninsula | Pre-Occupational Therapy       | 1218.00 Occupational Therapy Technology | A.A. Degree                                |
| Sacramento City    | Occupational Therapy Assistant | 1218.00 Occupational Therapy Technology | A.S. Degree                                |
| Santa Ana          | Occupational Therapy Assistant | 1218.00 Occupational Therapy Technology | A.S. Degree and Certificate of Achievement |
| Santa Monica       | Rehabilitation Therapy Aide    | 1218.00 Occupational Therapy Technology | Noncredit program                          |

Source: Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI)



## 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

CTE LaunchBoard

Statewide CTE Outcomes Survey

Living Insight Center for Community Economic Development

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)

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## **Appendix A: Occupation definitions, sample job titles, five-year projections, and earnings for rehabilitation occupations**

### **Occupational Therapy Assistant (31-2011)**

Assist occupational therapists in providing occupational therapy treatments and procedures. May, in accordance with State laws, assist in development of treatment plans, carry out routine functions, direct activity programs, and document the progress of treatments. Generally requires formal training.

**Sample job titles:** *Acute Care Occupational Therapy Assistant, Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA), Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant/Licensed (COTA/L), Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA), Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant-Licensed (COTA-L), Licensed Occupational Therapy Assistant, Occupational Therapist Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA), Rehabilitation Assistant, School Based Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, Staff Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant/Licensed (Staff COTA/L)*

*Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Associate degree*

*Training Requirement: None*

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 82%*

### **Occupational Therapy Aides (31-2012)**

Under close supervision of an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant, perform only delegated, selected, or routine tasks in specific situations. These duties include preparing patient and treatment room.

**Sample job titles:** *Certified Occupational Rehabilitation Aide (CORA), Direct Service Professional, Direct Support Staff, Occupational Therapy Aide (OT Aide), Occupational Therapy Technician (OT Tech), Occupational Rehabilitation Aide, Rehabilitation Aide (Rehab Aide), Rehabilitation Aide/Scheduler, Rehabilitation Services Aide, Rehabilitation Technician (Rehab Tech), Restorative Aide, Restorative Coordinator, Rehab Aide*

*Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent*

*Training Requirement: Less than one-month on-the-job training*

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 82%*

### **Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021)**

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.

**Sample job titles:** *Certified Physical Therapist Assistant (CPTA), Home Health Physical Therapist Assistant, Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant (LPTA), Outpatient Physical Therapist Assistant, Per Diem Physical Therapist Assistant (Per Diem PTA), Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA), Physical Therapist Assistant and Nurse Aide, Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA), Physical Therapy Technician (Physical Therapy Tech), Rehabilitation Aide, Rehabilitation Assistant, Staff Physical Therapy Assistant*

*Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Associate degree*

*Training Requirement: None*

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 65%*

### **Physical Therapist Aides (31-2022)**

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.

**Sample job titles:** *Clinical Rehabilitation Aide, Physical Therapist Aide (PTA), Physical Therapist Technician (Physical Therapy Tech), Physical Therapy Aide (PTA), Physical Therapy Attendant, Physical Therapy Technician, Rehabilitation Aide, Rehabilitation Attendant, Restorative Aide (RA), Restorative Care Technician, Therapy Aide*

*Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent*

*Training Requirement: Less than one-month on-the-job training*

*Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 65%*



Table 1. 2017 to 2022 job growth, wages, education, training, and work experience required for the rehabilitation occupational group, Inland Empire/Desert Region

| Occupation (SOC)                          | 2017 Jobs    | 5-Yr Change | 5-Yr % Change | Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs) | Entry-Experienced Hourly Wage* | Median Hourly Wage* | Average Annual Earnings | Typical Entry-Level Education & On-The-Job Training Required | Work Experience Required |
|---|--------------|-------------|---------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Physical Therapist Aides (31-2022)        | 429          | 89          | 21%           | 73                                       | \$11.62 to \$15.62             | \$13.42             | \$30,100                | High school diploma or equivalent & 1 to 12 months           | None                     |
| Physical Therapist Assistants (31-2021)   | 427          | 130         | 30%           | 83                                       | \$29.42 to \$37.16             | \$33.30             | \$69,300                | Associate degree & none                                      | None                     |
| Occupational Therapy Assistants (31-2011) | 227          | 65          | 29%           | 44                                       | \$30.85 to \$37.11             | \$34.07             | \$68,500                | Associate degree & none                                      | None                     |
| Occupational Therapy Aides (31-2012)      | 65           | 14          | 22%           | 11                                       | \$13.59 to \$16.85             | \$15.21             | \$32,700                | High school diploma or equivalent & 1 to 12 months           | None                     |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>1,147</b> | <b>298</b>  | <b>26%</b>    | <b>212</b>                               | -                              | -                   | -                       | -  | -                        |

Source: EMSI 2018.3

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