

CCW ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE REGIONAL PROGRAM ADVISORY MEETING NOTES:

The Center for a Competitive Workforce (CCW) hosted a virtual Regional Program Advisory Meeting on the Administration of Justice workforce needs on Friday, November 19, 2021, in partnership with the [Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation](#) (LAEDC). This meeting is the third of four scheduled for the last few months of the year, each focused-on middle-skill occupations that prove to be resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact. These meetings have an intimate roundtable feel and serve to guide community colleges in their curriculum development and strengthen their position as the leading source of future talent in the region.

Key Data Points Presented by the Institute of Applied Economics, LAEDC

- Focusing on justice, public order, and safety activities there were roughly 71,680 jobs in Los Angeles County as of 2020. This includes, police and fire protection, courts, and correctional institutions among others.
- Number of employees in this industry has fallen a bit over the past decade and is down from nearly 75,000 in 2010 but there was a smaller drop due to the pandemic compared to many other industries in the county.
- The average annual wage was extremely high reaching over \$123,000 in 2020 as compared to 2010 where the annual wage was \$104,664.
- There has not been a drop in employment due to the pandemic. The 2021 employment level is forecasted to be only 2,000 jobs below the 2019 pre-pandemic baseline.
- Looking ahead there will be resumed growth in the next four years as the recovery process continues in Los Angeles County. By 2024 employment is expected to be back above the pre-pandemic level and there will be 3,000 jobs added between now and 2025.
- The characteristics of the workforce in the industry is seen as follows:
 - Workers tend to be slightly older and have greater educational attainment than the overall workforce of the County.
 - 3.5% of workers in justice, public order, and safety activities are under the age of 24 while nearly 54% are above 45 years old.
 - 64% of employees have at least some college experience with 31% holding a bachelors or higher.
 - There is also a much higher proportion of black workers in this industry than the County overall at 17% of the workforce and there's a much lower proportion of white workers at just 22% compared to 31% of the total County workforce.

Key Community College Talent Supply Data Points Presented by Center of Excellence (COE)

- On the supply side (educational side) there are several primary programs training students for careers in administration of justice:
 - Administration of Justice (2105.00)
 - Corrections (2105.10)
 - Probation and Parole (2105.20)
 - Industrial and Transportation Security (2105.30)
 - Forensics, Evidence, and Investigation (2105.40)

- Police Academy (2105.50)
- Combined, there were nearly 27,300 students enrolled in administration of justice programs during the 2019-20 academic year at LA community colleges. Student enrollment in these programs has consistently increased over the previous five academic years.
- Administration of justice programs is the third largest enrolled program behind child development programs and accounting programs.
- Between 2017 and 2020, community colleges in the region conferred an average of 2,863 awards in administration of justice programs.
- Variety of awards offered at all 19 of the region's community colleges with East Los Angeles having the highest student headcount for awards given.
- Student Demographics are as follows:
 - Compared to all CE programs in LA County administration of justice programs have a slightly larger portion of males (55%) than females (44%).
 - In terms of race and ethnicity, a slightly larger number of Hispanic students (58%) compared to all CE programs (54%), as well as a smaller number of White (11%) and Asian (3%).
 - Admin of Justice enroll a higher proportion of older students as compared to all CE programs.

Employer Perspectives: What trends are you and your industry experiencing overall and specifically with COVID-19 this year?

Lifeline Ambulance: We did not have a hiring slowdown after COVID. We knew in the medical industry that EMS are really needed. Because of the many medical professionals becoming infected with COVID and having to quarantine, many would not choose to come back just because they weren't sure if they wanted to risk that again and many of them had family members that were immunocompromised and were worried. We did see a bit of a dip in the number of candidates that we had available whether it was recent graduates or alumni, or you know EMT's that haven't been in the field for a few years but are coming back. More recently, in the past nine or ten months it has been a lot better. Most of our school partners EMT programs are almost at full capacity when it comes to their student count and we try to go, and we speak to the students as often as possible for recruitment but also to see what the general feeling is out there right now. We know that it can be scary especially in the medical industry and in EMS during this pandemic and are still seeing 30-40 new hires per month.

Port of Los Angeles Police: Covid had a significant impact for us from the standpoint of just how scary it was for everybody. Most first responders were required to go to work whereas virtually all our civilian employees in the Harbor department were telecommuting. We did not have any police officers working virtually and in doing that, there was a lot of anxiety, there were a lot of concerns that that came up especially with PPE issues that were going on. When we had to make an arrest the cleaning and sanitizing was out of our element and added stress that quite frankly none of us were really prepared for in our profession. And then now with the mandates that are coming down from the city and in our County, it's adding another level of anxiety in addition to what the pandemic has done to society. Managing that,

retaining employees, keeping morale high and encouraging folks to make sure they're staying engaged has been a challenge for us.

LA County Probation: Our deputies were not prepared to be able to work in what would have been considered a biohazard environment. Just like the other agencies we were not prepared on the appropriate methods of how to work in the juvenile halls while also maintaining 6-foot distance, wearing masks etc. Especially when it comes to emergency situations, it's not easy to always adhere to what the requirements were and that was a struggle, even more so when it came to keeping our deputies safe while also keeping order. It seems unlikely that this is the last pandemic and when it comes to curriculum, it would be good for those folks interested in the field to know what they can be drawn into and what the position entails, the expectations and preparation for these frontline positions.

LA Reentry: Apart from COVID, law enforcement has been targeted in such a derogatory way that has given different opinions to the community in terms of it being a professional field of choice even more so after what happened to George Floyd. It is important for the region's community colleges, which are gateways into higher education to provide a better understanding that they can be part of the solution and change regardless of the things that happen. The colleges having relevant curriculum that allow the communities who feel they are at the frontline or the crosshairs of the issues this past year, are encouraged to be agents of change and that being involved is a better way than being on the outside talking about will make a difference in society. Students should not steer away from pursuing these types of occupations but rather motivated to join them and be part of the solution for the betterment of our society.

Employer Perspectives: What workforce trends do you see that our community colleges should be aware of in order to prepare a more competitive workforce?

LA Reentry: In this era of lived experience that's becoming such a relevant conversation in terms of employment opportunities and using the life experiences of people as a qualifier for particular roles is creating a balance between us versus them. If we are going to evolve with what we have experienced with how quickly things can go bad, then we really should think about the creating a full economy where everyone is involved versus creating continued barriers that limit people from accessing potential job opportunities, referencing those with a criminal history. Using the fair chance hiring we could qualify the crime against the actual occupation and all the different elements that go into a person performing at a high level for those jobs as we move into this next era of our evolution and putting our society back into the vibrant place in terms of our economic impact and just full inclusion of people participating.

LA County Sheriff Department: With the new training that we've explored within our department I've noticed that we've gone to a more community policing, principal policing, and implicit bias. If community colleges are going to put together or add curriculum it should be around a class that talks about the history of law enforcement and understanding the face that law enforcement played throughout history. How

they were utilized inappropriately by unjust laws and all kinds of issues that law enforcement did not really choose to be a part of they just got thrown into and became the face of some of those situations that we see now. Students should have the understanding that when we respond to protests, etc. we are doing so to have to keep the peace and not because we are talking sides. It would also benefit those students interested in law enforcement to take a communication class. In our roles we must communicate all the time. You communicate in so many ways with so many different types of people and that is an important skillset that many officers to do have and that they must learn on the job. If I were to recommend a degree for students to get it would be a communications degree.

Los Angeles Airport Police: Those that apply and come through here go through the LAPD police academy. We are continuously hiring both police officers, security officers and traffic officers. One of the things we are seeing for our new hires specifically is specifically around the lack of spelling, grammar and writing skills. It may sound very basic, but we constantly see errors in reports and can't stress enough that when they put pen to paper do so as if it is going to court and will be used in front of attorneys and judges. Although this is the computer age where technology is used everywhere, here at LA Airport Police we do not use anything that is automated. All of our reports are still written out. So, again an emphasis on good writing skills, great spelling, and grammar.

Port of Los Angeles Police: The biggest trend which we see is that many folks are looking to retirement out of frustration of all the technology that is now required for law enforcement personnel. This is everything from body worn cameras, vehicle cameras, the computers they use for all reporting requirements. Making everything technology based moving forward has been problematic for some of our more seasoned tenured officers that didn't come into the profession with some of those expectations which I do think is the same problem younger officers are facing.

LA County Probation: When we work with returning citizens and justice involved folks, we are always teaching them soft skills. In Workforce Development people always talk about the value of having soft skills and how to conduct yourself in the workplace, the kind of language that is appropriate, etc. Young officers should also be pushed into learning the soft skills necessary to be able to talk to wide range of people when it comes to age. Talking to a fifteen-year boy will not be the same as talking to someone in their 30's. There should be a focus on best practices to diffuse a tense situation and deescalating circumstances where there is a difference in age. With that comes both communicating and listening skills which we feel is a very important soft skill to ensure folks have before jumping into this field. However, it would be unfair to expect that law enforcement agencies would magically create officers that have learned this and are great at it our of training. Much of these skills are learned growing up, taught by parents, teachers, etc. Offering a course on it though, would make all the difference.

LA County Sherriff Department: One of the biggest things we are coming across at our department are the writing skills, basic writing skills to be more exact. We have a lot of individuals who are struggling to pass our entry level exam which is set at a 10th grade level. It is based off grammar, punctuation, and

sentence structure. We also struggled with candidates that had active listening skills, but we are now teaching that in the Academy. Learning how to communicate tailored to the individual that you are coming in contact has been added to our training and the Academy does a great job in ensuring folks know how to communicate with special needs people, and those with mental health issues. Even more so how to differentiate and communicate with an individual of different heritage and cultures.

Employer Perspectives: How would you describe the future of the field in terms of evolving workforce needs?

Port of Los Angeles Police: We are the smallest of the three LA city agencies and so we only hire a couple of officers a year. We have a need for people with emotional intelligence, who understand what is happening in real time, skills in reading the room, reading the individuals and can respond appropriately in that in that kind of environment.

Lifeline Ambulance: We are an all time high for the need. We are always hiring and hiring as many EMTs as we can. We saw a significant drop during COVID because people did not want to risk their life as well as with the mandate to have to be vaccinated. Our need doesn't stop and we proactively recruiting from colleges and reaching out to partners.

Los Angeles Police Department: The chief has made a goal of hiring 744 officers this year which has not been done in a long time. We get a good number of candidates sign up and take the test every month but are struggling in the diversity part. Getting women to sign up has been the hardest part for us. We've tried to reach all different demographics by going to different events, reaching out the community and reaching out to our local colleges.

Additional Resource Links:

- www.lareentry.org

Please email isabel.duran@laedc.org with any questions and/or to get involved.

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