

Career Pathways

Job Outlook:

1. National outlook average for 2023-and-2033 = approximately 0.4% annually or 4.0% over 10-years (2.1 million new jobs* annually).
2. All healthcare average for 2023-and-2033 = approximately 9.7% (1.9 million new jobs* annually)

| Occupation | 2016 Outlook | 2018 Outlook | 2020 Outlook | 2022 Outlook | 2023 Outlook | Nat Med Salary | # Change (+) * |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Athletic Trainer | 23% | 19% | 23% | 14% | 13% | \$57,930 | 4,300 |
| Chiropractor | - | 7% | 11% | 9% | 10% | \$76,530 | 6,100 |
| Registered Dietitian | - | - | 11% | 7% | 7% | \$69,680 | 6,000 |
| Exercise Physiologist | 13% | 10% | 13% | 10% | 10% | \$54,860 | 2,200 |
| Health/Wellness Coaching | - | - | | | 7% | \$62,860 | 4,300 |
| High School Education | - | 4% | 8% | 1% | -1% | \$65,220 | -6,900 |
| Home Health and Personal Care | - | - | - | 22% | 21% | \$33,530 | 820,500 |
| Lab Technicians | - | - | 14% | 5% | 5% | \$60,780 | 18,200 |
| Massage Therapist | - | - | - | - | 18% | \$55,310 | 26,000 |
| Medical Equipment/Drug Sales | - | - | 5% | 16% | 15% | \$103,730 | 78,600 |
| Nurse Practitioner | - | - | 45% | 45% | 40% | \$129,480 | 141,200 |
| Occupational Therapy Assistant | 29% | 31% | 34% | 24% | 21% | \$65,450 | 10,800 |
| Occupational Therapist | 24% | 18% | 17% | 12% | 11% | \$96,370 | 16,800 |
| OSHA Specialists | - | - | - | 13% | 14% | \$77,580 | 21,900 |
| Personal Trainer ** | 10% | 13% | 39% | 14% | 14% | \$46,480 | 47,500 |
| Physical Therapy Assistant | 31% | 26% | 32% | 26% | 19% | \$58,740 | 28,800 |
| Physical Therapist (DPT) | 28% | 22% | 21% | 15% | 14% | \$99,710 | 36,800 |
| Physician Assistant | 37% | 31% | 31% | 27% | 28% | \$130,020 | 43,700 |
| Recreational Therapist | - | - | - | - | 4% | \$57,120 | 700 |
| Registered Nurse | - | - | 9% | 6% | 6% | \$86,070 | 197,200 |
| Surgical Assistant/Technician | - | - | - | - | 6% | \$60,370 | 7,900 |
| Post-secondary Education | 15% | 11% | 12% | 8% | 8% | \$84,380 | 111,400 |
| Technicians (EMT, Paramedics) | | | | 5% | 6% | \$44,780 | 16,200 |

* Projected growth between 2023-and-2033 (sector growth + replacement).

** Usually part-time work.

Reference: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook. Retrieved 01/2025 (www.bls.gov/ooh).

Quick Facts and Cost of Living Comparisons:

- Average U.S. salary = \$65,478 v. San Diego = \$76,080 (2024).
- Average salary in San Diego is approximately 16.1% higher than the national average.
- Cost of living in San Diego is approximately 44.2% higher than national average.
- Average cost of a home in San Diego is 110.9% higher than the national average (\$508,666 versus \$1,092,000).

| City | Cost of Living Index Plus Rent | Salary Index v. SD | Local Purchasing Power (San Diego = 113.4) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Manhattan, New York City | 100.0 (reference) | 206% higher | 100.0 |
| San Francisco, CA (city) | 84.2 | 39.8% higher | 161.2 |
| Los Angeles, CA (city) | 70.0 | 2.2% lower | 122.2 |
| Seattle, WA | 69.7 | | 175.5 |
| Denver, CO | 62.0 | 1.3% lower | 146.3 |
| San Diego | 73.8 | - | 142.4 |
| Tampa Bay, FL | 58.9 | | 149.8 |
| Dallas, TX | 56.7 | 5.3% lower | 157.3 |
| Las Vegas, NV | 52.4 | | 144.2 |
| Phoenix, AZ | 51.9 | 7.5% lower | 155.6 |
| Boise, ID | 49.4 | 29.4% lower | 148.2 |

1. **Cost of Living Plus Rent Index:** This is an estimation of consumer goods prices including rent compared to the reference of New York City. For example, a score of 80 implies goods are approximately 20% more affordable than NYC.
2. **Local Purchasing Power:** A measure of how much an average resident of a city can buy with their salary compared to the reference of New York City. It provides a comparison of an average net salary in a city to the cost of goods and services (i.e., cost of living and rent) in that city. A higher Local Purchasing Power Index indicates that residents can afford more goods and services

Comfortable Living Comparison

- Employs the 50/30/20 budget recommends that, for sustainable comfort:
 - 50% of salary is allocated to housing, groceries and transportation (includes using standardized 35% of gross salary to mortgage factor).
 - 30% of salary to entertainment and hobbies.
 - 20% of salary toward paying off debt, saving, or investing.
 1. Single income in Manhattan = \$138,570.
 2. Single income in San Diego = \$122,803.
 3. Single income in San Francisco = \$119,558.
 4. Single income in Seattle = \$119,392.
 5. Single income in Los Angeles = \$117,400.
 6. Single income in Denver, CO = \$94,445.
 7. Single income in Dallas, TX = \$88,418.
 8. Single income in Phoenix = \$88,137.
 9. Single income in Tulsa, OK = \$74,909.

References:

- www.smartasset.com. Retrieved 01/25.
- www.nerdwallet.com/cost-of-living-calculator

Degree Pay Rate Differentials

Average College Graduate with a BS degree (national average):

- Approximately \$66,600 annually (biased by engineering and computer sciences).

Average College Graduate with an MS/MA degree:

- Approximately \$80,200 annually.
- A 20% or \$13,600 differential v. BS degree.

Average College Graduate with a DPT degree:

- Approximately \$99,710 annually.
- A 24.3% or \$19,510 differential v. MS/MA degree.
- A 49.7% or \$33,110 differential v. BS degree.

References:

- www.ziprecruiter.com
- www.salary.com
- www.bankrate.com
- www.bls.gov/ooh (Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook).

Value of Post-baccalaureate Degree and Fees

- Minimal consideration requirement for many allied health professions (e.g., ATC, RDN, strength and conditioning coach).
- Specialization.
- Marketability.
- Credibility (especially within education).

| CA Residents: SDSU Estimates | MS (2025-2026) | DPT (2025-2026) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Tuition (plus fees) | \$10,794 per year | \$32,251 per year* |
| Total Units for degree | 36 total | 116-to-121 total |
| Units per Semester | 9-to-12 | 9-to-18 |
| Duration | 2-2½ years | 3 years (9 semesters) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years didactic • 1-year clinical rotations |
| Books and Supplies | \$970 per year | - |
| Food and Housing** (off-campus) | \$18,406 per year | \$18,406 per year |
| Transportation** | \$2,466 per year | \$2,466 per year |
| Personal Expenses** | \$3,290 per year | \$3,290 per year |
| Employment | Yes (part-time) | Not recommended |

* SDSU cost includes all additional program fees.

** Living costs regardless of school.

Value of a Pursuing an MS Degree (SDSU) vs. BS Degree

Expenses and Lost Income:

- Tuition + Books (2½ years): **\$29,119***
- Lost fulltime income (40 hr. job average) = $\$80,200 \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ years = **\$200,500.**
- Part-time income ($\$35,00/\text{year}$) $\times 2\frac{1}{2}$ years = + **\$87,500.**

- Total Loss (2½ years) = - **\$113,000.**

Salary differential between BS and MS/MA: $\$13,600/\text{year}$.

- **$\$113,000 \div \$13,600 = 8.3$ years.**
- How long do you plan to be in the workforce?

* Cost of living (food + household), transportation and personal expenses are not factored in as they exist regardless.

Value of Pursuing a DPT (SDSU) vs. BS Degree

Expenses and Lost Income:

- Tuition + Books (3 years – 9 semesters): **\$96,753***
- Lost full time income (40 hr. job average) = $\$66,600 \times 3$ years = **\$199,800.**
- Part-time income ($\$35,000/\text{year}$) $\times 3$ years = **\$105,000.**

- Total Loss (3 years with no work) = **$\$199,800 + \$96,753 = \$296,553$.**
- Total Loss (3 years with part-time work) = **$\$105,000 + \$96,753 = \$201,753$.**

* Cost of living (food + household), transportation and personal expenses are not factored in as they exist regardless.

Salary differential between BS and DPT: $\$26,252$ per year.

- **No work: $\$296,553 \div \$33,110 = 8.9$ years.**
- **Part-time work: $\$201,753 \div \$33,110 = 6.1$ years.**
- How long do you plan to be in the workforce?

Alternative Career Pathways in Allied Health, Education and Medical

1. Occupations within Kinesiology (salary range estimates: \$30,000-250,000)

| Fitness/Wellness | Rehabilitation | Sport Science |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Trainer Wellness Coordinator Health Club Director Fitness Consultant Strength & Conditioning Coach Fitness Club Manager Education (recreation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Therapist Athletic Trainer Cardiac Rehabilitation Work Hardening Occupational Therapist Work Site Analyst (Ergonomics) Special Population Groups Adaptive Specialist and Designer Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education (Academic) Insurance Investigator Equipment Designer Fitness Appraiser Private Industry Research (equipment, technology & performance). Manufacturing Research |

2. Occupations within Physical Education (salary range estimates: \$25,000-1,000,000+)

| Teaching | Research | Coaching | Administration |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching (various levels) Outdoor Education Teacher / Coordinator Educational Consultant Education – administrator Program Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Sport Equipment Design Consultant to Industry, Private Health Clubs / Organizations Research (ergonomics, adaptive, etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School or College Coach Community Club Coach National Team Coach Professional Team Coach Coaching Certification Instructor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sport / Activity Organization Marketing / Sports Agents Coordinators / Consultants Athletic Directors Government Sport / Activity |

3. Occupations within Health Education (salary range estimates: \$25,000-250,000)

| Teaching | Government / Non-Profit / For-Profit | Self-employed |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School or College Private Health-Wellness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Agencies (e.g. AHA, ACS, Robert Wood Johnson) Hospitals Rehabilitation Units Manufacturing and Sales | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Behavior Consultant Author / Fitness Journalist Professional Presenter Software, App, Program Developer Product Developer |

4. Occupations within Commercial Recreation (salary range estimates: \$25,000-200,000+)

| Corporate / Business | Hospitality Facilities | Cruise Line | Theme Park |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Wellness • Fitness/Wellness Programming • Recreational • Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Hotel • Hotel Chain Employee / Consultant • Fitness Center Sports and Activities Centers (e.g. golf) • Wellness / Spa Nutritionist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Ship or Commercial Line • Recreation / Activities • Fitness / Wellness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent v. Corporate Park Employee or Consultant • Recreational / Activities • Employee Wellness |

5. Occupations within Government (salary range estimates: \$35,000-85,000)

| Health / Fitness Consulting | Tourism | Program Coordinator |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietitian / Nutritionist • Sport Consultants • Fitness / Wellness • Facility Design • Programming Consultants • Program Evaluation Consultants • Government Agencies (e.g. Navy Seals) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Activities • Tourism Promotion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Administrator |

6. Occupations within Municipalities and Recreation Government (salary range estimates: \$15,000-80,000)

| Children | Special Needs | Program Coordinator | Outdoor | Managerial |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Programming • Summer Camps • Aquatic Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Programs • Special Needs Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Event Coordinator • Sport Coordinator • Fitness Program Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outward Bound Schools • Instructor (water safety, ski) • Ecotourism • Adventure Tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility Manager • Community Developer / Facilitator |