

Santa Cruz County High Demand Job Opportunities

Santa Cruz County continues to see jobs returning to the local economy and prospects for lower unemployment are improving. Over the next five years, Santa Cruz County is projected to add more than 250 jobs. The occupations within the industry sectors identified by the Workforce Development Board of Santa Cruz County that have the best job prospects are shown below.

SOC	Agriculture	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	\$54.47	1,598	150	-56	-3.5%
45-2091	Agricultural Equipment Operators	\$22.64	329	46	-6	-2.0%
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	\$33.13	260	30	-9	-3.5%
19-4013	Food Science Technicians	\$31.49	53	7	-2	-4.0%
SOC	Business & Financial Operations	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	\$25.96	1,747	157	-160	-9.5%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$67.07	1,609	106	-66	-4.0%
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$28.41	1,105	96	-76	-7.0%
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$31.11	992	87	-87	-9.0%
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	\$39.18	895	67	-55	-6.5%
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	\$46.63	779	48	-31	-4.0%
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	\$44.76	759	56	-29	-4.0%
13-1111	Management Analysts	\$56.20	633	45	-16	-2.5%
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	\$54.13	512	29	-19	-3.5%
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$42.79	507	38	-16	-3.0%
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	\$44.66	456	32	-14	-3.0%
11-3031	Financial Managers	\$90.43	413	28	2	0.5%
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	\$41.88	317	26	-21	-7.0%
11-1011	Chief Executives	\$120.48	269	15	-11	-4.0%
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	\$38.41	250	20	-3	-1.0%
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	\$29.23	239	20	-12	-5.5%
13-1041	Compliance Officers	\$44.86	207	13	-8	-4.0%
13-1023	Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	\$38.99	186	15	-6	-3.5%
13-2051	Financial and Investment Analysts	\$48.61	176	9	-6	-3.5%
15-2051	Data Scientists	\$63.80	127	9	10	8.0%
13-1081	Logisticians	\$48.46	121	11	2	1.5%
SOC	Education & Public Administration	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$22.64	1,559	191	-85	-5.5%
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	\$24.62	1,315	148	-59	-4.5%
11-9199	Managers, All Other	\$83.99	1,102	70	-41	-4.0%
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	\$23.70	1,010	96	-91	-9.5%
33-9032	Security Guards	\$24.71	579	62	-37	-6.5%
25-3031	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	\$32.69	573	53	-44	-8.0%
25-3021	Self-Enrichment Teachers	\$31.88	441	46	-18	-4.0%
33-3051	Police and Sheriffs Patrol Officers	\$57.50	434	26	-21	-5.0%
25-9044	Teaching Assistants, Postsecondary	\$27.07	407	45	-16	-4.0%
11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	\$43.22	356	24	-16	-4.5%
25-2011	Preschool Teachers	\$24.66	345	33	-16	-5.0%
25-9099	Educational Instruction and Library Workers, All Other	\$35.05	339	26	-18	-5.5%
37-1012	Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	\$35.63	233	20	-12	-5.0%
11-3012	Administrative Services Managers	\$61.20	208	14	-8	-4.0%
25-3099	Teachers and Instructors, All Other	\$46.30	190	18	-12	-6.5%
33-2011	Firefighters	\$42.50	181	11	-8	-5.0%
SOC	Engineering & Environmental Science	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
17-2051	Civil Engineers	\$60.34	198	10	-8	-4.0%
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	\$69.90	127	6	-2	-1.5%
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	\$62.07	125	7	-1	-0.5%
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	\$94.28	105	6	-4	-4.5%
SOC	Services	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
39-9031	Exercise Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors	\$32.79	410	72	-2	-0.5%
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	\$25.14	294	33	-11	-3.5%
27-1024	Graphic Designers	\$37.16	178	10	-11	-6.0%
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	\$23.08	153	14	-6	-4.0%
SOC	Healthcare	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
29-1141	Registered Nurses	\$81.20	1,662	70	-46	-3.0%
31-9092	Medical Assistants	\$27.55	807	99	9	1.0%
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$26.83	726	62	-23	-3.5%
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	\$23.65	593	72	-28	-5.0%
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$42.93	475	33	-20	-4.0%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	\$33.13	475	39	9	2.0%
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	\$28.80	455	45	-4	-1.0%

11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	\$79.62	418	35	24	5.5%
31-9091	Dental Assistants	\$26.92	376	45	-11	-3.0%
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	\$33.89	348	26	-10	-3.0%
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	\$27.98	316	26	-9	-3.0%
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	\$46.01	238	17	-2	-1.0%
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	\$68.27	185	10	-5	-2.5%
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	\$22.98	174	29	-3	-2.0%
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	\$31.30	167	11	-2	-1.0%
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	\$29.57	166	15	-3	-2.0%
31-9011	Massage Therapists	\$32.55	166	20	0	0.0%
soc	Retail & Hospitality	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$26.01	913	118	-31	-3.5%
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	\$27.88	909	63	-80	-9.0%
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	\$26.25	902	91	-81	-9.5%
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	\$44.62	701	49	-43	-6.5%
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services	\$38.41	590	48	-28	-5.0%
11-2022	Sales Managers	\$63.51	464	28	-20	-4.5%
11-9051	Food Service Managers	\$39.86	304	30	-10	-3.0%
41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks	\$23.75	294	27	-14	-5.0%
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	\$37.21	292	20	-14	-5.0%
11-2021	Marketing Managers	\$82.64	218	14	-7	-3.5%
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	\$43.27	202	12	-10	-5.0%
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	\$24.38	188	24	-10	-5.5%
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	\$45.10	181	12	-8	-4.5%
35-1011	Chefs and Head Cooks	\$33.89	171	18	-5	-2.5%
41-9099	Sales and Related Workers, All Other	\$30.63	159	17	-8	-5.0%
51-3021	Butchers and Meat Cutters	\$22.60	156	15	-10	-6.5%
soc	Information/Technology and Science	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
15-1252	Software Developers	\$75.05	775	39	4	0.5%
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$100.43	343	22	1	0.0%
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	\$39.18	300	12	-26	-9.0%
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	\$59.38	282	13	-10	-3.5%
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	\$57.21	233	11	-6	-2.5%
soc	Manufacturing, Construction & Transportation	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
51-2092	Team Assemblers	\$24.76	1,192	109	-57	-5.0%
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$29.90	943	83	-39	-4.0%
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	\$28.17	871	70	-36	-4.0%
47-2061	Construction Laborers	\$33.51	784	56	-20	-2.5%
47-2031	Carpenters	\$37.40	770	46	-31	-4.0%
53-3033	Light Truck Drivers	\$25.10	770	71	-19	-2.5%
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	\$49.09	482	31	-17	-3.5%
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$33.03	429	29	-19	-4.5%
47-2111	Electricians	\$40.77	380	31	-7	-2.0%
11-9021	Construction Managers	\$52.98	367	25	-8	-2.0%
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$39.81	336	23	-13	-4.0%
53-1047	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers	\$32.84	334	28	-15	-4.5%
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	\$38.70	312	25	-16	-5.0%
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	\$23.08	304	24	-15	-5.0%
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	\$43.89	291	20	-13	-4.5%
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	\$30.10	288	28	-17	-6.0%
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	\$43.17	262	20	-6	-2.0%
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	\$30.72	254	16	-12	-4.5%
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	\$44.90	246	17	-11	-4.5%
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$36.20	243	27	-10	-4.0%
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	\$33.70	221	16	-15	-7.0%
soc	Other	Avg. Hourly Earnings	2025 Jobs	Annual Openings	5-Year Projected Job Growth	5-Year Projected Growth %
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	\$33.89	272	32	-8	-3.0%
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	\$40.67	188	13	-7	-3.5%
27-4021	Photographers	\$36.01	159	11	-8	-5.0%
27-2042	Musicians and Singers	\$35.87	152	15	-8	-5.5%
27-3043	Writers and Authors	\$45.77	145	12	-7	-4.5%
27-1011	Art Directors	\$62.36	129	9	-6	-4.5%

These occupations are in industries with projected growth from 2026-2031 (or a decline of less than 10%), that pay a wage of at least \$22.57/hour, or \$46,950 annually (2025 300% poverty guideline for Santa Cruz County), have an education/experience level at or below the Bachelor's Degree level, and currently have at least 50 employed in Santa Cruz County. (6.8.2026)

Local ETPL

WDB Top 10

Living Wage Job >\$42.98