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## 10 Best Online Healthcare Schools in California



[Californians](#) are not getting any younger. In fact, predictions say that by 2030, one in five of the state's residents will be of retirement age. The aging population in the Golden State is only one of the many reasons that healthcare professionals who have graduated from online [healthcare](#) schools in California are in high demand and are likely to continue to be in the coming years.

Registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) from accredited healthcare schools in California are needed to provide quality care to senior citizens in the 1,250 licensed long-term care nursing facilities that currently exist in the state. In addition, these nursing facilities use medical billers and coders and medical office professionals with expertise in healthcare management and medical office administration to keep their operations running smoothly.

However, according to a report by the University of California San Francisco, many Chief Nursing Officers in California are finding it difficult to recruit nurses for the specialized positions they need filled. In addition, more than 90 percent of hospitals in the Golden State have found that the demand for nurses in California is greater than the available supply. If you'd like to take advantage of the demand for any of these careers, earning an education

from one of the many accredited healthcare schools in California can be an advantageous first step.

### 3 Facts about Healthcare in California

- Seven million Californians reside in Health Professional Shortage Areas and are in need of healthcare professionals to provide them with quality care. Health Professional Shortage Areas are areas of a U.S. state that are facing shortfalls of primary care, mental health care, and/or dental care.
- The California Future Health Workforce Commission is working to eliminate the shortage of primary care in the state by 2030. It is doing so by maximizing the roles of nurse practitioners and expanding college pipeline programs to bring low-income and underrepresented professionals to the healthcare industry.
- To help individuals and families with low incomes receive access to the care they need, when they need it, at an affordable price, the California Health Care Foundation was created. It promotes healthcare careers in low-income areas and secures various grants to fund initiatives that aid in improving healthcare in the state.

### Most Popular Healthcare Degrees in California

Below is our ranking of the most popular Healthcare degrees in California, based off how many degrees of each type were awarded by California schools in the 2017-18 school year.

1	Associate in Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	5490	5	Master in Social Work	3391
2	Bachelor in Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	4945	6	Certificate in Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)	2490
3	Certificate in Medical/Clinical Assistant	4079	7	Certificate in Dental Assisting/Assistant	1446
4	Bachelor in Health and Physical Education/Fitness, General	3862	8	Certificate in Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	1301

### Best Healthcare Careers in California

Although healthcare-related occupations may be similar from state to state, there can be variations due to various factors, such as performance of certain industries. Considering the sheer size of California — the Golden State is the third largest state in the U.S. — and of its cities — according to Ballotpedia.org, three of the 10 biggest cities in America are in California — it's no surprise that California needs a lot of healthcare facilities: hospitals,

doctor's offices, public health agencies. And those facilities need people to run them: medical assistants, physician assistants, phlebotomists, billers and coders, health services managers and more.

In addition, since California attracts movie stars and big-time business executives, it's no surprise that massage therapists are in demand to work at luxury spas such as Cal-a-Vie Health Spa and Sense Spa at Rosewood CordeValle. This may also explain the prevalence of occupational therapists and physical therapist assistants, who may be needed to help with anything from a stunt-based injury, to a skiing accident at Big Bear, to the physical consequences of having a day job sitting in a Silicon Valley office.

## How To Pick a Healthcare Major That's Best For You?

There are a plethora of healthcare majors that students can pursue at the best healthcare schools in California. But with so many to choose from, which healthcare major is the best for you?

Students who are searching for a healthcare career that can give them many options after graduation should consider the field of [nursing](#). Nurses from the best healthcare colleges in California can be seen throughout the state, working at large hospitals such as UCSF Medical Center or Cedar-Sinai Medical Center. They may also hold positions at schools, doctors' offices, and nursing homes like Arroyo Vista Nursing Center or Piners Nursing Home.

On the other hand, students who are detail-oriented and interested in a healthcare career that does not involve directly caring for patients may be more interested in [medical billing and coding](#), [healthcare informatics](#) or [medical office administration](#). Degrees and certificates in these fields can be earned at multiple online healthcare schools in California, and they open the door to several positions that take a supportive role to client-facing nurses and physicians. Sweetening the deal, medical billers and coders are often able to work from home, which can save them long commutes in highly-trafficked cities such as Los Angeles or San Francisco.

## Best Online Healthcare Schools in California

Prospective students can use this ranking of the best online healthcare schools in California to find the right school for their specific career aspirations. Each of the schools on our list holds official accreditation and offers at least one degree or certificate program in a healthcare-related subject, either in an online or hybrid format. We ranked these schools using data from the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES), analyzing factors such as tuition costs and number of online programs offered in order to help you to make an informed decision.

Please be aware that many online healthcare programs require some form of face-to-face learning at some point. Some schools may require students to take specific courses on-campus rather than online. However, others may only require certain labs or exams to be conducted in person. Many online colleges have arrangements with other schools or hospitals around the country so distance learners can complete in-person requirements in their area, but not all of them. Always make sure you know what your program and/or courses may require before you commit to an online healthcare program.

#### 1. California State University-Northridge

At California State University-Northridge, courses for some of the best online healthcare programs in California are taught through the Canvas learning management system, some synchronously and others asynchronously. Students can earn a hybrid Master of Science in social work in two years if attending on a full-time basis. The program's hybrid nature means students are able to complete their assignments online, but are also brought together one night per week in order to interact face-to-face.

Students who need a greater percentage of their program to be online may be interested in the Master of Science in communicative disorders program -- which involves a clinical practicum -- or the Master of Public Administration in health administration program -- which focuses on leadership and management skills related to health organizations. There are also online certificate programs in computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

#### 2. Concordia University-Irvine

Concordia University-Irvine's online courses are taught through the Blackboard learning platform and follow a semester schedule. Hybrid options are available for most programs, including those in nursing, and even the fully online courses feature synchronous sessions in the curriculum so students can more easily interact with their peers and instructor.

Nursing students can start at the undergraduate level with the online RN-to-BSN program. Current associate-level nursing students may pursue dual enrollment in this program if they wish. Meanwhile, grad students can enter the online MSN program and choose to specialize in nursing leadership or nursing education. Scholarships are available for students maintaining continuous enrollment in either program.

On the other hand, students looking to become medical and health services managers may be more interested in Concordia's B.A. in healthcare management or Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) programs. The latter is designed in accordance with the common competency domains of the Healthcare Leadership Alliance (HLA).

#### 3. San Diego State University

At San Diego State University, one of the best online healthcare schools in California, students can pursue an online Master of Public Health in health promotion and behavioral science. This is an 18-month program that focuses on developing, implementing and critiquing public health programs.

In addition, SDSU offers a hybrid Master of Science in rehabilitation counseling, as well as an online certificate in regulatory affairs that revolves around the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries. Most online courses at SDSU are taught in an asynchronous format via the Blackboard online learning platform.

#### 4. California State University- East Bay

California State University-East Bay offers a hybrid RN-to-BSN program designed for students who already hold a California registered nurse license and would like to earn their Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Although most courses in this program can be completed online, there are a few that are held on-campus, either at or near the school's Hayward campus.

A part-time hybrid Master of Science in Nursing designed for working nurses looking to advance their careers is available as well. Students enrolled in this MSN program can choose from two specializations: nursing education, or nursing leadership and administration. All online courses at CSU East Bay are delivered through the Blackboard online learning platform.

## 5. California State University- Dominguez Hills

At California State University-Dominguez Hills, registered nurses who have already earned a diploma or an associate degree can complete a BSN program online. CSUDH uses the Blackboard online learning platform to teach online courses.

Nurses who have already earned their BSN and are looking to advance their careers further may instead wish to pursue the online Master of Science in Nursing, which allows students to choose a concentration such as clinical adult nurse specialist, clinical pediatric nurse specialist, family nurse practitioner, nurse administrator or nurse educator. A certificate program in sport and fitness psychology is also an option for students who hope to pursue online healthcare programs in California.

## 6. California State University-Chico

Unique among the schools on our list, California State University-Chico specifically focuses its online healthcare programs around the needs of nurses in rural areas. Through the Blackboard learning platform, CSU-Chico extends its online RN-to-BSN program to the most distant rural areas of California, while also keeping the coursework flexible for working nurses who may have seven-days-a-week work schedules. There is also an online MSN program with a choice between two specializations -- nursing education or nursing leadership -- and the Rural California Nursing Preceptorships (RCNP) program, which gives student nurses and graduate nurses alike the chance to earn clinical experience in a rural or semi-rural setting.

With its accessible programs and commendable focus on the unsatisfied healthcare needs of rural areas, CSU-Chico certainly deserves its position as one of the best accredited healthcare schools in California.

## 7. Saddleback College

At Saddleback College, students can complete a variety of transferable online courses and use them toward a healthcare-related degree program. Online courses in health, health sciences, emergency medical technology and nursing can help students looking to become nurses or medical assistants, while courses in human services and counseling may be perfect for those more interested in therapy or social work. Saddleback's various hybrid courses in kinesiology are also an option, one that may be well-suited for aspiring massage therapists or occupational therapists.

The college's online courses may be taught in six-, eight- or 10-week sessions and are delivered via the Canvas learning platform. In addition to its transferable online courses, Saddleback offers a "for-credit" internship program called the Cooperative Work Experience (CWE), where students can earn internships in the healthcare field and receive college credits for completing them.

## 8. San Jose State University

San Jose State University, one of the best healthcare colleges in California, hosts a few different online healthcare degree programs on their eCampus, all delivered via the Canvas learning platform. Working nurses who hold a master's degree and would like to take their careers to the next level can enroll in the online Doctor of Nursing Practice -- a five-semester program that meets in-person once a semester and culminates in a doctoral project rather than a thesis or a dissertation.

SJSU also offers a hybrid Master of Science in medical product development management, which was designed in collaboration with various biomedical companies around the Bay Area. The program focuses on skills needed for careers in clinical trial management, drug safety, and other positions in healthcare product development. Additionally, an accelerated Master of Public Health that can be completed in 24 months is available for students who would like to improve the economic, social and environmental health of communities throughout California.

## 9. California Baptist University

Online healthcare degrees at California Baptist University are specifically designed for busy students with jobs and/or families who would like to save time and money on their education. Its Christianity-inspired degree programs can be completed via the CBU Online portal and delivered via a number of interactive technologies, including Blackboard 9.1 Platform, Telepresence and WebEx.

One of the big advantages at CBU is simply the variety of online healthcare programs the university offers. Undergraduate students can benefit from a B.S. in healthcare administration and management, an RN-to-BSN program for current RN license-holders, a B.S. in kinesiology, a B.A. in human services or a B.A. in sports, recreation and fitness management. Graduate students interested in healthcare, on the other hand, may pursue an online M.S. in counseling psychology, a Master of Public Health or an M.S. in kinesiology.

## 10. Santa Barbara Business College-Venture

Students who are interested in the administrative side of healthcare may be well-suited to the online healthcare programs California's Santa Barbara Business College has on offer. SBBCollege offers both an online associate program in medical office administration and a bachelor's program in healthcare administration. The two programs may sound similar in name, but they are actually rather different. While the medical office administration program focuses on front office skills, medical billing and coding, and integrated computer applications, the healthcare administration program revolves around management skills that are commonly used in healthcare environments.

In addition to these programs, SBBCollege encourages hands-on experience in healthcare fields such as vocational nursing, medical assisting, and medical office administration by offering job training that online students can participate in at various locations throughout Southern California.

# Professional Healthcare Organizations in California

Students pursuing online healthcare programs in California may benefit from joining one or more professional healthcare organizations. These organizations can give them opportunities to network with other healthcare students and professionals, which may even help them land their first job or internship. Many such organizations represent and campaign for their field in regards to legal matters, affecting how healthcare professionals can practice. Some also maintain informational blogs or newsletters, or offer memberships to healthcare-related publications.

There are many benefits to joining such organizations, so it's worth being aware of which ones are available for you.

- [American Nurses Association California](#), Sacramento
- [California Association of Healthcare Leaders](#), San Francisco
- [Women in Health Administration of Southern California](#), Los Angeles
- [San Diego Black Nurses Association, Inc.](#), San Diego