



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**Note:** If you wish to interview Lane County former foster parents or a former OYA foster youth about their experiences, please contact foster care certifier Kelly Crain at 541-682-4717.

### **Oregon Youth Authority seeks Lane County foster homes**

If a Lane County youth on parole or probation needs a foster home, chances are good he or she will be placed in another county. The state's fourth-largest county has only two Oregon Youth Authority foster homes, both outside of Eugene and Springfield.

As a result, Lane County youth have been placed in cities such as Portland, Salem, Klamath Falls and Coos Bay.

"I know these are good homes," Kelly Crain, OYA foster care certifier for Lane County, says of distant placements. "But sending youth far from home means less effective family therapy, fewer visits with family and friends, and loss of familiar school and community supports."

Crain says the state juvenile corrections agency is seeking additional Lane County foster homes. OYA recruits foster parents for youth who are on probation or parole, need an out-of-home placement, may be in various stages of treatment for their offenses and for whom an evaluation has shown foster care to be appropriate. Foster parents receive a monthly maintenance reimbursement for the services they provide to youth.

Crain is seeking both traditional foster homes and at least one transitional home, where youth learn more about establishing a bank account, preparing a household budget, shopping for food, preparing meals, job-hunting and successfully performing other tasks that support independent living.

Crain says foster parents make a real difference in young lives, assisting with school and jobs, supporting volunteering and modeling positive behavior and choices.

For example, she tells about a youth who entered a Lane County foster care home after time in an OYA close custody facility and in residential care. The foster parents not only supported him through a severe medical diagnosis that required extensive treatment, but also supported him in completing high school and putting him on a path to successful independent living that includes attending Lane Community College.

“His foster parents made a huge difference in his life,” Crain says. She says two other Lane County youth in foster care graduated from high school this spring.

Qualifications to serve as a foster parent include being at least age 21 (age 25 for transitional foster homes), a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, financially stable and able to pass a criminal history check. Prospective foster parents should be emotionally mature and have an understanding of how to help youth build positive relationships and live independently.

Crain is available to discuss foster parenting with interested people, can provide an information packet and is available to speak to Lane County civic and service groups. She can be reached at [Kelly.crain@oya.state.or.us](mailto:Kelly.crain@oya.state.or.us) or at 541-682-4717.

Placing appropriate youth in high-quality foster homes helps fulfill OYA’s mission of protecting the public and reducing crime by holding offenders accountable and offering reformation opportunities in safe environments. OYA supervises approximately 1,100 offenders on probation and parole in communities throughout Oregon, and has custody of approximately 900 offenders ages 12-24 in correctional and transitional facilities in Albany, Burns, Florence, Grants Pass, La Grande, Salem, Tillamook, Warrenton and Woodburn.

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