



Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences

Providing workplace safety solutions for Oregon and its workforce

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences (OccHealthSci) at OHSU conducts groundbreaking research on worker health and safety. OccHealthSci research improves workplace and safety practices via education, training and materials that reach thousands of Oregon workers each year, reducing fatalities and lowering disease and disability rates.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIRE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

OccHealthSci was established by the Oregon Legislature in 1988 (ORS 353.460) with continuous base funding from the Workers Benefit Fund (ORS 656.630). A central component of Oregon's visionary state worker compensation reforms (Mahonia Hall) was the creation of the Institute. Despite dramatic inflation and increases in personnel and operational costs over the past 37 years, the formula that determines the state's annual investment in OccHealthSci remains unchanged.

Without a change in the funding formula, OccHealthSci's ability to improve worker health and safety outcomes will be diminished and the Institute will need to scale back the creation and distribution of workplace solutions that reduce health and safety hazards and improve productivity.

Adjusted for inflation, state-provided base funding for OccHealthSci has dropped by more than 50% since 1988, resulting in an annual \$2.81M budget gap. This shortfall hampers OccHealthSci's ability to fulfill its mission.

A NEW FUNDING FORMULA WILL GUARANTEE OREGON WORKERS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE INSTITUTE

OccHealthSci is seeking a change to the Institute's funding formula that will enable it to continue providing high quality research and workplace solutions. New investment will support applied research, training design and outreach in critical industries including agriculture, construction, emergency response, and health care. Addressing the budget shortfall will improve Oregon's ability to address health and safety challenges facing workers, including:

- Workforce mental health
- Adverse job site culture in construction
- Firefighter exposure to wildfire smoke
- Agriculture workers' exposure to extreme heat



OccHealthSci at work in Oregon



IMPROVING SAFETY PRACTICES

16 Oregon companies since 2020, representing more than 4,000 employees in construction, manufacturing and transportation have implemented the OccHealthSci Safety Climate Scale. The Scale assesses company safety practices and provides critical information to management regarding necessary adjustments for improvement.

PREVENTING INJURY AMONG HOME HEALTH AIDS

OccHealthSci, in partnership with SEIU Local 503, developed a training for home health aides that reduces injuries and lessens social isolation. The training was adopted by the Oregon Home Care Commission and is now available to 60% of home care workers in Oregon.



TRAINING TO SUPPORT WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

OccHealthSci currently offers the only evidence-based online workplace mental health support training for managers. The training is available to 49,000 state employees through the Department of Administrative Services Workday portal. To date, public, private and non-profit organizations have licensed the training for use by over 2,000 employees.

EDUCATING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

OccHealthSci, in partnership with SAIF Corporation, has developed and delivered Total Worker Health® courses to over 1,500 occupational health and safety practitioners employed by Oregon companies. Courses are routinely offered at industry association meetings and regional OSHA conferences.

