

Oregon Department of Human Services 2019 Highlights



Vision

*Safety, health
and independence
for all Oregonians*

Mission

*To help Oregonians in
their own communities
achieve well-being and
independence through
opportunities that
protect, empower,
respect choice and
preserve dignity*

Values

*Integrity
Stewardship
Responsibility
Respect
Professionalism
Innovation
Service Equity*



Message from Director Fariborz Pakseresht

Our vision of safety, health and independence for all Oregonians is what drives our work at the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). The Department holds a unique position among state agencies in creating an Oregon where all its residents can thrive. We often interact with people from the moment they enter this world until the moment they leave. We serve Oregonians throughout that life journey with the intent of helping each person live their full potential at every stage.

Our services touch one in four Oregonians through five programs that serve children, families, aging Oregonians, and people with intellectual, developmental or physical disabilities. All programs are supported by business services that cover a range of responsibilities for keeping our large organization functioning.

While every year brings state and federal directives we must implement, we constantly seek other ways to deliver better outcomes for the people we serve, and to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations to maximize taxpayer investment.

We envision a future delivery system that provides services in a seamless and integrated manner across the lifespan and in strong partnership with other organizations. During 2019, our focus was on stabilizing and strengthening our foundation to be capable of supporting and sustaining the integrated service delivery system we're working toward.

We began addressing findings from a thorough internal assessments to show us where our foundation needs shoring up. We used ground-breaking research and data analytics projects to point us towards the strategies and practices that will result in the best outcomes. We invested resources to serve our growing culturally and linguistically diverse population and to make our workforce and practices reflect Oregon's changing demographics. We are intentionally shifting our culture to create the mindset and values we want to be the hallmark of our work with Oregonians.

Thanks to the hard work of our dedicated staff and productive partnerships with organizations throughout the state, we have many accomplishments to report for 2019. We selected some highlights to share with you. If you have questions or want to learn more about what the Department achieved in 2019, please contact us at DHS.DirectorsOffice@state.or.us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fariborz Pakseresht". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

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Highlights

The Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) has five program divisions that provide services to Oregonians across the lifespan: Aging and People with Disabilities, Child Welfare, the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services, Self-Sufficiency Programs and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The five program divisions are supported by a business operations division. Business operations are essential in our ability to deliver services to Oregonians. They do many of the things that keep large organizations like ours running such as taking care of our facilities and conducting background checks for staff and community providers.

Our 2019 highlights include those that span the entire Department, touching each program division, and specific accomplishments selected by each program division.

Department Highlights

Building a positive, inclusive and enduring culture

The purpose of our culture change is to create environments and interactions that are supportive to all staff and clients of the organization. In 2019, the Department:

- Formally launched the effort to build a positive, inclusive organizational culture called RiSE. The RiSE culture includes five primary elements: Safety and well-being, caring and supportive relationships, high expectations and accountability, meaningful participation, and community engagement.
- Conducted RiSE Building Sessions across the state over five months to gain valuable insight and voice from employees on how to bring the RiSE vision to life and infuse it throughout the Department. Turned the input and ideas from Building Sessions into communication, engagement and training approaches to move culture into action, beginning with managers.



Using research, data and analytics to inform decisions

Detailed and customized research, data and analytics can provide guidance at decision points to strengthen our organization, support our workforce and improve outcomes for the people we serve. They do not replace the professional opinions of staff based on experience and expertise. Instead, they give staff more information and possible outcomes to consider. In 2019, the Department:

- Continued implementation of the Child Welfare Research Agenda and continued developing research agendas for other program divisions. Eventually, all program divisions will have a research agenda that reflects the current needs of the program.
- Put tools in place in Child Welfare to help with decision-making at the individual case level. The three primary tools implemented are one that helps screeners identify safety risk in calls to the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline; a tool that generates the probability for a stable reunification when a child returns home from foster care, and a tool that estimates the likelihood of stability one year after a child is reunified with their family.
- Built the infrastructure for a data warehouse. The data warehouse improves safety and well-being by getting us to better outcomes through data we can trust, the highest level of security and faster reporting for insights that make the staff and participant experience better.

Advancing equity and inclusion

Oregon is becoming more diverse and we must keep up with changing demographics. We are working to integrate equity and inclusion into all we do from diversifying our workforce to ensuring we provide equitable services. In 2019, the Department:

- Conducted an extensive Request for Proposals (RFP) process and selected contractor Culture Journey LLC from Missouri to provide a two-year diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility learning experience for top agency leadership starting February 2020. This is part of the Department's Unified Equity Framework. In modeling this commitment to equity, senior leadership, such as directors and deputy directors, will attend quarterly group learning sessions and individualized coaching and mentoring.
- Developed a service equity framework for the organization and service equity plans for each program division. The plans identify specific disparities within each program and remediation strategies. Service equity dashboards were created to ensure we measure progress in addressing disparities.
- Added new Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and local chapters. ERGs are a diversity and inclusion best practice that involve organizing groups of employees

around shared cultural identities to support each other and the Department's overall vision and mission. The Department has ERGs for communities including Black and African-American employees, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Latinx, Veterans, LGBTQ+, Native Americans, Women, and people with disabilities.

Increasing meaningful engagement with stakeholders

The Department's work is done by staff in local offices across the state working in close partnership with community organizations. Our Department is just one part of the human services ecosystem and we get the best results for the people we serve when our staff are supported and we open our doors to the many different stakeholders who assist us in this work.

- Identified four priority areas and related initiatives to address findings from a 2018 internal assessment that called for strengthening the Department's fundamentals to support staff in their work. The assessment involved feedback from over 4,500 staff. The four priority areas are: strategic direction, developing talent, investing in culture, and improving the organization's image.
- Increased the Department's capabilities for engaging with public and private partnerships, including assisting with the development and support for the Children's Public and Private Partnership (CP3). The partnership will undertake joint planning, coordination, implementation and measurement efforts benefitting seven counties. The goals will be to stabilize and strengthen families, safely reduce the number of children in the foster care system, improve permanency placements of children, reduce the duration of children's placement in foster care and employ strategies to avoid children's placement in the Child Welfare. The goal is to reduce the number of children in foster care by 1,000.
- Made it easier for people to volunteer by launching an agency-wide, mobile-friendly website and volunteer portal to streamline and modernize our volunteer recruitment. The volunteer program received and processed 679 applications last year. In 2019, volunteers donated 46,820 hours of services valued at \$1.2 million.

Aging and People with Disabilities (APD)

Oregon's older adults, people with disabilities, and their families experience person-centered services, supports and early interventions that are innovative and help maintain independence, promote safety, wellbeing, honor choice, respect cultural preferences and uphold dignity.

Interim Director
Mike McCormick



Highlights

Tribal Navigator Program: APD has established agreements with five of the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon plus the Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA) for Tribal navigator services. APD's Tribal Navigator Program is a formal partnership between local APD and Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) offices and Tribal entities. Each participating Tribal entity designates a staff member as the Tribal Navigator. Their role is to liaise between their members who are older adults or people with disabilities to assist with enrollment in Older Americans Act Services or Long-Term Services and Supports. The ultimate outcome is decreased barriers to access and increased trust between all agencies and Tribal members.

Centralized Abuse Management System: APD fully implemented the Centralized Abuse Management (CAM) System for Adult Protective Services abuse investigations last year and will complete the expansion of CAM to include the Office of Developmental Disabilities, Behavioral Health, the Office of Training, Investigation and Safety in early 2020. Previously Oregon used manual processes and multiple outdated abuse investigation systems, making it difficult to track perpetrators who targeted multiple victims or identify trends to air prevention efforts. CAM is a comprehensive web-based system that enables DHS and the Oregon Health Authority to standardize abuse reports across multiple populations to provide better protection to vulnerable Oregonians. The implementations to date have been lauded as a tremendous success and a leap forward in our capability to protect vulnerable Oregonians.

Asset Verification System: Oregon implemented a federally-required Asset Verification System (AVS) in 2019. AVS is now used to verify liquid assets and real property, discover potentially undisclosed assets, and review asset history for potential disqualifying transfers. The system has created workload efficiencies for local eligibility staff while simultaneously promoting stronger program integrity.

Improved customer service: Following several years of collaborative preparatory work, APD, our AAAs and the Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP) will roll out changes in 2020 to make it easier for Oregonians to get the economic assistance and human service benefits for which they are eligible. To support this effort, APD and the AAAs are not only training employees to serve Oregonians through an upgraded Medicaid eligibility system, called OregONEligibility, or ONE, but we've updated business processes throughout APD to remove operational silos and adopt a more person-centered approach. This includes cross-training with SSP to ensure that consumers' initial eligibility needs are met as quickly as possible regardless of how they sought out services.

Business Operations

Provide critical business services that are data-informed, accountable and transparent.

Highlights

Public Records Request Unit: With support from the Governor's Executive Order for Child Welfare and the Alvarez and Marsal crisis consulting firm, DHS rapidly created a Public Records Unit to respond to requests, track policy compliance and report outcomes. The Unit began its work by clearing a backlog of 991 Child Welfare public records requests within four weeks. It absorbed media records requests in August and in September took on records requests from APD. The Public Records Unit absorbed record requests from all remaining parts of the Department in November. Between July and December 2019, the Unit had 3,365 public records requests and 3,243 were completed with an average time of nine business days, faster than the required timelines.

Health, Safety and Emergency Management: Several programs were established to improve the health and safety of our program participants and staff in emergency situations, including:

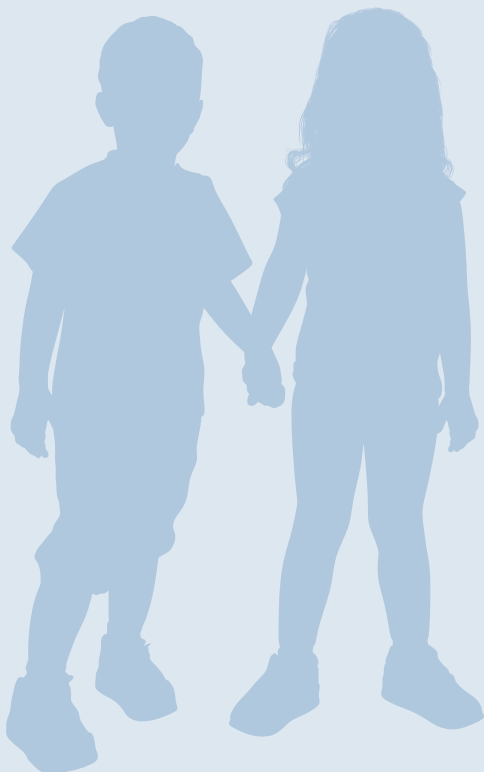
- Formation of the state's first Disability Emergency Management Advisory Council (DEMAC) in collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Emergency Management. This Council is comprised of persons with disabilities from all over Oregon and will help all Oregon Emergency Response Council Agencies and local governments develop emergency management plans that are inclusive to people with disabilities.
- Certification of three Occupational Health, Safety and Emergency Management Program staff to provide Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) training to DHS management and staff. The trainers also assist when DHS employees are having thoughts of suicide or are aware of someone who may be having thoughts of suicide.

Gold Star Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting: The Office of Financial Services received the Gold Star award from the Department of Administration Services (DAS) for excellence in financial reporting. This is the 9th consecutive year OFS has received the Gold Star for DHS. This award is given to agencies who provide accurate and timely financial information, assisting in the completion of the State financial statements and allowing the State to receive the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This award is presented to governments who publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). Receiving this certificate provides assurance to investors and other users of State financial data that the information provides an accurate picture of the State's financial position.

Child Welfare

Every child and family has a safe and positive environment in which to live and develop.

Director
Rebecca Jones Gaston



Highlights

Staff Hiring: With support through a Governor's Executive Order and from the Child Welfare Executive Oversight Board and the Oregon State Legislature, Child Welfare was able to hire hundreds of new staff members to improve safety, reduce caseloads and build capacity within the workforce. Recruitment for a variety of positions began in late July 2019 and by the end of October, hiring was complete for 345 positions. The new hires included 176 new caseworkers and more than 25% of the new hires were from underrepresented groups, meeting a diversity goal for the hiring effort. The recruitment and hiring process included use of new realistic job preview videos, a new video interview process, and updated training curriculum and approaches.

Residential Treatment Program Improvements: Child Welfare added 115 spaces for children and youth in foster care with complex or specialized needs to its residential treatment program capacity. The new capacity moves Oregon closer to a goal of serving all children and youth with complex or specialized needs in Oregon by filling gaps in services through collaboration with the Governor, the Oregon State Legislature, Oregon Health Authority, and other partners. Although more work remains to be done, the number of out-of-state placements peaked at 88 in March 2019 and dropped to 20 by December 31, 2019. During 2019, Child Welfare also created rapid access to the physical, dental and mental health services critical for youth being served in Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) residential treatment programs. Youth in BRS residential treatment programs got the flexibility to change their Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO) based on their geographic placement for better access to services when needed. A second initiative was launched to integrate mental health services in BRS residential treatment programs.

Oregon Child Abuse Reporting Hotline: To ensure all children and families are served and evaluated in a consistent way and treated fairly within the system, Oregon completed the consolidation of 15 regional child abuse reporting hotlines into one statewide hotline. By streamlining the screening processes and consolidating into one hotline, Child Protective Services workers are better able to meet the complex needs of the diverse communities that make up our state. All screening staff are now trained in the same interpretation of rule and Child Welfare policies and procedures.

Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS)

People and families access quality supports that are simple to use and responsive to their strengths, needs and choices, while they live and thrive as valued members of their community.

Director
Lilia Teninty

Highlights

Electronic Visit Verification: ODDS successfully moved thousands of Personal Support Workers (PSW) into a new system that requires PSWs to document the hours of service they provide in real time. PSWs are hired by people with developmental disabilities to provide everyday supports. The system, called Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) was mandated by a federal law that required states to implement an electronic way for verifying attendant care services. Seventy-two percent of active PSWs are using the system in advance of the April 1, 2020 deadline.

Foundational Legislative Changes for I/DD Services: The 2019 Oregon Legislative Session saw many important changes for intellectual and developmental (I/DD) services. Senate Bill 1039 strengthened Oregon's support of persons with I/DD who are unable to make health care decisions for themselves. The legislation expanded who qualifies for help in making health care decisions and clarifies the roles of the various parties. Senate Bills 19 and 20 were introduced by Governor Kate Brown on behalf of the DHS. They added more I/DD providers as mandatory abuse reporters and cleaned up eligibility definitions. They also provided needed flexibility to work with people served, partners and stakeholders to reflect improvements and a vision for the case management system defined in Oregon Administrative Rules and more. These were important foundational changes to the work of ODDS.

Stabilization and Crisis Unit: The Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU) has more than 750 employees dedicated to serving Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. SACU is a safety-net resource for Oregonians with I/DD with no other option for a residential bed due to significant I/DD and behavior challenges. SACU supports individuals to stabilize, then transition to community providers. Over the past year, SACU has devoted significant resources to enhancing the success and safety of its employees through a partnership with SAIF to develop a comprehensive Workplace Violence Prevention Program. To support this effort, SACU has expanded both the training curriculum in new employee orientation as well as the services offered through our Employee Assistance Program.



Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP)

Provide a safety net, family stability and a connection to careers that guide Oregonians out of poverty.

Director
Dan Haun



Highlights

Reduced Wait Times: SSP improved services to Oregonians seeking health coverage through the Oregon Health Plan. Customer eligibility wait times were 2 to 3 months and phone call wait times were almost 3 hours. Through a coordinated effort with local offices, Facilities Administration, the Office of Information Services and Human Resources, three new Oregon Health Plan eligibility processing centers were created. The result, when coupled with workshare efforts, was that average phone wait times dropped to 5 minutes or less and eligibility was determined in a few days, rather than months. In the process, 137 jobs were created, mostly in rural communities with high unemployment.

Workshare: When SSP transitioned three Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility processing centers into Oregon Health Plan processing centers, it moved the SNAP work into local offices and spread it across the state. More than 37,000 documents have been processed through this workshare approach, enabling staff to efficiently work cases with program participants from outside their district remotely.

Housing Stabilization Program: The Housing Stabilization Program serves families eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The program received an additional \$5 million during the 2019 legislative session. With the funding, the Department and Oregon Housing and Community Services added additional requirements to improve services and increase partnerships with Community Action Agencies. This included collaboration between local DHS offices and Community Action Agencies, referral processes from the Department to Community Action Agencies, co-case staffing, prioritization of TANF recipients, and increased partnerships.

Improved Customer Service: SSP, along with APD and AAAs, will roll-out changes in 2020 to make it easier for Oregonians to get the economic assistance and human service benefits for which they are eligible. To support this effort, SSP is training employees to serve Oregonians through an upgraded eligibility system called OreONEligibility, or ONE. SSP established a Change Guide Network to support employees in local offices by sharing information, answering questions and preparing them for training and implementation. The effort also involved setting up Virtual Eligibility Centers for processing applications and determining program eligibility with “same day/next day” service. Opening the Centers created additional jobs in rural areas.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Assist Oregonians with disabilities to achieve, maintain, and advance in employment and independence.

Director
Keith Ozols

Highlights

Program Participation: In 2019, more than 8,800 people applied for services and Vocational Rehabilitation closed more than 2,500 cases for people successfully rehabilitated with jobs.

Youth Transition Program: Vocational Rehabilitation partners with more than 120 school districts to prepare students with disabilities for their transition out of high school into employment and independence. The internationally recognized Youth Transition Program (YTP) served 1,851 students in 2019. More than 75 percent of students in YTP exited school with a job or in post-secondary education. Vocational Rehabilitation also provided more than 21,000 pre-employment services, which includes counseling, job exploration, and more, to students with disabilities.

People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in Community Jobs: Vocational Rehabilitation continues to meet the requirements of the Lane v. Brown Settlement Agreement, which requires the Department to meet specific metrics in serving people with I/DD. In 2019, 853 people with I/DD were placed in community jobs through Vocational Rehabilitation, a 23 percent increase from the prior year. In addition, Vocational Rehabilitation and ODDS working together surpassed a Settlement Agreement requirement ahead of schedule. Requirements called for placing 735 people from sheltered workshops in competitive integrated employment by 2019, and 914 were placed. A total of 1,115 people from sheltered workshops must be placed in competitive integrated employment by 2022.





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