

# Employment Department Budget Development Community Engagement Plan

# Employment Department Overview

The mission of the Oregon Employment Department (OED) is to *Support Business and Promote Employment*. We accomplish this by:

- Supporting economic stability for Oregonians and communities during times of unemployment through the payment of unemployment benefits;
- Serving businesses by recruiting and referring the best qualified applicants to jobs, and providing resources to diverse job seekers in support of their employment needs;
- Developing and distributing quality workforce and economic information to promote informed decision-making; and
- Providing easily accessible Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance benefits that help Oregon employers and workers maintain quality of life, economic stability, and peace of mind.

Our organizational values of integrity, respect, and community are based on acting with honesty and courage, valuing diverse perspectives and fostering a sense of belonging for our employees, partners, and customers. Two of our operating principles specifically address inclusion:

- We are inclusive and transparent in our decision-making
- We seek out and form effective alliances to address community needs

## Current Budget Engagement

The Employment Department acknowledges that it does not have a current process to include external customers, stakeholders, and other groups in its budget development process. The current process includes only internal stakeholders in strategic budget planning, development of the Agency Request Budget, and policy package development. And, while after the fact brief explanations regarding the Agency Request Budget and policy packages has typically been conveyed to a few existing advisory boards and groups, that process has not been with an emphasis on the inclusion of underserved communities, or communities with barriers to participation. OED recognizes this is a large gap in our process and is making a commitment to purposefully change and to include underserved communities in its budget development process.

This purposeful and intentional engagement aligns with our organizational values and operating principles relating to diversity and inclusion, yet we recognize that, historically, we have not engaged externally within the budget development process with underserved communities who could help us in becoming a more inclusive provider of the services we provide. We also do not have established lines of communication with external stakeholders or underserved communities during the budget development process. We recognize that achieving inclusiveness in developing the budget will take some time to ensure those engaged have an understanding of our budget, and their involvement and empowerment in helping OED develop its budget.

OED is mostly funded by Federal and Other funds. We are restricted in the use of these funds in some cases to a narrow objective, while in other cases, the funds can be used for multiple programs and objectives, such as increasing equitable access to our services. OED is also an early submittal agency, which provides an additional constraint to engage with communities, assist them in gaining an understanding of the agency's budget and the

budget process, and meaningfully incorporate their feedback before this biennia's budget submission date of August 1, 2022.

OED is already engaging in some communication with external stakeholders related to providing services to underserved communities (see Appendix A for contact lists by program), and we are committed to continuing these communication points to further engage interested parties in our budget development, seeking out additional underserved communities, and seeking out comments on where we can improve our programs and services. We believe it will take several biennia to traverse from understanding to empowerment in terms of the agency's budget process.

## Engagement Goals and Objectives

Our goals for the 2023-25 budget development progress begin with developing or enhancing lines of communications with groups who have established lines of trust with underserved communities to help us develop the outreach needed in our budget development process to include these underserved communities. After establishing lines of communication, our initial objective is to provide "understanding sessions" or "office hours" to underserved communities and groups to establish an understanding of the programs and budget of the Employment Department, and our revenue sources and the laws and rules that govern the use of those funds. We will also seek feedback on how the agency might better serve communities that have historically been underserved by us so that we can more fully incorporate community engagement into our budget process for 2025-27.

OED will focus on the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program and will consult with stakeholders of this program on the development of the 2023-25 Agency Request Budget. The feedback from interviews, surveys, and workshops, planned for March 2022 thru May 2022, will be used in OED's Racial Equity Impact Statement that will be included in the 2023-25 Agency Request Budget. OED will use the information shared with us to recognize the impact of programs, policies, and budget on Oregonians who are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Latina, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander and members of Immigrant and Tribal communities.

OED recognizes that we are starting with only a few established working relationships with groups serving underserved communities. Those groups that we have working relationships with are either changed due to the social distancing during the pandemic or were for a narrow or program-related purpose. We recognize that we need to lean into this process from a position of establishing trust first, not over promising, and being very transparent with our intentions and goals of the engagement process for 2023-25 and beyond. This new budget engagement program will meaningfully integrate engagement and outreach activities into core budget development activities and measure outcomes through the lens of how effectively it supports the access needs of the people and communities who would most benefit from input into the budget development process.

OED will follow an adapted version of the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) engagement spectrum to describe the level of participation that each stakeholder group has in the planning and decision-making process. Through stakeholder analysis, we will understand our engagement level with each stakeholder group. The

spectrum of engagement level identified in the table below provides a general view of increasing stakeholder participation in the decision-making process as one moves from left to right. Goals and objectives reflect the aspirational and measurable commitments OED will make with different stakeholder groups.

**Increasing level of stakeholder involvement, impact, trust and communication flow**

	<b>INFORM</b>	<b>CONSULT</b>	<b>INVOLVE</b>	<b>COLLABORATE</b>	<b>EMPOWER</b>
<b>Nature of relationship</b>	Some stakeholder involvement; communication flows from one to the other, to inform; provides community with information; entities coexist	More stakeholder involvement; communication flows to the community and then back, answer seeking; gets information or feedback from the community; entities share information	Increasing community involvement; participatory form of communication flows both ways; involves more participation with community on issues; entities cooperate with each other	Full stakeholder community involvement; forms partnerships with community on each aspect, from development to solution; entities form bi-directional communication channels	Strong bi-directional relationship; final decision making is at community level; entities have formed strong partnership structures
<b>Outcomes</b>	Establishes communication channels and channels for outreach	Develops connections	Visible partnership with increased cooperation	Partnership and trust building; co-creation	Shared leadership; mutual trust, and confidence
<b>Participation goal</b>	To provide the stakeholder with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	To obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the stakeholder throughout the process to ensure that stakeholder concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the stakeholder in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the stakeholder.
<b>Promise to the stakeholder</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and share how your input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and share how your input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

The table below details OED’s specific goals and objectives, grouped by stakeholder engagement level.

<p><b>To inform and share information about the agency’s budget through stakeholder awareness, the Inform Goals are:</b></p>
<p>Stakeholders            (1) understand OED’s purpose and intentions, future-state vision;            (2) have confidence in the agency’s desire to implement community engagement; and            (3) understand the federal and state requirements and constraints on OED’s available funds</p>
<p><b>Inform objectives</b></p>
<p>A1 – Make relevant budget development information accessible to as many stakeholders as possible and shared in a timely manner.</p>
<p>A2 - Identify and analyze stakeholders to understand their needs and desire to be involved in the budget development process, and means by which they would like to be involved.</p>
<p>A3 - Establish the infrastructure, process, clear approach, and tools and resources necessary to support engaging with stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>To consult and obtain feedback through community outreach activities, the Consult Goals are:</b></p>
<p>Stakeholders            (4) feel they can provide feedback on OED’s strategic plans, budgeted current service levels, and policy packages; and,            (5) feel that their concerns and needs are heard, acknowledged, and considered in the agency’s budget.</p>
<p><b>Consult Objective</b></p>
<p>B1 - Ensure there are multiple outreach and engagement opportunities for stakeholders, both remotely and within their communities, to provide input through various outreach events and engagement activities.</p>
<p>B2 - Have multiple ways to connect and contact agency budget and equity staff to receive feedback and input.</p>
<p>B3 - Customize outreach and engagement activities by considering shared impacts and needs of historically underserved and vulnerable population.</p>
<p><b>To involve and consider stakeholder concerns and aspirations through focused group engagement, the Involve Goal is:</b></p>
<p>Stakeholders            (6) are well-informed about the agency’s budget development process; and,            (7) are actively involved in influencing the final budget decisions.</p>
<p><b>Involve Objective</b></p>
<p>C1 - Establish bi-directional communication between stakeholders and agency budget staff. (transparency)</p>
<p>C2 - Educate stakeholders about key budget information and the decision process, as well as the skills necessary to knowledgeably put forth well-considered ideas and alternatives. (capacity-building)</p>
<p>C3 - Dedicate resources, time, space, and staff to support stakeholder group participation in providing timely and meaningful contribution to final budget decisions. (equity)</p>

<b>To collaborate and partner with stakeholders in shared decision-making, the Collaborate Goal is:</b>
(8) Stakeholders collaborate with agency budget staff on decision-making, functions, actions, and activities.
<b>Collaborate Objective</b>
D1 - Develop stakeholder subject matter knowledge on key topics and competencies on the decision process through access to agency subject matter experts.
D2 - Engage stakeholders in discussions on key topics and ensure full participation in shared decision-making.
D3 - There is a consistent and transparent process to capture, act on, discuss, and provide feedback on stakeholder input.

<b>To empower stakeholders to make the final decision, the Empower Goal is:</b>
(9) Appropriate stakeholders receive technical assistance and consultative support for as much self-directed decision-making as possible.
<b>Empower Objective</b>
E1 - Provide necessary resources to create full governance and accountability in decision-making.
E2 - Provide necessary resources to understand the legal limitations and impacts of each decision.
E3 - There is a consistent and transparent process to document and implement decisions made by stakeholders.

## Engagement approach

OED will engage with diverse stakeholder groups throughout the budget development process, evolving from Informing to Empowering through several biennia. Our primary aim is to build trusting and productive relationships to support the agency’s commitment to transparency, collaboration, and meaningful participation. Aligned with OED’s values and guiding principles, we are committed to the following foundational engagement practices:

- **Effective communication**—Communities understand the process, goals and intended outcomes; the information they need to make an informed decision; the perspectives of each other; and, their role(s) and stake in the process and issue.
- **Respect** - The tone, content, and facilitation of engagement efforts genuinely respect the input, values, and interests of all participants—even if sometimes difficult.
- **Transparency of processes**—The entire engagement effort will be clear and well-understood by all stakeholders, and honest about the role and influence stakeholders will have in either the decision-making or implementation of solutions.
- **Sharing information widely**—Everyone involved has a common understanding of the issue and each other's perspectives as much as possible.
- **Engaging stakeholders in meaningful ways**—The engagement will account for stakeholder perspectives, acknowledge their contributions, and employ their skills in a manner they feel is consistent with their perspectives of these attributes.
- **Inclusiveness**—Broad participation is encouraged and supported by appropriate engagement opportunities, and extra care and effort will be made to include the voices of historically underserved and vulnerable stakeholder groups by providing content in plain language and multiple language translations.

# Engagement Implementation Timeline

Phase	Approximate Date	Task
Phase 1	Dec 2021 – Feb 2022	Pre-implementation communications planning. Identification of community stakeholders.
Phase 2	Feb – Mar 2022	Developing communications infrastructure, preparing for inform objectives.
Phase 3	Mar 2022 –Jul 2023	Communication with community stakeholders on Agency Request Budget thru Legislatively Adopted Budget process and decisions.
Phase 4	2023	Develop the Consult and Involve objectives for 2025-27 budget development process.
Phase 5	2024 and beyond	Transition to Collaborate and Empower.

OED is committed to working with the Racial Justice Council to identify community groups and contacts from the list of underserved communities including Native Americans, members of Oregon’s nine federally recognized tribes, American Indians, Alaska Natives; Blacks, Africans, African Americans; Latinx/a/o, Hispanic; Asian, Pacific Islanders; Arab/Middle Eastern/North Africans; Immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers; people without documentation, DACA “Dreamers”; linguistically diverse; people with disabilities; LGBTQIA+; aging/older adults; economically disadvantaged; farmworkers, and migrant workers.

Phase 2 work will initially begin with engaging the contacts for these groups to build trust in our plans for inclusion into the budget process, which will lead to sessions that will assist with understanding of OED’s budget process and our strategic plan. Our approach is to accomplish this through a series of conversations with engagement stakeholders and groups, building trust in OED’s commitment to including their constituents in the budget development process and identifying resources to better serve these communities.

Once these relationships are established, we will expand our work to include more participation efforts, through workshops or “town halls” and “listening sessions” at both trusted community venues and accessible online platforms. These efforts will provide information on the budget development process and ask for input on solutions to providing better customer service to underserved communities.

We will schedule workshops during March through May 2022 on different days of the week and at different times during the day to accommodate varying circumstances of those we work with. Our goal is to find ways to visit with community groups in their communities for these sessions and find ways for community leaders to share information and gather information from their communities to share back with us when there is a desire to have a discussion without OED present. We are looking for resources that may be available to offer stipends to cover transportation costs for participants where there are barriers to increased participation in the workshops.

Our initial goals of relationship building and informing will be useful to this second step of involving the communities in the budget development process.

Our Phase 2 and Phase 3 plans include building stronger relationships with community partners, some who are already engaged with us and others that we are not currently communicating with, with the purpose of them further understanding what is included in OED’s budget and where we might need to identify resources, both funding and positions, to better serve these communities. Our goals after the initial 2023-25 budget development process of improving community understanding of our budget will ultimately lead to a more collaborative model for budget development in future biennia.

For 2023-25 budget planning, OED will begin the engagement with Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance (PFMLI). Goals will be established to expand to additional programs, including Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Workforce Operations (WO), ultimately expanding to all programs managed by OED in the community engagement process in future biennia. This process will become a regular part of our gathering of information for developing a budget, through feedback from community partners on current practices, identification of resources to make needed changes, and feedback to stakeholders on resources that were identified due to their involvement.

## 2023-25 Budget Development Engagement

OED will inform and consult with community members in developing changes to current investments in our budget and proposing new investments related to the PFMLI program for the 2023-2025 Agency Request Budget.

OED will inform communities of the current service level for PFMLI and engage in meaningful discussions with communities on improvements or changes that can be implemented to better serve their communities. This includes feedback on current policy packages or development of new policy packages for 2023-25.

Informing communities means keeping communities updated through fact sheets, open forums, presentations, reports, and social media. Consulting communities means receiving community input through virtual or in-person workshops, focus groups, interviews, advisory committees, or surveys and using that feedback in development of the Racial Equity Impact Statement and policy packages.

<b>Milestone/Phase</b>	<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Method</b>
Inform / Phase 2	Establish communication points; identify community leaders; schedule workshops.	End of Feb 2022	Interviews, email, survey
Consult & Involve / Phase 3	Introduce program funding and objectives; gather and listen to responses; develop Policy Packages.	Mar thru May 2022	Workshops, email, Interviews, surveys
Inform / Phase 3	Communication with community stakeholders on Agency Request Budget decisions based on feedback; continue engagement thru Legislatively Adopted Budget process.	Jun 2022 thru Jul 2023	Email, fact sheets, virtual and in-person conversations and workshops.



# Resources

## Roles and Responsibility to support stakeholder engagement

Who	What is their role and/or responsibility?	What decisions will they make?
Agency Director and Executive team	Actively communicates commitment to inclusion of underserved communities in budget development process; manage relationships with stakeholders and seeks their support	Endorses final budget decisions
Chief Financial Officer	Directs the work of the Budget staff; approves necessary resources to support effective outreach and meaningful engagement; facilitates strategic connections, warm introductions, and engagements with stakeholders and groups.	Makes final recommendation to the Agency Director and Executive Team about engagement implementation and communications.
PFMLI Director	Specific to PFMLI program communicates commitment to inclusion of underserved communities, manages relationships with stakeholders and seeks their support. Directs the work of the PFMLI staff to make necessary changes for both community inclusion and implement changes.	Makes final recommendation to the Agency Director, CFO and other Executive Team members about engagement implementation and communications.
Budget Manager	Supports engagement goals by clearly communicating the agency's goals and fostering support for the engagement process among department staff, external stakeholders, and partners; facilitates strategic connections to engagement stakeholders and groups.	Makes recommendation to department leadership; makes recommendations and decisions on communications, engagement process, and outreach topics
Equity and Inclusion Officer	Provides advice and recommendations regarding policy, process, specific communications, outreach, and engagement topics; keeps agency's Equity and Inclusion Council informed of engagement work and regularly requests council feedback	Makes recommendation to Chief Financial Officer, Budget Manager, and staff on policy, process, and specific engagement or outreach topics or groups; stays informed of engagement work
Communications Director	Provides advice and recommendations regarding communications methods, strategies, and content; assists with the development and review of communication and information; oversees any associated workload delegated to communications staff	Makes recommendations to Chief Financial Officer, Budget Manager, and staff on communications methods, strategies, and content; stays informed of engagement work; assigns work to communications staff
PFMLI Staff	Develops scheduled updates to stakeholders specific to the PFMLI budget and workshops. Provides assistance to PFMLI Director and Budget in planning and implementing any	Reviews communications and EIC messages for content consistency and accuracy. Facilitates implementation of adopted changes.

	changes adopted through community workshops.	
Budget Staff	Develops and presents budget status reports, plans, and schedule updates to stakeholders; provides content for communications with stakeholders.	Reviews message content for consistency and accuracy, or facilitates review by other project members as necessary

## Approach to Evaluation and Monitoring

Evaluation will examine the Employment Department’s Budget Development Community Engagement Plan and the associated activities to increase decision-maker understanding of the impact the agency has on engagement participants, as well as improvements that can be made to communications and participation. Monitoring how well each underserved community understands our budget process, their amount of trust in the agency’s communications, and their participation in the process is essential for the agency to continuously improve our budget engagement process.

Evaluation is both an accountability tool as well as a management and learning tool that is a continuous improvement approach to the practice. An essential aspect of evaluating engagement effectiveness starts early with setting clear goals that are honest, achievable and objectives that are measurable. The goals and supporting objectives identified above describe the impact that engagement will have in the form of meaningful outcomes. These goals are measurable both through qualitative (interviews, focus groups, etc.) and quantitative (surveys, demographic analysis, etc.) means.

The agency will develop a strategy to evaluate and monitor the execution of this engagement plan with the initial goals to:

1. Provide information to guide improvement of the engagement activities and initiatives during the implementation phase (formative evaluation)
2. Determine whether an initiative was well-designed and successfully implemented to inform future efforts (process evaluation)
3. Assess the outcome (conditions and behaviors) and impact (long term goals) of the activities and initiatives (evaluation)

Measuring engagement success will look at the impact OED wants to create from the perspective of the stakeholders. For each group of engagement level goals (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower), outcome metrics reflect the impacts as a result of successfully meeting the goals of engagement.

The Employment Department is committed to fulfilling this initial plan and continuing plans by engaging with communities to help inform our budget and policy packages so that we may better deliver our programs and services to these communities.

## APPENDIX A

### Current Contact List for Program Engagement

<b>Community</b>	<b>PFMLI</b>	<b>UI</b>	<b>WO</b>
AFSCME	X	X	
AFT-Oregon		X	
Asian Pacific Network of Oregon (APANO)	X		
Associated General Contractors		X	
Association of Oregon Counties		X	
Basic Rights Oregon	X		X
Black United Fund Oregon	X		
Brown Hope	X		
CASA of Oregon	X		
Catholic Charities	X		
CAUSA (Latino immigrant rights)		X	
Central City Concern			X
Children First for Oregon	X		
Clackamas Women's Services	X		
Coalition of Communities of Color	X		
Community Action Agency Network	X		
Community Alliance of Tenants	X		
Disability Rights of Oregon	X		
Domestic Violence Resource Center	X		
Elevate Oregon	X		
Familias en Acción	X		
Family Forward	X		
Free Geek			X
Hacienda CDC	X		
IBEW		X	
IRCO	X	X	
Latino Business Alliance	X		
Latino Network	X	X	
League of Oregon Cities		X	
Lower Colombia Hispanic Council (Consejo Hispano)	X		
Metropolitan Family Services	X		
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers			X
Momentum Alliance	X		
Muslim Community Center of Portland	X		
Muslim Education Trust	X		
National Council of La Raza	X		

Native American Youth and Family Association	X	X	
NeighborImpact	X		
NeighborWorks	X		
NFIB		X	
Northwest ADA Center			X
NW Credit Union Association		X	
NW Grocery Association		X	
NW Pulp and Paper Association		X	
NW Workers Justice Project		X	
OBI		X	
OR AFL-CIO		X	
OR Association of Hospitals		X	
OR Bankers Association		X	
OR Building Trades Council		X	
OR Community College Association		X	
OR Council of Presidents (Universities)		X	
OR Education Association		X	
OR Farm Bureau		X	
OR Forest and Industries Council		X	
OR Health Care Association (Nursing Homes)		X	
OR Home Builders Association		X	
OR Law Center		X	
OR Nurses Association		X	
OR Restaurant and Lodging Association		X	
OR School Boards Association		X	
OR School Employees Association	X	X	
OR State Firefighters Council		X	
OR Trial Lawyers Association		X	
OR Winegrowers Association		X	
Oregon Child Development Coalition	X		
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence	X		
Oregon Commission for the Blind			X
Oregon Latino Health Coalition	X		
Oregon Nurses Association	X		
Oregon Rural Action	X		
PCUN	X		X
Portland Business Alliance		X	
Professional Business Development Group	X		
REAP Youth Leadership	X		
Salem Multicultural Institute	X		
SEIU	X	X	

Self Enhancement Inc.	X		
Technology Association of Oregon		X	
Tribal Governments	X	X	X
UFCW		X	
Unite Oregon	X		
Urban League of Portland	X	X	
VOZ Workers Rights Education Project	X		