



RS EXCHANGE

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Weekly Report

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

Below are some highlights from the Governor's [Regional Solutions \(RS\) Coordinators](#), on behalf of the eleven interagency teams across Oregon.

Regional Solutions (RS) Director – Leah Horner

North Coast Region – Jennifer Purcell

- **Cruise Ship Operators and Ports of Call Coordination** – North Central and North Coast Regional Solutions Coordinators convened a meeting with local public health officials, city and county leaders, and Port Directors from the ports of call along the Columbia River. Regional Solutions reviewed Oregon's phased reopening and discussed guidance relevant to cruise operations, including General Employer, Mask and Face Covering, Indoor/Outdoor Entertainment Facilities, Restaurants and Bars, Venues and Events, Pools, and Transportation guidance. We also discussed the complexities of counties being in different phases of reopening and the importance of cruise ship operators coordinating with local public health for each of the ports of call.

Participants heard from representatives from American Cruise Lines and American Queen Steamboat Company regarding resuming river cruise operations. Community leaders from Astoria, Portland, Hood River, and The Dalles, along with representatives from Washington Governor Inslee's office and the Port of Clarkston, Wash. learned about the cruise operators' health and safety plans and asked a number of questions. Discussion included public perception of introducing visitors from cruise ships, the typically vulnerable population, plans for transportation and hospitalization in case of an outbreak, surge capacity implications, and the need for coordinated community messaging.

- Next Steps – North Coast Regional Solutions participated in a follow up meeting with City of Astoria, Port of Astoria, Clatsop County, Columbia Memorial and Providence Seaside hospitals, and Emergency Medical Transportation to coordinate locally. Regional Solutions will continue to support addressing public health concerns, coordinating community messaging, and connecting with other Columbia River partners.
- **North Coast Economic Recovery Team – Background** – The North Coast Economic Recovery Team is comprised of local, regional, state, and federal economic and workforce development partners. Convened by Regional Solutions, the team is sharing information about impacts and needs, resources and supports, and planning for recovery.
 - Update – This week the Economic Recovery Team heard from travel and tourism partners regarding reopening.

- Oregon Parks and Recreation provided updates regarding the status of state parks in Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia counties, what to expect when visiting a state park (whether for day use or overnight camping), and how regional partners to help support messaging about limited openings and service reductions.
- Travel Oregon provided updates regarding travel and tourism impacts, messaging, connecting local partners to resources and programs.
- The Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association (ORLA) provided updates regarding how reopening is going for their North Coast member businesses and shared information about training resources available to local communities.
- Regional Solutions also meets weekly with economic developers, chambers of commerce and downtown associations, destination management organizations, workforce partners, and ports to better understand the challenges they are facing as they respond to business needs.
 - This week, we discussed the technical assistance and personal protection equipment (PPE) needs of local small businesses, to inform investments recently approved by Oregon’s Emergency Board.
 - We also heard from small business organizations, visitors’ centers, and destination management partners that they are experiencing and increase in inquiries from businesses regarding how to operate safely while welcoming visitors back to the coast, as well as from visitors asking what communities and businesses are doing to keep visitors safe. Messages regarding the importance of wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distance, and washing hands, are coupled with encouragement to be kind, be patient, wait your turn, and be respectful of one another.

Mid-Valley Region – Jody Christensen

- **Mid-Valley Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (M-V RSAC)** – met on Friday, June 5, to get an overview of the Regional Solutions (RS) Mid-Valley’s Economic Recovery Team (ERT) effort and the coordination over the last 12 weeks. Several ERT members gave updates on the COVID response efforts and the effectiveness of the robust communication with RS and the Governor’s office. The committee decided to meet for one-hour updates on June 19, June 26, and July 10.
- **Mid-Valley POC Community Outreach Alliance** – meets weekly and includes representatives from Pinos Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas (MLP), Latino Business Alliance (LBA), Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC), Oregon Employment Office – Woodburn, Advanced Economic Solutions, Farmworker Housing Development Corp (FHDC), Unidos Bridging Community, Western Oregon University (WOU) Multicultural Center, Mano a Mano – Salem, Izo Marketing, City of Independence - Community Engagement, Portland General Electric (PGE), Oregon Childhood Development Coalition (OCDC), Oregon Education Association, the Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC), Northwest Human Services, and MICOREGON. SEDCOR, Willamette Workforce Partnership, the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Business Oregon, and the Chemeketa Small Business Development Center join the meetings as well.
 - This week, Lisa Harnish (Marion/Polk Early Learning Hub) and Jenn Richter (Yamhill County Coordinating Care) shared information on their work including childcare resources. In addition, Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron and Farm Coordinator Michael Keuler asked for input on the recently developed [Marion County Farm Site and Housing resource guide](#).

- **Mid-Valley Economic Recovery Team (ERT)** – includes representatives from the Counties, Willamette Workforce Partnership, Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, Strategic Economic Development Corporation (SEDCOR), the Small Business Development Center, early learning hubs, local emergency management, the Employment Department, Business Oregon, chambers, regional destination marketing organizations, utilities, non-profits, tribal government, and federal delegation representatives. The goal is to create robust communication and networks in the response and recovery work. The ERT has moved from two meetings per week to one through the end of June.
 - This week, the ERT and the Community Outreach, Chamber, and Economic Development Alliances commented on what criteria should be considered in two of the funds recently approved the E-Board. Comments were gathered on the Technical Assistance for Underrepresented Business Fund (Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) and the Personal Protective Equipment for Small Business Fund (OBDD).
 - Regional partner COVID-related updates:
 - The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce and Stayton Area Rotary announced the [Stayton Regional Small Business Relief Fund](#), which was made possible through the generosity of a number of local businesses & organizations. The fund will support small businesses financially impacted by COVID-19 and help them operate in compliance with new reopening guidelines. The fund is open to small businesses throughout the region, including Stayton, Sublimity, Jefferson, Scio, Aumsville, Turner and the Santiam Canyon.
 - The Salem City Council has dedicated \$188,000 to distribute grants of up to \$5,000 to eligible businesses. Salem businesses with up to five employees can apply for up to \$3,000. The City expects to announce a second phase of business grant funding later this summer for low-moderate income businesses. The city partnered with Willamette Workforce Partnership (WWP) to manage the application process. Grant program information is on the [WWP website](#) and [City of Salem website](#). Applications will be posted online Monday, Jun. 15.

Upcoming Scheduled Regional Solutions Advisory Committee Meeting

Friday, June 19, from 8-9 AM

To participate, join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95353677306?pwd=UmRydTJXeGNoaDZjYlVFL2cxZWJ2dz09>

Meeting ID: 953 5367 7306

Password: 341531

One tap mobile +12532158782,,95353677306#,,1#,341531#

South Valley/Mid Coast Region – Sarah Means

- **The SVMC Economic Recovery Team (ERT)** – includes representatives from the Employment Department, Business Oregon, local and regional economic development professionals, Workforce Investment Boards, ports, and federal delegation representatives. The Team meets regularly to share information, identify immediate needs and understand impacts. Impacts as a result of COVID-19 are impacting all industry sectors in the region.
- Identified needs/challenges/opportunities this past week include:
 - The ERT received an update on the Tourism and Hospitality industry specific to the SVMC. Lincoln County, in particular, has been hard hit by the pandemic. The coastal

economy relies heavily on the tourism and hospitality industry. Lincoln County currently has the highest unemployment rate in the state at 25.8%.

- ERT members were also given an update on the LatinX Townhall sponsored by the Oregon LatinX Leadership Network. Over 100 people have attended statewide. Resources to connect to this event were provided to the ERT.
- PPE continues to be a challenge for small businesses (dental clinics were specifically mentioned). We are also hearing about businesses having difficulty finding sanitizer as required by the guidelines for reopening.
- The City of Florence is working with multiple partners to apply for Community Development Block Grant funding. Some of the funding would be for direct assistance to workers in retail and other hard hit industries.
- RS is partnering with Willamette Valley Visitors Association and Travel Lane County to do a webinar specifically on the reopening of venues. This is likely the first of a series of webinars that will be developed over the coming weeks.
- City of Eugene has developed a streamlined process for “streeteries” – café seating in the public right of way in Eugene. The City has also eliminated the fee for sidewalk seating.

Southern & South Coast Regions – Alex Campbell

- **South Coast Umpqua Region:**
 - **South Coast Umpqua Recovery Team:**
 - Group discussion of broadband expansion collaboration and coordination; created a team to identify and pull together providers and key public entities.
 - Reviewed key changes for Phase 2; many questions about Phase 2; Regional Solutions Team held two webinars on Phase 2 regulations on June 5.
- **Southern Oregon Region:**
 - **Southern Oregon Recovery Team:**
 - Provided key clarifications of Phase 2 guidance, including the “Reopening Guidance Tool” and occupancy signage requirement.
 - Several Josephine County participants raised limited childcare availability, especially outside of Grants Pass, as a limiting factor on going back to work.
 - Chambers/visitors centers are re-opening.
 - Lodging at about 65% occupancy, outpacing the state. DMOs would like to see I-5 Welcome Center reopened.
 - Community colleges received notice from insurer that they will not be defending/covering COVID-related claims.

Metro Region – Raihana Ansary

- **Metro Economic Response Team** – Metro Regional Solutions (RS) is partnering with Greater Portland, Inc. (GPI), to co-convene a Metro Economic Response Team in order to share

information and resources related to COVID-19. In addition to state agencies (Business Oregon, Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor & Industry, Small Business Advocate, Oregon Housing & Community Services, and Travel Oregon), a number of partners in the Portland-metro region have been invited to participate including business associations, city and county economic development practitioners and elected leaders, community-based organizations, labor, members of the Governor's Metro Regional Solutions Advisory Committee and workforce development organizations.

- Update – Senator Jeff Merkley joined the Metro Economic Response Team meeting and provided federal updates on addressing systemic racism and COVID-19.
- On addressing systemic racism:
 - Sens. Cory Booker and Kamala Harris are leading an initiative to introduce a broad bill addressing systemic racism and policing.
 - Merkley's piece of that is to prevent police officers let go for bad behavior/racist behavior in one jurisdiction from getting hired in another jurisdiction. There isn't an effective national database. Hopes to use access to federal funds as a lever to require that police report in these categories, and departments that are hiring consult and see the background of people in the hiring process.
- On HEROES Act:
 - Passed the House, but is stalled out in the Senate.
 - Would send almost \$1 trillion to state and local governments:
 - \$500 billion to states
 - \$350 billion to local governments
 - \$20 billion to tribes
 - \$20 billion to territories
 - \$75 billion for testing and contact tracing. In addition, Merkley is working with Sen. Warren to promote the hiring of 100,000 contact tracers across the country.
 - \$175 billion for housing assistance:
 - \$100 billion for rent assistance
 - \$75 billion for mortgage assistance
- Two bills Merkley has introduced:
 - A moratorium on utility shutdowns
 - Absentee voting
- **Prosper Portland/Venture Portland Listening Session with Personal Service Providers –** Participated as a panelist during a listening session hosted by Prosper Portland and Venture Portland with 54 personal service providers. Presented the Governor's reopening plan and personal service industry-sector guidelines. Questions and concerns expressed included the following:
 - Many felt that personal service providers should not be reopening in Phase 1 due to safety concerns related to the close proximity of providers and clients especially for certain services i.e. haircuts, massages, and tattoos.
 - Many are worried that they will lose their unemployment benefits if they choose not to return to work out of fear that they may contract COVID-19. RS shared the temporary COVID-19 unemployment rules that allow people to continue to receive UI benefits if

they do not return to work under certain circumstances (i.e. if they have COVID-19 or a taking care of family member with COVID-19, or if they been advised not to return to work by a medical provider due to their older age and or existing underlying health conditions). There were still concerns raised among those who don't want to work out of fear of contracting the virus and whom would not fall into a category that is exempt from returning to work under the temporary COVID-19 rules.

- Many personal care providers are independent contractors or self-employed. There were many questions about Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). RS shared the PUA fact sheet.
- Concerns were expressed over the availability and cost of cleaning products and personal protective equipment (PPE) required to reopen.

North Central Region – Nate Stice

- **North Central Oregon Recovery Team** – The Mid-Columbia Economic Development District and Region Regional Solutions stood up the bi-state Columbia Gorge/Mid-Columbia Bi-State Economic Resilience Team. The structure for the team was outlined in a 2019 report produced by [MCEDD](#), based on work Regional Solutions led efforts around fire recovery for the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire and 2018 Grass Fires.
 - This emphasis of the team this week has been three-fold: 1) sourcing answers on phase 2; 2) helping to connect state and regional efforts to protect farmworker and prepare for harvest; 3) statewide coordination for river cruise ports of call.
- Highlights:
 - **Cruise Ship Operators and Ports of Call Coordination** – North Central and North Coast Regional Solutions Coordinators convened a meeting with local public health officials, city and county leaders, and Port Directors from the ports of call along the Columbia River to provide a forum for communities to discuss their approach to cruise ship docking. More in North Coast Report.
 - Thank you to OHA's Deputy State Epidemiologist Tom Jeanne who joined the Mid-Columbia Economic Resilience Team Friday to update the team on the virus and answer questions as part of the region entered Phase 2. Members of the team also gave an update on the State of Washington's Phase 3 (similar to Phase 2 in Oregon).

Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Bend Chamber Webinar** – Presented on Phase 2 protocols along with Deschutes County Public Health. Invites went out broadly to members and non-members. Roughly 250 participants.
- **Central Oregon Economic Response Team** – Central Oregon Regional Solutions (RS) Team along with county commissioners, city leaders, chambers, economic and workforce development, downtown organizations, local legislators, federal congressional delegation representatives and the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee have been meeting weekly since mid-March.
 - Update – RS convened the team to share Phase 2 guidance. Many thanks to Jeff Rhoades, Governor's Office, for joining to share the Executive Order state enforcement approach and framework. Jeff did a great job emphasizing that education is the first response especially, for those doing their best to meet the protocols. The team was also joined by Josh Lehner, Office of Economic Analysis, to hear about the economic forecast.

Next steps are a deeper dive into the race/ethnicity of people receiving UI benefits as well as, job type.

South Central Region – Annette Liebe

- **Klamath IDEA webinar** – Presented on Phase 2 protocols along with Klamath County Public Health. Roughly 30 participants.
- **South Central Oregon Response Team** – Central Regional Solutions (RS) Team along with county commissioners, city leaders, chambers, economic and workforce development, downtown organizations, local legislators, federal congressional delegation representatives and the Regional Solutions Advisory Committee have been meeting weekly since mid-March.
 - Update – RS convened the team to share information about the most recent Emergency Board authorized investments. The team provided specific feedback on the \$10M investment in PPE for employers/employees; they supported state bulk purchasing after using existing chamber and county networks to identify what's needed. They also recommended including Plexiglas and touchless equipment as PPE. With regard to the \$3M for businesses owned by historically underserved populations, the group also supported broad eligibility for rural businesses. Team members shared that some gyms and restaurants are frustrated that the protocols for Phase 2 aren't more flexible.

Greater Eastern & Northeast Regions – Courtney Warner Crowell

- **Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team** – This week the Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team met and provided feedback on how the \$10M for PPE for small businesses and the \$3M for technical assistance for underrepresented businesses that was allocated by the emergency board last week should be allocated. This information will be shared with the Coronavirus Economic Advisory Council. Key takeaways from that conversation included having one clearinghouse per county to identify needs and distribute PPE and allow as much flexibility as possible for counties including allowing Plexiglas or barriers to be a reimbursable expense. Regarding the technical assistance fund, there was discussion about how hard it will be to reach businesses since these tend to operate on their own and not ask for help but that this is an opportunity to really expand the knowledge about existing resources for women and minority owned businesses in Eastern Oregon.
 - Communities also shared best practices on how they are helping businesses with expanding outside seating by making code changes and working with businesses to see how they can get enough outside seating that it will be financially feasible to open up. Many communities are still seeing some businesses who are reluctant to open up for daily traffic (both restaurant and retails) so they are working directly with those businesses to see how the city or county can help. Great ideas are being shared each with among communities through the regional economic recovery team.