



January 11, 2023

Today, on my second full day in office, I wanted to send this message to all employees of the State of Oregon.

I want to begin by saying thank you. Thank you for serving Oregon and all of the people who call our state home. Thank you for your professionalism and commitment to public service. Thank you for the grit and dedication you each have shown through back-to-back crises and unprecedented challenges. I admire the work that you do, day in and day out, to provide the vital services Oregonians rely on.

Our collective mission, simply put, is to deliver results for Oregonians. To take on our biggest challenges and make things better. It is a simple idea – making things better – but as we all know, a difficult thing to achieve.

Oregonians count on state government every single day. Whether you are helping someone renew their driver's license, get a permit, register a new business, sign up for health coverage, or stepping up to help communities in the aftermath of a disaster – your work is essential, and it has never been more important as we work to turn things around in Oregon.

Oregonians have high expectations of their state government, as they should. And I have heard from people – including state employees – loud and clear: the status quo is not working – and for many Oregonians, it has never worked. That is not a criticism of our dedicated state employees or any one leader. It is the result of several years of incredible strain that the pandemic and wildfires put on our state, revealing where our systems are simply not working. Often, state employees are doing great work in spite of unnecessary bureaucratic barriers and outdated systems that do not meet the challenges of the day.

That is why I am directing agency leadership — with my support — to prioritize customer service. That means being more efficient, more effective, and creating systems that will empower the state's 42,000 public servants to deliver for Oregonians.

It is my pledge to all Oregonians, including each of you, that I will work every day to turn things around – to be a partner with you in solving problems, big and small. We will not be perfect, but we will improve every year, so Oregonians can proudly say their state government was there for them.

Sincerely,

Governor Tina Kotek