

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement

August 21, 2025

Director message



Over the past few weeks, I have had the honor of traveling parts of the world within Oregon, meeting leaders from Ukrainian, Tongan, Latino, and other communities, and visiting organizations that welcome and support immigrants and refugees every day. I was even invited to watch a youth soccer game- *el juego bonito*, “the beautiful game”, which truly brings together people together from all cultures. These moments have been a reminder of the strength, resilience, courage, and hope that live in our communities, even during difficult times.

We are also closely watching federal H.R. 1 and what it may mean for the people we serve. According to the [state’s analysis](#), this bill could bring deep cuts to programs like Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid), SNAP (food benefits), and education. These aren’t just numbers, they are doctor visits for a parent, meals for children, and opportunities for students to succeed.

The bill also raises [certain legal fees](#) tied to court and immigration processes, making it even harder for low-income individuals and families to get legal help as they navigate complex immigration processes. These losses and added costs would be felt in real and personal ways.

Our strategic planning process is still underway, and the voices I have heard over these past weeks will shape that work. I am deeply grateful for the trust shared, the stories told, and the partnerships growing stronger every day. In the weeks ahead, we will continue listening, learning, and building together. The challenges

in front of us are real, but so is the strength of our communities. With Governor Kotek's [reaffirmed commitment to immigrant and refugee communities](#), we know that Oregon's values of dignity, safety, and belonging will remain strong as we work to ensure every person has the opportunity to belong, contribute, and thrive.

In partnership,

Jessica Ventura, Director, OIRA

Opportunities

Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is seeking applicants to serve on the Adequate Service Level Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee members will study and develop recommendations to modernize adequate service levels for Early intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) in Oregon. ODE is currently recruiting for the following roles:

- One member who is an educator employed in an EI/ECSE program
- One member who is a therapist employed in an EI/ECSE program
- One parent of a child currently enrolled in an EI/ECSE program
- One member with expertise in budgeting for an EI/ECSE program
- One member with expertise in K–12 Special Education

To apply, complete [this application by August 27, 2025](#)

US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants is hosting a workshop called, “Understanding Child & Adolescent Development and the Impact of Resettlement on Refugee Youth”

The workshop is on Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 11:00-12:30 PM PT.

APANO is accepting applications for their Child Care Cohort

This program is designed to offer training, business planning, and technical assistance to those who are starting their own in-home child care business or are looking to become licensed as a registered family child care providers in Oregon.

Each participant will undergo 40 hours of training and can receive a \$3,000 grant upon completion of the licensing process.

Free training for health care interpreters in the fall

The State of Oregon, acting through the Oregon Health Authority's Equity and Inclusion Division and the Oregon Health Policy Board, has allocated funding specifically to support the growth and retention of health care interpreters (HCIs) in Oregon this fall term.

Visit [the Oregon Health Care Interpreters Association](#) to see OHCIA's conditions to enter the 60-hour training program and the State of Oregon credentialing requirements.

[Register here](#) to be considered for scholarships.

Note: Beginning October 1, 2025, class sizes will change due to a new ruling from the Equity and Inclusion Division that decreases the number of students per class to 15. This change will affect training costs and the number of available scholarships.

2025 Southern Oregon Healthcare Interpreter Summit

This event is designed for spoken and sign language interpreters working in health care settings. It will explore the challenges, growth, and wellness needs of our profession.

When: Thursday, September 18, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Where: Rogue Community College, Grants Pass, Oregon

[Click here](#) for the flyer.

Upcoming events



Portland Refugee Support Group Family Wellness Fair

- Thursday, August 28, 2025
- 11:00 AM 2:00 PM

•Sabin CDC1420 Northeast Killingsworth Street Portland, OR, 97211United States

Our [Family Wellness Fair](#) is a collaboration between [PRSG](#), [Lutheran Community Services NW](#), [Sabin Community Development Corporation](#), and [Portland Bureau of Transportation](#), designed to bring families together in a safe, welcoming environment where they can **connect with community, build trust, and access resources** that support their overall well-being.

Spanish Facebook Live Event - Emergency Preparedness and Recovery



The ODHS Office of Resilience and Emergency Management, the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, and the American Red Cross invite you to join them for a free virtual event to learn more about what you can do before, during, and after emergencies, and the resources available to prepare and recover.

When: Thursday, August 28, 2025, at 12 p.m. (noon)

Where: Virtual event on the [ODHS Spanish Facebook page](#)

No registration needed — just visit the page on the date and time of the event. We look forward to seeing you there!

Facebook Live en Español - Como prepararnos y recuperarnos en casos de emergencias

La Oficina de Resiliencia y Manejo de Emergencias del Departamento de Servicios Humanos de Oregon, el Departamento de Manejo de Emergencias de Oregon y la Cruz Roja Americana los invitan a un evento gratuito para aprender sobre qué podemos hacer antes, durante y después de emergencias por desastres naturales y los recursos disponibles para prepararse y recuperarse.

Cuándo: Jueves 28 de agosto del 2025 a las 12 pm (medio día)

Dónde: Evento virtual en la [página de Facebook en Español de ODHS](#)

No necesitan registrarse, solo entrar a la página el día y hora del evento. ¡Los esperamos!

Cómo prepararnos y recuperarnos en emergencias y desastres naturales

From the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI): Immigration Enforcement: What Oregon Employers Need to Know

What can employers do to prepare?

Join the Employment Assistance team for an overview of action items to consider now – before immigration enforcement agents audit your workplace.

We'll be hosting sessions on August 26th and October 1st to cover the intersections of civil rights law and heightened federal immigration action so that you can stay compliant and understand your obligations.

Make sure you have the information you need on:

- Oregon as a sanctuary state and what this means for your business
- Steering clear of national origin discrimination complaints and hiring pitfalls
- Preparing for a potential I-9 audit, including mandatory notification of employees
- What to do during and after an ICE audit or raid

BOLI will provide additional links and resources.

These sessions are free but require advance registration – choose the time that works best for you!

[August 26](#), 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

[October 1](#), 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Have an event you'd like us to highlight? Let us know!

OIRA Webpage

If you need this message in another format or have questions, please contact [ODHS Communications](#).

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Everyone has a right to know about and use Oregon Department of Human Services programs and services. Some examples of the free help we can provide include sign language and spoken language interpreters, written materials in other languages, Braille, large print, audio, and other formats. If you need help or have questions, please contact us at communications.dhs@odhs.oregon.gov.