

# Agency Request Budget Overview

**2023-25 Biennium**

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# Building well-being together

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Everyone in Oregon deserves an opportunity to build well-being, reach their potential, and fully contribute to their communities.

**ODHS serves more than 1 in 3 Oregonians and is well positioned to benefit entire communities** – if we can redesign a human services system that has long legacies of racial and economic inequity and a piecemeal service network that leaves many behind.

Our job is to partner with communities and dismantle the barriers so that everyone in Oregon can access the supports they need to thrive.



# Supporting well-being across the lifespan

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Effective supports at one stage of life contribute to greater well-being over the rest of our lives.

OregONEligibility



Program	Birth	Adulthood	Final stages of life
OregONEligibility	Yes	Yes	No
Child Welfare Division	Yes	Yes	Yes
Self-Sufficiency Programs	Yes	Yes	No
Vocational Rehabilitation	No	Yes	Yes
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services	No	Yes	Yes
Aging and People with Disabilities	Yes	Yes	Yes

Child Welfare Division

Self-Sufficiency Programs

Vocational Rehabilitation

Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

Aging and People with Disabilities

*Birth*

*Adulthood*

*Final stages  
of life*

# How our programs impact communities

People with disabilities can participate more fully in jobs and community.

People can pay their bills and focus on their families' well-being instead of on financial stress.

Families have the support they need to build healthy foundations at home for children's brain development.



Kids are better fed, helping them be ready to learn at school.

People are safer during emergencies and disasters.

Older adults are healthier and better able to share their culture, abilities and wisdom with younger people.

# Advancing a profound culture change

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## Where we've been



### People trapped by regulation

Agencies determine what's best for the community and people.

If the need isn't prescribed by agency rules, staff say "no" or pass the individual on to someone else.

Regulations are at the center of many decisions and some services are one-size-fits-all.

## Where we're headed



### People free to pursue goals

People and community are the experts in their own lives.

Staff guide people through paperwork, go to clients, do the legwork to find supports.

People, not regulations, are at the center of decisions and services are tailored to their needs.

# How we're getting there:

## Three agencywide priorities

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**Strengthening  
our foundations**

**to serve people  
more equitably  
and effectively**



**Preparing for  
and responding  
to emergencies**

**from COVID-19  
to wildfires to  
earthquakes**



**Creating  
the future of  
human services**

**through community-  
driven solutions to  
systemic oppression**

# **STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONS**

**Policy Option Package 118: Child Safety**

# What's at stake: Child Safety

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- Children thrive when they have safe and supportive family structures in which to grow up.
- According to Oregon's *May Child Welfare Progress Report*, **about 4,000 times every month** Child Protective Services staff engage with families to identify whether children are being exposed to an unmanaged safety threat.





# Risk:

## Incomplete understanding of families' challenges

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Key ingredients in achieving our Child Welfare Division's Vision for Transformation are **accurate assessments of child safety** and **in-home support** to prevent placements away from family and community.

- Child Welfare needs more staff to facilitate the in-depth assessments needed to accurately identify safety threats.
- A lack of investment will make it difficult for Child Welfare staff to be able to meaningfully engage with families, understand their specific needs, and develop customized safety plans.
- Unaddressed safety issues increase the likelihood that a child will enter foster care – an outcome that disproportionately affects Black and Native American families. The separations from family and community can be traumatizing for children and families alike.

# Solution: Expanding caseworker capacity

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- A staffing investment is necessary to meet the ratio of 1 caseworker to 7 new assessments per month (1:7) under the Oregon Caseload Standard Ratio.
- The investment will ensure critical caseworker capacity for family engagement, assessment, safety planning, and ongoing support – helping to make sure that children have the best chance of growing up in a **safe and nurturing family**.
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## POP 118

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$37,538,083		\$12,514,099	\$50,052,182	401	200.50

# **STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONS**

**Policy Option Package 110: Human Resources**

# What's at stake:

## A diverse and supported workforce

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ODHS is committed to **becoming an antiracist organization** that actively dismantles discriminatory systems and prioritizes equity in our work.

ODHS Office of **Human Resources (HR)** plays a **critical role** in helping the agency realize these aims. From recruitment and onboarding to training and compensation, HR is building a diverse human services workforce that is highly qualified, well supported at work, and representative of Oregon's communities.

# Risk:

## Inadequate resources to accomplish strategic aims

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- Current staffing levels are not sufficient to fully support agency strategy. Our training and development staff-to-employee ratio, for example, is approximately 1:1,660, while 1:350 is considered the industry standard.
- Meanwhile, staffing shortages across our Rapid Talent Acquisition, Recruitment, and Classification and Compensation teams have resulted in service delivery delays and are causing important strategic and analytical work to be postponed.

# Solution: Build HR capacity

This package would create permanent positions in HR's **Central Training, Rapid Talent Acquisition, Recruitment, and Classification & Compensation** teams and provide HR with a Project Manager. Together, these positions will:

- Support the long-term growth and development of agency management teams;
- Improve efficiency and effectiveness related to recruitment, hiring and onboarding; and
- Meet the agency's operational and program goals and advance the HR Strategic Plan through effective project management.

## POP 110

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$3,608,496		\$2,405,719	\$6,014,215	33	24.75

# **STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATIONS**

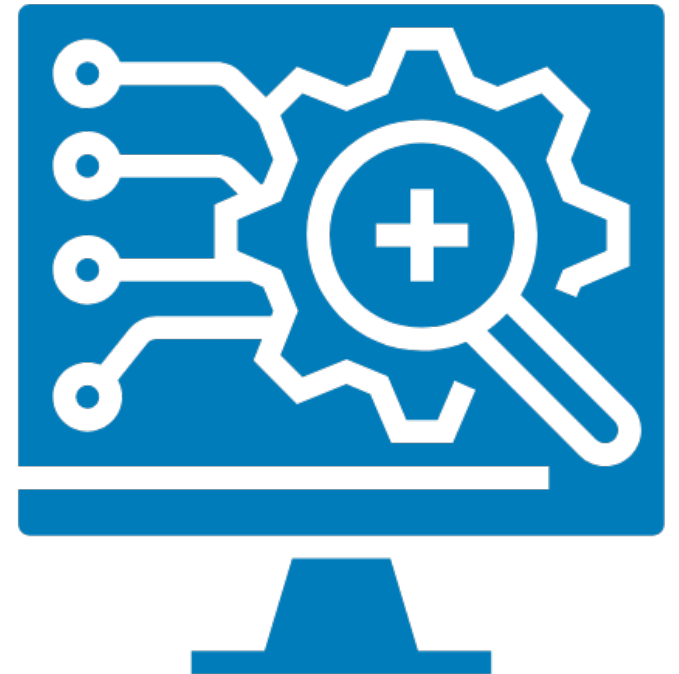
Policy Option Package 203: **Mainframe Migration**

# What's at stake:

## Oregonians' access to benefits

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- Everyone in Oregon deserves uninterrupted access to needed supports and to the income they earn at work.
- More than **one million Oregonians** receive benefits or provider payments through the mainframe system.





# Risks: Aging technology exacerbating backlogs

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- The COBOL programming code on the mainframe system dates to the 1970s and is increasingly unsupported.
- Mainframe-proficient staff are shrinking in number and hard to replace, resulting in a variety of **service and payment bottlenecks**.
- If the problem is not resolved, there is increasing risk that the agency will be **unable to make timely payments to Oregonians**, potentially for an extended period.



# Solution: System upgrade

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To **ensure that Oregonians continue to receive benefits and payments** without interruption, Oregon Eligibility Partnership seeks to phase out the mainframe systems. Doing so will help:

- **Avoid the risk of service breakdowns** caused by old software.
- Bring ODHS technology into **alignment with peer agencies** and improve flow across interfacing information systems.
- Allow Oregon to **achieve full benefit from its investments in the ONE system.**

## POP 203

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$9,253,492	\$1,208,969	\$5,444,561	\$15,907,022	10	7.14

# **PREPARING FOR + RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES**

Policy Option Package 109: **Investing in Resilience**

# What's at stake: Communities' resilience

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- When disasters strike, we need to make sure that Oregonians' basic needs for food, water, and shelter are met right away.
- For our communities to thrive in the context of climate change, Oregon must be ready to respond and recover from disasters.
- We also need to make sure that people – particularly those who are disproportionately impacted – can access the health care, child care, and employment and housing assistance they may need in order to recover and rebuild their lives.



# Risks: Gaps in our emergency capacity

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- Without adequate emergency response capacity and alternative shelter plans, **Oregonians' access to basic needs** after a disaster won't be available.
- Specifically, as pandemic-related travel constraints lessen, the hotels OREM has partnered with to provide people with shelter no longer have the vacancies to accommodate this function.
- Oregon's [Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#) identifies ODHS as the primary agency for providing mass care, emergency shelter, food, water, and disaster social services, but **critical gaps** in staffing and other resources have limited our ability to meet these responsibilities, as described in both the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission's [2018 report](#) and the state's [after-action review](#) of the 2020 wildfires.

# Solution: Resilience and response

ODHS has temporarily bridged the gaps by hiring non-budgeted staff in its Office of Resilience and Emergency Management (**OREM**). Now, OREM is requesting permanent position authority and funding for the staff who help coordinate and deliver:

- Water to communities facing drought and toxic water conditions.
- Shelter for more than 4,400 wildfire survivor households.\*
- Disaster case management for more than 1,300 Oregonians.\*\*
- Over 1.85 million emergency meals.\*
- More than 950 wildfire survivors to long-term housing.\*\*

## POP 109

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$7,722,411		\$5,148,257	\$12,870,668	48	48.00

\*As of June 2022; \*\* Between May 2021 and June 2022

# **CREATING THE FUTURE OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Policy Option Package 135: TANF Redesign

# What's at stake:

## The well-being of Oregon families

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Every child is filled with tremendous promise – and we have a shared obligation to nurture that promise.

That means **improving the ways we support families** – maximizing their capacity for strong, caring relationships and reducing financial stressors that undermine well-being.





# Risks: Perpetuating family hardship

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- The monthly TANF cash grant for a family of three is \$506 – **not enough to afford a one-bedroom apartment in any Oregon county** or cover a family's basic needs ([OCPP, 2020](#)). With inflation rising and a recession looming, need will increase and those dollars will cover even less.
- Only 13 percent of families receiving TANF also receive a housing subsidy (HHS), which leaves most **at risk of housing hardship** (OCPP, 2020).
- Research suggests that the most **reliable predictors of involvement with the child welfare system** are income loss, cumulative material hardship, and housing hardship,\* and children in families experiencing poverty are seven times more likely to experience neglect than economically secure children.\*\*
- In 2020, 41 percent of Oregon children in foster care or receiving in-home services were **connected to the state's TANF program 60 days prior to entering care** (Oregon Child Welfare Data Book).

\*Conrad-Hiebner, A., & Byram, E. (2020). *The temporal impact of economic insecurity on child maltreatment: A systematic review*. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 21(1), 157-178; \*\*Sedlak, A.J., Mettenburg, K., Basena, M., Petta, I., McPherson, K., Greene, A., & Li S. (2010). *The fourth national incidence study of child abuse and neglect (NIS-4): Report to Congress*. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

# Solution: TANF redesign

A proposal developed by the **TANF Redesign Partnership** and the **Poverty Relief Task Force** seeks to ensure families have the resources and financial flexibility they need to be stable and reach their full potential. The proposal includes:

- Increasing the **monthly cash grant**,
- Evaluating all families using the **same eligibility standard** to reduce disproportionate burden on single parents, families where the adult is not receiving TANF benefits, families with limited housing, or families that live in multigenerational households,
- **Ending time limits**, and
- **Expanding eligibility** to historically excluded populations, including undocumented parents/caregivers and people pregnant for less than eight months.

## POP 135

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$118,887,918		\$25,000,000	\$143,887,918		

# **CREATING THE FUTURE OF HUMAN SERVICES**

Policy Option Package 116:

**Grants to community-based organizations**

# What's at stake:

## Solutions that work for people and communities

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Human services work best when **government and community act as partners** in providing the supports people need to thrive.

**Community-Based Organizations** (CBOs) are deeply connected to their communities and have a first-hand understanding of local needs, putting them in a unique position to deliver effective, equitable services that are tailored to community goals.



# Risk:

## Local organizations lack necessary capacity

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While CBOs have a unique ability to **address longstanding inequities** in service delivery, they often lack the necessary resources and capacity.

This contributes to the status quo, where human services systems are government-centric and deliver one-size-fits-all solutions that leave many people and families behind.

Throughout the pandemic and recent extreme weather events, communities clamored for more locally-driven, culturally-appropriate responses – the kind that CBOs are better positioned to provide.



# Solution:

## Investing in community-powered services

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This package would provide **grant funding to CBOs**, awarded in 5 investment areas:

1. Innovation Funding
2. Community Resilience and Preparedness
3. Interconnected Human Services
4. Community Navigators
5. Community Voice

### POP 116

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$25,070,146		\$1,066,706	\$26,136,852	19	14.25



Questions?

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# Other Major Policy Option Packages

2023-25 Biennium

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# Creating the Future of Human Services

**Policy Option Package | Aging and People with Disabilities**

# What's at stake: Health care for Oregonians

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Access to **health care** is one of the **key building blocks of well-being**, helping people achieve better outcomes across the lifespan, and helping families keep costs in check through preventive care.

We must make sure this building block is available to all Oregonians, regardless of income.



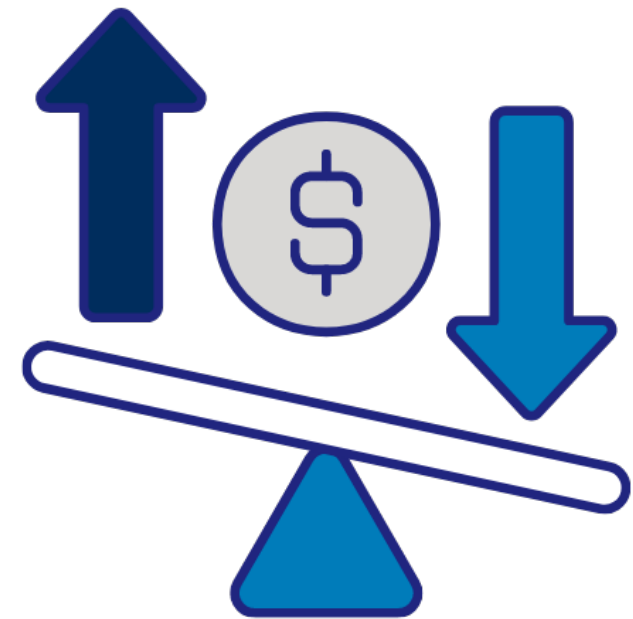
# Risk: Ongoing, systemic poverty

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For older adults and people with disabilities, eligibility for medical assistance and long-term services and supports is largely determined using federal Supplemental Security Income rules.

These rules have not changed to keep pace with our changing economic environment. They impose strict resource limits and other barriers that require people to become deeply impoverished before they can qualify for benefits.

This puts many older Oregonians and those with disabilities between a rock and a hard place when it comes to accessing needed benefits.



# Solution: Expand access to Medicaid

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The proposed package will **reduce financial barriers that limit access** to Medicaid by Oregonians who are aged or who experience disabilities.

The package raises resource limits and disregards certain types of income so that people don't have to become impoverished in order to qualify for benefits:

- Disregard Tribal-based income
- Raise program resource limits and index to future inflation
- Disregard Commission/Council income
- Add court-ordered child support and alimony
- General Assistance (GA) maximum housing benefit tied to the SSI standard
- Apply a 4 percent disregard to effectively “increase” SMF income standard to 138 percent of the federal poverty level
- Eliminate estate recovery

# Budget numbers: Reducing barriers to Medicaid

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POP 103

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$8,120,329	\$974,849	\$13,603,875	\$22,699,053	2	2.00

# Creating the Future of Human Services

**Policy Option Package | Aging and People with Disabilities**

# What's at stake: Access to culturally, ethnically and linguistically appropriate services

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Everyone in Oregon deserves to access services that align with their personal, cultural and ethnic identities and linguistic preferences.

**Equitable access to services helps ensure the well-being of people, families and communities in Oregon.**



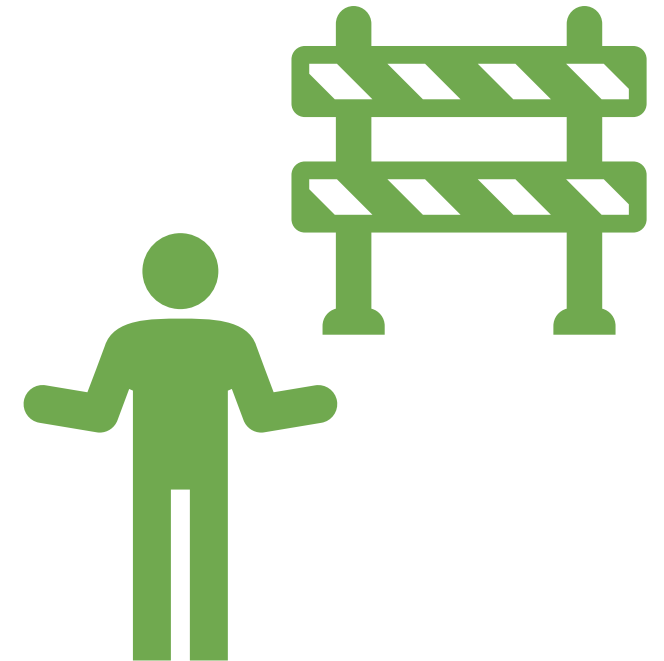
# Risk: Health, housing, food and financial stability

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Older adults, communities of color, LGBTQIA2S+ communities and people with disabilities have long encountered **systemic barriers** when navigating the services they need to achieve well-being.

These barriers – including language inaccessibility, lack of culturally specific services and lack of representation in service design – **contribute to health and economic disparities** as people are deterred from seeking the help they need.

We need to partner with communities to **dismantle these barriers, ensure greater access to critical supports and advance health and well-being equity in our state.**





# Solution: Creating a culturally responsive infrastructure

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The proposed package **will fund services that consider the interdependence of each person's lived experience, environment and cultural identity.**

This multi-pronged approach will produce more effective services through **increased staffing, robust translation services and comprehensive training programs.** Our target long-term outcomes include:

- **Reduced service access disparities** for consumers in rural communities, communities of color, immigrant communities and LGBTQIA2S+ communities.
- **More people served** in Title VI programs, culturally specific meal programs, and through the Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon and the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance program.
- **Reduced hospitalization and nursing facility admissions** due to preventative services and appropriate services for consumers outside of institutions.
- **Higher consumer satisfaction and well-being** through person centered case management, support and advocacy.

# Budget numbers:

## Equitable access and well-being

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POP 104

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$12,810,269		\$7,422,761	\$20,233,030	67	33.5

# Creating the Future of Human Services

## Policy Option Package | Self-Sufficiency Programs

# What's at stake: Housing stability

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Housing is a key social determinant of health.

Safe, stable, and affordable housing gives families **a strong foundation and improves their chances** of achieving their employment, education, health, and parenting goals.



# Risks: Ineffective solutions to housing barriers

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Communities of color face **disproportionate barriers to affordable housing** access, which increases disparities in well-being outcomes.

Families regularly relay that the existing network of subsidies and resources are insufficient to achieve housing stability.

The Housing Stabilization Program (HSP), in operation since 1999, contracts with Community Action Agencies to provide short-term housing benefits to families.

HSP could be more fully effective as a housing intervention and as a tool to achieve equitable outcomes.



# Solution: Expanding the HSP

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In response to the current housing crisis, This package would expand the Housing Stabilization Program (HSP) to be more effective and culturally responsive.

It entails:

- Increasing funding available to community-based organizations to build a network **of housing navigators** and provide financial housing assistance dollars to low-income Oregonians,
- **Expanding eligibility criteria** for HSP to include any Self-Sufficiency Program participant,
- Creating a **Landlord Incentive Fund**, and
- Expanding contracting opportunities for HSP beyond the Community Action Agency network, using a competitive Request for Proposal process that prioritizes **culturally specific organizations**.

# Budget numbers: Housing stabilization

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POP 137

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$83,972,130			\$83,972,130	4	3.52

**Creating the Future of Human Services**

**Policy Option Package | Child Welfare Division**



# What's at stake: Children's well-being

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**Children do best growing up in a family** that can provide love, support, cultural continuity, and cherished memories.

That's why ODHS Child Welfare Division's Vision for Transformation prioritizes supporting families and children **at home and in their communities.**



# Risk:

## Separating families when other solutions exist

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- While foster care is sometimes the only option for child safety, separation of a family is traumatizing.
- Child Welfare is actively building **Family Preservation**, a system designed to spare children and families from the trauma of separation by incorporating the correct supports to manage safety in the home.
- Unless family preservation efforts are fully implemented across Child Welfare's 16 districts, we risk the continued overreliance on foster care as a means of managing safety, which translates into unnecessary **family trauma** and ongoing **disproportionate impacts to Tribes and communities of color**.



# Solution: Investing in Family Preservation

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The Child Welfare Division needs additional staffing to move its Family Preservation efforts forward.

- New staff positions will be focused on family engagement, co-creation with families of case plans, and ongoing support to meet identified goals.
- These efforts will reduce the need for foster care and can help families stay – and thrive – together.



# Budget numbers: Family Preservation

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POP 121

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$18,260,864		\$6,087,630	\$24,348,494	193	96.50

# Strengthening our Foundations

**Policy Option Package** | Office of Developmental Disabilities  
Services

# What's at stake:

## Equitable access to services across the lifespan

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Everyone in Oregon, regardless of their age or immigration status, deserves access to the services and supports they need to achieve well-being.

ODDS is committed to providing uninterrupted services and supports as people move through each stage of life.

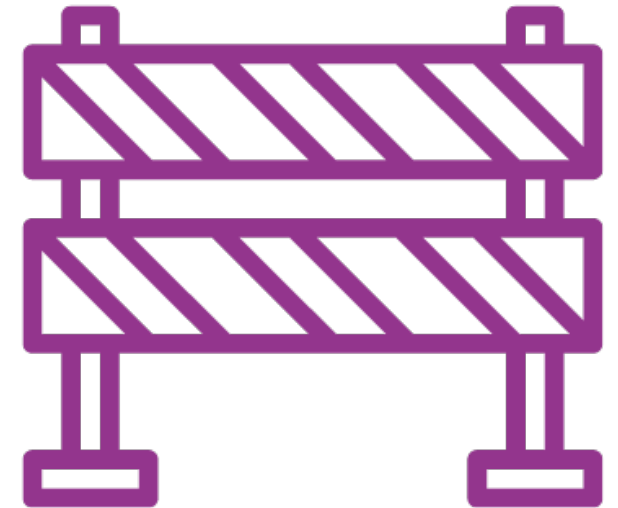
The **Healthier Oregon Program** (HOP) is an important equity milestone for access to long-term services and supports (LTSS) to all in Oregon who qualify.



# Risks: Barriers to accessing high-quality services

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- House Bill 3352 provided initial Healthier Oregon funding to enroll people ages 19 to 26 and 55+ during 2022's initial implementation of the program, but people ages 27 to 54 remain unenrolled.
- Communities of color are more likely to be uninsured; Oregon's uninsured rate for Latino/a/x people is 12 percent – twice that of the general population (Oregon Health Insurance Survey, 2019).



# Solution: Fund completion of Healthier Oregon

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This package would:

- Maintain the services authorized in 2021–2023.
- Expand LTSS to all potentially eligible populations, eligible children and adults with disabilities regardless of their immigration status, starting July 1, 2023.
- Fund additional staff (in Aging and People with Disabilities and Self-Sufficiency Programs) to help individuals access services and supports, including case managers and others critical to serving this population.

*\$77.8 M GF*





# Budget numbers: HOP

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POP 105

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$77,817,335			\$77,817,335	79	61.00

# Strengthening our Foundations

## **Policy Option Package | Oregon Eligibility Partnership**

# What's at stake: Oregonians' access to benefits

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- We all want a state in which every person in Oregon can access the supports they need to thrive.
- As of May 2022, **1.5 million Oregonians** access medical, food, cash, and child care benefits through the ONE system.
- ONE operations are a critical priority because people can't reach their potential when they are facing interruptions in their ability to see a doctor, choosing between paying bills or buying food, losing paid work in order to care for a child, or are unable to afford basic necessities for their families.

# Risks: Barriers to benefits

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- Need for medical, food, cash, and child care benefits is at historic levels.
- We improved efficiencies in business practices and computer systems to maximize existing staff resources, but we don't have the necessary staff to make sure everyone who is eligible gets what they need when they need it.
- Current staffing constraints contribute to delays in accessing needed benefits, which may result in:
  - Delays in accessing preventive care,
  - Reliance on food banks by hungry families,
  - Lack of access to child care, potentially leading to parents leaving the workforce, and
  - Loss of benefit dollars to local economies.

# Solution: Increase eligibility staff

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Additional staff members will help reduce the backlog and allow more Oregonians to receive timely benefits and services.

## **New eligibility staff will:**

- Answer calls and respond to people in offices applying for and/or receiving benefits;
- Process timely applications to reduce backlogs; and
- Provide support to community partners who assist people in applying for benefits.



# Budget numbers: Eligibility staffing

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POP 142

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$53,889,008		\$38,789,711	\$92,678,719	615	461.25

# Strengthening our Foundations

## **Policy Option Package | Aging and People with Disabilities**

# What's at stake:

## Home care services for Oregonians

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- Home care allows older adults and people with disabilities to get the day-to-day help they need at home while maintaining a good quality of life.
- In 2021, AARP reported that 77 percent of older adults in the U.S. would prefer to age in place rather than move into an alternative care setting.
- In Oregon and nationally, the demand for home care is expected to increase as the population rapidly ages.

[\\*2021 Home and Community Preferences Survey](#), AARP





# Risk:

## Inadequate support for a key growth sector

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- Oregon's home care workforce **lacks adequate human resources support**, which creates persistent problems surrounding provider payments, time capture, and training and advancement.
- Oregon's available home care provider count has shrunk to nearly half of pre-pandemic numbers, pointing to the need for additional investment to make sure Oregonians can **access these increasingly important services**.
- Bilingual/multilingual, **immigrant, and refugee community members face barriers** to employment in the home care sector at a time when their skills and lived experience are most needed by consumers.



# Solution:

## Investing in Oregon's home care workforce

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ODHS and the Oregon Home Care Commission are jointly requesting staffing to better support Oregon's home care workforce and ensure that older adults and Oregonians with disabilities get the supports they need at home.

The package will:

- Create **comprehensive human resources support** that better attracts, develops, and retains qualified home care workers.
- Create a permanent **provider time capture support unit** and a new, live staffed **consumer online service**.

# Budget numbers:

## Home care workforce investments

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POP 102

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$2,750,496		\$642,128	\$3,392,624	16	12.00

# Strengthening our Foundations

## Policy Option Package | Aging and People with Disabilities

# What's at stake:

## Well-being in the face of emergencies

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Emergency planning and management must consider the needs of all Oregonians, including the **unique needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and those residing in long-term care settings.**



# Risks: Gaps in preparedness

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As Oregon continues to feel the **impacts of recent crises** and looks toward demographic changes that will bring **increased demand for services**, older Oregonians and those with disabilities face unique risks within the limitations of current systems:

- Oregon lacks an adequate system for tracking long-term care residents and available beds:
  - Requires responders to gather information while trying to relocate individuals whose needs likely cannot be met in an emergency shelter
- A lack of dedicated regional safety positions prevents seamless coordination between Aging and People with Disabilities, the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management and health care partners when emergencies strike and necessitate facility closures.
- Adults ages 65 and older are a rapidly growing population; this coupled with ongoing workforce shortages in the long-term care sector point to a looming supply-and-demand crisis that will be exacerbated in emergencies.

# Solution: Making responsive investments in our service infrastructure

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Investing in data collection and systems infrastructure will ensure we can **track residents and long-term care vacancies during emergencies**, enabling a swift response.

**Additional staffing** will allow us to:

- Provide more timely information and resources to consumers during emergencies,
- Coordinate seamlessly with the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management and health care partners during emergencies and facility closures that affect older adults and/or people with disabilities,
- Support serious incident functions in compliance with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and
- Sustain effective service delivery in the face of substantial and growing demand.

Making permanent the five percent emergency-related provider rate increase will help ensure that **Oregonians can access community-based care** when they need it.

# Budget numbers:

## Infrastructure, access and emergency

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POP 101

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
\$97,401,189		\$144,367,410	\$241,768,599	113	98.75



# Strengthening our Foundations

## Policy Option Package | Vocational Rehabilitation

# What's at stake: Supporting the success of young people with disabilities

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All Oregon teens deserve support for realizing their **goals and dreams after high school**.

While transitioning from school to work can be daunting for any teen, teens with disabilities often must navigate **additional processes and disability stigmas** as they pursue careers and independent living.



# Risk: Loss of critical transition supports

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Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)'s youth services programs place counselors in high schools and community organizations statewide to help people ages 14–21 with disabilities to **explore career options, develop interviewing and self-advocacy skills and learn about post-secondary education opportunities.**

- VR currently delegates authority to oversee some contracts for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and provide related training and evaluation, but in 2022 the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) indicated that this arrangement is **not in compliance with federal law.**
- To comply, VR needs to provide these youths with services in-house, but it **does not have the staff** to do so. Without additional position authority, young people with disabilities stand to **lose a critical support** that helps them transition from school to work.

# Solution: Restructure transition services

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- VR needs to oversee contracted Pre-ETS services and rewrite some existing contracts to ensure they comply with federal guidelines.
- VR is requesting position authority to hire staff to provide these services — a **cost-neutral** request.
- By restructuring how youth services contracts are administered, VR will be able to **continue providing these critical transition supports** to young people with disabilities who are entering the workforce for the first time.

*Cost neutral*



# Budget numbers: Youth Transition Program

POP 148

General Fund	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	POS	FTE
Cost neutral					

# For more information

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Find ODHS' 2023-25 Agency Request Budget on our [website](#).

**Questions?** Contact Roberto Gutierrez, ODHS Government Relations Manager, at [Roberto.Gutierrez@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:Roberto.Gutierrez@dhsosha.state.or.us) or 971-317-1265