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**Aug. 6, 2025**

**To:** Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) partners and community

**From:** Fariborz Pakseresht, Director, ODHS

## **Leadership changes in ODHS and the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services**

Last week, I announced that the [Oregon Department of Human Services \(ODHS\)](#) reopened the search for a permanent director of the [Office of Developmental Disabilities Services \(ODDS\)](#). I have more news about this transition.

On Aug. 11, 2025:

- ODHS Deputy Chief Operations Officer Jeff Akin will become interim director for ODDS. Jeff will serve in this role until we have a new permanent director of ODDS.
- Dana Hittle will return to the ODHS Director's Office. She will serve as senior advisor on Medicaid policy and systems integration. Dana will continue to support Jeff and the ODDS team through this transition.

Jeff joined ODHS in March 2005. He has held many leadership positions. These include deputy chief operations officer, administrator of the Background Check Unit and administrator of Imaging and Records Management Services (IRMS). Jeff led work to modernize our background check processes.

Jeff is an inclusive leader. He creates settings that welcome staff, customers and partners. He's consistently improved our operations and service delivery. Under his leadership, IRMS employed individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Oregon Resource Association recognized this work by naming IRMS the 2022 Public Employer of the Year.

Dana has a deep expertise in Medicaid and working across systems to serve individuals and families. She also has a strong ability to bring

people and organizations together to improve systems. She started her career in the ODHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities. In 2013, she moved to Oregon Health Authority to work in Oregon's Medicaid program. Under her leadership as Medicaid director, Oregon became the first state to provide continuous Medicaid coverage from birth to age six. Oregon also became first to get approval to provide services for health-related social needs.

Dana rejoined ODHS in October 2023 to work in the Director's Office. Since then she served as interim deputy director of ODDS and, for the past 16 months, as interim director.

I thank Dana and Jeff for leading ODDS through this transition. I also thank the staff and partners of ODDS. You've improved our services and set the future ODDS director up for success.

As I wrote last week, we reopened our search for the permanent director of ODDS. Please share that [job posting](#) with all who may be interested. Thank you for helping us recruit strong candidates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Fani Saeed Pappas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "F" and "P".

Fariborz Pakseresht (he/him)

Director, Oregon Department of Human Services

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