

## **Oregon 2020-2024 WIOA Combined State Plan**

This document contains additions and modifications to [Oregon's 2020-2024 WIOA Combined State Plan](#). Unless specifically called out, the original plan submitted remains accurate and valid. Some specific language has been revised, but most of the modifications included below are additions reflecting changes that have occurred since the original plan was submitted and/or those addressing the U.S. Department of Labor Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 4-21 - Modification Requirements for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plans for Program Years (PYs) 2022 and 2023.

The public is invited to provide comments and recommendations for additional or revised information during the 30-day public comment period February 3 through March 4, 2022. Comments must be submitted by email to: Clay Martin, [clay.martin@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:clay.martin@hecc.oregon.gov)

Comments will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate within the modification. The recommended modification will be considered by the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board for revision and approval at their March 11, 2022 meeting. The approved modification will be submitted by March 15, 2022.

**Oregon's Economic and Workforce Analysis**

## Introduction to Oregon’s Economic and Workforce Analysis

Oregon experienced a strong economic rebound in 2021. Employers added 107,000 jobs during the year. Oregon’s trends have been similar to the nation’s: both have recovered four out of five jobs lost in the spring of 2020.

Unemployment rates have also improved dramatically, and are nearing record lows again. Oregon’s unemployment rate was 4.1% in December 2021. Oregon’s historical average unemployment rate is 6.8%. So although there has been tremendous disruption in the labor market, Oregon is experiencing a tight labor market similar to conditions in the year or two prior to the pandemic.

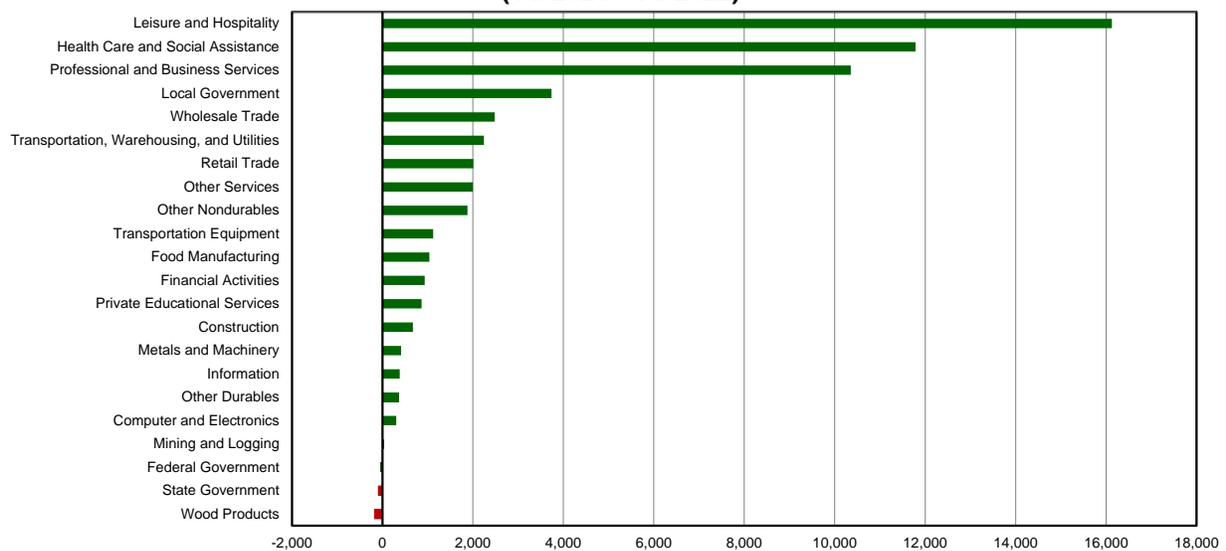
## Oregon’s Economic Analysis

The graph below shows job gains by industry in 2021. In most sectors, jobs lost during the pandemic recession were regained during this period. A few parts of Oregon’s economy ended 2021 at new, record-high employment. They included construction; professional and technical services; and transportation, warehousing, and utilities.

### GRAPH from BIG MONTHLY PPT

In the near term, job gains are expected to continue. Oregon’s Office of Economic Analysis forecasts that Oregon will achieve full jobs recovery from the pandemic recession slightly less than three years after it started. Job gains toward that full recovery are expected to be largest in leisure and hospitality (16,000), health care and social assistance (11,800), and professional and business services (10,400).

**Expected Job Changes by Industry Sector Over The Year  
(4Q 2021 - 4Q 2022)**



Source: Oregon Employment Department analysis using Oregon Office Economic Analysis Forecast, December 2021

## **Workforce Analysis**

Looking ahead, Oregon's economy faces many of the same demographic challenges seen across the nation. This includes the aging of the workforce and baby boomer retirements, lower rates of young people participating in the labor force, and slower job growth in rural areas. Oregon's labor force rebounded from the pandemic recession, and has recently stabilized slightly below 2.2 million people. Oregon's labor force participation rate (62.2% in December 2021) has also rebounded, and increased slightly above the pre-pandemic rate.

Population growth has driven labor force growth in recent years. This is a result of natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration. As labor force participation trends down due to increased retirements and lower participation among youth, future labor force growth could be limited to the rate of population growth.

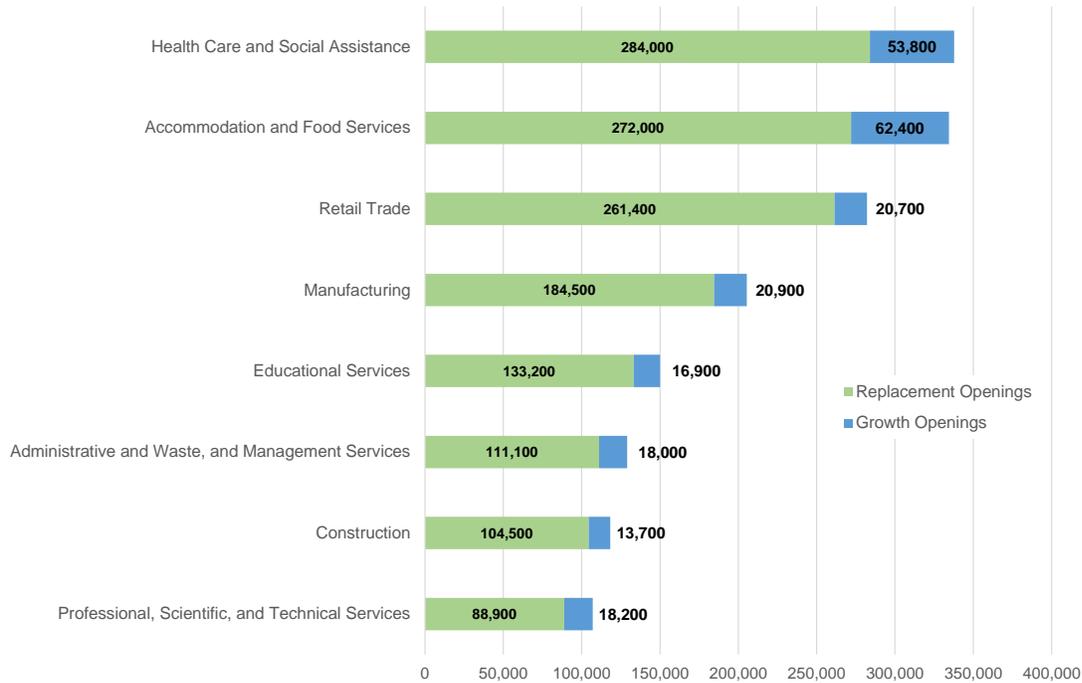
## **Skill Gaps**

As workers progress in their careers, they may change occupations. This creates an opening in the occupation they leave that can be filled by someone new to the occupation who may need training to fill that opening. Also, when a worker reaches the end of their career, they leave the labor force, again creating an opening that may require a trained worker to fill it.

We use the phrase "replacement openings" for the total number of occupational openings due to people changing occupations or leaving the labor force. Far more workers are needed to fill replacement openings than for "growth openings" that are due to net job growth. Even in some occupational groups with little anticipated net job growth, replacement openings can be numerous.

Projections by the Oregon Employment Department indicate that Oregon will add about 318,000 jobs between 2020 and 2030. For every one new job, there will also be an additional 9 job openings (or 2.2 million total) replacement job openings from workers leaving the labor force for retirement or other reasons, or making major occupational changes.

Oregon Growth and Replacement in Sectors with at Least 100,000 Total Openings  
2020-2030



Source: Oregon Employment Department

### Key Labor Market Trend: Employer Difficulty Finding Workers

Throughout the year, the Oregon Employment Department surveys private employers from all industries and areas of the state to ask about the job vacancies they are actively trying to fill. Employers provide the job title, starting wage, and education and experience requirements for each of their vacancies. They also specify whether their vacancies are for full or part-time positions, and permanent or seasonal jobs. If they face hiring challenges, employers also write in the primary reason for difficulty filling each job opening.

Job vacancies hit record totals in 2021; there were 107,000 job openings with private employers in summer, and 103,000 in the fall. Prior the pandemic, the largest number of job vacancies reported by private employers was 67,000 in summer 2017.

Hiring demand was so strong in 2021 that, as of fall, there were more job openings than unemployed people. In both Oregon and across the U.S., there were about 7 unemployed people per every 10 job openings. There were also more job openings than unemployed people in every workforce region of Oregon, with one exception. In Southwestern Oregon, there was a ratio of one unemployed person per job vacancy. One result has been widespread difficulty filling job vacancies. The majority of job openings were hard to fill in every sector of Oregon’s economy in 2021.

With low unemployment rates and relatively small available workforce, the largest hiring challenge employers faced in 2021 was a lack of applicants. In fall 2021, Oregon’s private employers reported

78,000 (or 76% of all) job openings as difficult to fill. Nearly 34,000 (or 49%) of the hard-to-fill vacancies had either too few or no applicants.

**Key Labor Market Trend: Difficulty Filling Health Care Jobs**

Amid an ongoing pandemic, difficulty filling job openings in health care has been an area of heightened concern. Yet, Oregon’s health care sector has consistently had the largest need for workers since at least 2013, when Oregon’s job vacancy survey began. The pandemic both revealed and intensified existing labor market challenges in the industry.

In the fall of 2021, there were 16,000 vacancies in the health care sector for jobs in healthcare practitioners and healthcare support roles in Oregon. Hard-to-fill practitioner and support job openings in Oregon’s health care sectors were much more likely to require previous experience (59%) than the not difficult-to-fill health care job vacancies (25%).

**Major Indicators from Oregon Health Care Job Vacancies  
By Vacancy Type, Fall 2021**

	<b>All Health Care Vacancies</b>	<b>Not Difficult-to-Fill</b>	<b>Difficult-to-Fill</b>
Vacancies	16,031	2,116	13,915
Average Hourly Wage	\$25.82	\$24.31	\$25.97
Full-time Positions	80%	80%	80%
Permanent Positions	100%	100%	100%
Requiring Education Beyond High School	58%	64%	57%
Requiring Previous Experience	55%	25%	59%
Difficult to Fill	87%	0%	100%

*Source: Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Job Vacancy Survey*

Both hard-to-fill health care vacancies and those filled without difficulty were more likely to require education beyond high school (three out of five) than job vacancies across all sectors (one out of three). In addition, difficult-to-fill health care vacancies are far more likely to require previous experience than job openings that weren’t hard to fill. As employers report record levels of hiring across industries, health care is competing with opportunities across sectors. The training and experience required to meet the needs of the health care industry can take time to translate to a ready workforce.

The COVID-19 virus itself, and upcoming workforce retirements both have an outsized impact in on the health care industry. That’s the case for not only those working frontline health care jobs, but also those who aren’t anymore. In May 2021, the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis published research showing that job losses for workers ages 65+ were concentrated in a handful of occupations. Health care support workers were among them. In Oregon, the health care and social assistance sector has the largest number of workers likely nearing or reaching retirement age by 2030. As of 2019, about 67,000 workers in the industry were at least 55 years old.

Since health care is more reliant on workers who have education beyond high school, the sector is also more exposed to future labor shortages if education pipelines are crimped or bottlenecked. The first year of the pandemic saw a significant decline in the number of students completing a certification or degree program in a health profession (-12%). Similar declines in completion were seen in Washington

and Idaho, meaning that recruiting new workers from regional training programs was going to be just as difficult.

### **Key Labor Market Trend: Recruitment and Retention in a Tight Labor Market**

Oregon closed out 2021 with 103,000 job openings, just slightly below the all-time record of 107,000 reached in summer. Hiring demand was widespread throughout industries and occupations. In fall 2021, five industries had more than 10,000 vacancies in the fall, and employers reported vacancies in 270 different occupations. At the same time, Oregon's unemployment rate in December (4.1%) was low by historical standards.

Taken together, the strong hiring demand, relatively low unemployment, and barriers keeping some workers on the sidelines has created a tight labor market. Employers across the economy have [responded to tight labor market conditions](#), prior to COVID-19 and now, in a number of ways:

- Employers have raised wages. The average starting wage for a job in Oregon rose to \$21 per hour between the fall of 2020 and fall of 2021, which rose to \$21 per hour. That's a 14% increase from one year before, and that's after adjusting for inflation, which was notably higher over the year.
- Some employers have added or increased benefits, perks, and bonuses either in addition to or instead of raising wages. These include benefits that typically come to mind, but also other perks like flexible work schedules, performance bonuses, and paid professional development training, among others.
- Relaxing previous experience requirements when possible, and when it doesn't pose a safety risk, can increase the number of people who qualify for jobs.
- In tight labor markets, employers tend to layer help wanted signs with other efforts such as referral incentives, signing bonuses, posting with online job boards, and working with recruiters outside of their immediate geographical area. This includes listing job openings with [WorkSource Oregon](#).

In a low unemployment environment with record numbers of job openings, it's important to layer these strategies, for both newly hired and existing workers.

### **Workers with Barriers: Older Workers**

Info and chart from aging workforce article here...

### **Workers with Barriers: Race and Ethnicity**

Lift narrative and graph from disparate impact report.

### **Workers with Barriers: Rural Workers**

Talk about rural jobs declining less and rebounding more than metro areas since 2020. Longer-term though, rural areas struggle to add jobs more than metro areas. Use metro/rural CES graph and projections map by region.

Loop in the aging workforce here as a factor. Pull that narrative from aging workforce article.

Also make mention of rural LFPR [use Tracy's map and article narrative].

### **Workers with Barriers: Disability**

Lift graph and narrative from QI article that gets updated each year.

**Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board**

## Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board

The Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) recognized early in the pandemic the need to provide as close to real-time analysis of the impacts of the pandemic in order to allow for better decision-making and response. Consistent with this proactive approach, the WTDB produced or commissioned a number of research reports and policy papers to shape strategy:

- [Stimulating Apprenticeship in Oregon Now and For the Future](#), Robert I. Lerman, Urban Institute, September 2020
- [Issue Brief: The Human Development Side of Economic Recovery in Oregon](#), David T Conley, PhD, EdImagine, September 2020
- [Effects of Social Distancing on Oregon's Leisure and Hospitality Workers](#), ECONorthwest, September 2020
- [Talent Development for Artificial Intelligence in a Post-Pandemic World](#), Artificial Intelligence Taskforce, October 2020
- [Effects of the Pandemic on Oregon's Healthcare Workforce](#), ECONorthwest, November 2020
- [Essential Employability Skills— Needed Now More Than Ever](#), Essential Employability Skills Taskforce, December 2020
- [Oregon Postsecondary Education and Workforce Training: Preparing for a Strong Recovery to the COVID-19 Crisis](#), Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission, May 2021

The WTDB formed the Equitable Prosperity Taskforce (EPTF) during the period. The EPTF produced the [Equitable Prosperity for All Taskforce Whitepaper](#) (Coraggio Group, June 2021) to describe a redesigned system that would invigorate and empower productive, collective, and collaborative work to help thousands of Oregonians share in equitable prosperity in the post-pandemic economy. This set the stage for significant discussion and strategy-making around four Imperatives:

1. Foster deep, sustained engagement by key industry leaders, employers, and labor unions to identify and communicate skills necessary for competitive employment.
2. Center the system on the user experience and acknowledge different pathways for different people and industries.
3. Improve alignment with agencies and nonprofits that provide wraparound supports.
4. Extend the apprenticeship model beyond manufacturing and the construction trades.

The EPTF work was very complimentary of discussions occurring in Governor Kate Brown's Racial Justice Council. Working together, along with a broad array of stakeholders, a \$200 million proposal took shape that became Future Ready Oregon 2022. The following is from Governor Brown's release providing an overview of the proposal:

“Aimed at realizing the full potential of Oregon’s workforce and meeting the needs of Oregon’s employers today and into the future, Future Ready Oregon 2022 advances Oregon’s economic competitiveness and ensures equitable opportunities for a diverse workforce. In particular, Future Ready Oregon 2022 will advance opportunities for historically underserved communities, including adult learners, dislocated workers, and disconnected youth. Investments emphasize recruitment, retention, and career advancement opportunities, while prioritizing key

populations, including people of color, women, people with low incomes, rural communities, veterans, and Oregonians who are incarcerated and formerly incarcerated.

Investments will focus on three key sectors: healthcare, manufacturing, and construction. With increased investments in infrastructure and housing, an aging workforce, and record retirements, workforce needs in these skilled trades sectors are projected to grow. These key sectors provide short-term pathways to meaningful employment, higher earning potential, and opportunities for economic mobility. Using a multifaceted approach through inclusive, culturally specific, and linguistically appropriate career-connected learning, employment services, and related initiatives, Future Ready Oregon 2022 will create equitable prosperity.”

Future Ready Oregon 2022 is currently being considered by the Oregon legislature.

Finally, the WTDB, in partnership with local workforce development boards facilitated new legislation ([Senate Bill 623](#), 2021) to establish the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC) to assess the effectiveness of Oregon’s public workforce development system immediately and every even year into the future. The CIC’s work must include the perspectives of underrepresented populations.

The Initial Assessment called out in SB 623 is complete ([Continuous Improvement Committee Initial Assessment](#), Coraggio Group, December 2021). CIC members were clear from the start that the collective purpose of the CIC’s work is to create a case for long-term, transformational change in the state’s workforce system, but the goal of the Initial Assessment is to identify near-term solutions that can be piloted and implemented over a six- to nine-month period to identify ways to improve the user experience and outcomes for those most impacted by COVID-19 and for disenfranchised communities. These near-term solutions are:

- Review and redesign the Job Seeker welcome and intake process, with the goal of identifying different tracks and process steps based on customer need.
- Evaluate the core purpose and functionality of iMatchSkills as a job matching and capability assessment tool to inform, and potentially expedite, OED’s planned modernization effort.
- Explore a single point of contact (e.g., Navigator role) through the WSO system (e.g., one stop centers, through community-based organizations or accessible through an online intake process) to efficiently guide next steps that match the unique needs of each customer.
- Clarify and communicate the current WSO accountability and evaluation system.

Implementation is beginning on these even as Oregon begins its first biennial full assessment. This assessment will have an added special focus on governance building off the findings behind the fourth bullet above from the Initial Assessment.

**Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program**

## **ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

- (a) **Aligning of Content Standards**. Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The Oregon Council of Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD) made a recommendation in October 2018 to the Oregon State Title II leadership to have Oregon Title II programs transition from the Oregon-specific Oregon Adult Learning Standards (OALS) to the nationally recognized College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). There was interest in preserving certain elements of the Oregon Adult Learning Standards and to consolidate them along with the CCRS into the Oregon Adult College and Career Readiness Standards (OACCRS). The rationale behind this recommendation was the alignment of the CCRS with the new CASAS Reading and Math GOALS which are the required assessments in Oregon, together with access to the many resources and materials available nationally to support implementation of CCRS. During program year 2018-19, a Learning Standards Reconciliation Project took place whereby a group of expert trainers, many of whom had previously developed the OALS, created Mathematics and Language Arts Handbooks to accompany the implementation of OACCRS. In addition, a training module was created with a view to orienting programs to CCRS during program year 2019-20. Training and professional development will continue to be offered on an ongoing basis to Title II program staff. support for the development and implementation of Professional Learning Communities for local providers also continues.

- (b) **Local Activities**. Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

### **Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)**

Adult Education;

Literacy;

Workplace adult education and literacy activities; Family literacy activities;

English language acquisition activities; Integrated English literacy and civics education; Workforce preparation activities; or

Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

**Special Rule.** Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

#### Funding Adult Education and Literacy Programs

The eligible agency administering Title II programs in Oregon is the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC): Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD). In July 2017, CCWD awarded three-year grants through a Request for Application (RFA) process in order to meet the statutory purposes of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The RFA process adhered to the provisions set forth in WIOA Title II sections 231 and 232.

A new multi-year competition for grant funds beginning PY22 is currently underway and Grantees receiving funds under the competition will be required to negotiate program budgets each year using a performance—based funding model. The grants will be for a five-year period and continuation will be dependent upon program compliance and performance. By federal law, eligible providers are prohibited from using federal grant funds to supplant state or local dollars. CCWD will continue to award WIOA Title II funds as set forth in WIOA section 222(a):

1. Not less than 82.5% of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 (Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers) and to carry out section 225 (Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals). Not more than 20% of such amount will be available to carry out section 225.
2. Not more than 12.5% of the grant funds to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223; and
3. Not more than 5% of the grant funds for the administrative expenses of CCWD.

Eligible providers, will be required to demonstrate effectiveness in providing adult education services. Examples of eligible providers, as detailed in Section 203(5) are, but not limited to:

- A local educational agency
- A community-based organization or faith-based organization
- A volunteer literacy organization
- An institution of higher education
- A public or private nonprofit agency
- A library
- A public housing authority
- Other nonprofit institutions that [had] the ability to provide adult education
- A consortium or coalition of entities listed
- A partnership between an employer and an entity.

The RFA was announced across a variety of platforms to ensure statewide participation. These platforms included HECC's monthly newsletter, press releases, and contacts with other state and local agencies and workforce partners. CCWD will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for Title II funds by:

- Using the same grant announcement, application, and proposal process for all eligible providers;
- Providing information about the RFA to any eligible agency that requests it;
- Incorporating the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA in the review criteria; and
- Evaluating all applications using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

CCWD distributes funds provided under Title II in accordance with the 13 considerations and provisions set forth in the Act and the Oregon's Unified State Plan. Applicants will be required to provide narrative detail on how they will meet each consideration.

1. The degree to which the provider is responsive to (a) regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (b) serving individuals in the community who are identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills and who are English language learners.
2. The ability of the provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities.
3. The past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, and the degree to which those improvements contribute to CCWD meeting its State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in WIOA section 116.

4. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108 of the Act, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners.
5. Whether the eligible provider's program (a) is of sufficient intensity, and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains, and (b) uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction.
6. Whether the eligible provider's activities including reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction are based on best practices derived from the most rigorous research available.
7. Whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services and delivery systems, including distance education, in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning, and how such technology, services and systems lead to improved performance.
8. Whether the eligible provider's activities offer learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
9. Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means.
10. Whether the eligible provider coordinates with other available education, training and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries in the development of career pathways.
11. Whether the eligible provider's activities offer the flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs.
12. Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with WIOA section 116) and to monitor program performance.
13. Whether the local area in which the eligible provider is located has a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

#### Local Activities

The term "adult education and literacy activities" means programs, activities, and services that include the following terms. Oregon will fund the following activities; however, not all providers will be required to provide the following programs, activities, and service, but WIOA Title II funds may be used to support them:

- Adult education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family Literacy activities
- English language acquisition activities
- Integrated English literacy and civics education
- Workforce preparation activities
- Integrated education and training

### Current Local Activities

Oregon currently expends WIOA Title II funds to provide ABE, ASE, and ESL in community college and correctional settings. Instruction is guided by the Oregon Adult College and Career Readiness Standards (OACCRS) which reflect a shared vision of what adults need to know and be able to do to carry out their goals and purposes. The OACCRS are contained in Learning Standard Frameworks which provide detailed information for instruction and are organized by educational functioning levels (EFLs) as defined by the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education. The OACCRS support Title II Adult Basic Skills service providers' goal of improving access to and completion of post-secondary credentials.

Oregon also uses integrated approaches such as such as I-BEST and Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) to address this goal. These approaches accelerate time to completion and increase certificate and degree attainment for Adult Basic Skills students through collaboration with CTE programs and relationships with industry and local employers to identify competencies and needs. This work has been advanced by the Oregon Pathways Alliance which has used targeted investment to develop a national model for a systemic framework for career pathways. State career pathways funds are used at community colleges for advising, instruction, and support services to support ABS student in pathways and bridge programs in occupational areas such as welding, health care, computer applications, HVAC, and automotive technology.

Programs are required to participate in professional development training and activities that focus on civics curriculum development. In addition, programs are encouraged to leverage additional grants such as the Pathways to Opportunities and the STEP (SNAP Training and Employment Program) Consortium to provide wraparound services for participants.

CCWD will require that all activities funded under Title II are of sufficient intensity and quality and based on the most rigorous research available, particularly with respect to improving reading, writing, mathematics, and English proficiency of eligible individuals. The scope, content and organization of local activities are described below.

CCWD will require all applicants to offer adult education and literacy activities and English language acquisition activities where there is local need throughout the three-year cycle.

### Adult Education and Literacy Activities

Scope: All providers will be required to offer adult education and literacy activities.

Content: The content of adult education and literacy will be academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase adults' ability to read, write, and speak in English, and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education, and obtain employment. Implementation of the Oregon Adult College and Career Readiness Standards (OACCRS) which include the essential components of reading, must be evident in curriculum and instruction.

Organization: Adult education and literacy activities will use technology, services, delivery systems, which may include distance education in order to encourage measurable skill gains for learners. Programs will provide learning activities in contexts that promote attainment of high school equivalency, transition to postsecondary education or training, or employment. Programs will follow Oregon Accountability Policies and Procedures, assessing learners with approved tests and placing them in instructional levels as described by the Educational Functional Levels (EFLs) for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE). Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in the organization of instruction.

#### English Language Acquisition Activities

Scope: All providers will be required to offer English language acquisition where there are sufficient numbers of English language learners, i.e., eligible individuals who have limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language and whose native language is not English or who live in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

Content: The content of English language acquisition will be reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending the English language in order to lead to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education or training or employment. Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in curriculum and instruction in English language acquisition.

Organization: English language acquisition will be of sufficient intensity and quality and based on rigorous research and effective educational practice. Activities will use technology, services, delivery systems, including distance education in order to encourage measurable skill gains for learners. Programs will provide learning activities in contexts that promote attainment of high school equivalency, transition to postsecondary education or training, or employment. Programs will follow Oregon Accountability Policies and Procedures, assessing learners with approved tests and placing them in instructional levels as described by the Educational Functional Levels (EFLs) for English as a second language (ESL). Implementation of approved Learning Standards must be evident in the organization of instruction. Programs will offer educational and career counseling services that assist learners to transition postsecondary education or employment, or offer English language acquisition as part of a career pathway.

CCWD will require all eligible applicants receiving section 231 funds who have previously provided workforce preparation activities and integrated education and training (IET) activities to offer them during the first year of the five-year grant cycle. For those who have not provided workforce preparation and integrated education and training activities, those programs will be required to offer them no later than the third year of the five-year cycle. If funding is available, CCWD will offer incentives to programs to offer these activities earlier in the grant cycle.

### Family Literacy Activities

Scope: Some providers may offer family literacy activities during the five-year grant cycle.

Content: The content of the family literacy activities will be activities that make sustainable improvements for a family and that better enable the parents or family members to support their children's learning needs.

Organization: Family literacy activities must integrate the following activities: parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency; interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children; training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children, and an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

### Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

Scope: Some providers will offer Integrated English Literacy and Civic Education services during the five year grant period.

Content: The content of Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education are services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training.

Organization: Local providers will build IELCE services on the successful practices and principles related to citizenship and civic participation contexts.

### Workforce Preparation Activities

Scope: All providers will be required to offer workforce preparation activities no later than the third year of the five-year cycle.

Content: The content of workforce preparation will be the skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education and training, skills necessary for successful transition into employment, and other employability skills that increase an individual's preparation for the workforce. These include basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, employability skills, and self-management skills such as utilizing resources, using information, working with others, and understanding systems. Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in curriculum and instruction.

Organization: Workforce preparation will be offered concurrently with another activity such as adult education and literacy, English language acquisition, or integrated English literacy and civics, or and meet the organizational requirements for those activities. Programs will be encouraged to use the U.S. Department of Education's Employability Skills Framework or other comprehensive resource to structure workforce preparation activities. Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in the organization of workforce preparation instruction. Workforce preparation activities will be assessed broadly through the assessment of EFLs.

- Family Literacy activities (add narrative that is like the other narratives: scope, content and organization)
- Integrated English literacy and civics education (aren't you offering IELCE as a local activity? The narrative needs to be here. Just because there is a separate section that addresses it specifically doesn't mean you don't include it here. Add narrative that is like the other narratives: scope, content and organization)
- Workforce preparation activities (You have this listed above)
- Integrated education and training

### Integrated Education and Training

Scope: All providers will be required to offer IET activities to learners no later than the third year of the five-year cycle.

Content: IET activities will include adult education and literacy or English language acquisition concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. An IET program will have a single set of learning objectives that identifies specific adult education content from the OACCRS, workforce preparation activities and workforce training competencies.

Organization: In order to meet the requirement that IET activities provided are for the purpose of educational and career advancement, the adult education and literacy component of the program will be aligned with the OACCRS. IET activities may also be a part of a career pathway. CCWD may fund eligible applicants to offer workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, and/or integrated English literacy and civics education activities (IEL/CE) (section 231) during the five-year cycle.

### Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities

Scope: Some providers will offer workplace adult education and literacy activities during the five- year cycle.

Content: Workplace adult education and literacy activities will include the content of adult education and literacy or English language acquisition which addresses the improvement of the productivity of the workforce. Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in curriculum and instruction.

Organization: Workplace adult education and literacy activities will be offered by the eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization. Implementation of the OACCRS must be evident in the organization of instruction.

(c) **Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**. Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Oregon will continue to support corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals under section 225 of WIOA. The amount of funding will not exceed the 20% allowable under WIOA. Academic programming may include adult education and literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated education and training, career pathways, secondary school credit, and peer tutoring. Where feasible, section 225 funds will also be used for integrated education and training and career pathways in order to increase the number of institutionalized individuals transitioning to post-secondary education.

Grants of section 225 funds will be awarded in a separate application process in accordance with the requirements of Subpart C in Title II of WIOA. CCWD will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for these funds by:

- Using the same grant announcement, application, and proposal process for all eligible providers;
- Providing information about the RFA to any eligible agency that requests it;
- Incorporating the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA in the review criteria; and
- Evaluating all applications using the same rubric and scoring criteria.

CCWD will give specific consideration in the criteria to eligible applicants that indicate priority of service to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

(d) **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, including how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Programs funded under section 243(a) will have the additional requirement to provide Integrated English literacy and civics education in combination with integrated education and training services (IETs). Programs offered under section 243(a) of WIOA must also be designed in consultation with the local workforce board and lead the participant to unsubsidized employment opportunities, economic self-sufficiency, and be within locally identified in-demand industries.

CCWD will distribute Title II funds to successful grant applicants according to WIOA guidelines and the needs of local programs. Competitive grant awards will comply with considerations in Section 231(e) of WIOA. A new multi-year competition for grant funds beginning PY22 will be held and Grantees receiving funds under the competition will be required to negotiate program budgets each year using the existing performance—based funding model. The grants will be for a five-year period and continuation will be dependent upon program compliance and performance

Oregon’s Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services are designed to enable English language learners (ELLs), including professionals with degrees or credentials in their native countries, to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.

Local providers will build IEL/CE services on the successful practices and principles related to citizenship and civic participation contexts. These may include classroom and experiential activities such as:

- Instructional experiences that teach English language reading, writing, speaking/listening, and math skills along with instruction in civic responsibility by collaborating with a local police department to help students get drivers’ licenses, understand the rules of the road, identify their rights and responsibilities as drivers, and prepare for interactions with local law enforcement while driving;
- An instructional unit called on ‘The Road to Citizenship ‘which takes participants through the entire citizenship process, including field trips to US Office of Citizenship and Immigration Services. Participants use the actual forms and materials needed to apply for and pass the citizenship exam and create portfolios of all the documents they need to collect and turn in to complete the process; or
- A unit, responding to a participant interest survey, on accessing medical services for families with children. The participants help plan a Health Fair that provides information to their community, including health screenings, an immunization clinic, and presentations by public school leadership, health care providers and insurance carriers to inform parents how to access care and services for themselves and their children.

(e) **State Leadership.** Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

CCWD will pursue the following required State Leadership Activities under this section of 223 of WIOA:

1. Alignment with other core programs:

Activities will include but may not be limited to:

- Explore the potential revision of Oregon Pathways to Adult Basic Skills (OPABS) and expansion of I—BEST and VESL models that integrate education and training

- Participation and active engagement in the Oregon Workforce Systems Executive Team (WSET). The team is a partnership consisting of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Directors that are committed to an aligned vision of the workforce system and that seeks to collectively serve business and program participants across programs and funding streams and is supported by agency executives and the Governor's office. WSET will continue to work together to integrate all programs in the public workforce system to reduce duplication and lift families out of poverty. The State Director will continue to work with Career and Technical Education leaderships throughout the state to develop seamless transitions for WIOA Title II students in to career pathways.
- Continue to support for the development of instructional content and models for career pathways

## 2. Establishment of high quality PD:

Activities will include but may not be limited to:

- Exploration and collaboration in the development of standardized components of an adult education and literacy orientation process with identified learning outcomes
- Continued maintenance and updating to the professional development framework for the state that outlines required professional development activities in the areas of assessment, data collection, reporting and use, OACCRS and Program Administration. These activities will be outlined in the Oregon Adult Basic Skills Policy Manual.

## 3. Provision of TA:

Activities will include but may not be limited to:

- Provide technical assistance to eligible providers on strategies to achieve negotiated targets on the primary indicators of performance and other identified areas of compliance.
- Provide support to meet WIOA data collection and reporting requirements.

## 4. Monitoring and evaluation:

Activities will include but may not be limited to:

- CCWD will communicate to programs their responsibilities related to compliance with the award terms and conditions via multiple methods including training for new and continuing programs and by describing responsibilities in the Oregon ABS Policy Manual. In addition, CCWD will annually assess the risk of programs and conduct both desk and onsite monitoring to ensure compliance with federal regulations and grant conditions. Program Improvement Plans will be developed and technical assistance provided.

Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

CCWD will pursue the following permissible state leadership activities:

- To promote transition of adult education students to employment and/or postsecondary education, CCWD will fund the development of instructional content and models for career pathways. CCWD will explore the revision of OPABS and support the expansion of I—BEST and VESL models that integrate education and training as a method to facilitate student transition.
- Technical assistance to eligible providers will include support for developing and implementing strategies to achieve measurable progress toward the state adjusted performance measures
- Exploration and collaboration in the development of standardized components of an adult education and literacy orientation process with identified learning outcomes
- Development of Professional Development materials that are based upon state and local program needs in order to improve and/or ensure program quality and compliance.
- Support state and local participation in professional development at state and local meetings and conferences.

(f) **Assessing Quality**. Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

CCWD as the eligible agency will assess the quality of adult education and literacy activities on regular basis by:

- Reviewing quarterly performance (e.g., number of students enrolled, hours attended, matched pre and post—tests, etc.);
- Conducting annual desk monitoring and onsite technical assistance visits; and
- Reviewing annual financial reports.

Frequent reviews will utilize data collected and reported in TOPSpro Enterprise more effectively for continuous program improvement, allowing CCWD to tailor technical assistance to areas of enrollment, instruction, student persistence, and transition to either employment or postsecondary training.

Oregon Title II professional development participants currently assess their experience by completing an evaluation after each training. Participants also frequently have the opportunity to reflect on each training day or event and share their reflection with the professional development staff. This keeps the training team apprised of the participants' progress, understanding, and plans for using new information. As the State develops and implements interactive training modules – posted and readily accessible on the CCWD website - to support the Oregon Adult College and Career Readiness Standards,

faculty will be able to work in groups, with workshops facilitated by a trainer, or in self-paced mode using accompanying workbooks to document progress. The State will continue to review evidence of implementation, e.g., course outlines, lesson plans, and classroom observation, as other training opportunities in Learning Standards, data collection and use, English language acquisition, and other topics in order to ensure the quality of professional development.

In addition to the above, as part of the annual risk assessment policy, programs will be asked to self-reflect on their level of risk in the area of professional development and evaluate their participation in required activities. These activities include attendance at professional development planning meetings, online trainings for faculty, program administrators, and data professionals, participation in program-based professional learning communities and the completion of training plans and assignments. Programs are required to provide evidence of the completion of these activities by submitting the documents listed in the ABS Policy Manual for the scrutiny of state staff. The State ABS Team will also review this documentation and the self-assessment outcomes to identify those programs in which professional development technical assistance is needed. The self-assessment tool will be evaluated for effectiveness and refined as necessary in order for the information collected to provide a basis for examining the effectiveness and quality of instruction. The State ABS Team will also review data related to student outcomes (for example Measurable Skill Gains) and offer assistance (for example site visits, technical support for faculty and supervisors and comprehensive needs' analysis) to programs where high risk appears to correlate with low gains.

Oregon will use a variety of data sources including but not limited to program performance to determine if the professional development and technical assistance we are providing is achieving the desired outcomes for the program.

**ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES**

<b>States must provide written and signed certifications that:</b>	
1.	The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;
2.	The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;
3.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;
4.	All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;
5.	A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;
6.	The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;
7.	The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and
8.	The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;
<b>The State Plan must include assurances that:</b>	
1.	The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);
2.	The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;
3.	The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;

4.	Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.
5.	The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).

## **Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)**

*Instructions: In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions.*

Local programs will be required to describe the steps they will take to ensure equitable access to Title II activities for participants with race, national origin, color, disability, or age barriers. For state-funded professional development activities, accommodations will be made as appropriate to ensure equitable access.

The state will ensure local programs receive opportunities for professional development in complying with GEPA requirements by providing information during at least one State Director meeting on an annual basis.

State staff will be required adhere to the same expectations and participate in the annual professional development opportunity described above.

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 04/30/2020)

### **NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS**

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about the following provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

#### **To Whom Does This Provision Apply?**

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

### **What Does This Provision Require?**

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

### **What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?**

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.
  
- (4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

#### **Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements**

**According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.**

1. [SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. [Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. [SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(required, only if applicable\)](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

Performance Targets for Title II:

<b>2022-23 Indicator/Program</b>	<b>Title II Adult Education</b>
<b>Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Employment 4th Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Credential Attainment Rate</b>	TBD
<b>Measurable Skill Gains</b>	TBD
<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	using method from T1

<b>2023-24 Indicator/Program</b>	<b>Title II Adult Education</b>
<b>Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Employment 4th Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit</b>	TBD
<b>Credential Attainment Rate</b>	TBD
<b>Measurable Skill Gains</b>	TBD
<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	using method from T1

**WorkSource Oregon**

### **Shift to a Virtual Service Delivery Model**

In response to COVID, WSO centers closed to in-person traffic spring 2020 and did not fully reopen until summer 2021. During this transition, the state began to phase in a number of system enhancements to support the delivery of services in a virtual format. Enhancements included new video conferencing software for use with external customers; a new WSO website, available in multiple languages, that greatly improves customer access to the menu of reemployment and training services; an online scheduling tool, available in both English and Spanish, that allows job seekers to arrange virtual or in-person appointments with staff, or reserve computer time in a center; automated emails to inform job seekers of their registration status and encourage customer engagement with WSO staff; and customer relationship management software for customers to submit questions through a central portal, thus streamlining staff workflow in responding to inquiries. All enhancements were operational by late 2021.

The scheduling tool, launched in September 2020, has been popular with customers and helped streamline center workflow for staff. To date over 2,000 appointments have been scheduled, with seventy percent initiated online by the job seeker. Of those scheduling an appointment with staff, 60% opted for a virtual meeting using video conferencing software vs. meeting in-person with staff.

To further enhance the scheduling tool's utility in serving Oregon's diverse customer base, an updated version in ten additional languages (identified thru census data and customer use of other translation services) is planned for spring 2022. The state is also exploring options to integrate the tool with state email and calendaring systems to further enhance its utility in managing center workflow and communicating with customers.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program was an early adopter of the scheduling tool, encouraging claimants selected for the program to schedule their RESEA orientation with staff online. In addition, other workforce programs are exploring how the tool can be used to work more seamlessly together to connect customers with reemployment services. For example, the state's Unemployment Insurance division is exploring how the tool can be used to connect claimants seeking reemployment services with WSO center staff, rather than just providing them contact information.

WSO leadership remains committed to offering services thru a virtual format to expand service delivery to more and diverse communities including underserved populations while also helping to protect the health and safety of staff and customers in light of the ongoing pandemic.

### **D. COORDINATION, ALIGNMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES TO EMPLOYERS**

Business Services (pages 56-57 of state plan)

WSO continues to align business services to support workforce investment activities and meet the needs of businesses and support economic growth in each area. Leveraging and aligning collective resources brings enhanced communication, coordination, and collaboration among businesses, economic development, service providers, business team members, and local workforce development boards.

The public workforce system and business services teams work in tandem to connect the diverse communities we serve, such as veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, unemployment insurance claimants, and dislocated workers with employment opportunities.

Labor market challenges continue, with many workers retiring and choosing not to return to work due to the ongoing pandemic. To address these challenges, business staff saw successful quality placements for their employers through use of the labor exchange system, outreach, special events, and social media.

In addition, business staff utilized WSO's LinkedIn recruiter platform to help fill positions. The partnership with LinkedIn began July 2020 and to date has generated almost 7,500 followers, gained national recognition, and resulted in 95 quality hires with up to six figure salaries. Based on this success, WSO recently extended its LinkedIn partnership for three more years.

To help customers gain new in-demand skills, the Business Services team in 2021 partnered with Google to offer 1,000 scholarships to provide customers online training at no cost in the following areas: data analytics, project management, IT support and UX design. Based on the success of this partnership, another 1,000 scholarships were secured in 2022.

Throughout the pandemic, the business services team continued its partnerships with other special programs, such as STEP, RESEA, MSFW, Veterans and Trade Act, to ensure a pipeline exists for the referral of those customers for enhanced job matching and placement assistance. The business services team will continue to look for innovative ways to connect customers served by these special programs with job listings.

#### PY 2020 Business Services Data

- Total Business served = 9,931
- Total Staff assisted job listings = 1,513
- Self-Referral job listings = 275,227
- Downloaded job listings from the National Labor Exchange = 171,929
- Total staff-assisted hires = 1,292
- Total self-referral hires = 3,132
- Total staff-assisted placement and self-referral hires = 54,032

### **C. DESCRIBE THE STATE'S STRATEGY FOR PROVIDING REEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO UI CLAIMANTS AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS**

### Reemployment Services and Eligibility Program (pages 139-140 of state plan)

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregon adjusted its RESEA program beginning in PY 2019, and continued throughout PY 2020. RESEA conversations shifted to virtual environments, both over the telephone and through video conferencing. Selection criteria for RESEA was modified, and claimants who indicated they voluntarily quit, or were discharged from their jobs on their initial claim application, were included in the new pool for RESEA selection. ES staff shifted to help support UI, so a weekly maximum was set at 200, and the subsequent RESEA conversation was temporarily stopped. As the need of the UI program began to gradually decrease, the weekly maximum was increased from 200 to 600 in June 2021. This plan was approved by USDOL, and allowed Oregon to continue to offer RESEA services to a selection of claimants throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Recognizing the importance of the RESEA program in connecting claimants – particularly those from underserved population groups, including those facing barriers to employment such as low-income individuals, English language learners, individuals without housing, and individuals with disabilities – with reemployment services and its impact in shortening the duration of UI claims, the state made two significant changes to its RESEA program in 2021. *First, all unattached claimants are now required to participate in RESESA.* Previously only those identified as most likely to exhaust benefits were selected. This change will allow the state to serve a significantly larger and more diverse pool of customers. These conversations, in accordance with USDOL guidelines, are conducted one-on-one, either in-person or through video conferencing. *Second, those identified as most likely to exhaust benefits are now selected for a subsequent RESEA conversation.* Previously all claimants who remained unemployed and continued to claim benefits were selected. This change will help ensure that those most at risk of long-term unemployment are connected with reemployment and training services and remain engaged with WSO. In addition, subsequent conversations must now be conducted one-on-one, either in-person or thorough video conferencing. Based on staff feedback, one-on-one conversations are more impactful and help facilitate customer engagement with the workforce system.

An additional change in 2021 was the introduction of a scheduling tool for local WorkSource Oregon offices. Customers now have the option of scheduling an in-person appointment or a virtual appointment with a set date and time with staff. Scheduling an appointment is not required as drop-in customers continue to be served, but is a tool to be used when it works best for the customer.

iii. **Equity in service delivery and educational programming.** *States should examine which population groups experience inequities in access to and participation in public workforce programs that lead to quality jobs. The Departments encourage states to develop education, training, and career service strategies that better address and promote equity in service delivery. Alignment among programs, including programs that support low-income jobseekers such Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and those supporting individuals with disabilities promote economic stability.*

### **9. ADDRESSING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (page 107 of state plan)**

With the start of the pandemic, WSO had to adapt to a rapidly changing work environment, both for staff and for customers, and how it provided services to these groups. With unemployment claims surging to historic highs, there was a clear need for additional language assistance. It took time, but with information from the Governor's office, and other sources, Unemployment Insurance (UI) information was made available in 15 languages other than English. This was a significant enhancement as previously information was limited to three languages.

In addition, the state's Online Claim System was expanded to allow for new claims to be started in Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese in addition to English. A new contract was also created for vendors to provide telephonic interpretation services, which expanded the number of languages available.

These changes will help WSO staff meet the shared responsibility of serving customers seeking assistance with UI and to facilitate their reemployment.

## **B. STATE STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS**

Assessment of Workforce Development System (page 39 of state plan)

The state's Workforce and Talent Development Board, in partnership with local workforce development boards facilitated new legislation (Senate Bill 623, 2021) to establish the Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC) to assess the effectiveness of Oregon's public workforce development system immediately and every even year into the future.

Under SB 623, the CIC will identify and contract with an independent third-party entity to conduct an initial and bi-annual comprehensive assessment of the public workforce programs and services. The committee will ensure that input from a variety of Oregon's historically marginalized groups, or stakeholder groups, is incorporated in the assessment.

Under SB 623, the focus of the assessment will be to:

- advance racial justice, equity, diversity and inclusion through the programs and services delivered through the public workforce system;
- align state and local efforts to improve the public workforce system in this state;
- support improvements that create a more comprehensive public workforce system;
- provide quality employment experiences and equitable outcomes for job seekers and businesses participating in workforce programs;
- improve the quality of workforce resources, programs and services made available through the public workforce system, and the transparency of information regarding performance metrics and outcomes related to those resources, programs and services; and
- build on any current workforce program assessments that are required by law.

SB 623 also required the committee to present the results of each assessment, along with any recommendations for improvements, in reports to the Governor and to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to workforce development every even-numbered year.

One outcome of the initial assessment is Future Ready Oregon 2022, which proposes an investment of \$200M in Oregon’s workforce system. Led by Governor Kate Brown’s office, this initiative seeks to realize the full potential of Oregon’s workforce and meeting the needs of Oregon’s employers today and into the future by advancing Oregon’s economic competitiveness and ensuring equitable opportunities for a diverse workforce. In particular, Future Ready Oregon 2022 will advance opportunities for historically underserved communities, including adult learners, dislocated workers, and disconnected youth. Investments emphasize recruitment, retention, and career advancement opportunities, while prioritizing key populations, including people of color, women, people with low incomes, rural communities, veterans, and Oregonians who are incarcerated and formerly incarcerated. This initiative will be submitted as a bill in the 2022 Oregon Legislative Session.

**4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS AND ONE-STOP PROGRAM PARTNERS**

**C. PREVIOUS ASSESSMENT RESULTS** (page 82 of state plan)

Title I and Title III Assessment Results

Below are Title I and Title III program performance results for PYs 2019/20 as reported to US DOL. Of note, all programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Wagner-Peyser) failed to meet negotiated targets in PYs 2019/20 for Employment Second Quarter After Exit. In addition, all programs failed to meet negotiated targets for Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit in PY 2020. All programs exceeded their targets for Median Earnings in PYs 2019/20, with the exception of Wagner-Peyser, which failed to meet its target in PY 2020 based on adjusted levels of performance as calculated by US DOL (adjusted levels of performance take into account data on actual economic conditions and characteristics of program participants served).

The impact of COVID and the resulting economic downturn (mass layoffs, business closures, record UI claims, etc.) combined with temporary changes to UI which waived work search requirements likely impacted the state’s ability to meet Employment Second Quarter After Exit in PY 2020. While the programs also failed to meet targets for Employment Second Quarter After Exit in PY 2019, the gap between negotiated targets and actual performance was much less than PY 2020.

While the economic recovery has been strong, the state anticipates the economic downturn that started in 2020 will continue to impact performance into PY 2021 (and possibly beyond) as the measures look back several quarters and do not reflect current economic conditions. According to the Oregon Economic Forecast published November 2021, Oregon is expected to fully regain all of its pandemic-related lost jobs by fall 2022, leading to full employment by early 2023.

Program Year 2019

Program	Measure	Negotiated Levels	Actual Levels
Adult	Employment Q2	71.0%	68.1%
Adult	Employment Q4	69.0%	68.6%
Adult	Median Earnings	\$6,100	\$6,661

Program	Measure	Negotiated Levels	Actual Levels
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	45.0%	61.6%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q2	71.0%	69.2%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q4	69.0%	69.7%
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$6,100	\$6947
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	45.0%	63.8%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q2	71.0%	68.2%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q4	69.0%	69.5%
Wagner-Peyser	Median Earnings	\$6,100	\$6,630
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q2	62.5%	61.8%
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q4	59.0%	60.9%
Youth	Median Earnings	N/A	\$4,146.97
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	68.%	55.3%
Youth	Measurable Skill Gains	N/A	36.4%

Program Year 2020 (Includes Adjusted Levels as calculated by US DOL)

Program	Measure	Negotiated Levels /Adjusted Levels	Actual Levels
Adult	Employment Q2	71.4% / <b>69.2%</b>	63.2%
Adult	Employment Q4	71.0%	65.5%
Adult	Median Earnings	\$6,400 / <b>\$6,193</b>	\$6,893.85
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	60.5%	65.4%
Adult	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	64.4%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q2	71.4% / <b>71.4%</b>	64.1%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q4	72.0%	66.7%
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$6,800 / <b>\$6,826</b>	\$7,386.57
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	63.0%	67.7%
Dislocated Worker	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	63.5%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q2	68.2% / <b>71.1%</b>	61.3%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q4	68.0%	60.8%
Wagner-Peyser	Median Earnings	\$6,600 / <b>\$6,855</b>	\$6,689
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q2	63.5% / <b>66.2%</b>	62.8%
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q4	63.0%	60.2%
Youth	Median Earnings	\$3,477.00 / <b>\$3,687</b>	\$4,450.61
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	68.4%	53.2%
Youth	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	40.9%

Oregon continued its two pilot approaches to measure Effectiveness in Serving Employers: Employer Penetration Rate and Repeat Business Customer Rate. Program Year 2019 and 2020 rates are listed in the tables below. DOL has not established minimum standards for these measures.

Performance Goals - Core Programs

Program Year 2021 (Negotiated Targets - Pending Adjustment)

Program	Measure	Negotiated Levels	Adjusted Levels
Adult	Employment Q2	71.4%	
Adult	Employment Q4	71.0%	
Adult	Median Earnings	\$6,400	
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	60.5%	
Adult	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q2	71.4%	
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q4	72.0%	
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$6,800	
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	63.0%	
Dislocated Worker	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q2	68.2%	
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q4	68.0%	
Wagner-Peyser	Median Earnings	\$6,600	
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q2	63.5%	
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q4	63.0%	
Youth	Median Earnings	\$3,477.00	
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	68.4%	
Youth	Measurable Skill Gains	51.0%	

Note: As per Training Employment Notice (TEN) 14-21, the Departments of Labor and Education have determined it is appropriate for DOL to begin assessing performance for two performance indicators under WIOA title I and III core programs for PYs 2020 and 2021 in accordance with the phased-in approach to performance assessments as described in TEG 11-19. The Departments, as permitted under section 503(a) of WIOA, will delay assessing performance for the purpose of imposing sanctions for the remaining performance indicators. The Departments will assess performance only for the Individual Indicator Scores for two indicators – Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit and Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit – for the WIOA title I and III core programs.

Program Year 2022 (Expected)

Program	Measure	Expected
Adult	Employment Q2	61.30%
Adult	Employment Q4	64%
Adult	Median Earnings	\$7,031.73
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	67%
Adult	Measurable Skill Gains	65%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q2	62%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q4	64%
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$7,608.17
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	70%
Dislocated Worker	Measurable Skill Gains	64%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q2	68.2
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q4	68.0
Wagner-Peyser	Median Earnings	\$6,959
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q2	63%

Program	Measure	Expected
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q4	60.20%
Youth	Median Earnings	\$4,628.63
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	52%
Youth	Measurable Skill Gains	43%

Program Year 2023 (Expected)

Program	Measure	Expected
Adult	Employment Q2	61%
Adult	Employment Q4	64%
Adult	Median Earnings	\$7,102.04
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	68%
Adult	Measurable Skill Gains	65.5%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q2	62%
Dislocated Worker	Employment Q4	63%
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$7,684.25
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	70%
Dislocated Worker	Measurable Skill Gains	64.5%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q2	68.2%
Wagner-Peyser	Employment Q4	68.0%
Wagner-Peyser	Median Earnings	\$7,098
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q2	64%
Youth	Employment, Education, Training Q4	61%
Youth	Median Earnings	\$4,721.21
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	52%
Youth	Measurable Skill Gains	45%

Customer Satisfaction: Program Year 2019

Customer Type	Number Selected / Surveyed	Response Rate
Businesses	4,545	10%
Individuals	139,879*	9%

\*The number of individuals surveyed significantly increased between March 2020 and June 2020 because of the increase in initial unemployment insurance claims resulting from the pandemic.

Customer Satisfaction: Program Year 2020

Customer Type	Number Selected / Surveyed	Response Rate
Businesses	4,284	9%
Individuals	28,782*	11%

\*The Oregon legislature approved temporarily stopping the sending of surveys to UI claimants during the pandemic, resulting in a significant reduction in the number of individuals surveyed. Survey distribution to UI claimants stopped June 2020 and restarted July 2021 for PY21.

The Employer Penetration Rate tracks the percentage of employers who are using the core program services out of all employers represented in an area or State served by the public workforce system.

Repeat Business Customer Rate tracks the percentage of employers who receive services that use core program services more than once.

#### Results – Program Year 2020

The state saw declines in both Job Seeker and Employer satisfaction resulting from the impacts to the labor market and workforce system caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, unprecedented volume of claims, and need to shift staffing from employment services to unemployment tasks to address claims volume. WorkSource Centers have already begun the shift back to ES operations and customer satisfaction survey results are seeing an improvement. Results are expected to return to pre-pandemic levels as services continue returning to “normal.” A few of the innovative and well-received ways of providing services that were developed during the pandemic will be kept in place, offering the potential to improve satisfaction even above pre-pandemic levels.

#### WorkSource Business Services

Program goals include a referral to hire ratio target of 5-1, increasing the percentage of staff assisted job listings filled to 70%, and filling staff-assisted job listings within 30 days. The state is pleased to report that its referral to hire ratio was 2.75-1 for PY 2019 and 2.32-1 for PY 2020, besting its target of 5-1. The percentage of job listings filled was 57% for PY 2019 and 52% for PY 2020. It’s important to note that while the goal was 70%, the historical rate has been around 50% and increasing the percentage is not easy. That said, the percentage of listings filled in PYs 2019/20 was higher than PYs 2017/18. And finally, the (average) number of days to fill job listings was 19 days for PY 2019 and 17 days for PY 2020. These outcomes are well below the target of 30 days and below those reported in PYs 2017/18.

This data along with other metrics and anecdotal evidence shows Business Services were able to sustain placement levels with increasingly fewer referrals which shows a better understanding of the skills, knowledge and abilities employers need to be successful. For employers, this means lower recruitment costs, faster recruitment times, higher quality candidates, and greater confidence in WorkSource Oregon’s ability to fill higher level positions.

Non-numerical goals include maintaining awareness of candidates from targeted populations to include those served by federal programs such as Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, Veterans, Vocational Rehabilitation, Oregon Commission for the Blind, and SNAP Training and Employment. To maintain this awareness and build partnerships, business services staff regularly meet with federal program coordinators and other workforce partners.

#### Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is both a federal initiative and an important element of the department’s strategy to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefit

claimants become reemployed. Selected claimants are required to meet one-on-one with staff and complete an initial RESEA interview. In Program Years 2019/20, 30,463 claimants attended an initial RESEA interview with staff. *Note: The RESEA program was significantly scaled back at the end of PY 2019 in response to WSO centers closing to in-person traffic and RESEA staff being redeployed to assist with UI claims. The program did not return to full strength until mid-PY 2021. As such, the number of claimants attending an initial RESEA interview in PYS 2019/20 (30,463) was significantly less than PYS 2017/18 (64,565).*

Despite these operational changes, the average weeks to reemployment for program participants in PY 2019 was 19.4 compared to roughly 15 in PYS 2017/18; and the average claim duration was 15.08 weeks compared to roughly 13 weeks in PYS 2017/18. These measures were less favorable in PY 2019 due in part to economic changes related to COVID, changes in UI rule and law (which saw the work search requirements waived in 2020 among other things) and WSO centers being closed to in-person traffic in 2020, among other things. (For these reasons, the state did not evaluate RESEA outcomes for PY 2020.)

The state retooled and relaunched its RESEA program in 2021 with two key changes. First, all unattached claimants are now selected for an initial RESEA conversation, rather than those identified as likely to exhaust benefits. Second, those identified as likely to exhaust benefits are now selected for a subsequent (second) RESEA conversation, rather than those that simply continue to claim benefits.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these changes and to ensure that reemployment services provided to RESEA participants are impactful (defined by the U.S. Department of Labor's Clearing House for Labor and Research as having a "high" or "moderate" causal evidence rating – TEGL 6-19), the state in PY 2021 will launch a multi-year evaluation of the RESEA program.

#### SNAP Employment and Training Program (STEP)

Customers served under STEP face more employment barriers than the average Wagner-Peyser participant. In PY 2020, the STEP program placed 754 participants for a 39% placement rate. Staff completed 6,403 orientations with 2,043 customers completing an Opportunity Plan (individual employment plan).

#### Customer Satisfaction

Oregon collects customer satisfaction survey results every month from job seekers that use the workforce system. Customer satisfaction is measured by favorable response rate across several criteria such as overall quality of service, timeliness of service, likely to recommend service to others, etc. Favorable response rate is measured by dividing number of responses that were rated as good or excellent by total responses.

In PY 2019 the overall customer satisfaction rate for job seekers was above 80%, consistent with PYS 2017/18. Unfortunately, satisfaction dropped in PY 2020 to 58% as the state dealt with record levels of UI claims and WSO centers closed to in-person traffic. Customer satisfaction for the first five months of PY 2021 (thru November 2021) is close to 70%, likely a result of a rebounding economy and WSO centers

fully staffed and reopen to in-person traffic. The state anticipates this trend to continue with a return to pre-pandemic customer satisfaction levels by PY 2022.

In PY 2019 the overall customer satisfaction rate for businesses was 78%, consistent with PYs 2017/18. Customer satisfaction dropped slightly in PY 2020 to 70% as the state dealt with record levels of UI claims and business closures. Unfortunately, customer satisfaction for the first five months of PY 2021 (thru November 2021) has continued this downward trend, coming in at 54%. The state believes this is a direct reflection of the struggles many businesses are facing in finding qualified candidates compounded by the current supply chain problems and operational issues related to COVID health and safety measures.

#### **D. EVALUATION** (page 88 of state plan)

##### Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program

Oregon will be contracting with a vendor in PY 2021 to evaluate its entire RESEA program. The state plans to use an impact study using the most rigorous and appropriate design feasible. Contracting out is not required, but evaluations cannot be conducted by staff affiliated with the program. This will be a multi-year evaluation and changes to the program may be implemented while still under evaluation based on preliminary evidentiary findings or results. RESEA program staff are engaged in an ongoing dialogue with Oregon's WIOA partners and local workforce development boards. These conversations will continue to build on the infrastructure and integration between RESEA and WIOA. Innovative interventions or service delivery strategies that demonstrate improved employment outcomes of RESEA participants and reduce the average duration of unemployment compensation receipt through employment will be a priority in our collaborative systems alignment work, as we focus on promoting the broader vision of WIOA of increased program integration and service delivery for job seekers, including claimants.

The RESEA program in PY 2020 piloted a special workshop titled Rethinking Job Search (Rethinking). Using cognitive-behavioral techniques to enhance motivation and self-efficacy in job-search activities, Rethinking aims to bolster job seekers' confidence in their ability to be quickly reemployed. The content is delivered in 12 facilitated sessions with a focus on management of thoughts and emotions, accountability, self-esteem and personal responsibility, and managing goals.

This pilot varied from previous larger-scale Rethinking projects in that workshops were conducted in a virtual service-delivery format because of COVID. Program objectives were to identify the redeployed program's feasibility, effectiveness of delivery, and short-term outcomes.

The following are short-term outcomes of the Rethinking pilot that pertain to emotional intelligence knowledge, and attitudes of participants. In summary, Rethinking participants:

- *Improved their knowledge of emotional intelligence (EI) concepts.* Participants experienced greater gains in EI knowledge than non-participants.

- *Gained confidence and motivation for job-searching.* Most respondents (20 of 24) reported improved confidence. All respondents reported either increased or stable motivation. These changes were sustained after program completion.
- *Became re-employed.* 42% of Rethinking participants reported finding work within 30 days of completing the Rethinking training.

Based on the pilot’s success, the state hopes to offer additional Rethinking workshops to eligible RESEA participants in 2022. For more information about the Rethinking Job Search program, click [here](#).

## **A. CORE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE’S STRATEGY**

### Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (page 45 of state plan)

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for workers, commonly referred to as Trade Act, assists workers who have been laid-off or had a reduction of work hours due to foreign competition become re-employed in suitable work. Trade Act offers a variety of benefits and services for eligible workers: re-employment services, job search and relocation allowances, training benefits, income support, tax credit for health insurance, and wage subsidy for workers 50 or older.

Trade Act is an active and engaged partner to core programs and WSO centers. Co-enrollment occurs based on needs and eligibility, and documented through collaboration with partners and data systems.

Trade Act Navigators (TANs) support local rapid response service delivery and have a focus on re-employment services to trade-affected workers. Trade Act staff refer participants to support services outside of what Trade is able to provide for barrier removal.

TAA Information Sessions review benefits and services of the TAA Program, TRA deadlines, as well as sector strategies and partner services available in local areas.

Trade Act staff conduct comprehensive assessments of skill level, aptitude, abilities, skill gaps, career interests, employment barriers, and supportive service needs. To avoid duplication of services, Trade Act accepts assessments completed by partner staff and provides assessment and training plan information to partners of co-enrolled participants.

The Oregon Trade Act program’s Central Trade Act Unit (CTAU) Case Management team assists trade-affected workers with identifying skill gaps and accessing and completing training required for the worker to become re-employed. Training for affected-workers should lead to employment in a high demand occupation, supported by labor market information, assessments, and meeting required criteria for training approval.

Trade Act participates in strategy meetings for each certified TAA petition that includes staff from Trade, CCWD, local service providers and unemployment insurance. Items reviewed during the meeting include wraparound services that are provided for participants that meet other funding stream requirements from partners, an overview of what Trade Act can pay for and services provided, any special training opportunities in the area, and a communication plan between partners.

During 2020-2021, the Oregon Trade Act program was approved to bring the TRA unit into the Central Trade Act unit. To improve upon customer service, the TRA unit joined the TAA call center to utilize one phone number, which gives participants one entry point for Trade Act services.

In support of Oregon's co-enrollment efforts, TAA currently refers all dislocated workers, who are trade eligible, to dislocated worker programs across the state.

The Trade Act program plans to host annual retreats beginning summer 2022 with OED area managers, business services teams, workforce board staff and Title I providers to collaborate on service delivery strategies to better serve the common customer including underserved populations. The retreats will be co-sponsored by the Oregon Trade program and the state's Higher Education Coordinating Committee (responsible for management and oversight of Title I funds).

TAA staff continue to provide videos of both Rapid Response and Trade Act Information Sessions as well as providing in-person services to underserved communities who may not be able to access virtual services. Additionally, the Oregon Trade Act Program has been approved by the Department of Labor for a two-year pilot to assist Trade affected Oregonians who meet Governor's Brown definition of underserved communities, obtain technology they need to have equitable access to services and employment opportunities.

#### SNAP Employment and Training Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Training Program (SNAP E&T) provides Oregonian's with employment and training services to help them achieve and maintain their employment goals. Part of the SNAP E&T program is administered by the Oregon Employment Department (OED) and funded through a contract with the Oregon Department of Human Services' (DHS) Self-Sufficiency program. Another statewide based SNAP E&T provider is the Oregon Community College Consortium which includes all 17 community colleges in Oregon. Other WSO partners including numerous non-profit and community-based organizations around the state also receive funds through DHS to provide SNAP E&T services. This creates a SNAP Provider Network to support participants and provide an array of wraparound services, particularly for those with specialized needs such as homeless youth and adults, refugees and those in recovery and reentry programs.

SNAP participants receive a one-on-one orientation to the employment and training services available through WSO, the SNP Provider Network, and other community partners. This orientation provides an overview of the program, its benefits and requirements, so SNAP participants can choose to participate, or not participate, in the SNAP E&T program.

SNAP participants are served through a case management model of customer service. This model provides each SNAP participant with a workforce professional who works with the participant and then guides, motivates, and supports them in their process of obtaining employment. Participants are also eligible for support services to include gas vouchers, bus tickets, interview clothing, tools, and training.

Launched in 2017 as a pilot program, OED has since expanded the program statewide and continues to develop the program and build partnerships with ODHS, the SNAP Provider Network and other WSO programs such as regional business services teams to help remove barriers and place participants with employment and training opportunities. Today the SNAP E&T program plays a pivotal role in Oregon's workforce system for serving low-income and underserved communities, assisting them with reemployment, training and support services to help them achieve career goals.

Participation in the STEP program dropped in PY 2020 as WSO centers, community colleges, and public libraries closed their doors to the public due to COVID. In response, the STEP program established a partnership with Free Geek, an Oregon-based non-profit, to ensure STEP participant's digital connectivity needs were met. Through this partnership, the SNAP program provided over 400 free laptops to STEP participants to help them complete training and employment activities. The STEP program plans to continue this partnership with Free Geek into PY 2021 and beyond as resources and funding allow.

COVID-19 changed the employment outlook for many STEP participants. As many industries reduced employment, STEP participants engaged in training activities that better aligned with the new post-COVID economy. The SNAP program increased job training funding for occupations within Oregon's Sector Partnership and Priority Occupations as defined by Oregon's Workforce Development Boards. In FFY 21, 138 participants received short-term training costing roughly \$230,000, while 211 received technical/vocational training costing roughly \$416,000. The program expects to see continued enrollment in job training with positive occupation outcomes in PY 2021 and beyond.

In addition to funding training activities, the STEP program launched a pilot in January 2020, to offer additional assistance with childcare, housing, utilities, automobile repair, and automobile Insurance to help participants address barriers to employment and remain engaged in reemployment and training activities. By the start of PY 2021, these support services were expanded statewide. The STEP program expects these support services to remain in place through Program Years 2022 and 2023.

And finally, in response to WSO center closures during the pandemic, the STEP program began offering assistance with internet and phone services in July 2020 to help customers connect virtually with programs and services. These services proved popular and by the end of PY 2020, almost \$49,000 was disbursed to eligible participants. The disbursements are expected to increase in PY 2021 and beyond as the economy recovers and STEP participation increases.

With WSO centers closed for much of PY 2020, and many ES staff assisting with UI claims processing, the total amount spent on all support services in PY 2020 was roughly \$420,000 compared to just over \$1M in PY 2019. Funding is expected to increase to pre-pandemic levels in PY 2021 now that centers are open and fully staffed.

## B. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 2. REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP (page 118 of state plan)

Registered Apprenticeship is integral to Oregon's workforce and education system. The registered apprenticeship system consists of multiple stakeholders, including the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), Oregon Employment Department (OED), Oregon Department of Education (ODE), Oregon community colleges, union and non-union training centers, and industry. HECC, BOLI, OED, and ODE work together on an inter-agency apprenticeship team

to support and collaborate on various work efforts related to improving the registered apprenticeship system.

Over the last year, the inter-agency apprenticeship team worked together to create a draft strategic plan that prioritizes equity and access to the apprenticeship system. The team is now going through an action planning process to identify the milestones they would like to achieve within the next year, to realize the vision of the strategic plan. One of the milestones agreed upon is to create structure and guidelines around how Oregon invites other organizations to be part of the apprenticeship grant application processes. The hope is that guidelines will make grants more accessible to organizations that may have previously been unable to present a sufficient grant application within a condensed timeline.

Oregon has also increased the training resources it has available for community partners, businesses, and employers that are interested in pursuing registered apprenticeship. The Oregon Apprenticeship website now has multiple guides available on how to create and maintain a registered apprenticeship program. The website also contains several explainer videos for job seekers and businesses around registered apprenticeship. The intent of the guides and training videos are to create shared understanding for customers around how to navigate the registered apprenticeship system.

The Oregon Employment Department (OED), in conjunction with the Apprenticeship Training Division (ATD) of the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), has worked over the past several years to train staff and workforce system partners on the basics of registered apprenticeship. Registered apprenticeship training is now offered to every new WorkSource Oregon staff person as part of their onboarding process. This training gives staff a foundation of registered apprenticeship knowledge and the tools to assist a job seeking customer in navigating the registered apprenticeship system. Apprenticeship connections in WorkSource Centers are primarily focused on how to connect job seekers to registered apprenticeship programs. While this is an important component of offering apprenticeship services in WorkSource Centers, OED will work to increase the registered apprenticeship connections WorkSource can offer to businesses.

## **Agricultural Outreach Plan**

***E. AGRICULTURAL OUTREACH PLAN (AOP). EACH STATE AGENCY MUST DEVELOP AN AOP EVERY FOUR YEARS AS PART OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 102 OR 103 OF WIOA. THE AOP MUST INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF NEED. AN ASSESSMENT NEED DESCRIBES THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.***

**1. ASSESSMENT OF NEED. PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE AREA BASED ON PAST AND PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL AND FARMWORKER ACTIVITY IN THE STATE. SUCH NEEDS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND HOUSING.**

#### Assessment of Need

Agriculture employers continue to note that there seem to be fewer U.S. workers to help with the harvest and are increasingly utilizing the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program to meet the need for seasonal labor. Growers are concerned that various factors such as 1) the aging of the workforce, 2) a younger generation that chooses not to follow in their parents' paths, but instead pursue higher education, and 3) jobs in the manufacturing sector, food service, and construction opportunities may diminish the availability of agricultural workers. The cost of providing housing is prohibitive and the need for help in this area is acute.

Oregon's high minimum wage – one of the highest in the country – is one factor that could help retain or attract more workers from other states. Another factor that could help entice workers is improvement of non-wage terms and conditions of employment. An option to meeting employer need for workers is the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), which involves recruiting workers in neighboring states. One of the requirements imposed by the alternative recruitment systems is the Adverse Effect Wage Rate, which is a higher wage rate that guarantees both domestic and foreign agricultural workers (performing the same work) a wage that is higher than the Oregon minimum wage, providing an incentive to workers in the agricultural system. These recruitment options also require employers to give hiring preference to domestic farmworkers, while supplementing Oregon's agricultural workforce through growing use of the H-2A program, which allows agricultural employers to bring temporary workers from foreign countries to harvest the crops. One of OED's longstanding goals has been and will continue to be connecting domestic MSFWs with agricultural employers as appropriate.

Technical assistance for MSFW outreach workers includes access to 1) training staff using a just-in-time training model, 2) operations and policy analysts for technical program support, and 3) an outreach worker manual (created in 2019). Yearly training for outreach workers includes partner collaboration (such as the National Farmworker Jobs Program, Title I, and local service providers), programmatic updates, and training on topics such as supportive services in the community, employment service Complaint System, and a summary of farmworker rights and conditions of employment.

Farmworker housing could be improved by broader use of available tax credits by employers. There are 330 registered camps that can house up to 10,000 individuals. Unfortunately, many agriculture

employers are not aware of these tax credits to help them improve housing conditions for farmworkers and their families. As a result, many migrant farmworkers continue to live in substandard housing. Oregon's migrant labor camp housing conditions include isolation, reduced access to services, 24-hour eviction notice, and excess heat during peak months of harvest. To remedy this, MSFW housing in Oregon should undergo annual reviews by the Oregon Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that take into account the promotion of tax credit funds to the agriculture employer base, and possibly more stringent housing inspection standards.

The unique workforce needs of MSFWs in Oregon are also addressed and provided by the Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC), operator of the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) under the WIOA section 167. OHDC has a presence in various counties in Oregon and coordinates with State Workforce Agency (SWA) outreach staff to conduct outreach to MSFWs through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established in 2018. Outreach services are conducted in areas where MSFWs work, live and congregate.

The SWA will also promote NFJP career and training services to MSFWs registered in the SWA employment system. OHDC and NFJP staff will likewise promote services provided to MSFWs via the SWA system, and advise MSFWs on the Complaint System. The partnership will also require OHDC and NFJP staff to assist MSFWs in the completion of a full registration in the SWA's labor exchange system (iMatchSkills) to facilitate job matching, and the receipt of reemployment services for dual enrolled customers. OHDC provides NFJP career and training services in the following locations:

- OHDC Hood River, Wasco County;
- OHDC Woodburn, Marion/Polk/Yamhill Counties;
- OHDC Klamath Falls, Klamath/Lake Counties;
- OHDC Hermiston, Umatilla County;
- OHDC Ontario, Malheur County;
- OHDC Tigard, East Multnomah/Clackamas Counties;
- OHDC Hillsboro/Beaverton, Washington County;
- OHDC Affiliate Medford, Jackson/Josephine Counties;
- OHDC Affiliate Bend/Redmond/Madras, Jefferson/Deschutes/Crook Counties; and
- OHDC Affiliate North Coast, Lincoln/Tillamook/Clatsop Counties.

**2. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY IN THE STATE MEANS: 1) IDENTIFYING THE TOP FIVE LABOR-INTENSIVE CROPS, THE MONTHS OF HEAVY ACTIVITY, AND THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF PRIME ACTIVITY; 2) SUMMARIZE THE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS' NEEDS IN THE STATE (I.E. ARE THEY PREDOMINANTLY HIRING LOCAL OR FOREIGN WORKERS, ARE THEY EXPRESSING THAT THERE IS A**

**SCARCITY IN THE AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE); AND 3) IDENTIFYING ANY ECONOMIC, NATURAL, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT ARE AFFECTING AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OR ANY PROJECTED FACTORS THAT WILL AFFECT AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE**

Oregon cultivates over 225 unique crops each with a dynamic labor demand. Based on production value, the top labor-intensive crops in Oregon are: fruit crops (e.g. apples, cherries, and blueberries) grown primarily in the Columbia Gorge and Willamette Valley regions with labor demand peaking June to September; vegetable crops (e.g. onions, rhubarb, and sweet corn) grown primarily in Northeast Oregon and the Willamette Valley regions with labor demand peaking July to October; greenhouse and nursery stock grown primarily in the Willamette Valley with labor demand peaking in March to September; Christmas trees grown primarily in the Willamette Valley with labor demand peaking in October to December; and hemp grown statewide with labor demand peaking in August to November.

Agriculture continues to be one of Oregon's multi-million dollar industries and is a chief contributor to the Oregon economy. The top agricultural commodities in Oregon are wine grapes, pears, and hazelnuts. Other commodities are hay, wheat and potatoes. The geographical agricultural regions for these crops are eastern Oregon, the Columbia Gorge, southern Oregon, and the Willamette Valley. Tree fruits are harvested in July through December, and blueberries in July through August. Vegetables, such as onions and corn, are harvested from August through December. Greenhouse plants are grown and sold primarily from March through September, and Christmas trees are tended to and harvested from July through November.

Employers struggle finding domestic workers who want to work in agriculture. To meet this demand, applications for the Foreign Labor Certification Program have increased significantly, from 47 in 2016, to 103 in 2019. Employers have requested to bring in upwards of 7,000 foreign workers since 2016.

Employers are also required to provide H2-A foreign and corresponding domestic workers with housing when conditions of the contract are met for travel distance from their place of residence. The Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will conduct the first housing authorization and consultation, and the State Workforce Agency (SWA) will conduct housing consultations subsequent years as authorized. Housing consultations conducted by the OED have increased significantly in recent years, from five in 2016 and ten in 2017, to 64 in 2018 and 88 in 2019.

**3. AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF FARMWORKERS MEANS SUMMARIZING MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARM WORKER (MSFW) CHARACTERISTICS (INCLUDING IF THEY ARE PREDOMINANTLY FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES, WHAT LANGUAGE(S) THEY SPEAK, THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MSFWS IN THE STATE DURING PEAK SEASON AND DURING LOW SEASON, AND WHETHER THEY TEND TO BE MIGRANT, SEASONAL, OR YEAR-ROUND FARMWORKERS). THIS INFORMATION MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DATA SUPPLIED BY WIOA SECTION 167 NATIONAL FARMWORKER JOBS PROGRAM (NFJP) GRANTEES, OTHER MSFW ORGANIZATIONS, EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS, AND STATE AND/OR FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SOURCES SUCH AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION**

The most recent and highly used enumeration study on the number of MSFWs in Oregon comes from Mallory Rahe, PHD, Oregon State University Extension Service. This study concludes that during the peak seasons, which includes reforestation under the Migrant Seasonal Protection Act, there are 60,000 seasonal workers and 30,000 migrant workers for a total of 90,000 MSFWs. While the migrant stream is slowly diminishing, an additional 2,000 – 3,000 H2-A foreign workers have started to replace a portion of the workforce on a seasonal basis. It's projected that this will continue to increase annually, in addition to the reforestation H2-B workforce based predominantly in southern Oregon. The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) manages the certification process of farm labor contractors, of which there are over 200 in the state.

Employers that provide good housing for their workforce often find their employees return the next season. Agricultural employers that have substandard housing for farmworkers are generally in a continuous struggle to find farmworkers to meet their harvest demands.

The most stable farmworker workforce in Oregon is the nursery industry. Oregon is one of the three top nursery producing states in the country and employs over 22,000 workers on a permanent/seasonal basis. Oregon's nursery industry also includes two of the state's top agricultural commodities, and is a driving force in the state's economy. Other top agricultural commodities in Oregon are the expanding vineyard industry, hops, blueberries, strawberries, apples, pears, cherries, grass-seed, onions, and hazelnuts.

While the predominant language of the Hispanic/Latino MSFW workforce is Spanish, a number of indigenous dialects such as Huichol, Mayan Yucatan, Mixteco-Nahuatl, Trique-Tarasco and Zapoteco can present challenges to the medical, education and employment fields.

Complaints from farmworkers include not being paid or paid incorrectly, safety conditions, inadequate housing issues, and sexual harassment and fear of retaliation by employers if they speak up about issues.

#### **4. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

In January 2022 USDOL announced its annual list of significant MSFW states (the 20 states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activity) and each state's designated significant MSFW one-stop centers (centers in which MSFWs account for ten percent or more of the annual participants or the administrator determines they must be included due to special circumstances such as an estimated large number of MSFW in the service area).

Oregon's rank as a significant MSFW state rose from 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> (placing it behind only Florida, Texas and California) while the number of significant MSFW one-stops (identified in Oregon as WorkSource Centers) remained at 21. The significant WSO Centers include Albany, Astoria, Beaverton/Hillsboro, Dallas, Eugene, Gresham, Hermiston, Klamath Falls, Madras, McMinnville, Medford, Newport, Ontario, Oregon City, Pendleton, Portland Central, Redmond, Salem, The Dalles, Tigard, and Woodburn. Federal guidance mandates that significant MSFW states have full-time, year round staff to conduct outreach duties to MSFWs.

The COVID-19 pandemic and other environmental states of emergency have highlighted longstanding systemic inequities in the workforce system for marginalized and underserved communities, including MSFWs. To address these gaps, also a concern raised by the SMA, and better align the program with federal and state goals to examine and enhance services to customers with barriers, the state is restructuring its MSFW outreach efforts through a new, more strategic business model.

Under this updated strategic model, full-time MSFW outreach specialists will report directly to managers in charge of, and responsible for, program outcomes and effective service delivery rather than to the local center managers. The state will be broken into four MSFW service zones or delivery areas, targeted with the needs of businesses and workers alike to maximize effectiveness. Staff will be responsible for outreach to one or more field office within their assigned area, and specializing in the needs of the counties they are assigned.

The zone managers will be responsible for programmatic oversight of MSFW outreach activities to include meeting federal goals and other performance metrics as identified. They will also be charged with strengthening relationships within the network of MSFW service providers, including WIOA programs offering reemployment and training services such as Title 1 Adult and Dislocated Worker, Apprenticeship, and SNAP Training and Employment (STEP). This model is slated for implementation summer 2022.

The primary role of outreach staff is to conduct especially vigorous outreach to farmworkers, including where they live, work, and gather. Outreach staff focus on educating farmworkers about workforce services and benefits available through local WSO centers and partner organizations, making quality referrals to MSFWs seeking reemployment and training services, and advocating for the Complaint System to ensure that MSFWs are aware of their legal protections. They also build relationships with workforce partners and educate them about the MSFW program through on-site visits, attending staff meetings, and making presentations. Of note, Oregon has a population of farmworkers who require information in indigenous languages to effectively learn about workforce services, and outreach staff work to ensure those language needs are met.

OED remains committed to exploring the ability of conducting outreach activities to reach unknown populations of MSFWs that need to be informed of their legal protections, the Complaint System, and the services available to them through Oregon's WSO Centers.

OED is also conducting outreach activities with its Section 167 partner, Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC), local interest groups, employer groups through employer and worker forums, and farmworker support groups as possible, and appropriate.

The OED outreach goal for Program Year 2021 is to contact 30,900 MSFWs, and increase that number by 3% each Program Year through 2023. OED will look to reach an estimated 1,500 agricultural employers as the H2-A program continues to increase in Oregon. In PY 2020, Oregon MSFW outreach staff contacted 34,253 MSFWs, far exceeding its outreach goals. Partner agencies that conduct outreach to MSFWs come into contact with an average of 10,000 MSFWs annually, per quarterly reports they provide to OED.

The State Workforce Agency (SWA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC)/National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in 2018 to facilitate MSFW registrations in the state's labor-exchange system (iMatchSkills) to increase access to reemployment and training services under WIOA. The MOU also provides NFJP staff access to job listings, the employer referral system, and wage data to help determine NFJP eligibility and provide enhanced services to MSFWs.

The Monitor Advocate will continue to work with business organizations, community service providers, and other workforce partners to explore opportunities for strengthening partnerships to improve outreach. Historically this type of work, which often involves presentations to partner agencies or meeting one-on-one with program staff, has been met with positive outcome. The Monitor Advocate looks forward to continuing this collaborative work that is critical to the success of the MSFW program.

WorkSource Oregon (WSO) staff work closely with the training resources available through the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) to make co-enrolled MSFW training and education referrals. Other training resources specifically for migrant workers include, but are not limited to, Oregon State University College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), Chemeketa Community College – College Assistance Migrant Program, Portland Community College – College Assistance Migrant Program, Oregon Migrant Leadership Institute, University of Oregon High School Equivalency Program (HEP), Chemeketa Community College High School Equivalency, High Desert Education Service District Program, and Portland Community College High School Equivalency Program (HEP).

Agencies that the SWA partners with to serve MSFWs and provide education and legal assistance include:

- National Farmworker Jobs Program;
- Community Colleges;
- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP);
- Statewide Migrant Head Start;
- Oregon Childhood Development Corp, MSFW State Childcare;
- Legal Aid for MSFWs;
- Oregon Law Center;
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission;
- Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries;
- U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour;
- U.S. Department of Justice;

- Centro Cultural; and
- Portland Mexican Consulate.

To help MSFW outreach staff and frontline WSO staff identify MSFWs, the state labor-exchange system (iMatchSkills) displays an MSFW indicator in the job seeker's registration profile. Staff can also search for MSFWs using the MSFW indicator alone or in conjunction with other delimiters such as last contact date, local office of assignment, assigned staff, and services received by other programs such as SNAP Employment and Training.

MSFWs referred to local WSO centers for job-placement assistance complete an intake process that includes registration in the state labor-exchange system (iMatchSkills) and a one-on-one meeting with staff that includes an assessment of needs, an orientation to workforce services and programs to include use of the state's electronic job board, and the provision of labor market and occupational information. Staff also provide reemployment assistance to include use of the state's electronic job board and assistance in applying for and filling out employment applications for positions listed with WSO. Staff also refer customers to appropriate and relevant WIOA title I partner agencies and to the local area National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) for reemployment and training services.

OED will also educate agricultural employers about the responsibilities they have to workers, make job placement services available, and provide training on using the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) that includes regular agriculture listings and H2-A job listings. This training helps staff work with employers, who increasingly need compliance support to navigate the H2-A application process which can be administratively complex. OED is also conducting wage and practice surveys to assess real-time agricultural working conditions to better determine requirements for H-2A job listings, and to help employers recruit workers. In the next four years, OED expects to continue the increase of H2-A applications by agriculture employers. This will require more frequent and coordinated field visits to the workers that will be working alongside Oregon domestic MSFWs by the SMA, MSFW outreach specialist, and partner organizations.

Oregon Employment Department (OED) technical staff support training WSO office and MSFW outreach staff as they onboard regarding the basics of Wagner-Peyser and WIOA. The Monitor Advocate provides training on the MSFW Complaint System, outreach services, the Monitor Advocate system, sexual harassment, and other programs and initiatives. They also receive training through the Foreign Labor Certification Program Coordinator on how to conduct Agricultural Labor Housing Consultations for employers who utilize the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) and the H2-A program.

Technical assistance for outreach workers includes annual MSFW statewide training. This three-day training (conference) focuses on the availability of training opportunities for MSFWs, partner collaboration (such as the NFJP, Title I, and local service providers), supportive service in the community, employment service Complaint System, and providing a summary of farmworker rights, legal protections and conditions of employment.

To facilitate communication between Employment Services (ES) and UI divisions and help strengthen partnerships for improved service delivery to shared customers (including MSFWs), WSO held a series of facilitated conversations around the state in 2019 with WSO staff (to include MSFW outreach staff) and UI center staff. Titled “WSO/UI Connectivity: Strengthening the Bond,” these sessions allowed staff to build relationships, explore service delivery approaches, and share business practices with co-workers across divisions. These conversations were well received and WSO is planning follow-up sessions in PY 2022/23 to continue these conversations to further strengthen partnerships.

Training for WSO staff includes how to provide a customized Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program conversation, Unemployment Insurance (UI) connectivity, and recognizing UI eligibility issues, as well as core functions training. In calendar year 2019, 18 potential UI eligibility issues were detected for MSFW customers by WSO staff and referred to the UI division for review.

The following core curriculum courses are available to OED MSFW outreach staff.

- Facilitating Career Development

This course provides individuals with relevant skills and knowledge to assist others in planning careers and obtaining meaningful work. Staff receive in-depth training in the areas of career development in the form of 120+ class/instructional hours, provided by a nationally trained and qualified instructor using curriculum created by the National Career Development Association.

- A-COACH Approach Program

This program provides staff with the knowledge, skills, tools, and actions they need to develop a COACH Approach – a conversation style that is successful at building strong relationships, improving results, and helping people achieve their goals.

- SNAP Employment and Training Success

This course highlights one of the main tenants of the SNAP E&T program: the Orientation and what information is to be shared with the customer along with how staff can perform the obligation.

- RESEA Fundamentals

This course covers key Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) concepts to include the initial RESEA Welcome Conversation and subsequent RESEA Conversation. Topics include developing a work search advisory and reemployment plan.

- Welcome Conversation e-learnings

These are a series of short e-learning modules available for all WorkSource Oregon staff to build skills related to the Welcome Conversation (one-on-one conversations with new and returning customers).

- WSO New Hire Core Curriculum Training

New staff from around the state participate in local office activities and virtual meetings to increase skill and understanding of OED philosophies, programs, and processes. The experience is coordinated by one trainer, and various trainers lead sessions that include subject-matter experts and program managers.

- Trauma Informed Care

This course is an effort to build internal knowledge and competency around Trauma Informed Practices.

- Motivational Interviewing

This course focuses on helping staff become a helper in a customer's change process and express acceptance of our customers, their experience, knowledge, and their solutions.

- WOMIS Basics

These are four 5-15 minute e-learning episodes to create a consistent WorkSource Oregon Management Information System (WOMIS) Basics learning experience that can be reflected upon for future use. This course covers registration for WOMIS for staff and customer sides, confidentiality, message errors, and labor-exchange (iMatchSkills) registration for staff and customer sides.

- MSFW Annual Training

An annual, statewide training for all staff involved in the MSFW program. Developed by and for staff in the MSFW program.

- MSFW Housing Consultation Training

Staff learn what forms to use and what to look for when certifying housing for employers who use the Agricultural Recruitment System and the H-2A program. Staff from the Oregon Safety and Health Administration also attend to provide guidance on the housing regulations in Oregon.

- Foreign Labor Certification Program Orientation

This orientation is required before staff can obtain the authority to refer on Foreign Labor Certification Program (FLC) job listings.

- MSFW Job Service Complaint System

The purpose of this training module is to provide staff a high level overview of the Job Service Complaint process with specific focus on how it relates to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.

- Culture Matters: Managing Unconscious Bias

This highly interactive half-day workshop is designed to help individuals enhance their cultural awareness and understand the effect of unconscious bias on workplace performance. Practical strategies for improving performance when working across cultures will be given. Participants draw

upon research-based findings to improve their self-awareness and to develop the first steps to relating and working with cultural intelligence.

All OED field offices will collaborate with workforce partners and service providers to leverage training services for MSFWs. Partners include Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC)/National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee of Oregon. OED will also have an ongoing cooperative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OHDC to provide access to the job seeker registration system, as well as connecting them to local office workforce planning. Other partners include WIOA Title I providers, universities, local community colleges, special programs funded to serve MSFWs, High School Equivalency Programs (HEP), community development farmworker housing associations, Centro Cultural, migrant health clinics, migrant education programs, Migrant Head Start, farmworker legal services, and other farmworker advocacy organizations.

## **5. SERVICES PROVIDED TO FARMWORKERS AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS THROUGH THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM**

MSFWs are recognized in WorkSource Oregon (WSO) centers as a targeted population group, with additional focus to deliver effective and equal access to the full range of workforce services. Federal regulations require that MSFWs receive workforce services on a quantitatively proportional and qualitatively equivalent basis as those provided to non-farmworkers. Using an integrated service delivery model (as outlined in the WSO Standards document), all customers will be offered a comprehensive menu in at minimum Spanish and English of skill enhancement products, including, but not limited to, occupational training. In addition, staff at WSO centers will use a variety of tools to attempt to match the job seekers' skills, interests and abilities with available high wage, high demand jobs in their current labor market area, or in other areas if desired. The integration of services with WIOA partners is intended to increase the quality of services, focus on skill and talent development of both unemployed and current workers and, on a system-wide basis, increase the wages, job retention and job advancement of Oregonians.

In addition to improved customer outcomes, more efficient and effective customer service is expected from the systematic coordination of federal workforce services. Finally, more efficient use of resources, and elimination of program duplication from enhanced integration are also expected to improve the use of limited and declining funding. Designated MSFW representatives within each workforce area will continue to work with local management and staff to keep focused on service delivery and equity outcome goals regarding MSFWs.

Customer outcomes are measured by the federal MSFW performance measures (quantitatively proportionate services that include the following categories: Referred to Jobs, Provided Workforce Services, Referred to Support Services, Career Guidance, and Job Development); increased placements of MSFWs through local Business Services Teams, which provide enhanced recruitment and referral services for employers in targeted sectors; increased numbers of MSFW registrations that are complete and current in the state's labor exchange system, iMatchSkills; and finally, anecdotal evidence obtained through MSFW outreach staff and OHDC partner staff.

Training resources through the broader workforce system are also of interest to agricultural employers. Employers have identified that increased skills are needed for many agricultural opportunities, whether for supervisory positions or to meet the changing mechanization and technology requirements of the industry. WSO staff will work to increase placement results through more effective identification of skills that agricultural employers are seeking and identifying through their registrations in iMatchSkills.

Integrating WIOA and Wagner–Peyser services is an advantage to agricultural employers and their access to the workforce system. In particular, locally designed employer services teams will have responsibility for connecting local employers to WSO centers. To the extent agricultural employers connect with the workforce system individually or industry wide, job seekers will be better informed about available jobs, needed skills and training options related to agriculture, and the workforce system will be more informed about and responsive to the workforce needs of agriculture.

The most important Business Service WSO provides is connecting employers to qualified candidates. Business services are responsive to business and workforce needs of the local area, how these align with local sector strategies, and protocols to access recruitment processes and other services. All WSO centers will provide appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers (to include agricultural employers), including small employers, in local areas. Business services include: recruitment services, customized training, incumbent worker training, job postings, incentives, and rapid response.

Business services are continually evolving and improving. At the start of 2013, WorkSource Oregon began offering an enhanced business services model. Employers select this option when they want a deeper partnership with their business services staff member. To build a successful relationship, WSO staff begins by conducting on-site employer visits prior to the start of the recruitment, to better understand the business culture and the business recruitment needs, which allows staff to refer qualified candidates in a timely manner with an increased level of success. The employer then has a smaller, more highly qualified applicant pool, which saves them time and money.

This model has proven successful in building high-functioning business services teams, which serve as a single point of contact for businesses. In turn, this has helped improve communication and coordination of service delivery between workforce partners and allowed for more streamlined and targeted placement of WorkSource Oregon customers to include MSFWs, veterans, claimants, dislocated workers and other special populations. This model has also helped local areas align business services efforts and ensure that workforce investment activities meet the needs of businesses and support economic growth in each area. Enhanced communication, coordination and collaboration among businesses, economic development, service providers, business team members, and the local Boards will help leverage and align collective resources.

An example of helping connect MSFWs with employers is the work started in 2019 between the Monitor Advocate and the WSO Business Services Program Coordinator. Through this partnership, local Business Services Teams have increased collaboration with MSFW outreach staff to facilitate the referral of MSFWs to the Business Services Teams for enhanced job placement assistance. These teams develop

relationships with businesses and work closely with them through the entire recruitment process. These teams also focus on filling job listings in the local sector strategy.

Activities that offices may pursue to facilitate increased successful labor exchange on all agricultural listings include handing out and collecting applications for work, scheduling interviews, and providing space at a specific field office for the employer's interviews. Staff may also assist workers with the actual application, help with translation at interviews when needed, and re-contact workers referred for an interview. This follow-up activity can produce more reliable recruitment results for the employer and the agency, helping to see that available workers are hired for needed employment. Staff will also use historical information on monthly employment patterns to identify opportunities for workers to effectively move from one local grower to another or be available for referral on any agricultural listing approved for recruitment of non-local workers.

OED will continue to promote membership on local and state workforce boards, and to meet agricultural business owners and other business owners who see limited English proficient MSFWs and others as potential employees. This will help raise awareness of training needs within agriculture for MSFWs to reach higher levels of education, and may open new options for securing training funds from within and outside the workforce system.

MSFW outreach staff will also serve as an MSFW voice at the local level to raise any issues impacting MSFW customers as system integration moves forward through awareness of the Job Service Complaint System. Outreach includes information regarding the use of the Complaint System and follow up of complaints. All complaints are logged and reported to USDOL as provided in federal guidance. In addition, staff will provide MSFWs with information regarding worker rights through information sharing sessions and flyers.

MSFWs will be encouraged to go to WorkSource Oregon (WSO) centers to receive the full services offered to all job seekers. MSFWs who are not fluent in English receive one-on-one interviews with staff for registration and job referrals. Staff that are not bilingual in the language of the job seeker are to seek interpreter services, including in indigenous languages, through the department's contracted interpreter service, or with the assistance of the coordinator of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program. Other MSFWs are to be offered assistance in registration to assure quality registrations are completed. Staff assistance is available to all MSFWs for learning the OED computer job match system and for using English and Spanish websites for looking at available jobs and learning about other workforce services. OED MSFW representatives will assist MSFWs in filling out applications for job listings registered in the OED system.

The majority of MSFWs registered with OED, consistent with the overall farmworker population, require services to be provided in Spanish. Services and resources identified and promoted through the workforce system will include access to and referral of MSFWs to all WIOA service program providers, and specifically Oregon Human Development Corporation's National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in areas of the state in which they operate. Information about services from community partners, including food, clothing, housing, transportation, medical, social and legal assistance, will also be a continuing

referral. With significantly increased concerns over an adequate labor supply for Oregon agriculture, WSO expects its labor exchange system will become a critical resource for agricultural employers.

In response to the pandemic, WSO centers closed to in-person traffic in spring 2020 and did not fully reopen to the public until summer 2021. During this time period, technology enhancements and staff training were phased in to support the delivery of services in a virtual format. These include video conferencing software for use with external customers; a new WSO website that greatly improves customer access to the menu of reemployment and training services in twelve languages; an online appointment tool that allows job seekers to make virtual or in-person appointments with staff, or reserve computer time in a center, available in Spanish and English with additional translations underway; and automated emails to inform job seekers of their registration status and encourage customer engagement with WSO staff.

In addition the state's Online Claim System in 2021 was expanded to allow for new claims to be started in Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese in addition to English. A new contract was also established for vendors to provide telephonic interpretation services, which expanded the number of languages available to meet customer demand.

MSFW outreach staff will continue to be trained on the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) by the Monitor Advocate and Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) Program Coordinator. Currently, outreach staff provide USDOL ARS brochures to employers when marketing services to agricultural employers. OED held a special work session at the 2020 annual MSFW training that focused on marketing the ARS and working with employers to identify alternative recruitment strategies.

## **6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. COLLABORATION**

All OED field offices will collaborate with workforce partners and service providers to leverage reemployment and training services for MSFWs. Partners will include Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC)/National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee of Oregon. OED will also have an ongoing cooperative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OHDC to provide access to the job seeker registration system as well as connecting them to local office workforce planning. Other partners include WIOA Title I providers, universities, local community colleges, special programs funded to serve MSFWs, HEP language classes, community development non-profit farmworker housing associations, Centro Cultural, migrant health clinics, migrant education programs, Migrant Head Start, farmworker legal services, and other farmworker advocacy organizations.

The SWA will continue to collaborate closely with the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Organization (OSHA), the Mexican Consulate, and the California State Monitor Advocate (through an MOU signed in Program Year 2018).

WorkSource Oregon (WSO) signed a four-year MOU with OHDC/NFJP in 2018. NFJP providers train alongside WSO staff in yearly training events and are increasing interactions in referrals. NFJP

management will continue to share knowledge of their program to local WSO offices. NFJP staff have gained access to the state's labor-exchange system (iMatchSkills) to register customers for workforce services, provide referrals to job listings, and track services provided to MSFWs.

Oregon's WIOA partners will be included in regional and local planning to ensure MSFW program customers are considered in their program service provisions. WSO staff currently work closely with the training resources available through the National Farmworkers Jobs Program. Other training resources especially for migrant workers include Oregon State University College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), Chemeketa Community College-College Assistance Migrant Program, Portland Community College-College Assistance Migrant Program, Oregon Migrant Leadership Institute, University of Oregon High School Equivalency Program (HEP), Chemeketa Community College High School Equivalency Program, Portland Community College High School Equivalency Program (HEP), and the High Desert Education Service District.

While MSFWs are recognized as a targeted population and receive equitable workforce services at the State Workforce Agency (SWA), further integration of the WIOA Title I services for MSFWs is an opportunity particularly for youth. As more H2-A job listings come into Oregon, more domestic MSFWs are being displaced and Title I employment and training services could benefit many of these impacted workers. To facilitate this connection, promoting and referring domestic MSFWs to WIOA Title I providers will be encouraged at all local WorkSource Oregon centers.

Improving access to and enrollment of MSFW customers with Title I employment and training services is a priority for the Monitor Advocate in Program Years 2020-2023. One opportunity to improve this connection is for OED management to meet with state workforce boards and WIOA Title I providers to address how to provide services to both domestic MSFWs and agricultural business owners who see MSFWs as potential employees. An awareness of the rights and services that MSFWs should receive under WIOA Title I needs to be explored, discussed and a recruitment process consistently implemented.

## B. REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT

## C. DATA ASSESSMENT

The State Workforce Agency (SWA) has met the required MSFW Program Equity Ratio Indicators for Program Years 2017-2020. Equity was met in Referred to Jobs, Provided Workforce Services, Referred to Support Services, Career Guidance, and Job Development.

However the SWA has fallen short of providing qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services to MSFWs in comparison to services provided to non-MSFWs in the areas of Total Staff Hires, Staff Hires at Greater than Federal Minimum Wage, and Staff Non-Agricultural Hires.

This deficiency has consistently been addressed by the Monitor Advocate in annual MSFW program training and through Monitor Advocate Significant Office Reviews. In Program Year 2020, field office management and outreach staff focused on addressing the needs of the agriculture employer base to

improve the hiring of Total Active MSFW applicants, increase outreach to MSFWs to make them aware of WorkSource Oregon job services, training outreach staff in Job Development services, and referring MSFWs to the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP), which focuses on non-agriculture vocational training services.

The SWA technical department has also updated the state's registration and intake system to better align with the new WIOA MSFW definitions and performance measures. This will improve the overall quality and accuracy of MSFW registrant data for WIOA performance reporting. Monitoring on a quarterly basis will also be a priority by the SWA so that more complete and accurate data is captured.

Below are service counts by category that SWA staff provided to MSFWs in Program Years PY 2019/20 as recorded in the state's labor exchange system (iMatchSkills). Note: The drop in service counts between PY 2019 and PY 2020 is a direct reflection of COVID-19 impacts to the state. Not only did the economy slow down but WSO Centers closed to in-person traffic and ES staff shifted to help process UI claims.

- Welcome Process Completed (One-on-One Intake): PY 2019: 3,765 PY 2020: 474
- Resume Assistance: PY 2019: 680 PY 2020: 85
- Next Steps Planning: PY 2019: 4,603 PY 2020: 646
- Job Search Planning: PY 2019: 1,648 PY 2020: 295
- Job Search Workshop: PY 2019: 405 PY 2020: 39
- Job Coaching: PY 2019: 813 PY 2020: 116
- Staff Referrals to Job Listings: PY2019: 363 PY 2020: 83
- Self-Referrals to Job Listings: PY 2019: 4,460 PY 2020: 1,806
- SNAP Employment and Training (STEP) Orientation: PY 2019: 1,157 PY 2020: 252
- STEP Plan Uploaded (Individual Employment Plan): PY 2019: 690 PY 2020: 93
- Workforce Information Provided (Labor Market Information): PY 2019: 3,957 PY 2020: 406

#### D. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

##### Assessment of Previous AOP Program Years 2017-2020

The progress made on services to MSFWs in Oregon during the previous four year program years (2017-2020) can best be described as times of making strides with periods of unintended complacency. Ensuring that services be provided qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate compared to other job seekers continues to be a struggle.

To some degree, the MSFW program is hampered by the inability to provide qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services to MSFWs due to Wagner-Peyser funding levels which have

remained relatively flat over time. Funding constraints limit the impact for all customers with significant barriers, in particular the underserved and hard to reach MSFW population.

In spite of funding constraints, the following actions have been identified, and many acted on, to bolster program outcomes: simple follow ups with MSFW clients following the initial intake and registration process, including job referrals; H2-A job listing promotion; job fairs and other recruitment activities targeting MSFWs; updated and complete MSFW registrations in the state's labor-exchange system for job-matching; and communication with agriculture employers regarding domestic MSFW referrals.

In PY 2018, the SMA identified that MSFWs were not receiving assistance in getting complete registrations in the state's labor-exchange system, a violation of the Judge Richey Court Order. MSFWs should be recognized in all WSO centers as a targeted population entitled to effective and equal access to the full range of workforce services. Federal regulations under the Judge Richey Court Order of 1974 mandate that MSFWs receive services on a quantitatively proportionate and qualitatively equivalent basis as those provided to non-MSFWs.

As a result of the Judge Richey Court Order, the SWA will take uniform, complete applications for each Migrant Seasonal job applicant utilizing Employment Service offices, including a meaningful history of prior employment, training and education of the applicant and a statement of their desired training and/or employment goals, and utilize such applications in providing applicants with and referring them to available jobs, and training opportunities directed to upgrading job capabilities. The SWA is pleased to report that new processes and procedures were fully implemented in PY 2020 to correct this violation. To sustain this important work, designated MSFW representatives within each workforce area work with field office staff to ensure that MSFWs receive the necessary assistance for a complete and accurate registration that will help match them to job opportunities other than agricultural job listings.

The SMA has noted that MSFW outreach staff and WSO field staff do not sufficiently update and promote H2-A job listings with higher paying wages to the local domestic workforce. To improve this, WSO Centers will ensure that those higher paying agricultural jobs are visible and accessible to walk-in customers. OED will also look for new and creative ways to promote H2-A job listings to the local domestic workforce.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, Oregon believes that its new MSFW service delivery model (see above, Outreach Activities) will streamline outreach activities and improve overall program outcomes for the MSFW community. The state will monitor implementation of this model in the coming years, working with SWA staff, WIOA partners, and MSFW service providers across the state to ensure that it is impactful and meeting the state's outreach goals and the reemployment and training needs of the MSFW community.

The SMA in PY 2020 identified that MSFW outreach staff were being required to conduct H2A housing consultations, a violation of MSFW outreach regulations. Per 20 CFR 653.107 (4), MSFW significant states must have full-time, year round outreach staff to conduct year round outreach duties. Following a corrective action filed by the SMA, outreach staff no longer conduct H2A housing inspections.

The SMA in PY 2020 signed a data sharing agreement with the Oregon Health Authority MSFW Task Force. This agreement allows OED to share MSFW administrative data with the task force so they can more quickly respond to COVID-19 outbreaks reported by MSFWs.

In PYs 2017-2020, staff were able to resolve 90% of MSFW complaints at the local level, which is a good outcome for MSFWs.

#### E. STATE MONITOR ADVOCATE

As the State Monitor Advocate I have been engaged in some of the writing on the Oregon AOP and agree with most but not all of the plan regarding workforce services to Oregon's MSFWs and agriculture employers

Fernando Gutierrez, State Monitor Advocate

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

**Enhanced Supportive Services...**VR has worked with the Oregon State legislature to ensure Rate Parity between systems so that whether an individual with intellectual or developmental disability receives employment services through the Oregon Developmental Disabilities system or Vocational Rehabilitation the service provider is guaranteed equal pay rates. This allows students to move between systems without a negative impact to the service providers who are key to their success.

**Equity** -- Vocational Rehabilitation has created a Service Equity Committee. This committee is made up of VR Staff, community-based contractors, Tribal VR partners and ODHS Office of Equity and Multicultural Services. This committee works to identify opportunities to create and enhance access to members of communities for whom access to our systems can be difficult, it works create opportunities for learning about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and works to increase diversity both in customers served but also in staff and service providers doing the work in their communities.

**Reemployment** -- Vocational Rehabilitation recently received a Disability Innovations Fund Grant from RSA. With this Grant VR will develop and run the Career Advancement Initiative Program (ICAP) a model demonstration project. ICAP will leverage Oregon's current statewide success in utilizing career pathways for other populations, including integrated education and wraparound support, to advance educational and economic equity for people with disabilities including those from marginalized populations. ICAP will braid the supports and services of all 14 Community Colleges(urban, suburban, and rural)in the state, the Department of Human Service's VR program and the state's Self-Sufficiency Programs in addition to local collaboration with employers and other WIOA workforce partners.

**Oregon Commission for the Blind**

## Oregon Commission for the Blind

Toward the close of PY19 and the start of PY20, the state of Oregon faced multiple and significant economic, environmental, and humanitarian disruptions. Social unrest, climate driven wildfires and a global pandemic all had direct impacts on Oregon's businesses and labor force. As with many service providers - OCB's clients and business partners were specifically and substantially affected. Pandemic related disruptions continued into PY21.

Social unrest in Oregon's largest cities disrupted public transportation and access to medical services and employers. Climate driven wildfires burned nearly 1 million acres of forest throughout the state, with significant impacts in rural Oregon. Transportation and business activity were significantly affected, and air quality conditions made most outdoor activity impossible throughout the summer. Some OCB clients lost their homes to fires, and some OCB business partners were forced to temporarily close operations. The global COVID-19 Pandemic reduced or temporarily eliminated access to public transportation, shuttered many businesses temporarily or permanently, reduced access to education and social services resources, and reduced access to blindness related medical services and tools. Public unemployment insurance programs were overloaded, and it was extremely challenging to contact unemployment insurance programs given sheer volume of calls compounded with marginally accessible state UI systems. Vocational Rehabilitation agencies rely on Community Resource Providers (CRP) to provide job development, job coaching and other vital employment services. CRPs found themselves unable to provide services for clients and could not engage with existing clients on jobsites due to COVID protocols or other limitations. Communication with employer's was put on hold in many cases. Many CRP's changed careers to adapt to the sudden loss in revenue. This was especially damaging to OCB's rural constituencies.

Legal blindness is a significant disability and requires intensive, hands-on blindness skills training as well as specialized assistive and adaptive technology tools and resources. Orientation and Mobility, as well as several other blindness skills, are effectively and nearly exclusively provided hands-on, in proximity between student and instructor. During PY20, vaccines were not yet available, and state mandated safety protocols were in place. Orientation and Mobility instructors were not permitted to provide service. Other services at OCB were reconfigured for remote delivery.

OCB does not plan to substantively alter or modify existing plan elements during this modification window, but rather provide appropriate updates and areas of renewed focus. OCB will join its core WIOA partners in approaching a more comprehensive reassessment of strategies and goals in the next WIOA State Plan submission window in 2024. Here are OCB's responses for WIOA planning priorities as articulated in TEG-4-21 and RSA TAC-22-02:

### **Data Driven Decisions:**

OCB receives Statewide labor market information (LMI) through its partnerships with the Oregon Employment Department (OED) as a core partner of WorkSource Oregon (WSO). Quarterly and other statewide and regional labor market reports are provided by OED, and distributed to OCB managers, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC), Business Relations Coordinators (BRC) and Rehabilitation Instructors. LMI is discussed at VRC and Workforce Services Team meetings, as well as in targeted client staffing. OCB client facing staff use the state's labor data website, [www.workinginoregon.org](http://www.workinginoregon.org) to keep up to date with industry and occupational changes and instruct clients on the value and use of LMI. LMI is

used to develop education, training, and employment plans for OCB clients. OCB BRC staff meet regularly with OED Business Services staff to interpret data and apply local labor market intelligence to share and develop employment opportunities based on real time demand. OCB will expand creative applications of LMI to inform decision making moving forward regarding client training, employment, and business partnerships – especially regarding industry sector and occupational changes influenced by the Pandemic and other disruptions. In PY22 and PY23, OCB will continue to intentionally integrate updated labor market data into strategic and tactical decisions around client training and occupational plans and strategic business partnerships.

### **Reemployment:**

Actively building formal and informal partnerships with WSO partners is a successful strategy toward improving outcomes for OCB clients, and one OCB will continue moving forward. OCB clients are encouraged to register with WSO, and to co-enroll for training and employment resources and opportunities. Due to Pandemic and other related disruptions, all WSO centers were physically closed, and OCB client co-enrollment was limited. In PY22 and PY23, OCB will engage in additional efforts to assist clients to access the state’s labor exchange system, iMatchSkills. OCB continues to build capacity with WSO partner organizations in serving OCB clients through leadership and front-line level partner disability awareness training, Windmills implicit bias training and assistive technology demonstrations. OCB has and will continue to partner intensely and deliberately with Oregon’s general VR agency to augment strengths and reduce redundancies in engagement with business. OCB will focus on building capacity around counseling clients around skill development, occupational skills training, apprenticeships, and post-secondary education as tools for clients to achieve living wage, competitive, integrated employment. In PY22 and PY23, OCB will create structured opportunities to engage with with Oregon’s Bureau of Labor and Industries and community college system to explore the accessibility of pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and career pathways programs.

### **Equity in Service Delivery and Educational Programming:**

Data consistently shows individuals experiencing vision loss experience higher rates of unemployment and lower wages than the typical population. Additionally, individuals in rural areas of the state have limited access to training, educational and employment opportunities. Equity in service delivery is a strategic priority for OCB, the Governor of the State of Oregon, and Oregon’s Workforce Talent Development Board (WTDB). Due to the many disruptions OCB faced due to the Pandemic and other events, OCB developed proficiency in delivering services remotely. OCB staff actively engaged WSO Business Services Teams (including Oregon’s general VR agency) to develop strategies for co-communication, and shared outreach. This represented not a change in strategy, but rather an increase in the intensity of focus. OCB staff continued to provide disability awareness, implicit bias and assistive technology training and technical support to public and private sector partners through remote delivery strategies. In addition to identifying ongoing and new partner training opportunities, OCB will enhance efforts moving into PY22 and PY23 by providing additional OCB internal staff training around access to apprenticeship, occupational training and skill development services with a statewide lens and rural focus. Reciprocally, OCB will increase engagement with apprenticeship programs and training providers around creating accessible curricula and overall programmatic offerings. This enhanced outreach and education will extend to OCB’s Pre-ETS/Transition constituency as appropriate.

**Enhance Supportive Services Offerings:**

OCB provides appropriate and necessary supportive services for all its clients, as directed under guidance from the Rehabilitative Services Administration. OCB shares information from partner organizations on a consistent basis with client facing staff about additional supportive services resources. In PY22 and PY23, OCB will enhance and create new opportunities to connect OCB clients with additional supportive service resources through public or community providers.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program**

**a. 1. Discuss long-term projections for jobs in industries and occupations in the State that may provide employment opportunities for older workers. (20 CFR 641.302(d)) (May alternatively be discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan.)**

Workers age 55 and older made up twenty-three percent of Oregon’s workforce in 2017 (Table 1). The Health Care and Social Assistance field currently employs the greatest number of older workers (64,327) in Oregon, and that industry is expected to need the most replacement workers as these employees exit the workforce. With thirty-three percent of all employees age 55 or older, Mining and Quarrying is the industry that now employs the greatest share of Oregon’s older workers. However, mining jobs account for a relatively small share of overall workers, with only 1,902 out of more than 1.8 million in total.

According to projections by the Oregon Employment Department, the industries expected to have the highest number of openings by 2027 are Private Educational and Health Services (54,700), Professional and Business Services (41,200), Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (36,700); and Leisure and Hospitality (26,900). Together these four industries are projected to have more than 159,500, or approximately sixty-five percent, of total job openings between 2017 and 2027.

Natural Resources and Utilities have the highest share of workers 55 and over, but Health Care and Social Assistance has the most workers 55 and over.

Table 1			
	Workers All Ages	Workers Age 55 and Over	Percent Age 55 and Over
All Industries	1,838,059	426,530	23%
Mining and Quarrying	1,902	633	33%
Utilities	7,477	2,335	31%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	48,652	14,845	31%
Transportation and Warehousing	60,451	17,685	29%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	27,857	8,140	29%
Public Administration	73,358	20,540	28%
Educational Services	149,838	41,750	28%
Other Services	74,886	20,232	27%
Wholesale Trade	75,940	19,429	26%

Table 1			
	Workers All Ages	Workers Age 55 and Over	Percent Age 55 and Over
Manufacturing	187,500	46,055	25%
Health Care and Social Assistance	268,212	64,327	24%
Finance and Insurance	56,398	13,249	23%
Construction	101,858	22,449	22%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	95,612	20,494	21%
Administrative Support and Waste Services	103,008	21,768	21%
Retail Trade	206,135	42,936	21%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	48,971	10,029	20%
Information	37,373	7,390	20%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	32,154	6,348	20%
Accommodation and Food Services	180,471	25,880	14%

*Private and public average employment for 2018*

*Source: Oregon Employment Department and U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD*

**a. 2. Discuss how the long-term job projections discussed in the economic analysis section of strategic plan relate to the types of unsubsidized jobs for which SCSEP participants will be trained and the types of skill training to be provided. (20 CFR 641.302(d))**

Older workers accounted for only ten percent of Oregon’s workforce in 1992. That figure has more than tripled since then to reach twenty-three percent by 2017. Baby Boomers have undoubtedly played a role in this shift, but the Great Recession also hit aging workers hard, leading many to work beyond the traditional retirement age of 65. Twenty five-eight percent of Oregon SCSEP participants in PY 2018 2020 were 65 or older (Table 2).

Table 2	
Participant Age <del>and</del> <u>at</u> Enrollment	PY <del>2018-2020</del> Percent
55-59	<del>44</del> 34%
60-64	<del>31</del> 38%
65-69	18%
70-74	<del>4</del> 7%
75 & over	<del>3</del> 4%

SCSEP participants benefit from training they receive at community service assignments like Area Agency on Aging (AAA) offices, senior centers, Centers for Independent Living (CILs), governmental offices, hospitals, schools, and libraries. Over the course of this four-year plan, SCSEP grantees will continue to build and maintain relationships with host agencies and other partners in the high growth fields identified above. Under the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) Strategic Plan, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are tasked with implementing sector strategies to address the needs of key industries. Sector strategies are public/private partnerships designed to meet the needs of critical industry sectors within the regional labor markets. The partnerships are intended to facilitate communication and eliminate barriers that slow the process of recruiting, hiring, training, and advancing workers within an industry. LWDBs will develop or expand partnerships in key industries for a more highly skilled workforce. LWDBs will determine which sectors to prioritize in their region, but some examples include clean technology, natural resource industries, health services, and business services. Sector strategies are expected to create opportunities for SCSEP enrollees as well as participants in other workforce programs to engage with local employers and identify new placement opportunities.

SCSEP participants have access to free training on a variety of topics including computers, reading, and math skills. Host agency sites offer participants the chance to become familiar with common office equipment and procedures such as word processing software, computer-based scheduling programs, email etiquette, and customer service skills. SCSEP participants are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to enhance their competitive edge in the job market.

**a. 3. Discuss current and projected employment opportunities in the State (such as by providing information available under §15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491-2) by occupation), and the types of skills possessed by eligible individuals. (20 CFR 641.325(c))**

Workers age 55 and older make up approximately twenty-three percent of Oregon’s total workforce. Nearly half (46%) of those individuals are currently employed in Health Care and Social Assistance (64,327), Manufacturing (46,055), Retail Trade (42,936), and Educational Services (41,750) (see Table 1). Looking ahead to 2027, the Oregon Employment Department projects that most new job openings will be in Private Educational and Health Services (54,700); Professional and Business Services (41,200); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (36,700); and Leisure and Hospitality (26,900). SCSEP participants

receive training in a variety of topic areas and these industry trends will inform strategies to prepare participants for the best possible employment outcomes.

Many SCSEP applicants have been out of the workforce for an extended period of time and they may lack the computer skills demanded by many employers. The Oregon SCSEP provides basic and advanced computer skills training to all participants, depending on their needs, helping them develop the necessary skills to secure meaningful employment. Basic computer skills courses include general computer skills and Windows basics. Participants may advance to learn intermediate skills in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. SCSEP participants also take part in Job Club, which is designed to help them develop skills to maximize their job search efforts and secure unsubsidized employment.

To ensure that community service assignments provide training that meets the needs of participants, all SCSEP participants complete an assessment and enter it in iMatch Skills before being assigned. iMatch Skills identifies the types of job openings in the community that most closely match the participant's assessment. Once a participant has indicated the type of job they wish to train for, SCSEP staff searches for a community service assignment that can provide appropriate training for that position.

**b. 1. A description of actions to coordinate SCSEP with other programs. This may alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of the strategic plan, but regardless of placement in document, must include:**

**b. 1. A. Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with WIOA title I programs, including plans for using the WIOA one-stop delivery system and its partners to serve individuals aged 55 and older. (20 CFR 641.302(g), 641.325(e))**

SCSEP participants are enrolled with the American Job Centers (known in Oregon as WorkSource offices), through which WIOA Title I services are available. These services include, among others, assistance with job search and job placement, individual employment plan development, counseling, and career planning services.

~~Oregon~~ SCSEP ~~is included in~~ ~~has a~~ Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with each LWDB in ~~its~~ ~~the~~ service area. Several SCSEP local offices have staff stationed in the WorkSource offices, which increases program visibility and streamlines access to SCSEP services. Some WorkSource offices also serve as SCSEP host agency sites. The staff at WorkSource offices is more likely to promote SCSEP and refer qualified individuals for eligibility screening when they are familiar with the program.

**b. 1. B. Planned actions to coordinate activities of SCSEP grantees with the activities being carried out in the State under the other titles of the Older Americans Act (OAA). (20 CFR 641.302(h))**

The Oregon SCSEP sub-grantee, ~~Experience Works~~, and national grantee, Easterseals Oregon, maintains relationships with the local AAAs to coordinate services and make appropriate referrals to one another. SCSEP participants have access to other Older Americans Act programs offered through the AAAs, including case management, nutrition, transportation, and housing services. AAAs refer individuals who

may be eligible for SCSEP to the local projects for eligibility screening. This relationship benefits both SCSEP and AAAs by helping aging Oregonians maintain their independence as long as possible.

**b. 1. C. Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other private and public entities and programs that provide services to older Americans, such as community and faith-based organizations, transportation programs, and programs for those with special needs or disabilities. (20 CFR 641.302(i))**

SCSEP projects work with government programs such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) and Veterans Services to provide additional resources for participants with unique needs. OVRs provides individualized services that assist people with disabilities find and keep a job. Thirty-~~one~~three percent of SCSEP participants in Program Year ~~2018-2020~~ were individuals with disabilities.

Grantees partner with non-profit organizations in their communities that provide services to older Americans as host agency training sites. Some successful partnerships in Oregon include St. Vincent de Paul, Habitat for Humanity, and Salvation Army. These arrangements help foster economic self-sufficiency for SCSEP participants while also providing much needed support to community organizations. SCSEP grantees will continue to use their community connections to identify and develop partnerships with organizations that serve older Oregonians.

Easterseals Oregon has joined Comcast Oregon in support of their Internet Essentials program which provides seniors and low-income individuals with high-speed internet services from Comcast. For ~~\$9.95~~15 per month plus tax, Comcast installers will come to the participants' homes and provide necessary equipment and installation for free. There is no credit check and no contracts to sign. This gives SCSEP participants greater access to job opportunities, healthcare and benefits, and educational resources. Through this program, participants also have the ability to purchase laptops at under \$150 for their personal use.

**b. 1. D. Planned actions to coordinate SCSEP with other labor market and job training initiatives. (20 CFR 641.302(j))**

SCSEP projects in Oregon already have joined forces with the LWDBs and WorkSource offices in their areas to share resources and strengthen communication between workforce programs. LWDB meetings provide opportunities for SCSEP staff to network with local business leaders, address the needs of older workers, and identify potential resources in their service areas. Partnerships between SCSEP and the LWDBs are mutually beneficial for both programs involved, and their continued utilization will be encouraged in the future.

**b. 1. E. Actions to ensure that SCSEP is an active partner in the one-stop delivery system and the steps the State will take to encourage and improve coordination with the one-stop delivery system. (20 CFR 641.335)**

SCSEP projects work closely with the local WorkSource offices in their daily operations. In many cases SCSEP is co-located in the WorkSource office along with other employment programs. This relationship allows local SCSEP staff to stay informed of changing labor market trends in their region and encourages open communication and resource sharing between SCSEP and other employment-related programs.

The state SCSEP office encourages local SCSEP projects to continuously develop relationships with LWDBs to represent the needs of SCSEP participants.

**b. 1. F. Efforts to work with local economic development offices in rural locations.**

Of Oregon's 36 counties, 14 met the SCSEP definition of persistent unemployment when the 2016-2018 tables were released in 2019. Those counties are: Baker, Columbia, Coos, Crook, Curry, Douglas, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Union, and Wallowa. The Oregon SCSEP will conduct outreach to local economic development offices in these counties. Table 5 shows all Oregon counties, with the 13 urban counties in italics.

~~Experience Works~~ Easterseals Oregon and their subrecipient are actively pursuing partnerships with economic development offices in rural locations to promote the benefits of hiring older workers and to learn about upcoming opportunities for SCSEP participants.

**b. 2. The State's long-term strategy for engaging employers to develop and promote opportunities for the placement of SCSEP participants in unsubsidized employment. (20 CFR 641.302(e)) (May alternatively be discussed in the State strategies section of strategic plan.)**

Local SCSEP projects continuously seek new host agencies and potential employers in their communities as resources for SCSEP participants. They maintain strong relationships with local employers and LWDBs to enhance collaboration with workforce partners and promote employment opportunities for older workers.

Easterseals Oregon is co-located in 12 Oregon WorkSource offices and holds MOUs with Worksystems, Inc., Clackamas Workforce Partnership, and the WDBs in Salem, Eugene, Medford, and the coastal counties. Easterseals has a successful relationship with Worksystems Inc. in Multnomah County, in which the liaison visits SCSEP twice a week to work with Employment Specialists and SCSEP participants. The co-location and liaison relationships have been instrumental in the success of the Easterseals Oregon program. Being located directly in the WorkSource offices has made available numerous resources to SCSEP participants and staff. Easterseals supports the WorkSource system by requiring all participants to enroll in the WorkSource system and work cooperatively with WorkSource staff.

~~Experience Works has in place MOUs and resource sharing agreements with AAAs, LWDBs, senior centers, and local WorkSource offices.~~ These relationships help the projects remain informed of changes in the local workforce and allow them to quickly notify participants of potential employment opportunities. SCSEP projects engage with LWDBs to ensure sector partnerships in their regions include opportunities for older workers.

**b. 3. The State's long-term strategy for serving minority older individuals under SCSEP. (20 CFR 641.302 (c))**

The Charter Oak Group's Analysis of Service to Minority Individuals, PY 2017 concluded that Oregon's SCSEP served minority individuals in relative proportion to the state's eligible population. During Program Year 2017, 17.4% of the participants in Oregon's SCSEP project were minority individuals.

Census data adjusted for the eligible population show that minorities 55 and older make up 15.9% of the state's population.

Should service fall below equitable levels going forward, a strategy that has proven effective in the past is to focus outreach efforts on community groups that have frequent contact with the older adults in the target population. Developing and enhancing relationships with service groups that work with minority older adults generates interest in SCSEP and allows the program to share information through trusted resources in local communities.

Local projects conduct ongoing outreach to ensure that eligible individuals are aware of SCSEP and have opportunities to participate in the program. Some examples of specialized outreach include distributing fliers with information in Spanish, classified advertisements in minority-focused newspapers, and posters that depict minority individuals.

**b. 4. A list of community services that are needed and the places where these services are most needed. Specifically, the plan must address the needs and location of those individuals most in need of community services and the groups working to meet their needs. (20 CFR 641.330)**

As of July 2019, the Oregon Employment Department reports that more than sixty-seven percent of Oregon's 36 counties have unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) higher than the state average of 4.2%. Table 3 identifies those counties where Title V services are most needed based on the unemployment rate relative to the rest of the state. Those 24 counties have the greatest need for services that assist unemployed individuals find work.

Thirty-~~one~~-~~three~~ percent of SCSEP participants in PY ~~2018~~-~~2020~~ reported having a disability. The Oregon SCSEP works with OVRS to connect participants with comprehensive services to help them succeed in the job market. Also in Program Year ~~2018~~~~2020~~, ninety-~~one~~-~~two~~ percent of participants had income at or below the poverty level and seventy-~~eight~~-~~five~~ percent received some form of public assistance. These statistics suggest that organizations serving Oregonians who experience disabilities, those with low income, and individuals receiving public assistance are well positioned to coordinate with SCSEP. Oregon will continue to work with groups including the Oregon Employment Department, the [Oregon](#) Department of Human Services, and a variety of other public and private community service programs to identify, recruit, and train eligible older workers.

Table 3	
County	July 2019 Unemployment Rate (not seasonally adjusted)
Umatilla	6.3
Klamath	6.0
Coos	5.5
<i>Morrow</i>	5.5

Table 3	
County	July 2019 Unemployment Rate (not seasonally adjusted)
Crook	5.4
Douglas	5.4
Jackson	5.3
Josephine	5.3
Columbia	5.1
Curry	5.0
Grant	5.0
Linn	5.0
Lake	4.9
Jefferson	4.8
Malheur	4.8
Polk	4.8
Wheeler	4.7
Baker	4.6
Harney	4.6
Lane	4.6
Union	4.6
Wallowa	4.6
Lincoln	4.5
Marion	4.5
Oregon	4.2
Tillamook	4.0

Table 3	
County	July 2019 Unemployment Rate (not seasonally adjusted)
Yamhill	4.0
Clackamas	3.9
Deschutes	3.9
Gilliam	3.9
Sherman	3.9
Benton	3.8
Clatsop	3.8
Multnomah	3.7
Wasco	3.5
Washington	3.5
Hood River	3.3

(LAUS) Multiple Area & Time Report

Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

~~While Morrow county has a higher unemployment rate than the state average, there are no DOL-authorized positions in that county due to population size. Similarly,~~ SCSEP-eligible populations in Gilliam and Sherman counties are too small to qualify for SCSEP positions under the allocation model used by DOL. For that reason, there are no active SCSEP projects operating in those three-two counties.

**b. 5. The State’s long-term strategy to improve SCSEP services, including planned long-term changes to the design of the program within the State, and planned changes in the use of SCSEP grantees and program operators to better achieve the goals of the program. This may include recommendations to the Department as appropriate. (20 CFR 641.302(k))**

The Oregon Department of Human Services has invested significant resources in the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) of Oregon. The ADRC of Oregon connects individuals with local public and private community resources to help them remain as independent, healthy, and safe as possible. ADRC has professional Information and Referral (I&R) staff available to help consumers identify possible supports to address current and future needs. ADRC is a statewide resource and its services are available to all, regardless of income. ADRC is a valuable resource to assist SCSEP applicants locate and obtain

supportive services in their communities. SCSEP is included in the ADRC database to ensure that older workers seeking assistance through the ADRC will be connected with SCSEP.

**b. 6. The State’s strategy for continuous improvement in the level of performance for SCSEP participants’ entry into unsubsidized employment, and to achieve, at a minimum, the levels specified in OAA Section 513(a)(2)(E)(ii). (20 CFR 641.302(f))**

Oregon’s SCSEP projects strive to help participants find appropriate unsubsidized employment before the end of their 48-month individual durational limit. The Q2 Employment target for Oregon’s state SCSEP grant in Program Year 2018 was 33.4% and the actual rate for that period was 24.1% (72.2% of target). For Q4 Employment, the target was 28% and actual performance was 34.8% (124.3% of target). To ensure that Oregon meets or exceeds employment targets in future Program Years, the Oregon SCSEP project will focus on engaging potential employers and helping participants tailor and effectively market their skills.

**c. 1. A description of the localities and populations for which projects of the type authorized by title V are most needed. (20 CFR 641.325 (d))**

The program serves unemployed, low-income (no greater than 125% of the Federal Poverty Level) older workers (55 and older) who are residents of Oregon. The Oregon state SCSEP grant service area covers 16 counties statewide. ~~Easterseals is also serves as the national SCSEP grantee that and serves 18-19 Oregon counties in that capacity around the state. After a successful administrative transfer was completed in early PY 2017, the only county in Oregon where multiple grantees operate a SCSEP project is Multnomah County.~~

In PY 2018, ~~seventy-seven eighty-five~~ percent of Oregon SCSEP participants were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, sixty ~~five seven~~ percent lived in rural locations, and thirty ~~one three~~ percent experienced a disability. To address the needs of these populations, Oregon will continue to collaborate with agencies including Self-Sufficiency and Vocational Rehabilitation in addition to private social services programs.

**c. 2. List the cities and counties where the project will be conducted. Include the number of SCSEP authorized positions and indicate where the positions changed from the prior year.**

Table 4 identifies the number of Program Year 2019 authorized positions in Oregon by county. There were no changes to authorized position allocations from the prior year in Oregon’s SCSEP grant.

Table 4			
County	State Grantee	National Grantee	All Grantees
Baker	4		4
Benton		10	10

Table 4			
County	State Grantee	National Grantee	All Grantees
Clackamas		43	43
Clatsop		6	6
Columbia		7	7
Coos		16	16
Crook	6		6
Curry		7	7
Deschutes	27		27
Douglas		25	25
<i>Gilliam</i>			
Grant	2		2
Harney	2		2
Hood River	2		2
Jackson		38	38
Jefferson	3		3
Josephine		23	23
Klamath	13		13
Lake	3		3
Lane		63	63
Lincoln		12	12
Linn		20	20
Malheur	6		6
Marion		40	40

Table 4			
County	State Grantee	National Grantee	All Grantees
<i>Morrow</i>			
<b>Multnomah</b>	29	82	111
<b>Polk</b>		11	11
<i>Sherman</i>			
<b>Tillamook</b>		6	6
<b>Umatilla</b>	10		10
<b>Union</b>	5		5
<b>Wallowa</b>	2		2
<b>Wasco</b>	5		5
<b>Washington</b>		50	50
<b>Wheeler</b>	1		1
<b>Yamhill</b>		12	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>591</b>

Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

(LAUS) Multiple Area & Time Report

**c. 3. Describe current slot imbalances and proposed steps to correct inequities to achieve equitable distribution.**

No slot imbalances currently exist in the distribution of Oregon’s authorized SCSEP positions. Individual counties that experience ongoing slot imbalances are addressed during the annual Equitable Distribution process with all Oregon SCSEP grantees.

**c. 4. A. Moves positions from over-served to underserved locations within the State in compliance with 20 CFR 641.365.**

State and national grantees work collaboratively to identify areas of the state where over-enrollment or under-enrollment exist. The state SCSEP coordinator consults with the state grant sub-recipient and the national grantee and mutual agreement is required before any positions may be exchanged. The existing distribution of positions between counties is compared with the number shown in the ED Report to identify any areas of over- or under-enrollment in the state. Participants may not be terminated from

the program because of the equitable distribution requirement, so grantees rely on attrition to correct areas of over-enrollment.

#### **c. 4. B. Equitably serves rural and urban areas.**

The definition of Rural as outlined in statute at 20 CFR 641.140 is:

*An area not designated as a metropolitan statistical area by the Census Bureau; segments within metropolitan counties identified by codes 4 through 10 in the Rural Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) system; and RUCA codes 2 and 3 for census tracts that are larger than 400 square miles and have population density of less than 30 people per square mile.*

Approximately sixteen percent of Oregonians live in nonmetropolitan counties. Employment opportunities and community resources are often more difficult to obtain in rural counties than in metropolitan areas. According to the Program Year ~~2018-2020~~ Quarterly Progress Report (QPR), ~~81-57~~ of the ~~124-85~~ participants served by Oregon's state SCSEP grant during Program Year ~~2018-2020~~ lived in areas identified as rural. ~~Easterseals Oregon publicizes county and regional office locations and self-referral options on the Easterseals Oregon website, as well as social media channels like Facebook Twitter and Instagram. Experience Works staff travels to rural counties often meet with participants and host agencies. Experience Works publicizes their statewide toll-free phone number so that applicants and partners may easily contact their state office, no matter where they live. The Experience Works web site also refers Oregon SCSEP applicants directly to the state office to streamline the application process.~~

Individuals living in urban areas tend to have greater access to resources such as transportation, health services, and educational opportunities than Oregonians living in less populated regions. Computer literacy has become increasingly important for SCSEP participants and most employment opportunities now require basic computer skills at a minimum. All SCSEP participants are required to register with iMatch Skills, the state's computerized labor exchange system that matches employers with qualified candidates based on their skills and work experience.

Advances in technology continue to lower the cost of accessing the ~~h~~internet, creating new opportunities for rural Oregonians that were not possible in the recent past. ~~Experience Works and Easterseals offers~~ computer literacy and higher-level computer skills training to SCSEP participants to help improve their employment prospects. ~~Experience WorksEasterseals uses a program called JobReady that allowsprovides~~ SCSEP participants ~~to review their~~with electronic copies and hard copies of their Individual Employment Plan (IEP) ~~online any time they wish~~for easy reference. SCSEP participants also use JobReady to complete online training courses at their own pace and earn Job Skill Certificates that can be presented to potential employers. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to access the National Career Readiness Certificate through WorkSource Oregon to demonstrate skill competency.

#### **c. 4. C. Serves individuals afforded priority for service under 20 CFR 641.520. (20 CFR 641.302(a), 641.365, 641.520)**

When recruiting and selecting participants for SCSEP, priority is given to individuals who have one or more of the following priority of service characteristics:

- Are covered persons in accordance with the ~~Jobs for Veterans Act~~Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (covered persons who are SCSEP-eligible –veterans and

~~eligible spouses, including widows and widowers — who are eligible for SCSEP~~ must receive services instead of, or before, non-covered persons);

- Are 65 years or older;
- Have a disability;
- Have limited English proficiency;
- Have low literacy skills;
- Reside in a rural area;
- Have low employment prospects;
- Have failed to find employment after utilizing services provided ~~through~~ under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)the One-Stop-Delivery System;
- Are homeless or are at risk for homelessness; or
- Are formerly incarcerated or on supervision from release from prison or jail within five years of the date of initial eligibility determination.

The priority of service requirements are included in the state SCSEP contract and are observed by the all Oregon SCSEP grantees ~~in Oregon~~. Local project staff uses their connections with other programs, such as OVRS counselors and Veterans Representatives at the WorkSource offices, to promote SCSEP and identify individuals who may meet the priority of service and eligibility requirements. Grantees partner with organizations that serve hard-to-reach populations, like those experiencing geographic or social isolation and those whose primary language is not English. Those organizations include the Northwest Seasonal Worker Association and several federally recognized tribes of Oregon.

Participants with the greatest economic need are provided supportive services, both direct and indirect. ~~Direct services may include a gas card or a bus pass to accommodate transportation to and from their host agency assignment until they receive a paycheck~~ Easterseals Oregon works closely with community partners and the local WorkSource to identify and provide supportive services to participants. SCSEP staff utilizes resource guides, including the ADRC, to identify supportive services, such as assistance with shelter, utilities, clothing and food, which may be available to participants. Many times, those resources are provided at no cost to SCSEP or the participant.

Those with the greatest social needs are assigned to training sites that can provide a highly supportive environment. These sites may already serve clients facing similar barriers as the participants, providing a more comfortable learning environment for the SCSEP participant. The first training assignment for individuals with the greatest social need is limited in duration so SCSEP staff can monitor them closely and interact more often.

### **c. 5. The ratio of eligible individuals in each service area to the total eligible population in the State. (20 CFR 641.325(a))**

Table 5 shows the ratio of SCSEP-eligible Oregonians to the state's population, the number of individuals with the Greatest Economic Need (55 and older with income below Federal Poverty Level (FPL)), and Greatest Social Need (65 and older with a disability and income below FPL).

Table 5			
	Ratio of SCSEP-Eligible Population	Greatest Economic Need	Greatest Social Need
<b>All</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>114,089</b>	<b>26,735</b>
<b>Baker</b>	7%	694	201
<i><b>Benton</b></i>	3%	1,789	327
<i><b>Clackamas</b></i>	3%	8,738	2,296
<b>Clatsop</b>	5%	1,216	278
<i><b>Columbia</b></i>	4%	1,366	224
<b>Coos</b>	7%	3,124	1,024
<b>Crook</b>	6%	774	127
<b>Curry</b>	10%	1,425	348
<i><b>Deschutes</b></i>	4%	5,605	1,191
<b>Douglas</b>	6%	4,103	1,160
<b>Gilliam</b>	7%	93	6
<b>Grant</b>	6%	231	110
<b>Harney</b>	8%	397	32
<b>Hood River</b>	3%	503	95
<i><b>Jackson</b></i>	5%	7,664	1,354
<b>Jefferson</b>	5%	723	115
<i><b>Josephine</b></i>	8%	4,795	958
<b>Klamath</b>	5%	2,253	534
<b>Lake</b>	10%	453	159
<i><b>Lane</b></i>	5%	12,416	2,878
<b>Lincoln</b>	8%	2,502	505

Table 5			
	Ratio of SCSEP-Eligible Population	Greatest Economic Need	Greatest Social Need
<b>Linn</b>	5%	3,863	779
<b>Malheur</b>	6%	969	300
<b>Marion</b>	3%	7,220	1,801
<b>Morrow</b>	3%	253	60
<b>Multnomah</b>	4%	23,423	5,626
<b>Polk</b>	3%	1,804	420
<b>Sherman</b>	7%	73	14
<b>Tillamook</b>	6%	969	167
<b>Umatilla</b>	4%	2,083	577
<b>Union</b>	4%	705	196
<b>Wallowa</b>	7%	304	67
<b>Wasco</b>	5%	881	196
<b>Washington</b>	2%	8,451	2,103
<b>Wheeler</b>	13%	109	25
<b>Yamhill</b>	3%	2,118	482
<b>Urban</b>	4%	89,252	20,439
<b>Rural</b>	6%	24,837	6,296

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates, Table B17024 and Table C18130.

These estimates are subject to a margin of error, and margins of error can be large for small populations and less populated counties.

**c. 6. A. Reside in urban and rural areas within the State**

Sixty-five-seven percent of Oregon SCSEP participants in Program Year 2018-2020 lived in ~~urban-rural areas~~Oregon, while thirty-five-seven percent resided in ~~rural-urban areas~~Oregon. Urban counties are shown in italics in Table 5.

**c. 6. B. Have the greatest economic need**

See Table 5.

**c. 6. C. Are minorities**

Table 6		
Race and Ethnicity	Total Population	Population 55+ Income < FPL
All	3,947,954	114,089
Hispanic or Latino Origin	498,708	6,315
American Indian or Alaska Native	43,674	1,737
Asian	162,923	4,259
Black or African American	72,590	3,401
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	14,678	213
Two or More Races	177,327	3,580

*Metropolitan and nonmetropolitan are defined here by county boundaries.*

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates, Table B17001*

**c. 6. D. Are Limited English Proficient**

Table 7					
	All Languages	English	Spanish	Other Indo-European Languages	Asian and Pacific Island Languages
Oregon	538,002	344,736	48,922	10,682	16,516

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017 5-year estimates, Table B16009*

*These estimates are subject to a margin of error, and margins of error can be large for small populations and less populated counties.*

**c. 6. E. Have the greatest social need. (20 CFR 641.325(b))**

See Table 5.

**c. 7. A description of the steps taken to avoid disruptions to the greatest extent possible, when positions are redistributed, as provided in 20 CFR 641.365; when new Census or other reliable data become available; or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason. (20 CFR 641.325(i), 641.302(b))**

To avoid service disruptions for participants, SCSEP follows guidance from the US DOL when discrepancies in enrollment levels exist. The strategies recommended by the US DOL to manage over-enrollment include stopping new enrollments and adjusting hours for current participants.