

# State of Oregon



## Workforce System

Unified State Plan

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Program Years 2016-2019

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## **Section I. Oregon WIOA State Plan Type**

Provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and associated regulations revised the requirements for State Plan submissions for a number of federally-funded, state administered programs related to the Workforce system. This document is the Unified State Plan submission for Oregon, to comply with those provisions.

The Oregon Unified State Plan includes the six core programs required by WIOA to be included in a Unified State Plan:

- the Adult Program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker Program (Title I),
- the Youth Program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Under Section 103 of WIOA, states have the discretion to include up to an additional 11 programs and activities in a Combined Plan. Oregon has chosen to not include any of the additional programs.

## **Section II. Strategic Planning Elements**

### **Overview of the Workforce System**

The Oregon Workforce Development System helps state residents obtain and succeed in family wage jobs while meeting employers' needs for a skilled workforce. The system is intended to help all Oregonians reach their potential, regardless of disability, minority/ethnicity, or barriers to employment. The system has two primary customers:

- Job seekers/working learners, which includes the “emerging” workforce (youth 14-years old or older), “transitional” workforce (those transitioning from unemployment, dislocation or public assistance to employment), and current workforce (those currently employed).
- Businesses and employers who seek the best possible candidates for job openings, provide data for continual improvement of services and partner on solutions to workforce challenges

### **Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis**

After a slow initial recovery from the depths of the Great Recession, economic conditions in Oregon have finally improved. Job growth is strong, with 49,500 jobs added in the past twelve months. Oregon is adding jobs faster than the national average, which has reduced Oregon's unemployment rate from its recession high of 11.9 percent in spring 2009, when Oregon had the second highest unemployment rate in the nation, to 6.0

percent in October 2015. This unemployment rate is comparable to the unemployment rate seen in a typical economic expansion.

### **Economic and Workforce Analysis**

Current forecasts indicate Oregon's economy will continue to see strong job growth over the next few years, before slowing slightly after 2018. The September 2015 Oregon Office of Economic Analysis' Economic and Revenue Forecast projects the state to add 54,500 jobs in 2016 and 56,800 jobs in 2017. The unemployment rate is forecasted to be 5.8 percent in 2016 and 5.4 percent in 2017.

Oregon's economy faces many of the same demographic challenges seen across the nation, including the aging workforce and Baby Boomer retirements, fewer young people participating in the labor force, and slower job growth in rural areas.

Oregon's labor force grew over the course of the recession and recovery due to population growth – a result of natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration – and partly due to an increase in the existing population that is looking for work. It is likely that some Oregonians entered the labor force by looking for work when their household's main work-related earnings were threatened or reduced by the weak economy or when their capital assets or income fell due to declining stock values and lower interest rates.

Oregon's labor force has since stabilized to around 1,950,000 million people. This is largely due to a slower population growth than the average during the past two decades. Population growth is expected to increase again when job growth improves enough to attract more workers from out of state. Other likely factors slowing labor force growth are the increase in the number of people leaving the labor force as baby boom generation workers reach retirement age, the lower labor force participation rate among teenagers, and discouraged workers who are not currently looking for work.

As the economy continues to add jobs, some workers who left the labor force will return as their prospects for finding a job improve. These re-entrants will keep Oregon's unemployment rate from falling much lower. The rate is expected to stabilize around 5.4 and 5.6 percent in 2017 and 2018.<sup>1</sup>

### **Oregon's Expanding Recovery**

Job gains in a broad range of sectors have helped to lower Oregon's unemployment rate during the last couple of years. Early in the recovery period, some industries were still losing jobs and offsetting job gains in other sectors, which made for modest job gains overall. Recently, nearly all sectors have gained jobs or at least stopped losing jobs, which has led to stronger overall job growth.

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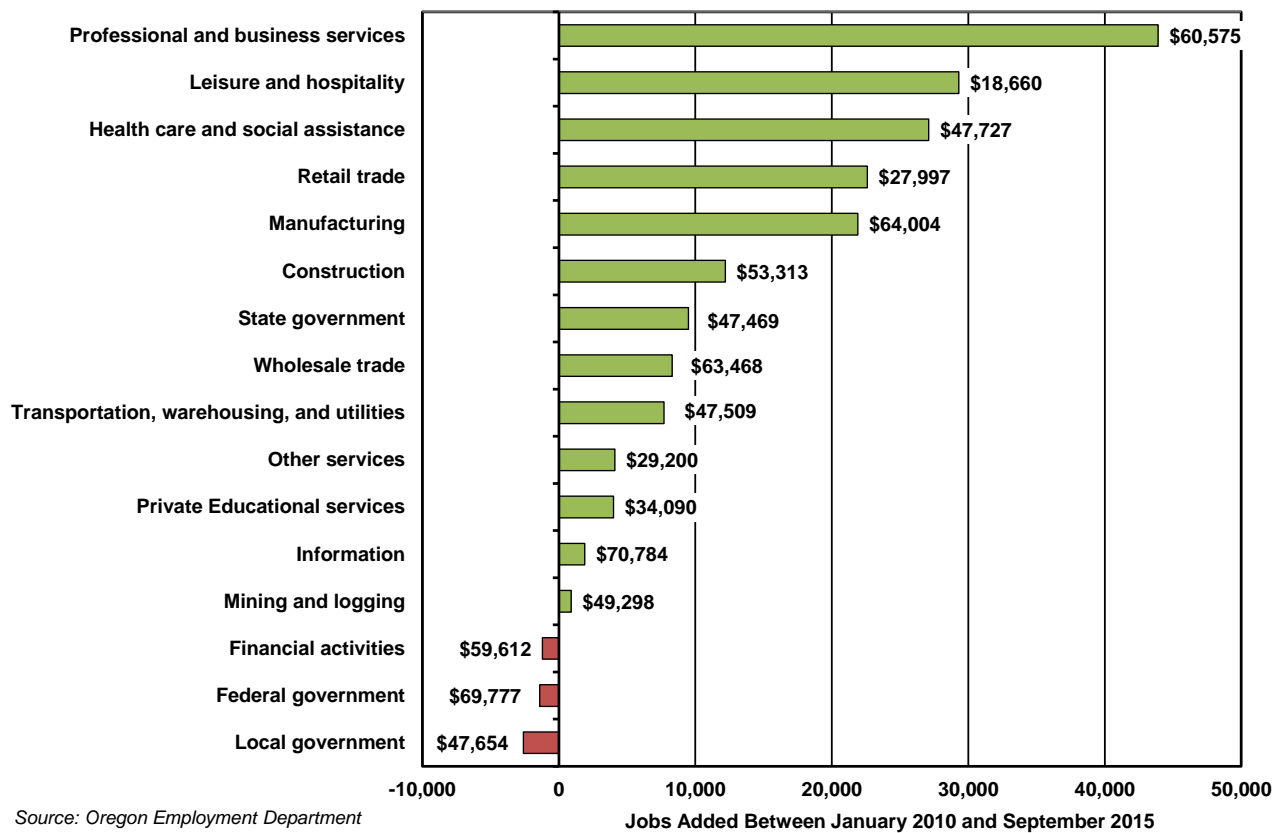
<sup>1</sup> All economic data was sourced from <https://www.qualityinfo.org/> and the Workforce & Economic Research Division of the Oregon Employment Department, unless otherwise noted.



Oregon's job recovery began in January 2010 and since then the State has added 188,200 jobs through September 2015. Graph 1 shows the number of jobs by industry added during the recovery period and the average annual pay in those industries in 2014. The gains have been in industry sectors with high-, middle-, and low average pay. The only large private sector in Oregon that has not experienced job recovery is financial activities, which continued to cut jobs until 2012. Federal and local government saw large job losses due to budget cuts early in the recovery. Local government employment is recovering as budgets have recovered.

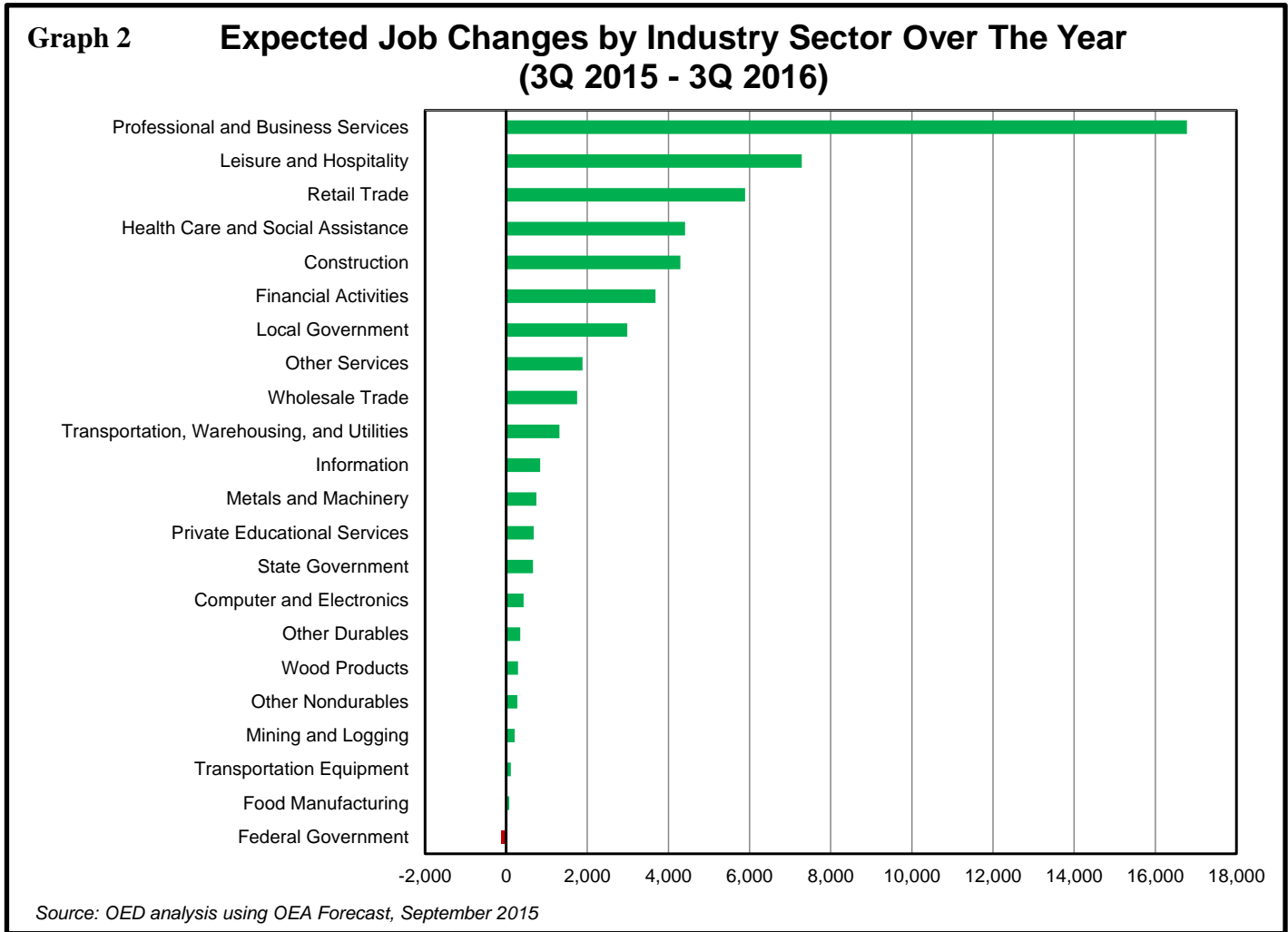
**Graph 1**

**Oregon Job Growth and Average Pay by Industry**  
Gains Since Employment Low Point in January 2010, 2014 Average Pay

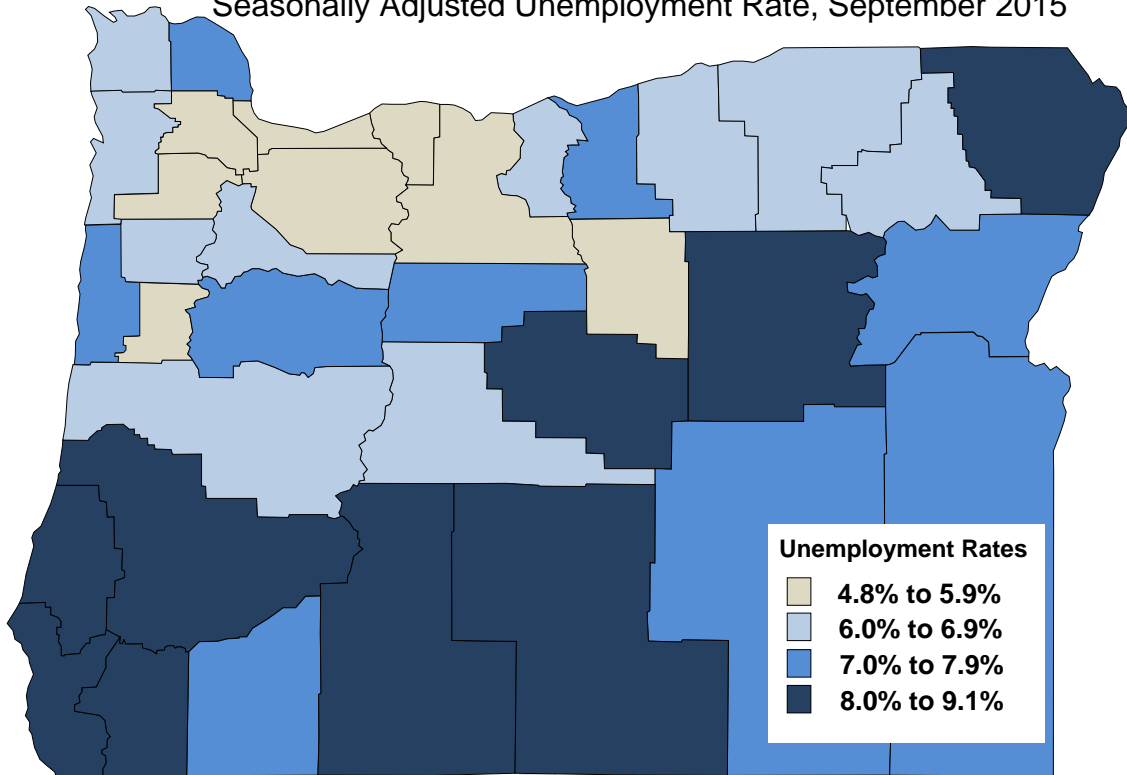


Source: Oregon Employment Department

Graph 2 below shows the projected net job change from third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016. Net job gains are expected across all major private industries. Professional and business services is expected to continue adding a lot of jobs (+16,800), followed by leisure and hospitality (+7,300), retail trade (+5,900), health care (+4,400), and construction (+4,300).



## Higher Rates in Southern and Central Oregon Counties Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate, September 2015



### **Rural Areas of the State Finally Seeing Some Recovery**

The Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro area is Oregon's largest metropolitan area and is split along the Oregon and Washington state border. Most of the metro area's residents and jobs are located in Oregon. The Portland metro area has a labor force of more than 1.2 million people. Because Portland's economic region crosses the state border, many workers in Oregon actually live in Washington. In 2013 there were about 71,000 people working in Oregon who lived in Washington. The Portland metro economy is doing better than the state as a whole, and its 5.6 percent unemployment rate was lower than the state's in September 2015.

Unemployment rates tend to be higher in Oregon's other metro areas. The unemployment rate in the Eugene metro area is 6.4 percent, Bend-Redmond is 6.6 percent, Salem is 6.7 percent, Medford 7.4 percent, Albany is 7.5 percent, and Grants Pass is 8.5 percent. The exception is the Corvallis metro area, which is economically buoyed by Oregon State University. At 4.8 percent, Corvallis has the lowest unemployment rate in the state.

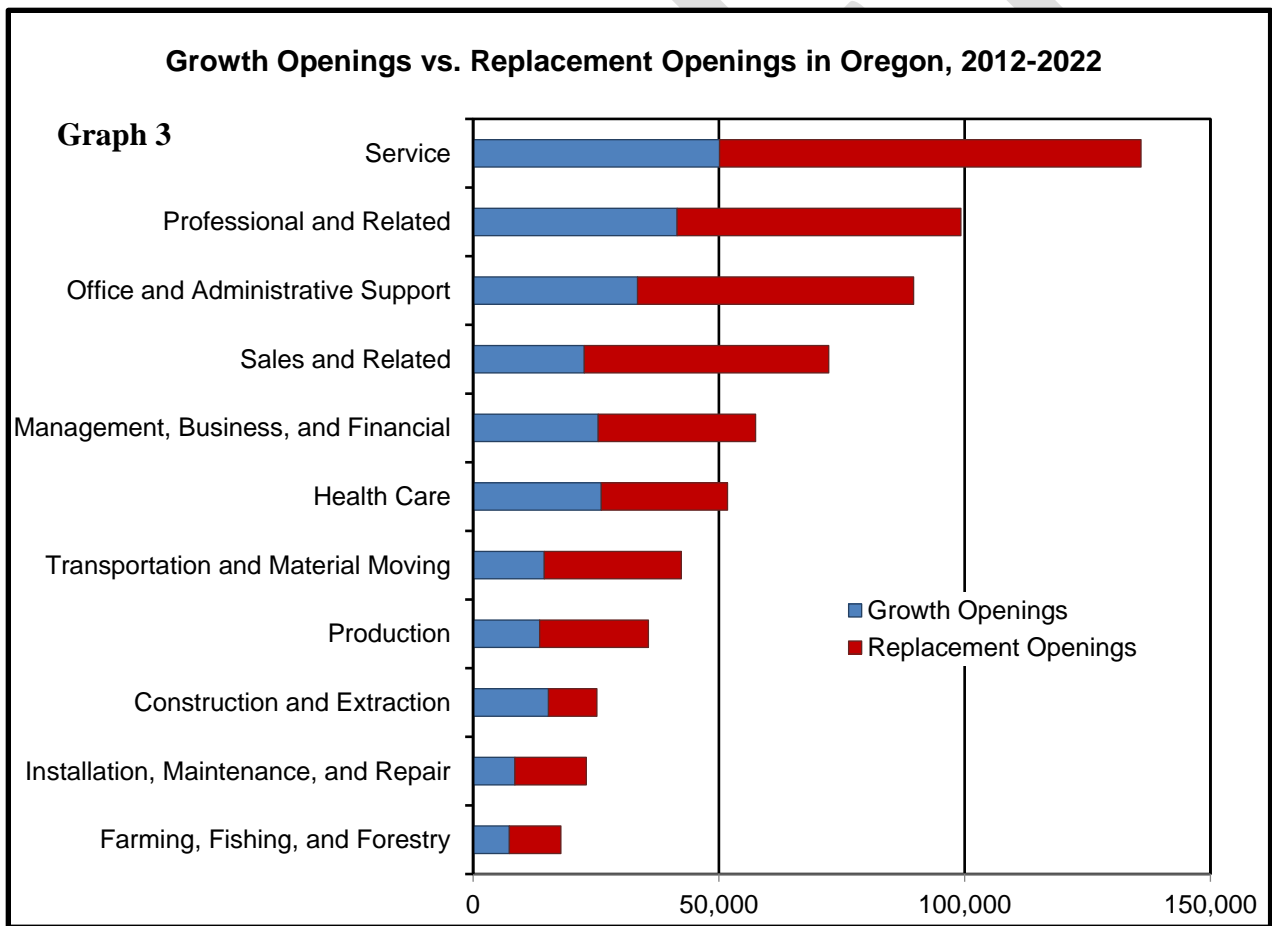
Many of Oregon's rural counties are still struggling with high unemployment rates. Unemployment is especially high in the central and southern regions of the state. Curry County on the south coast has an unemployment rate of 9.0 percent, and Grant County in eastern Oregon has the highest rate at 9.1 percent. Overall, non-metro area unemployment was 7.3 percent in September 2015.

## Continued Need for Trained Workers to Replace Retiring Workers

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. Additionally, 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. More workers are needed to fill replacement openings than for “growth openings”, which are due to net job growth. Even in some occupational groups with little anticipated net job growth, replacement openings can be numerous.

During the Great Recession, many workers were forced to delay retirement. Looming retirements mean there is going to be continued need for replacement workers. Projections by the Oregon Employment Department indicate that Oregon will have about 261,000 job openings due to economic growth between 2012 and 2022. However, there are going to be an additional 392,000 replacement job openings from workers permanently leaving their occupations, mostly due to retirements.



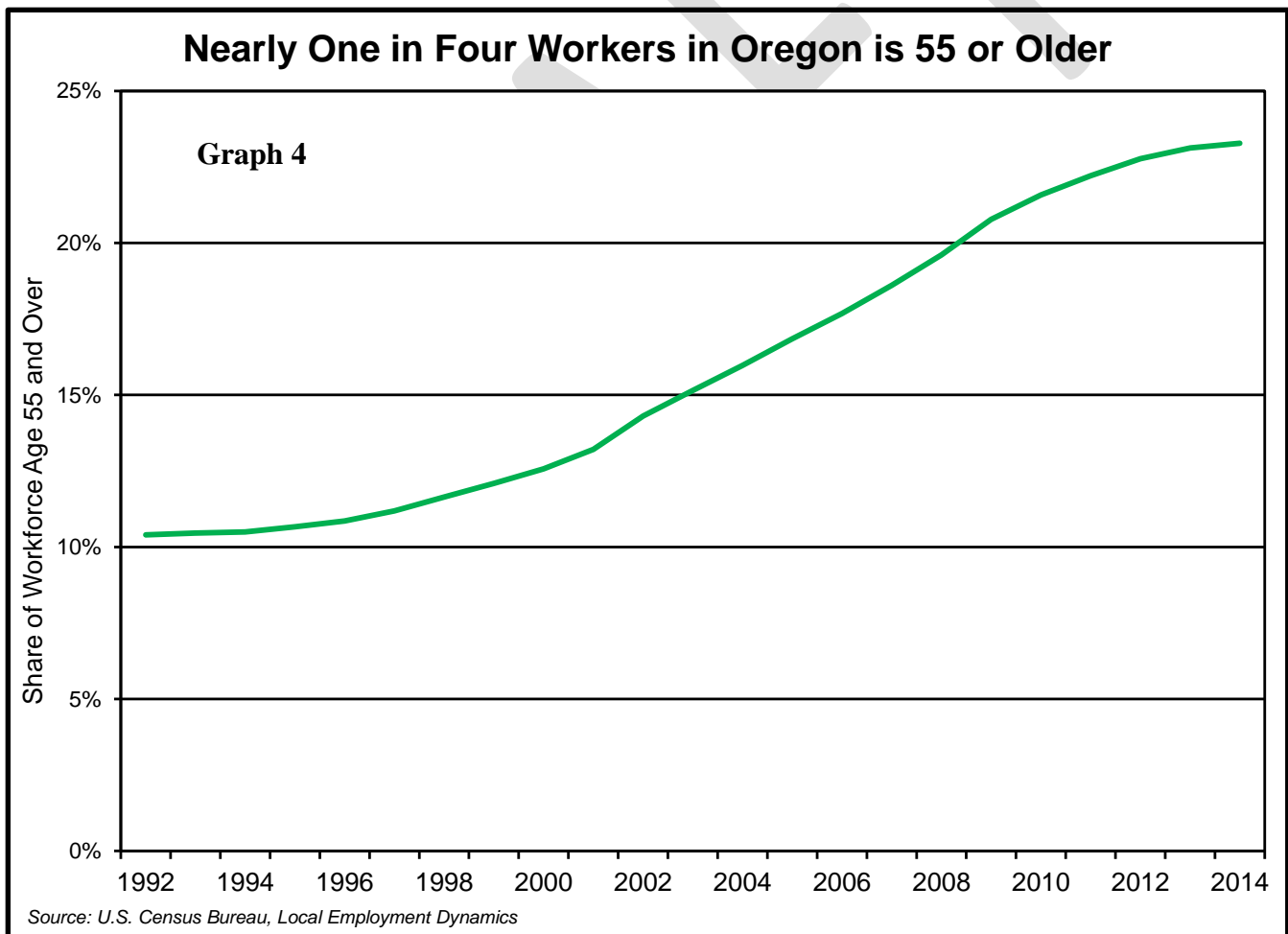
Projected growth and replacement job openings by broad occupational group are shown in Graph 3. Service occupations will have the most openings through 2022, but of the 136,000 expected openings, 63 percent will be due to replacement needs. In fact, most job openings in nearly all occupational groups will be from

replacements as more workers enter retirement. Only health care, construction, and extraction occupational groups are expected to have more openings due to growth than due to replacement openings. As the labor force continues to age, replacement openings are likely to become more numerous and the associated need for training is likely to grow.

### **Workers with Barriers to Employment: Older Workers**

Baby boomers have dramatically changed the age structure of Oregon’s workforce. In 1994, the oldest baby boomers were just 48 years old and the overall workforce was much younger. Two decades ago, just over 10 percent of Oregon’s workforce was 55 years or older. In 2014, 23 percent of Oregon’s workforce was 55 years and over (Graph 4).

The number of workers in Oregon who were 55 years and over reached nearly 393,000 in 2014. Of those workers 96,000 were age 65 years and older and working past the traditional age of retirement.



Older workers can be found in jobs in all industries, of course, but some industries have a large concentration of older workers. In Oregon, the industry sectors with a larger than average share of workers 55 years and older are mining (33%), utilities (32%), agriculture and forestry (30%), real estate (30%), educational services (29%), public administration (29%), transportation and warehousing (29%), other services (27%), health care (25%), and manufacturing (24%). These industries may face a tougher time finding enough replacement workers as these older workers head toward retirement. At the same time, older workers looking to remain in the workforce may find job opportunities in these sectors if they have relevant experience.

Rural areas in Oregon also have a large concentration of older workers. In fact, the only counties with a smaller share of older workers than the statewide average are Washington County (20%), Multnomah County (22%), and Deschutes County (22%).

### **Workers with Barriers to Employment: Long-term Unemployed**

In the early stages of the economic recovery, the number of long-term unemployed Oregonians spiked to 102,100, the highest number of record. Long-term unemployed are those who have been unemployed for at least six months. The longer an unemployed worker remains unemployed, the less likely they are to find a steady full-time job, and the more likely they are to leave the labor force. Researchers have found that long-term unemployment can lead to a decline in the workers' knowledge, skills, and abilities, making it harder for them to qualify for available jobs. Other studies show that multiple employers discriminate against the long-term unemployed, making it less likely for an unemployed worker to receive an interview. These barriers to employment exist even in a strong economy.

The number of short-term unemployed Oregonians has returned to roughly the same number seen during the previous economic expansion. However, the average of more than 28,000 long-term unemployed Oregonians during the last 12 months is more than twice the average seen during the 12 months prior to the Great Recession. Over the last year, one out of four unemployed Oregonians were long-term unemployed.

Although the number of long-term unemployed Oregonians has fallen from its peak in 2010, it took five years of economic recovery to reduce long-term unemployment to its present level. In addition to how persistent long-term unemployment has been, it's unclear from the data whether most of the improvement has been from long-term unemployed finding work, or if most have left the labor force altogether.

### **Workforce Skills Needed**

A skilled workforce is a key component of Oregon's economic strength. To remain competitive, Oregon businesses need an adequate supply of job-ready workers. Skills are essential at every level of the workforce. A more highly skilled workforce will be better able to adapt to the changing needs of businesses in an evolving economy.

For workers to be competitive in the job market, and for employers to maintain a productive workforce, workers need a variety of basic, entry-level skills. These include reading, writing, speaking, listening, arithmetic, and basic computer skills. Employers also need workers with "soft skills," including good work habits, dependability, and a positive attitude. These basic skills can be the foundation for more complex skills demanded by higher paying occupations.

Table 1 shows the skills most commonly needed across Oregon’s economy. While this particular snapshot is based on all 2012 employment, the list is very similar for only high-demand occupations. Top skills associated with projected openings over the 2012-2022 period are also quite similar, meaning this list is relevant for current and future workforce needs.

Higher paying occupations tend to require a higher level of skill, on top of a worker’s basic skills. When looking at the skills most commonly associated with high-wage occupations, there are some key differences from the top skills listed here for all occupations.

High-wage occupations are more likely to require skills like: use algebra; prepare reports in a timely manner; understand, use and communicate technical information; make presentations; read schematics and specifications; and apply active listening techniques. Less emphasis is placed on skills like: provide customer service; follow safety procedures; maneuver heavy objects; apply health and sanitation standards; and operate fax machines, copiers, printers and other office machines. Information for job seekers and employers to conduct analysis and decision-making related to occupation, education and training choices (including resources on certificates, credentials and licenses) can be found at <http://www.qualityinfo.org><sup>2</sup>

The knowledge and technology base for the vast majority of professional and technical occupations is changing rapidly. Significant trends such as big data, cyber vigilance and the Internet of Things are changing the way we work. These changes mean the information we gather, manage and analyze, regardless of industry, is a driving force for every enterprise. So too are the advances in engineering and science that result in new materials for manufacturing, smart grid systems for energy, advanced diagnostic and therapeutic devices for health care and bioscience, and smart mobile technologies. These innovations and others are generating the need for occupations such as cybersecurity specialists, business intelligence analysts, and mechatronics engineers.

In Oregon and across the nation, the work environment that drives talent is also changing.

- Mid-size companies are disappearing, leaving a barbell economy of small and large firms.

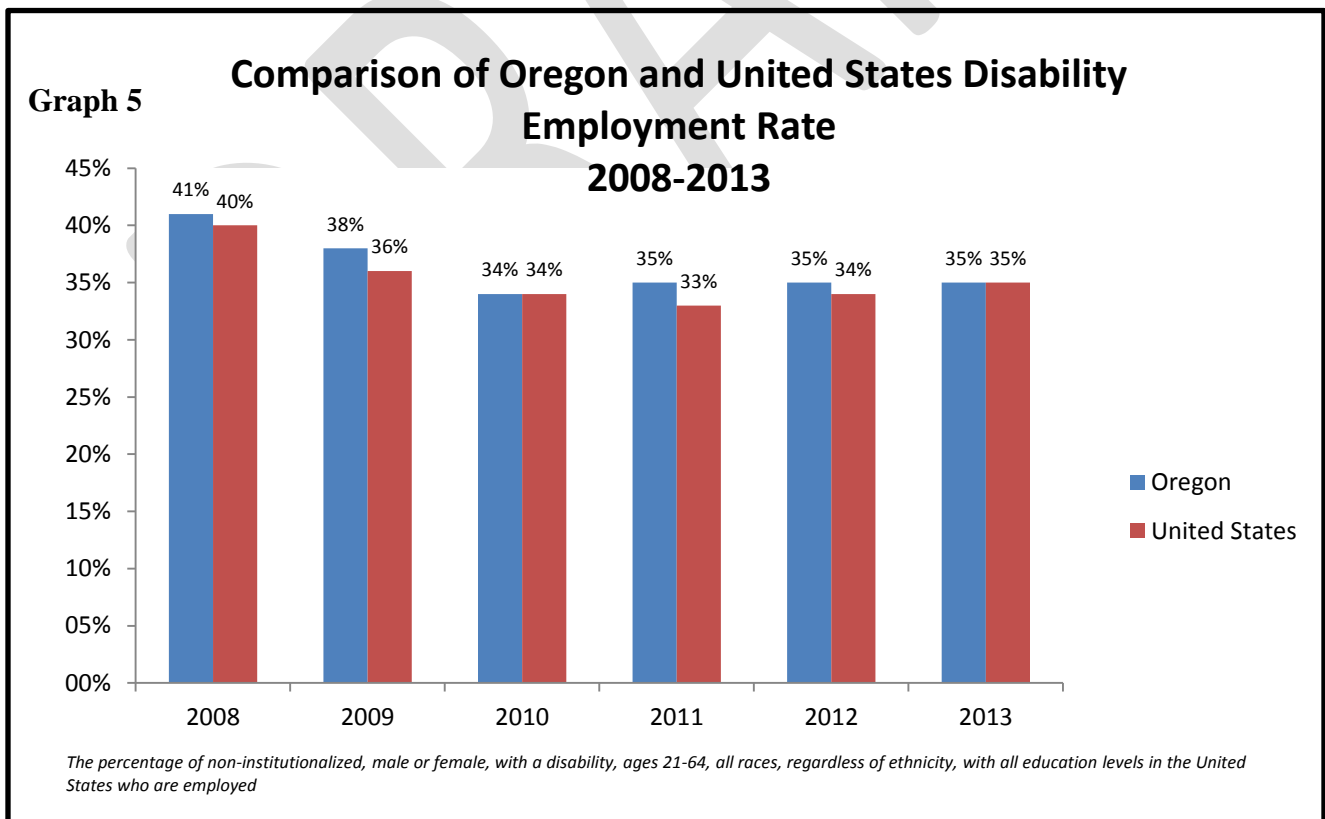
<b>Table 1</b>
<b>Top 20 Skills by 2012 Employment, Oregon</b>
Process records and maintain forms and files
Use basic mathematics
Work as a team member
Provide customer service
Follow safety procedures
Obtain information from clients, customers, patients or others
Use computers to enter, access and retrieve data
Maneuver heavy objects
Prepare reports in timely manner
Use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling
Use algebra
Apply health and sanitation standards
Apply mathematical principles to accounting, bookkeeping or budgeting
Understand, use, and communicate technical information
Process and prepare business forms
Make presentations
Operate fax machines, copiers, printers, and other office machines
Provide customer service using telephone
Receive payments and make change
Organize and work with detailed records

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.qualityinfo.org>

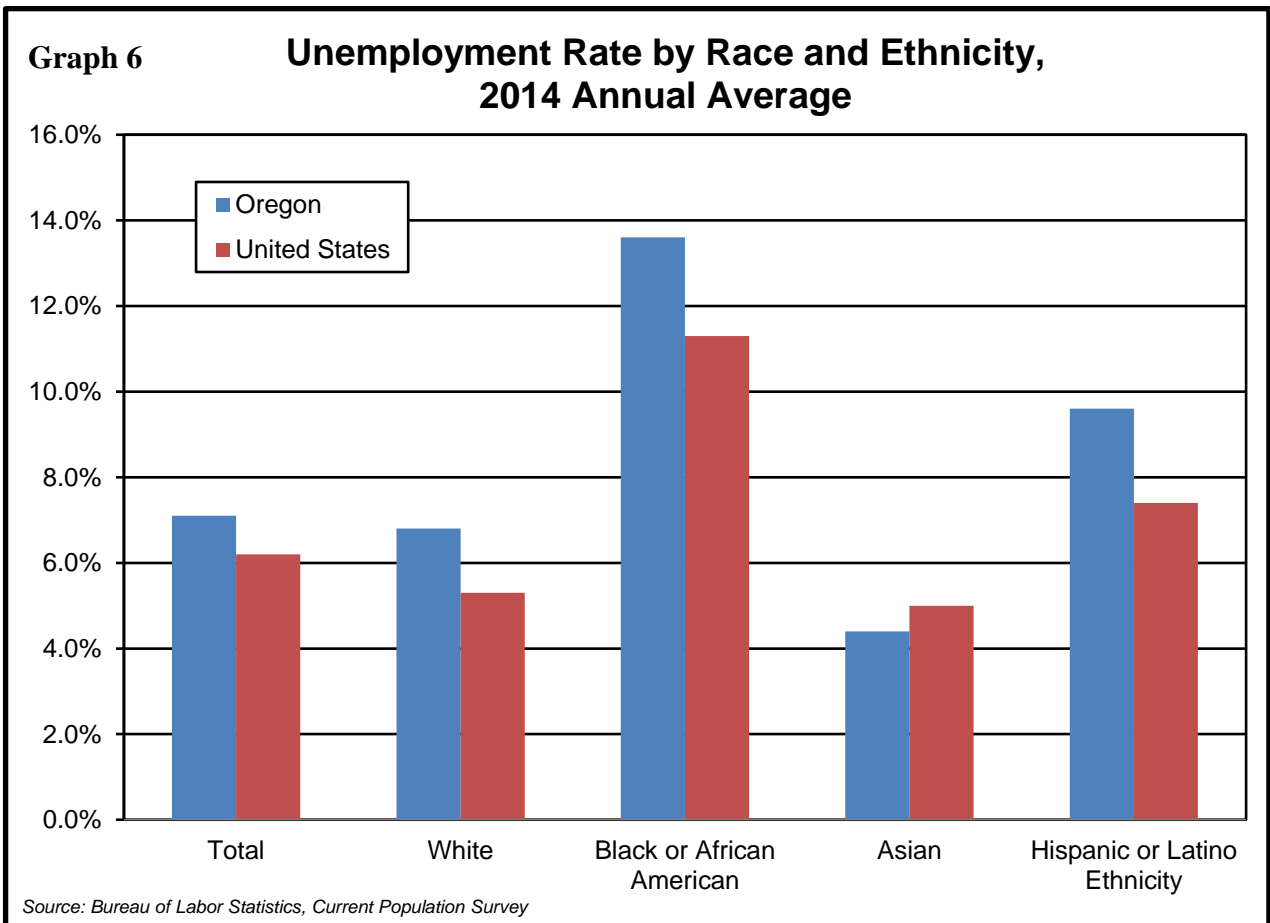
- The average tenure in a job has decreased to seven years, and younger workers change jobs about every 3-4 years.
- More workers (~40%) are freelancers, self-employed or contract workers, with the trend expected to grow.
- Business is conducted in interdisciplinary teams, with consistent customer interactions.
- The Internet, social media and mobile apps give customers (including students and employees) more choices and influence than ever before.
- Technology is automating tasks, yet increasing the need for people to diagnose and rapidly respond to problems.

**Workers with Disabilities**

Individuals with disabilities are habitually an underrepresented population in the workforce. This is due in part to skill gaps, institutional barriers, and societal acceptance of individuals with disabilities. Whether a disability is acquired or congenital they often lead to lack of work experience and periods of long-term unemployment. The same employer discrimination that is mentioned above for the long-term unemployed is compounded by the fact that individuals with disabilities face other forms of discrimination in hiring practices. The attached chart shows the employment rate for individuals with disabilities in the United States and in Oregon. Oregon mirrors the national average employment rate for individuals with disabilities.







**Characteristics of the Population**

Oregon’s population has become more racially diverse over the last two decades. By 2010, nearly 84 percent of the population was white, 4 percent was Asian, and 2 percent was black or African American. The remainder of the population was American Indian, Native Hawaiian, some other race, or two or more races.

Oregon’s population has also grown more ethnically diverse, as seen in the growth of the Hispanic population over the last two decades. By 2010 it had grown to almost 12 percent. More than 16 percent of the United States’ population was Hispanic in 2010, indicating that Oregon still has a small Hispanic population relative to the national average. Nevertheless, Oregon’s Hispanic population grew at a faster rate (63%) than the national average (43%) from 2000 to 2010.

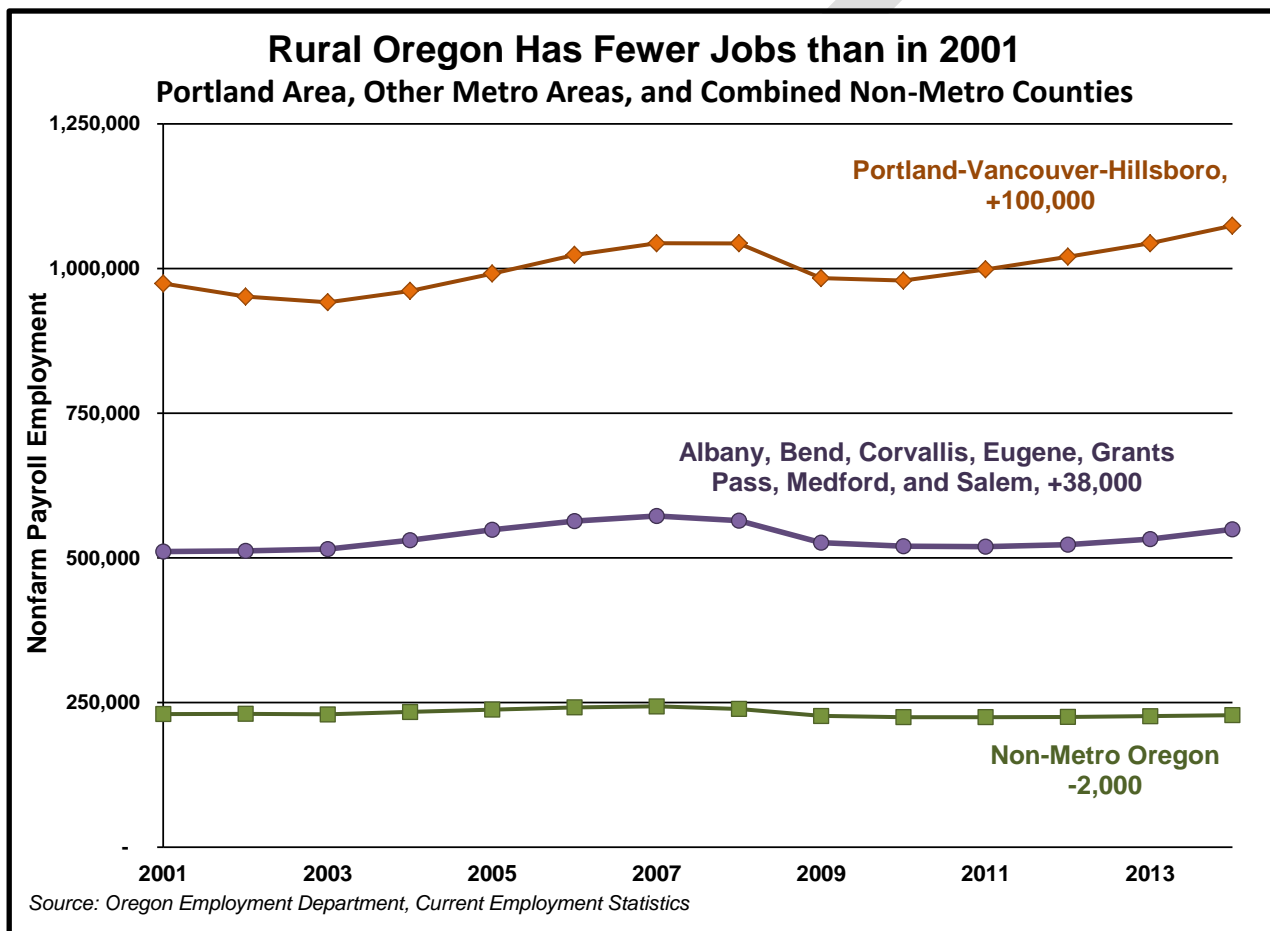
Graph 6 shows the 2014 unemployment rates by race and ethnicity. At 13.6 percent, unemployment among blacks or African Americans was higher than the total population, which was 7.1 percent. The unemployment rate among people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity was also higher at 9.6 percent.

**Economic and Workforce Conditions in Rural Oregon**

It took rural areas of Oregon much longer than it took the Portland area to begin adding jobs following the Great Recession. The number of jobs is now growing again in nearly all rural counties, and the growth rate in some rural counties has been faster over the last year than the statewide job growth rate. Other areas of rural

Oregon are not doing as well. Job growth in these areas of rural Oregon is hampered by changes in the economy and an aging population. These are long-term slow-growth trends that were made worse by the recession and make it hard for these areas to share in the recovery.

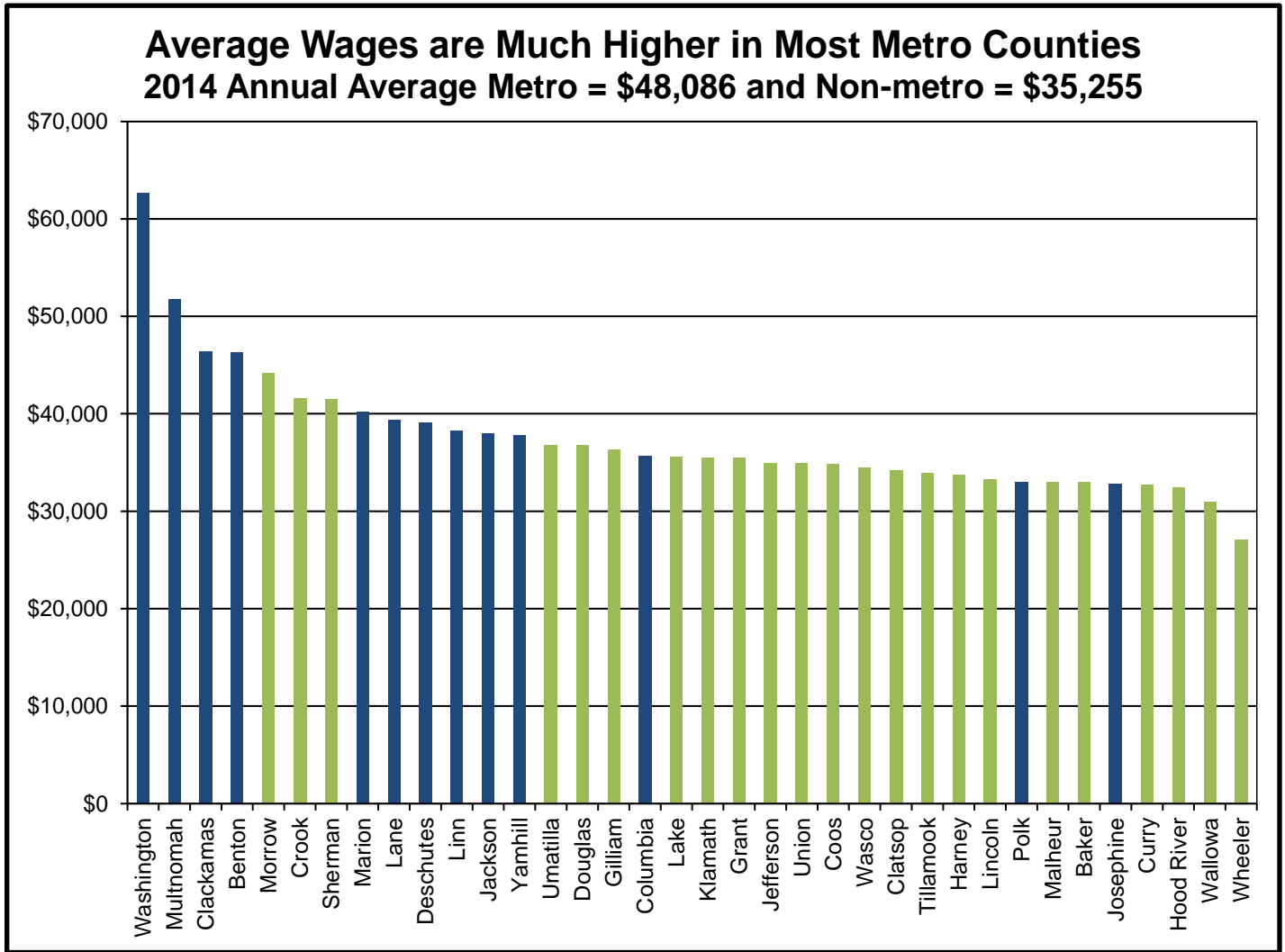
Since 2001, Oregon’s non-metro counties, taken as a whole, have lost a net 2,000 jobs. Rural Oregon’s job losses contrast with the long-term job growth of urban Oregon, where 100,000 jobs were added in the Portland metro area and a combined 38,000 jobs were added across the other metro areas over the same period.



There tends to be fewer jobs per person living in rural Oregon than there are in urban areas, and a smaller share of the population in rural counties is involved in the labor force. The labor force participation rate is the share of the population age 16 years and older that is employed or unemployed. Over the last 15 years, labor force participation rates have been falling in Oregon and the U.S. as a larger share of the population reaches retirement age and fewer young people enter the labor force.

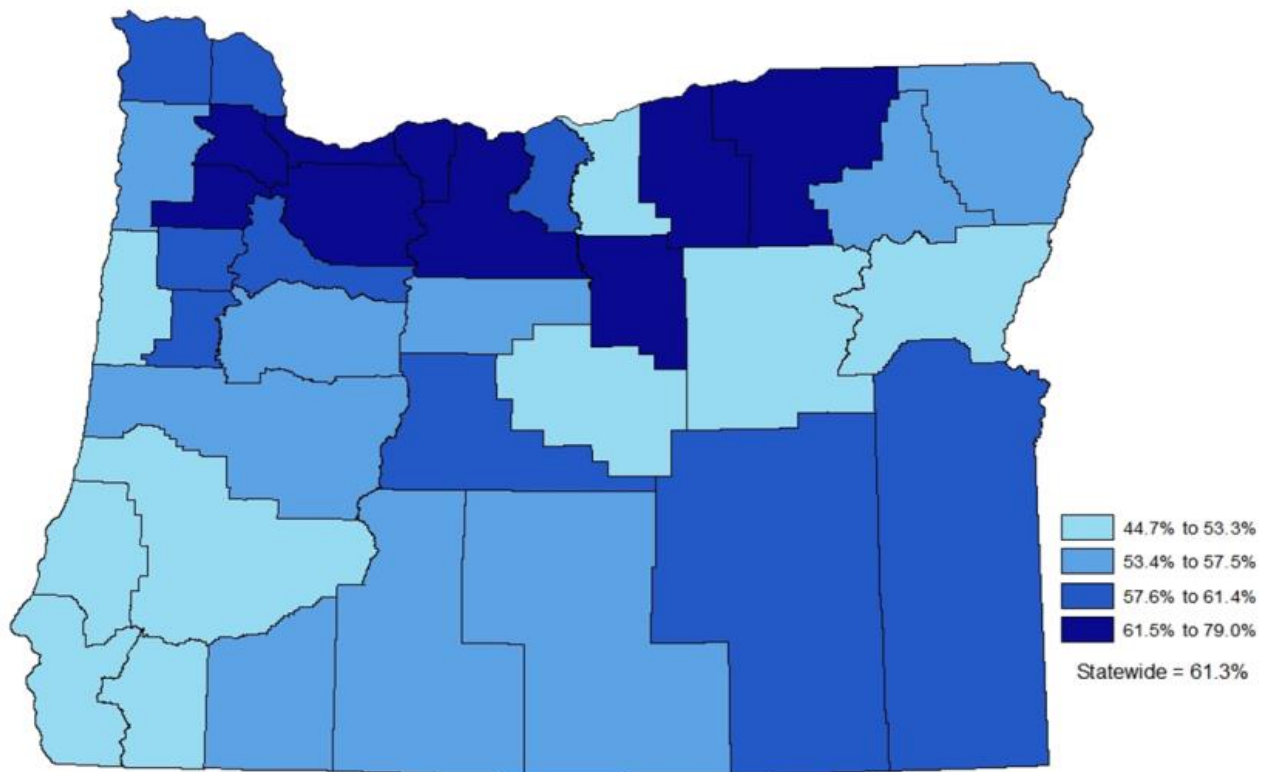
Average wages in rural Oregon are lower than in urban areas of the state. The combined average annual payroll in non-metro counties was just \$35,255, compared with \$48,086 in metro areas in 2014. Just three non-metro

counties, Morrow, Crook, and Sherman, have average wages that are similar to metro areas. However, the average wages in these three counties are high due to very high wages for relatively few jobs. This increased the overall average without directly raising the wages of other workers. For example, the information sectors of Crook and Morrow counties include jobs at Internet data centers, and the high wages paid in that industry raise the overall county average above wages in other rural counties.



These trends are particularly strong in many of Oregon's rural areas. Curry County has the lowest labor force participation rate in the state at 44.7 percent in 2014. That means fewer than half of the county's population age 16 and over was working or actively looking for job. Some rural counties have higher labor force participation rates. Four of the five rural counties that had participation rates higher than the statewide rate of 61.3 percent were located along the Columbia River. These were Hood River (79.0%), Wasco (67.8%), Morrow (65.5%), and Umatilla (63.7%) counties.

## Labor Force Participation Rates by County, 2014



## Occupations Key to Oregon’s Traded and High Growth Sectors

The 2015 Oregon Talent Plan used primary and secondary data sources from industry, government, and academic sources to identify the ten top occupational clusters in three categories for the technology, advance manufacturing, energy, healthcare and biosciences industry sectors.

High-growth, high-demand occupations	Mission critical occupations	Emerging occupations
<p><i>Significant new and replacement jobs with foreseeable demand, high growth rates, and hard-to-fill vacancies that cut across industries and/or regions</i></p>	<p><i>Strong employment and above average projected growth; identified by industry as essential for core operations and often hard-to-fill</i></p>	<p><i>Relatively new and/or growing rapidly in support of multiple industries; ability to position the state as a leader in these skills</i></p>
<p>Systems and data specialists who design, connect, and manage big data systems.</p> <p>Data and business intelligence analysts who analyze big data to enhance operations, predict market demand, mitigate risk, and control quality and standardization.</p> <p>Industrial machinists, millwrights and operators of highly computerized and/or automated processes requiring precision, quality control and strong diagnostic skills.</p> <p>Rehabilitation therapists and assistants (physical, occupational, respiratory, etc.) employed in hospitals, clinical and long-term care systems.</p>	<p>Technologically skilled mechanics and maintenance technicians who maintain and repair highly technical machines and equipment across industries including manufacturing, energy, healthcare, and others.</p> <p>Mental and behavioral counselors who are a growing part of integrated health systems and who support the ability of residents to have productive lives, especially in rural areas.</p> <p>Interdisciplinary engineers who can integrate mechanics, electronics, and computer systems that comprise smart machines and connected devices.</p> <p>Primary health care practitioners including specialty nurses who are at the heart of new coordinated patient care health models, and are significantly in demand in rural areas.</p>	<p>Cyber and information security specialists who can develop, monitor and mitigate security risks for data and information systems.</p> <p>Advanced materials engineers &amp; scientists enabling the development of products and devices that are smaller, tougher, lighter, more flexible, less expensive, and more energy efficient.</p>

## *Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis*

### **The State's Workforce Development Activities.**

The Workforce system provides services focused in broad categories:

- Enhancing the job skills of Oregon's workforce.
- Assisting Oregon's employers find skilled workers.
- Assisting job seekers enhance their work search skills and assist in finding employment.
- Providing workforce economic and labor information for decision-making.

Oregon conducts analysis of its Workforce activities on an ongoing basis, including education and training activities, depending on the issues and decisions at hand. Under the previous state board strategic plan, and in an effort to align, integrate and right size Oregon's workforce system, the state contracted a comprehensive organizational review in 2013 that included an evaluation of customer service and other components of Oregon's system. This review can be found here: [Workforce System Organizational Review in 2013<sup>3</sup>](#).

### **Shared Vision, System Outcomes and Measures**

This 2013 Organizational Review (OR) identified a lack of shared vision to create a system-wide, integrated perspective with all programs working to achieve the same outcomes. Additional analysis by a joint taskforce of the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) and Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) confirmed this conclusion and recommended that the education and workforce systems in Oregon adopt common outcomes. OWIB and HECC both adopted the recommendation to adopt skill gain/credential rate, entered employment, employment retention, earnings from employment, and wage gain. Continued implementation of WIOA and its common measures will further progress in this area.

### **Governance and Accountability Structures**

The review concluded that Oregon's workforce system could benefit from improved governance, communication and coordination among the system's agencies and partners. Oregon began work to redefine, repurpose, and strengthen its state and local workforce boards to better address community, business and worker needs. This work has been further supported by the new state and local board roles and functions contained in WIOA.

### **Service Delivery**

This 2013 Organizational Review also concluded a need for sharing of best practices, implementation of continuous improvement, and work to have effective and efficient functionality of the whole system throughout the state. This general assessment also concluded that the system needs to better reflect the needs of those it serves. Much work has been done to realign local workforce areas and to align state program boundaries to better serve customers. This groundwork lays an important foundation for the implementation of WIOA.

### **Support for Service Delivery**

The 2013 Organizational Review also concluded that integrating data across information systems is a key support for local service delivery and is instrument for maximizing accountability and transparency. The state continues work to explore ways to better link information systems and offer "no wrong door" access to all customers.

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<sup>3</sup> [Workforce System Organizational Review in 2013](#)

Oregon continues to evaluate the impacts of the workforce system. As we transition from WIA to WIOA, we are discussing how evaluation efforts and activities might be affected. While these are “works in progress”, Oregon continues to track, present, and analyze data, including trends over time.

Data from Oregon’s system-wide performance measures continues to be available for the employment related indicators, basic skills attainment, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) caseload management. Oregon’s cross-system outcomes accountability system, Performance Reporting Information System (PRISM), gathers demographic data on customers served by nearly all workforce partners, ensuring analysis and evaluation can occur based on customer cohorts (e.g., racial/ethnic minority status, age group, or educational attainment level). Many results are available at a statewide level, by agency/partner program, and/or by local area – or by combinations. These system-wide performance data are available at [www.prism.state.or.us](http://www.prism.state.or.us)<sup>4</sup>.

Information and data is updated regularly, and this, combined with the ability to filter results and compare trends over time, gives program managers, stakeholders, and even the general public the ability view, analyze, and evaluate various performance-related measures across Oregon’s workforce system.

Oregon also created interagency and cross-program structures to better coordinate and communicate within the workforce system. The OWIB and HECC adopted recommendations from a joint task force to adopt mechanisms to develop and align policy between post-secondary education and workforce, including joint meetings and summits focus on policy, implementation strategies, and investments. These structures will continue under WIOA for the core programs and partner programs.

### **Enhancing the job skills of Oregon’s workforce**

An “Analysis of Oregon’s Local workforce development boards: Benefit-cost Analysis of WIA Title I Programs / Economic Impact Analysis of WIB Operations” is another example of an analysis of the workforce programs. The report examined Oregon’s local workforce development boards (WIBs) and the benefits and costs generated by their Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, which are largely supported by Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I funds. The report also measured the economic benefits generated by the operations of the local WIBs in the state. This report can be found at <http://wioa.weebly.com/state-and-local-planning.html><sup>5</sup>

Title II assessments and analysis focused primarily on enrollment and measurable skill gains, such as GED completions. Over the past two years, Title II enrollment in Oregon has decreased from 16,204 in 2013-2014 to 13,882 in 2014-2015. There is no waiting list. The number of hours participants received services was nearly identical during the two-year time period, a little over 1.6 million hours in both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. On average, Title II students received services for over 100 hours a year. The percentage of pre- and post-tests were also similar between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015; approximately 57% of enrolled participants completed pre- and post-tests. In 2013-2014, Title II outcomes measures totaled, 710 GED completers, 2,578 participant transitions to postsecondary education, and 1,699 participants entered employment.

### **Assisting Oregon’s employers to find skilled workers**

An analysis of Title III (Wagner-Peyser) business services provided by the Oregon Employment Department shows that customer outcomes have improved. New processes lower the number of candidates an employer

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<sup>4</sup> [www.prism.state.or.us](http://www.prism.state.or.us)

<sup>5</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/state-and-local-planning.html>

considers for each new hire, saving the employer time and money. Local staff are focusing on small and medium size employers, as well as those in growth industries.

### **Assisting job seekers to enhance their work search skills and assist in finding employment**

An Oregon Employment Department analysis shows that Oregon's approach to the delivery of reemployment services saves an average of 1.1 weeks of unemployment benefits across all claimants. Reemployment services saved Oregon's UI trust fund \$41.8 million in PY 2013, and \$37.5 million in PY 2014. The total number of claimants dropped by 14% from PY 2013 to PY 2014, which explains the decrease in savings.

An analysis of Oregon's one-stop offices was used to implement a set of service and performance standards. An assessment was used that looked at the ability of all partners in the one-stop system to meet the new standards. The WorkSource Oregon Operating Standards Statewide Self-Assessment Report was used to determine a strategy for implementing the operating standards statewide. The partners at WorkSource Oregon, the one-stop centers, have developed statewide operational standards for the centers. This system recognizes that the workforce areas are starting at different places and performance is not anticipated to meet all standards across the state. However, the measurements will help determine how well we are striving toward full implementation of the standards by region. For the full report, see [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards Self-Assessment Report \(April 2015\)](#).<sup>6</sup>

### **Providing workforce economic and labor information for decision-making**

The Performance Reporting Information System (PRISM) was established to collect, analyze, and report on Workforce development services, Customers receiving these services, and Employment outcomes after receiving services. PRISM measures how effective Oregon's workforce agencies are at helping people find and keep jobs and improve wages.

### **The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities.**

Oregon's workforce redesign effort created four [new workforce boards and reorganized several others](#)<sup>7</sup>, requiring that local areas hire new staff, develop incorporation documents, consider partnerships, and so forth. The [Analysis of Oregon's Local workforce development boards](#)<sup>8</sup> illustrates the level of change and it is significant. While the time pressure to implement WIOA is helping to drive that change, there is a growing, common understanding that the change will be iterative and not conform tightly to the federal timetable. The total level of change is significant and creates, in the short term, a significant level of risk and potential weakness to the workforce system.

The level of support from political, education, and business leaders for Workforce programs has been consistently strong, including a significant amount of state funding. There is a healthy partnership at the state-level between the core programs, with strengthening interest from our non-core partners to collaborate, leverage resources and improve outcomes across all programs. Professional staff work tirelessly to remove barriers and maximize resources to improve services to the customer, both the employer and the worker.

One of the greatest assets of Oregon's workforce system is a culture of strong communication and partnership between programs. Processes, where feasible, have been built to integrate services, including intake and

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<sup>6</sup> <http://wsostandards.weebly.com/wso-operational-standards-self-assessment-report-april-2015.html>.

<sup>7</sup> <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/>.



eligibility cooperation. There are many examples of this cooperation. For example, Trade Act, Unemployment Insurance Training and Dislocated Worker staff coordinate and cooperate in service provision. One-stop partners across all workforce areas developed [statewide operational standards](#)<sup>9</sup> for their offices/ not only do the standards provide service consistency, they also demonstrates active collaboration between programs across workforce areas. Similarly, state funding for the Labor Management Information (LMI) function has allowed Oregon to build and maintain a robust suite of [labor market information and services](#)<sup>10</sup>, including local-area analysis, information sharing outreach and strong partnerships with workforce partners. LMI will inform sector strategies, career planning, training decisions, business engagement and placement services.

### **Enhancing the training and job skills of Oregon's workforce**

In PY 2012, Oregon's local WIBs served 189,787 WIA Title I participants – 36,952 participants in the Adult Program, 149,819 participants in the Dislocated Worker Program, and 3,016 participants in the Youth Program. Performance measures for PY 2012 show that, of those who were placed into jobs between April 1, 2011 and March 30, 2012, a total of 15,370 adult participants and 80,654 dislocated workers retained employment for three consecutive quarters after they exited the program. Participants who retained employment after exiting the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs were projected to generate a total of \$165.1 million in added taxable earnings over the next ten-year period (in present value terms). This change equates to a total of \$2.77 in added taxable earnings for every dollar spent to fund the programs.

Performance measures for PY 2012 also show that 911 youth participants were placed in employment or education between October 1, 2011 and September 30, 2012. These youth are projected to generate \$10 million in added taxable earnings over the next ten-year period (in present value terms), or \$0.90 for every dollar spent to fund the program. Overall, the combined economic value of the WIA Title I programs administered by Oregon's local WIBs is \$175 million, equal to the added taxable earnings that will accrue to participants of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs over the next ten years. The benefit-cost ratio yields a \$2.48 in added taxable earnings for every dollar spent.

One specific area with a potential for improvement and added strength is the percentage of Title I funds spent on individual occupation training. The Oregon Workforce Investment Board recently adopted a requirement that every local workforce board invest a minimum of 25 percent of its funds in occupational training. As this is a new requirement and the state has four new local boards, the state board will continue to monitor implementation over the period of the state plan to assess success and identify additional ways to increase the funding for training. Improving this area while redesigning the workforce regions and implementing WIOA may be difficult but it remains an objective.

Strengths of Oregon's Title II programs stem from strong connections with postsecondary education and training programs. Currently, Title II programs are housed within the 17 Oregon independent community colleges. Integration with the community colleges allows adult education and literacy providers to extensively leverage resources such as facilities, services, and matching funds. Title II providers are required to provide a match and CCWD, as the eligible agency, is required to uphold maintenance of effort in support of adult education and literacy programming in Oregon. In addition to the significant financial contribution made by the current Title II provider, the co-location of adult education and literacy programs on community college

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<sup>9</sup> <http://wsostandards.weebly.com/read-the-worksource-oregon-operational-standards-here.html>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.qualityinfo.org/>.

campuses facilitates strong connections to academic bridge programs and post-secondary programs, including career and technical education and industry recognized certifications.

### **Service Delivery**

Oregon is undergoing a systemic, structural transformation that will improve the way customers receive employment and training services at local WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Centers. These changes will also improve the way businesses receive services from WSO Centers. Oregon has been operating within a partnership framework for many years. The partners recently developed [standards](#)<sup>11</sup> that will be used to guide Oregon's one-stop system. The standards reflect the common vision on delivery of workforce services.

Business services are continually evolving and becoming better. At the start of 2013, The Oregon Employment Department began offering enhanced business services. Employers select this option when they want a deeper partnership with their business services staff member. An on-site visit is conducted to better understand the business culture and the business objectives, which allows staff to refer better candidates to the employer. The employer then has a smaller, more highly-qualified applicant pool, which saves them time and money. The service has improved the value and impact of business services by lowering an employer's recruitment and turnover costs. National and state level studies show that when the right person is hired, the employer saves roughly 50 percent of the new hires' salary because of lower turnover and training costs. In PY 2013 we directly placed 833 workers into the 721 enhanced job listings we received. Using a very conservative net savings to the employer of \$6,000 per hire, the service saved Oregon businesses \$5 million in recruitment and turnover costs. The numbers improved in PY 2014, resulting \$5.7 million in employer savings from the 955 workers placed against 1,004 enhanced job listings. Interest in the service continues, with 319 workers placed into 319 enhanced job listings in the first quarter of PY 2015.

### **Support for Service Delivery**

Oregon has a strong bricks and mortar presence. Roughly 30 percent of facilities are owned by the State, which have lower operational costs when compared to leasing. The use of non-federal funds provides additional flexibility in locating offices relative to community needs, and this is particularly important given Oregon's rural expanse. Local elected officials across rural communities depend on public workforce services to support their economic and education objectives. On the other hand, many offices need to be upgraded to improve customer flow, and in some instances, moved or expanded to allow more partner staff to co-locate.

The strength of our data systems help to deliver consistent services and resources across the state. While the state's current data systems ensure the delivery of program specific services, integrating these systems remains a significant and expensive challenge.

A significant shortcoming of the workforce system is often uncoordinated and unconnected Information Technology infrastructure, with several major components that are neglected, out of date and inflexible. While the current data systems ensure the delivery of program specific services, integrating these systems remains a significant and expensive challenge. There is limited ability to feasibly share data and/or participant information between core programs and partners. Even with tentative plans to move forward with some new IT systems, IT remains a significant concern. With the high cost and risk of new IT systems, IT issues are often a barrier to improving and integrating the workforce system. However, there are currently key partners working together with the goal of increased interconnectivity of these systems in a more efficient manner to

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<sup>11</sup> <http://wsostandards.weebly.com/read-the-worksource-oregon-operational-standards-here.html>.

increase the effectiveness of the workforce system through increased sharing of data to inform better data-driven decision making.

### **Providing workforce economic and labor information for decision-making**

The Oregon Employment Department's Workforce and Economic Research Division provides accurate, reliable, and timely information about Oregon's state and local labor markets. The goal is to provide quality information that helps our customers make informed choices. Workforce development policy makers are a key Research customer group, particularly serving the labor market information needs of state and local workforce development boards. With the advent and now widespread use of the internet, the more "traditional" aspects of labor market information are largely made available on-line; allowing staff more time to focus on custom analysis and answering challenging questions about the labor market.

### **State Workforce Development Capacity**

Adult Basic Education services in Oregon serve less than 10 percent of the adult Oregonians who lack a high school diploma or GED. While there are no waiting lists for Adult Basic Education services with current Title II providers, that does not mean that the full population of individuals needing services are pursuing them. Title II funds about 15 percent of Adult Basic Education services in the state, the remaining 85 percent of services are funded through community college general funds. Community colleges are independently governed entities that allocate general funds based on local needs and priorities. Community colleges are under no obligation to fund Adult Basic Education at any particular level. The level of support is exceptionally high across Oregon's 17 community colleges. If this were to change, services funded solely under Title II would reach a much smaller number of Oregonians.

Capacity issues are often localized, either by geography or program. Rural Workforce Investment Board regions have the highest unemployment rates but the least amount of resources as well as geographic issues such as widespread facilities. Programs, such as Title 1 or Wagner-Peyser, that meet general community needs often lack the capacity to provide the specialized services needed by certain groups or programs (i.e. Vocational Rehabilitation).

Oregon's labor exchange program has demonstrated sufficient capacity to provide service. Non-federal funding plays a majority role in meeting Oregon's labor exchange needs, which in turn ensures the integrity of Oregon's UI trust fund and the delivery of enhanced services to the business community. The addition of state money has reduced the duration of Unemployment Insurance claims, which saved employers tens of millions in tax dollars and helped ensure Oregon's Unemployment Insurance trust fund remained solvent during the Great Recession. State funding also increases the capacity to meet the service needs of employers, helping to improve their bottom-line by lowering recruitment, turnover, and training costs. In PY 2014, over 340,000 individuals were active in the labor exchange system, and 173,000 were not UI claimants. This means that virtually half of our job seeker customers chose to seek services through the public labor exchange. More businesses are choosing our enhanced service option, as validated by the hundreds of success stories from businesses sharing that the service more than meets their needs and expectations. Our ability to maintain these services is contingent upon receiving state funds in the future.

## State Strategic Vision and Goals

### *Vision*

The strategic vision for the state's economy and overarching goals for the state's workforce system: *A strong state economy and prosperous communities are fueled by skilled workers, quality jobs and thriving businesses.*

A robust economy with ample mid- to high-income jobs is a baseline for a state-wide high quality of life, which includes healthcare, food security, and quality housing. The vision seeks to focus on Oregon's long-term economic prosperity and resiliency through people-based strategies designed to lift up Oregon workers, innovators and entrepreneurs.

To achieve this vision, the [Oregon Workforce Investment Board \(OWIB\) developed guiding principles](#)<sup>12</sup> to identify core or foundational values for the workforce development system. These principles will be used as a lens for evaluating the goals, strategies and actions of the system:

- Customers of the workforce system include both businesses and individuals (job seekers, working learners and youth).
- Data, including customer input, drives continuous improvement and accountability of the system.
- The state supports local decision-making to achieve the OWIB's vision and goals.
- Strategies are business-led, demand-driven and benefit all customers.
- Customers have access to a simple, flexible and streamlined system.
- System agencies and organizations are agile and nimble to respond to customer needs.
- The system promotes equity and strives to reach equitable outcomes, including but not limited to addressing the unique needs of families in poverty, communities of color, and rural communities.
- Collaboration within the workforce system and with other policy areas occurs between state agencies, through sector strategies, and at the local and regional level.
- Investments and decisions are results driven, not program-driven, to optimize long-term results for clients served, build a strong economy and achieve the state's goals.
- The system adopts tools and promising practices from other states or communities rather than creating new ones, whenever appropriate.
- The workforce system targets investments to high-wage, high-demand occupations in sectors where the opportunities are the greatest.

### *Goals*

Consistent with the state's vision, the OWIB will target workforce resources to high-wage, high-demand occupations in sectors where opportunities are the greatest. This includes innovations, enhancements, and expansion of existing programs such as career pathways, career and technical education, work-based and experiential learning, career readiness, career-related learning experiences, adult basic education, youth employment, industry-recognized credentials, and apprenticeship.

To meet this goal Oregon's workforce system must provide services and partner with educational programs to ensure that: 1) all Oregonians can meet basic workplace skills requirements and are ready to work, and 2) Oregon's workers have the transferable, technical skills that make them competitive for high-wage, high-demand jobs. This must be true for all groups of workers and potential workers, whether they are coming

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<sup>12</sup> [Oregon Workforce Investment Board \(OWIB\) developed guiding principles](#)

directly out of high school, a trade or technical school, an apprenticeship program, a Workforce Investment Act funded training program, a public assistance program, a community college, a four-year university, or are already working.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board Oregon has identified 4 strategic goals to give direction for the state's workforce system.

**Goal 1:** Create a customer-centric workforce system that is easy to access, highly effective, and simple to understand.

The State of Oregon has cultivated a strong workforce system which provides a solid foundation for further collaboration to promote improved customer service and increased effectiveness. Creating a streamlined, collaborative workforce system is the number one goal within this strategic plan because it directly affects the success of all other goals the OWIB pursues. If the system is not aligned, easy to navigate, and focused on the customer, all other efforts to improve our services will be less effective. An aligned, simple-to-use customer-focused system is also critical to making the system accessible for all Oregonians, especially for those with barriers to employment.

**Goal 2:** Provide business and industry customized workforce solutions to prepare and deliver qualified and viable candidates.

The second goal focuses on the business side of the workforce system's customer base. Businesses need an available workforce that is trained not only in the occupational skills required to do the job, but also in the employability skills necessary for candidates to be viable in the job market.

**Goal 3:** Invest in Oregonians to build in-demand skills, match training and job seekers to opportunities, and accelerate career momentum.

The third goal focuses on the jobseeker side of the customer base, including actively reaching out, engaging, and empowering individuals with barriers to employment. In order to increase the opportunity for employment, jobseekers must be informed about opportunities and prepared with in-demand skills, or those that are currently needed by business and employers locally. Matching training opportunities to the needs of local employers will allow the workforce system to present jobseekers with more opportunities, and employers with more viable candidates to choose from. Focusing on demanded occupational skills can also allow jobseekers to get a first step toward a larger career pathway and to accelerate the process of advancement.

**Goal 4:** Create and develop talent by providing young people with information and experiences that engage their interests, spur further career development, and connect to Oregon employers.

During the stakeholder input activities throughout the strategic planning process, there was an overwhelming theme identifying youth as an important target population for the strategic plan. Recognizing that the current youth population is tomorrow's workforce, this goal focuses on providing opportunities, in partnership with business and education, for young people to experience and understand the local economy to inform their future careers.

## *Performance Goals*

Oregon anticipates further guidance from DOL and DOE on Performance Goals and the federal/negotiation process under WIOA. Once this guidance is received and processed by all of the core programs, Appendix 1 will be completed.

## *Assessment*

Oregon will assess its workforce system effectiveness through a variety of methodologies and assessments.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) has adopted seven system performance measures, which are closely aligned to the WIOA performance measures. The OWIB will review a dashboard of the following measures on a quarterly basis to identify statewide policy and program recommendations:

- Entered employment
- Employment retention
- Earnings from employment
- Wage gain
- Skill gain
- Business satisfaction
- Job seeker satisfaction

These state-level outcome measures will be tracked statewide and by local workforce development areas as frequently as feasible. This tracking will help identify areas where policy or process adjustments may be needed. It will also identify the local areas that have achieved better results whose policy and processes may be shared and emulated elsewhere.

Local workforce boards may opt to track and analyze additional performance indicators and goals to track their own performance. These measures would be based on each area's specific economic and workforce conditions and the goals of the area. Although there may be significant overlap, it will be up to each local area to determine which performance indicators are relevant for the region, consistent with OWIB strategies, to meet the vision and goals laid out by OWIB.

The OWIB, in partnership with state agencies and the local boards, will continue development of additional measures to assess the statewide implementation of the goals and strategies. These measures will be developed through the OWIB Performance Reporting Committee and project specific work groups, which will involve members from the state board, representatives of state workforce agencies, and representatives from local workforce development boards.

This work requires state agencies and local workforce boards to continue the shift from a compliance- and program-specific orientation to a highly-integrated, outcomes-based system that makes value-added investments based on community needs. This work will also require greater responsibility, accountability, and autonomy for decision making at the local level.

Effectiveness of local service delivery through WorkSource Oregon will occur through the continued implementation and comprehensive use of the WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards. The workforce system will continuously evaluate its programs, services and processes in light of how these support the greater system goals, and add value to the experiences of customers, businesses and job seekers. For additional

information, see [“Rethinking Oregon Workforce Performance Measures - Recommended Measures, Two-Page Summary”](#) and the [“Year ONE Performance Checklist”](#)<sup>13</sup>.

The workforce system will continuously evaluate its programs, services and processes in light of how these support the greater system goals, and add value to the experiences of customers, businesses and jobs seekers.

These indicators may be either outcome-related or process measurements. For example, the partners at the One-stop centers in Oregon have initiated a process and developed statewide operational standards for the centers. There will be a measurement system for the standards. This system recognizes that the workforce areas are starting at different places and performance is not anticipated meet all standards across the state. However, the measurements will help determine how we be are moving toward full implementation of the standards by region (See the [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards Self-Assessment Report \(April 2015\)](#)<sup>14</sup>.)

### **State Strategies to achieve its Vision and Goals**

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board Oregon has identified strategies to implement its strategic goals and to give further direction for the state’s workforce system.

Oregon’s strategic vision for the state workforce system builds upon similar reforms in two other Oregon systems: education and economic-community development. Both of these previous efforts have put greater decision making into the hands of local organizations, while at the same time clarifying available investments and increasing accountability. The success of these reforms rests on well-defined outcomes with the highest flexibility possible on how to achieve them. The recommended system reforms will reduce fragmentation and provide greater flexibility to local communities in determining how to achieve goals and outcomes.

**Goal 1:** Create a customer-centric workforce system that is easy to access, highly effective, and simple to understand.

#### Strategies

*1.1 Create a framework for effective partnering within the workforce system.*

A framework for partnering will put processes in place for state agencies, local boards and other workforce organizations to work together and better understand each other’s services. This process will help to underline current policies that both help and hinder collaboration and will inform future policymaking decisions to support integration.

*1.2 Align and leverage resources (data, funding, capacity, etc.) to collectively impact common outcomes and reward collaboration.*

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<sup>13</sup> “Rethinking Oregon Workforce Performance Measures - Recommended Measures, Two-Page Summary” and the “Year ONE Performance Checklist”

<sup>14</sup> WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards Self-Assessment Report (April 2015)

Achieving more effective partnering will allow state and local workforce organizations to leverage resources, whether those resources are in the form of data, funds, or staff. As resources become scarcer, partnering will help to stretch them further to impact the outcomes of all participating organizations.

### *1.3 Build accountability mechanisms focused on results.*

Policies, processes, and funding decisions are only effective if they are followed or used properly. A theme of this strategic plan is to increase accountability to these things to focus on results. The OWIB will lead efforts to design and enforce mechanisms for accountability to ensure that investments are used wisely and programs are serving customers effectively, and to address shortfalls to make improvements.

### *1.4 Build a solution-driven (vs. program-driven) culture.*

A solutions-driven culture is one that starts plans with an end goal in mind. It focuses on the customer and seeks to understand their needs before deciding how to provide programs that will help to meet them. The workforce system has a lot of programs in place and is governed by federal law that could make it easy to turn to a program-driven culture, simply following the letter of the law and not thinking outside the box to meet the unique needs of the customer. The goal of this strategy is to ensure that does not happen and state agencies and local boards continue to hear from their customers and adapt programs to meet their needs.

### *1.5 Market coordinated system services and unite communications and information sharing among workforce, economic development and education.*

A system with uncoordinated services is very difficult for a customer to navigate. If the system markets services in a coordinated way, customers can come to one place and understand how to get the services they need without needing to understand the ins and outs of how it will happen. This is true for all services within the workforce system, but also for collaborating with economic development and education. For many customers, services from more than one or all three of these areas will be needed to reach a successful outcome. A system is best coordinated and most effective when all partners understand each other's services and communication paths are clear and well utilized for a seamless customer experience.

**Goal 2:** Provide business and industry customized workforce solutions to prepare and deliver qualified and viable candidates.

## Strategies

### *2.1 Create a sustainable framework for locally-driven sector partnerships to understand, anticipate, and respond to the needs of business and industry.*

Business-led sector partnerships present a great opportunity to convene industry representatives and partner agencies and organizations to work to understand the collective needs of businesses in an industry. These conversations about common needs can identify common solutions that may be targeted to impact businesses on a wider industry basis, such as training programs for candidates, incumbent worker training, or various operational support programs. While these partnerships occur locally, the OWIB will create a framework to provide guidance or a road map to successful sector partnerships based on current efforts and best practices, potentially facilitation coordinated strategies between regions.

### *2.2 Foster positive perceptions in business and industry about the workforce system.*



In order to maximize utilization of the services available to businesses, the workforce system needs to be seen as a trusted partner for meeting workforce needs. Greater utilization requires awareness of two different kinds – first, that businesses know the services exist, and second, they can see that they are effective. To increase awareness and visibility, local boards must be active in the community with other partners and at the table for any collaborative efforts. If progress is made toward Goal 1, increased accountability and collaboration and a focus on positive solutions will increase the effectiveness of the services that are available. This commitment to effective services and achieving results is a critical step to ensuring positive perceptions among business and industry. Boards should communicate success stories of businesses that have received benefits from workforce services.

*2.3 Actively communicate the coordinated services of economic development, workforce and education services to business and industry.*

Workforce development, economic development, and education and training providers all offer tools to serve businesses. To effectively provide these services, all of these organizations must be coordinated to ensure a seamless experience for business customers. When a business needs assistance, they do not need to know all of the work it takes behind the scenes from different organizations to make it happen. If communication is coordinated, the business will be able to have a clear message on what is available and how to get services. The OWIB will create a framework for this at the state level by ensuring coordination and collaboration with other state level boards and agencies providing workforce, economic development, and education services.

**Goal 3:** Invest in Oregonians to build in-demand skills, match training and job seekers to opportunities, and accelerate career momentum.

### Strategies

*3.1 Actively reach out and engage customers, especially target populations, in education, training, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities.*

To maximize the number of individuals taking advantage of the services offered, the workforce system should be proactive about engaging customers who are not already aware of the options available. Workforce and partner staff should also be fully informed on the full menu of services provided by all partners to be able to offer guidance and additional information to current customers.

*3.2 Empower Oregonians with the access, knowledge, tools, and resources to launch and accelerate career momentum, including information on local in-demand skills\* and careers.*

Instead of prioritizing customer choice or job placement over the needs of businesses and the available individual career paths, the workforce system should combine these efforts by helping individuals understand their options within the local economy and opportunities for advancement. This allows individuals to think beyond just getting a job and focus on taking a step toward a sustainable, lifelong career.

*\*In-demand skills are those that are currently needed by local businesses and employers.*

*3.3 Increase resources for occupational skill development and hold local workforce boards to a minimum investment in occupational training, which shall be established by the state board in local plan guidance.*

Funds should be prioritized for occupational training that gives people the tools that they really need to work in local businesses. By establishing a minimum requirement for funds spent on occupational training, the OWIB is

promoting accountability to ensure that the workforce system is truly supporting services that benefit both jobseekers and local businesses. This minimum threshold will be revisited each year of this strategic plan to adjust to the environment of the workforce system.

#### *3.4 Rethink and restructure training and skill development to include innovative and effective work-based learning and apprenticeship models and to accelerate training.*

Effective training often must go beyond classroom training to address all types of learners and provide hands-on experiences. Work-based learning and other innovative strategies that can help individuals understand more clearly what it is like to work in a certain industry or company are important to both improve learning outcomes and to help individuals with career exploration.

**Goal 4:** Create and develop talent by providing young people with information and experiences that engage their interests, spur further career development, and connect to Oregon employers.

#### Strategies

##### *4.1 Create pipeline plans, as part of Oregon's sector strategy approach, to connect in-school and out-of-school youth to opportunities in local sector partnerships.*

While some activities of sector partnerships will focus on meeting the immediate needs of the industry, to ensure that the future workforce is also prepared, sectors must take into account the youth population. As new and existing sector partnerships are being launched or expanded throughout the state, a plan is needed to ensure a focus is kept on the emerging and future workforce and that young people are informed about and connected to the strong industries in their communities.

##### *4.2 Pursue additional resources to support local initiatives in both rural and urban communities.*

As federal and state resources become scarce, it is important to make sure that a strong menu of youth services isn't lost. The OWIB will support local areas in pursuing additional resources for maintaining current initiatives and implementing new and innovative programs that engage and provide work experiences for youth.

##### *4.3 Provide technical assistance and/or incentives to support adoption and expansion of work-based learning, apprenticeships, and internships.*

While the OWIB does not directly provide services to businesses or individuals, it will be a resource for technical assistance, making connections between local areas, and sharing best practices related to various work-based learning initiatives. When possible and if funds are available, it will prioritize incentives for programs that provide these experiences for youth.

##### *4.4 Build partnerships to increase exposure to job and career opportunities and better connect school to work.*

Partnerships with businesses and schools are essential to ensuring young people are exposed to local career options and are able to see real-world applications of what they are learning in school. The OWIB will work to make these connections at the state level and to share best practices from across the state and country on how to make these partnerships successful and address any of the obstacles that typically exist when trying to provide youth work experiences.

## Strategies the State will implement

Strategies 1.1 and 4.1 described in the above section and adopted by the state board, specifically include sector strategies as a way to achieve the state's goals. In addition to these, Oregon is utilizing industry sector partnerships and strategies as a foundational approach to the way the workforce system works with employer, job seekers, and students to improve employment opportunities and overall business competitiveness. Oregon is doing this through collaborative partnerships at the state and local levels and technical assistance that supports capacity building in all of the state's local workforce areas.

At a high level, the state's strategy consists of providing consistency to the sector strategy process, regional data and program information, and inter-regional connections as outlined in [Oregon's Approach for Sector Strategies](#)<sup>15</sup>. Local regions have identified their target sectors and are noted in their [local plans](#)<sup>16</sup>.

All of the strategies under Goal 3 involve the use of career pathways to connect individuals to education, training and career momentum. Under WIOA, career pathways are a critical element of academic programming for Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs, one of the six core programs of the Act. Title II providers have both programmatic and performance based outcomes related to career pathways.

Oregon has long been a leader in career pathways. We have a strong collation of community colleges and training providers that promote and provide career pathways. These pathways are well defined and attached to career ladders and business in their community. Local Workforce Boards will work towards building career pathways in the new areas as set forth in WIOA. Oregon has already taken steps in this effort, such as providing for state wide coordination and leadership.



<sup>15</sup> [Oregon's Approach for Sector Strategies](#)

<sup>16</sup> [local plans](#)

Oregon has adopted the following working definition of Career Pathways: Career pathways are sequences of high-quality education, training, and services connected to industry skill needs. Career pathways have multiple entry and exit points that allow individuals to achieve education and employment goals over time. Career Pathways may include: Apprenticeships, On the Job Training, Industry recognized credentials, non-credit training and certificates, credit certificates and degrees. Part of this effort will be to move towards a wider inclusion of career pathways in our Title II, Adult Basic Education, and English language acquisition classes, as well as building new career pathways through apprenticeships programs.

All programs will be designed to expedite transitions from unemployment to employment, from underemployment to better employment, or, as in the case of displaced workers, from one industry to the next. Each Local Workforce Board will be addressing targeted populations as they build career pathways. Outreach to these targeted populations will be expanded. Local Boards will align their career pathways to their sectors, working with industry to establish trainings that are aligned with business needs. Business will benefit by having a pipeline of workers into their industries that are well trained and work ready.

### ***Strategies the State will use to align the core programs***

Companies in Oregon cannot grow or be competitive without the right talent. The alignment of worker skills with business needs means a worker quickly moves from a company liability into a productive asset. Yet, without the right combination of skills, it takes longer for workers to come up to speed. This time lag represents real costs; companies grow more slowly, worker wages stagnate, and workers look for other opportunities. Talent is the driver of economic growth; industry, education, workforce and government must work together to create more robust and agile education and training models for both incumbent workers and new graduates.

As stated earlier and highlighted in [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)<sup>17</sup>, the State of Oregon's workforce system provides a solid foundation for collaboration to promote improved customer service and increased effectiveness. Creating a streamlined, collaborative workforce system directly affects the success of all other workforce development goals. If the system is not aligned, easy to navigate, and focused on the customer, all other efforts to improve our services will be less effective.

Strengthening the framework for partnering by developing and implementing processes will make it easier for state agencies, local boards and other workforce organizations to work together and better understand each other's services to one strategy. This process will help to underline current policies that both help and hinder collaboration and will inform future policymaking decisions to support integration. More effective partnering includes state and local workforce organizations leveraging resources, whether those resources are in the form of data, funds, or staff. As resources become scarcer, partnering will help to stretch them further to impact the outcomes of all participating organizations. Financial, institutional, political and other barriers to effective partnering will be reviewed and revised to minimize their effect on partnerships.

Executive leadership from VR, HECC, OED, and Self Sufficiency Programs (SSP) are sponsoring a series of Local Area Alignment Meetings in conjunction with the local boards. These meetings bring together local program leaders with a goal of establishing a common vision, goal, communication and leadership plans that will allow them to implement integrated services that are tailored to local needs and situations. An independent facilitator leads the multiday meeting with the local leadership and state leadership present at the same time. This combination of individuals allows the state leadership to demonstrate commitment to the integration

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<sup>17</sup> [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)

efforts and help remove real and perceived barriers to local operational planning and integration. State leadership benefits from hearing local ideas and best practices that can be duplicated around the state and also helps state leadership understand the local needs. By early spring all areas of the state will have had this meeting and will be expected to have established local leadership teams with project plans in place to move their local plans forward.

The OWIB has also established goals and strategies to develop a solutions-driven culture with services that are easy to access and coordinated with education and economic development. Encouraging a solutions-driven culture means focusing on the customer and seeking to understand their needs before deciding how to provide programs. It's the OWIB's goal to ensure that state agencies and local boards continue to hear from their customers and adapt programs to meet their needs, rather than focus solely on programs and meeting federal law.

Similarly, a system with uncoordinated services is difficult for a customer to navigate. The OWIB's goal is to markets services in a coordinated way so that customers can come to one place and understand how to get the services they need without needing to understand the ins and outs of how it will happen. This is needed for services within the workforce system and in collaboration with economic development and education. For many customers, services from more than one of these program areas will be needed to reach a successful outcome. The workforce system can be best coordinated and most effective when all partners understand each other's services and the communication paths are clear and well utilized.

Oregon recently created the [Oregon Talent Council \(OTC\)](#)<sup>18</sup> to “advise and be a resource for state agencies and educational institutions on issues of talent development, and to promote the growth and competitiveness of Oregon’s traded sector and high-growth industries.” Its mission is to “make Oregonians the first and best choice of Oregon employers.” The Oregon Talent Council will be able to invest in priorities guided by the [Talent Plan](#)<sup>19</sup> to address talent needs.

### **Section III. Operational Planning Elements**

#### **State Strategy Implementation**

In many ways the implementation of the state strategies to meet its Workforce goals will be driven locally. Therefore the methods to reach the performance outcomes will differ from locale to locale, depending on the needs of the community and decisions of the local investment board.

Critical industry sectors fuel the state's economy most broadly, although the sectors usually differ by local area. The workforce system must prepare workers for the higher wage, higher skill, in-demand occupations these sectors have to offer. This approach will create a mutual benefit for companies and workers.

Industry sector strategies are employer-driven partnerships that meet the needs of key industries within a regional labor market. Partners include business, labor, economic development entities, education and training providers and other stakeholders. Sector partnerships are intended to remove bottlenecks that inhibit recruitment, hiring, training and worker advancement within an industry. These simultaneously address the needs of workers by creating formal

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<sup>18</sup> [Oregon Talent Council \(OTC\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Talent Plan](#)

career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment, and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs. The success of sector strategies lies in building better public/private partnerships based on the practical needs of industry for a more highly-skilled workforce.

Oregon's workforce system must work to find new ways to operate more efficiently and effectively to meet new challenges and deliver on outcomes in a time of stagnant or shrinking resources. Partners in the workforce system must work together in new ways, and leave behind the systems and approaches that are less effective at meeting the stated outcomes and goals of this plan.

While Oregon's publicly-funded workforce agencies and programs have helped hundreds of thousands of Oregonians find jobs and thousands of businesses find workers over the years, the workforce development system in Oregon must continue to remove barriers to achieving better outcomes for customers. Multiple funding streams with sometimes conflicting requirements and goals, administrative fragmentation, lack of consistency and coordination, and a lack of system-wide accountability can reduce the effectiveness of the system.

Within the current environment, the focus is about getting better results from the resources we have by creating a more agile system that is highly responsive to local business and economic cycles. The workforce system at both the state and local level needs to collaborate to achieve common outcomes.

For additional info see [Oregon's Local Planning](#)<sup>20</sup> website and [Oregon's Sectors](#)<sup>21</sup> webpage.

### ***State Board Functions: Oregon Workforce Investment Board***

The [Oregon Workforce Investment Board \(OWIB\)](#)<sup>22</sup> has two standing committees, nine local workforce board accountability teams, and as-needed, temporary, project-based work groups to implement its functions under WIOA:

- The OWIB Performance Reporting Committee consists of state board members, core program representatives, and local board directors. This committee reviews dashboards of high level system measures on a quarterly basis, flags issues for full board discussion, and develops potential recommendations to the Governor for full board action;
- The OWIB Executive Committee, consisting of nine members representing all of the WIOA membership categories and board leadership, meets on a monthly basis to guide the work of the board and make recommendations for full board action on key policy decisions under WIOA. All work developed by OWIB committees or by staff work groups are vetted first by the Executive Committee before consideration of the full board.

The nine local workforce development board accountability teams will each consist of two to three members from the business and workforce membership categories and will be supported by staff representatives from the four core programs. The purpose of these teams is to substantively engage with the local boards in their plan development and implementation processes through regular in-person or conference call meetings. At least once a year, the full OWIB will review the priorities and progress of each local board, with discussions focused

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<sup>20</sup> [Oregon's Local Planning](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Oregon's Sectors](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Oregon Workforce Investment Board \(OWIB\)](#)

on best practices that can be shared with other boards and challenges where additional technical assistance may be needed.

## ***Implementation of State Strategy***

### ***Core Program Activities***

#### **WorkSource Oregon**

The WorkSource Oregon (WSO) system integrates the services provided by the Wagner-Peyser Act administered by the Oregon Employment Department (OED) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's (HECC) Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD). The activities in the one-stop centers are described in the attached [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)<sup>23</sup> document. Please refer to that document for detailed discussion and description of the one-stop services and activities.

In order to be designated as a WorkSource Oregon center, services among Wagner-Peyser and Title I staff will be aligned resulting in seamless provision of services to customers. Staff resources across both funding streams will be pooled together and allocated collectively to ensure all services are delivered in accordance with the requirements of these operational standards.

All operational functions, including supervision and management where appropriate, will be taken into consideration when developing a functional staffing plan for each center. Agreed-upon staffing plans, including methodology, roles, and expectations, will be documented and may be solicited during program monitoring.

#### **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth**

At the state level, Oregon has formed several cross-agency workgroups focused on policy that are instrumental in implementing these state strategies. Locally, each of the nine local workforce boards (LWBs) will develop and submit a comprehensive four-year plan, in consultation with the chief elected official. This document clarifies what the LWBs must provide and do in order to implement State strategies and be in compliance with WIOA and state requirements.

The local plan will identify activities on how workforce partners and programs in each local workforce area will align and implement the vision and goals of the Oregon Workforce Investment Board and requirements of the WIOA (see [Oregon Local Planning](#)<sup>24</sup>). The LWBs are responsible for convening the workforce partners necessary to develop and implement the plan in the local area.

As final regulations for WIOA are released, and additional guidance is provided from the U.S. Department of Labor and/or the Oregon Workforce Investment Board, the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission may ask for the LWBs to provide additional information in the form of a local plan modification.

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<sup>23</sup> [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Oregon Local Planning](#)

## **Employment Services**

Services provided through the WSO centers will be customer-centered. There is no longer a required sequence of services in WSO centers. Rather, the appropriate service may be accessed at any time based on customer needs. WSO has adopted a set of service standards that will be used to guide local service delivery, and to ensure a common language for both customers and staff.

## **Adult Basic Education**

The Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development CCWD and local area Adult Basic Education (ABE) service providers will fund allowable activities under the [Adult Education and Family Literacy Act](#)<sup>25</sup> (AEFLA). Local providers will align activities with local area plans, such as sector strategies and career pathways. These adult basic education and literacy activities will also be coordinated across the core programs and partners through one-stop center participation, referrals, and co-enrollment where feasible.

Adult Basic Education services will be involved in improving access to postsecondary credentials at the state and local levels. CCWD, as the eligible agency, will invest State leadership funds to expand academic bridge programs for individuals transitioning from adult education to postsecondary education, through research-based programming such as I-BEST, Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), and the Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills (OPABS). Local ABE and literacy providers will be encouraged to explore bridge programs and promote transition to postsecondary education. ABE providers will work with the State and local boards to clearly define career pathways across the state that promote transition of adult education students into industry recognized certificates, licenses and portable stackable certificates.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) works with individuals with disabilities to identify, pursue, obtain and retain competitive and integrated employment. Core program activities include individualized assessment, vocational exploration, job placement services, retention serves and necessary and appropriate support services. Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation works in partnership with Workforce, Education, and relevant local programs that impact a positive employment outcome for individuals with disabilities.

As a Core program VR will ensure that programmatic access to our services is available at all WSO sites. Depending on local needs and opportunities VR will continue to support the current co-location of VR staff and services. VR will continue to have conversations about increasing co-location opportunities around the state. VR will always be available to assist Workforce partners when it comes to serving individuals with disabilities and will provide technical assistance and training in the best techniques to work with such individuals.

Vocational Rehabilitation services should be considered “value added” to assist our Workforce partners when they are serving individuals with disabilities. VR is participant on local boards and at the state level to assist and help develop programmatic and individualized services to effectively provide employment for individuals with disabilities. Services through Vocational Rehabilitation are individualized and consumer driven. If there is the possibility of utilizing other funded activities, Vocational Rehabilitation is required to pursue any and all “comparable benefits”.

When initial assessment is complete, disability created barriers identified and accommodations identified and provided, and a career or vocational objective is identified based upon interests, abilities, Labor Market

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<sup>25</sup> [Oregon Local Planning](#)



Information and any other factor influencing the choice of vocational objective, employment services consist of:

- Individualized job placement activities.
- Coordination with other services that provide employment services as is available and appropriate based on the disability and the barrier being addressed.
- Follow-up and post-employment services (PES) as required for our clients in order to intervene more effectively and timely if a disability created impediment may cause job loss.

An Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP) is to be completed within 90 days of eligibility unless the VRC and the consumer are in agreement to delay. If this is the case then the dates which the IEP will be completed must be identified.

At any stage of the VR process, VR may, with the consumer's agreement, refer to any other entity in the Workforce system that may be of benefit to achieving an acceptable employment outcome.

### **Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy**

The WorkSource Oregon (WSO) system integrates the services provided by the Wagner-Peyser Act administered by the Oregon Employment Department (OED) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's (HECC) Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD).

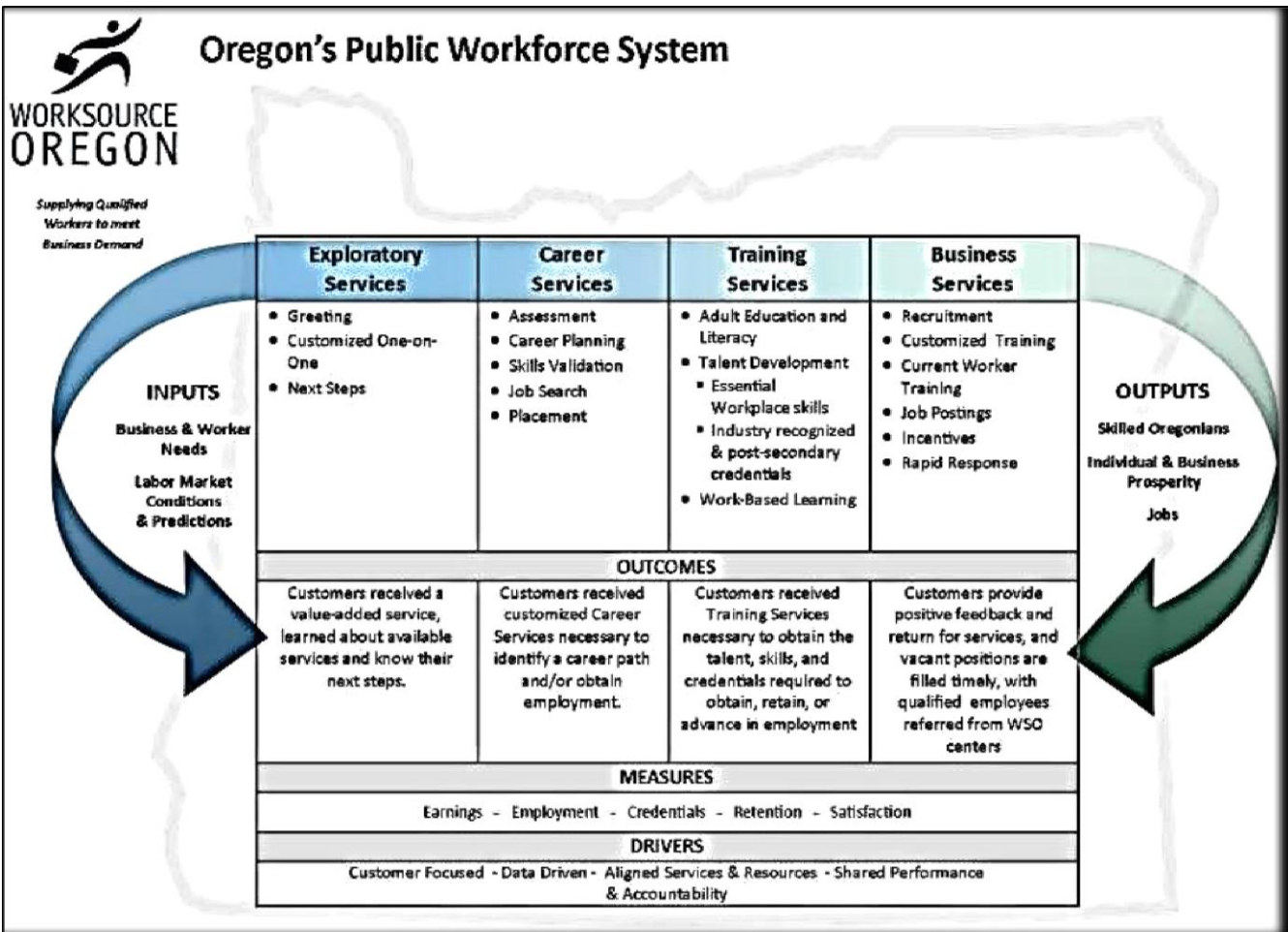
The mission of WorkSource Oregon (WSO) is to effectively respond to workforce challenges through high-quality services to individuals and businesses, resulting in job attainment, retention and advancement. WSO also has a strong vision of Oregon communities where the employment needs of jobseekers and businesses are met by solutions delivered effectively through engaged workforce system partners. The activities in the one-stop centers are described in the [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)<sup>26</sup> document. Please refer to this document for detailed discussion and description of the one-stop services and activities.

Core program activities will be aligned across the core programs through local efforts to satisfy requirements in the [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)<sup>27</sup>. All local areas will move forward to satisfy both co-location and alignment of the organization of Oregon's Workforce System is summarized in the following chart:

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<sup>26</sup> [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)

<sup>27</sup> [WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards](#)



It is not enough to have mandated and optional partners at one location, under one roof. Workforce partners at WSO Centers will combine their resources to staff WSO Centers and adequately staff their Exploratory, Career, Training and Business Services functions.

Oregon's integrated model of service delivery is fully supported by state policies and administrative systems. System innovation requires the development of governance and accountability structures that will inspire continuous improvement and focus on results. Each WSO partner has roles and responsibilities, purposes and functions as they relate to WSO policy and operations. With WIOA and the addition of other required partners, common operational agreements will further clarify roles, responsibilities and the decision-making authority of all entities involved. These agreements will identify which decisions will be made jointly, and how those decisions will be made.

[The HECC](#)<sup>28</sup> has responsibility for developing state budget recommendations, allocating state funding, and approving new academic programs at Oregon's community colleges and universities. CCWD's mission is to contribute leadership and resources to increase the skills, knowledge and career opportunities of Oregonians. On behalf of the Governor, CCWD funds, implements and oversees the state's implementation of Title I of

<sup>28</sup> [The HECC](#)

the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs and funding distribution (detailed information can be found on the [CCWD website](#)<sup>29</sup>).

Title II in Oregon will fund allowable activities under the [Adult Education and Family Literacy Act](#)<sup>30</sup> (AEFLA) in order to implement respective State strategies. These activities will be administrative at the state level and implemented at the local level. CCWD will administratively support data interoperability with core programs sharing data through data management systems such as Data for Analysis (D4A) and PRISM. Title II state and local activities will be aligned across core programs and partners through one-stop center participation, referrals, and co-enrollment when feasible. Administratively, CCWD will support one-stop infrastructure costs from the State grant allocation and designate the local adult education and literacy providers as the local one-stop participants. At the local level flexible staffing resources and cross-training will occur to support one-stop center integration and access for Title II participants. In addition to one-stop center participation, local Title II providers will incorporate career pathways into academic programming. Title II providers will work to align career pathways and contextualized integrated education and training to local area sector strategies.

The mission of OED is to promote employment of Oregonians through developing a diversified, multi-skilled workforce, providing support during periods of unemployment and supporting businesses by connecting them to well-qualified candidates for their job openings. The agency also provides labor market information for use by businesses, policy makers and a variety of stakeholders. OED is also responsible for Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program.

Title IV will continue to work with the LWDBs and other partners to insure coordination and alignment of program elements. Current and future activities that are being practiced and proven at a local level will be shared among the VR agency to develop best practices. VR is participant on Local Leadership Teams and will continue to work within the workforce system to ensure that clients can access services they need without duplication.

Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to work with clients to ensure that businesses have access to the talent they need through the VR system. VR works with individual job developers to reach out to employers and market the individual skills of participants who lack the ability to market themselves. Through this process, businesses often get employees whom they otherwise would not have screened into employment opportunities but who can meet their business needs. VR also works with federal contractors to help meet their 503 requirements and targets.

VR will be establishing procedures that are acceptable under our rules and regulations to assist our clients move forward in their careers and address disability based barriers that may preclude future career growth. We will also listen to the business needs of the in-demand occupations so that our clients will be prepared for employment opportunities that exist in our economy and have opportunities for growth and advancement.

VR is active in working with students and the educational system to ensure access to appropriate and timely labor market and employment information to assist the students in making informed decisions regarding future careers and work. VR is partnering with the educational systems to provide meaningful work

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<sup>29</sup> [CCWD website](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Adult Education and Family Literacy Act](#)

experience and opportunities. While the VR focus and mandate is to work with /students with disabilities, a framework is being established that may be replicable and effective for all students. We will build from our current youth program that is an internationally recognized best practice.

In order to implement WIOA and address and align these policy issues at a state level, Oregon has formed several state-level, cross-agency workgroups including:

### **Workforce Policy Implementation Team (WPIT)**

The WPIT is both an operational and decision-making group regarding workforce system project development and implementation. The WPIT is responsible for the following activities:

- Collaborating and jointly agree on best approach to workforce systems issues that impact multiple agencies, programs, or initiatives.
- Developing content for guidance and criteria regarding the integrated workforce system.
- Providing/assigning resources to populate project teams.
- Ensuring that projects are staffed by cross-agency resources.
- Ensuring alignment across projects and teams with a system-wide viewpoint.
- Providing consult and oversight to project teams.
- Making project, system, and program commitments for their agency, as appropriate.
- Reviewing and approving outcomes, products and recommendations of project teams.
- Making recommendations to leadership for approval, as appropriate.
- Representing agencies and briefing respective leadership on discussions and progress outside of meetings.
- Knowing when leadership must be consulted for a final decision and ensuring that all stakeholders requiring input at the leadership level are included in vetting processes. Inviting stakeholders (leadership, content experts, etc.) to meetings as appropriate to the agenda to ensure that work continues to advance.

WPIT members include agency and program managers from:

- Employment Department (W-P/Title III, UI, MSFW, Vets, LMI)
- Community Colleges & Workforce Development Department (Titles I & II)
- Department of Human Services (Title IV, SNAP E&T, TANF)
- Oregon Business Development Department
- Oregon Workforce Partnership (Association of LWB Directors)
- Oregon Commission for the Blind
- Oregon Workforce Investment Board (State Workforce Board)

### **WIOA Implementation Team (WIT)**

This group identifies policy and procedural considerations related to the implementation of WIOA, as well as trying to answer the “*How are we going to \_\_\_\_\_?*” questions. Membership includes representatives from the agencies and programs listed in the WPIT, and others, including Carl Perkins and CTE representatives.

### **WIOA Local Area Advisory Group**

The purpose of this group is to identify State and local policy and process needs and provide feedback on policy development. Membership includes local area program managers, compliance officers, etc., with State staff filling guest/advisory/technical assistance roles as needed. Includes a Youth-focused sub-group.

### **WIOA Services Group**

The purpose is to define and align service and activity tracking to WIOA definitions and requirements. Includes State WIOA title I & III staff and local area and MIS/ IT staff.

### **WIOA Registration Group**

The purpose is for developing a streamlined or “basic registration” aligned with WIOA and the WSO Standards. Includes State WIOA title I & III staff; will add IT staff as work progresses. Work group includes staff from OED (Research and Policy staff) HECC, and an LWDB representative.

### **Career Pathways Alliance**

The Alliance is program staff, Directors and other, who oversee career pathway initiatives and programs within the 17 Oregon Community Colleges, including short-term training programs and bridge programs for adult basic skills students.

### **Special Populations OWIB Sub-committee Service Equity and Access Project Group**

The purpose is to focus on efforts around injecting service equity into our WIOA implementation efforts. Participating partners include:

- Department of Human Services
- Oregon Employment Department
- Community Colleges and Workforce Development
- Oregon Workforce Investment Board
- Business Oregon
- Secretary of State
- Bureau of Labor and Industries (tentatively)
- Department of Corrections
- Oregon Commission for the Blind

### **Oregon Council for Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD)**

The OCABSD consists of adult education and family literacy Directors from the 17 Oregon Community Colleges and the Department of Corrections that currently serve as Title II providers.

### **Community College WIOA Workgroup**

This is a diverse cross-section of community college administration, staff, and faculty members who serve in workforce development, career and technical education, customized training, and adult education programs. Within the WIOA Workgroup there are various subgroups working on specific issues: creating a community college planning framework, developing a definition/visual for career pathways in WIOA, investigating data and reporting concerns with the eligible training provider list, etc.

### **Alignment with Activities outside the Plan**

At the state level, alignment and collaboration between the core programs and the programs and activities provided by mandatory and optional one-stop partners will occur through the state-level, cross-agency

workgroups described in the section above. Additionally, options to provide meaningful access to required programs will be explored locally and addressed through local planning efforts. Service strategies will be tested for effectiveness and efficiency. When the opportunity exists and it makes good business sense, co-location options will be considered. To see how the activities of the local workforce areas will be aligned amongst the four core programs and with other programs, view the local plans at <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/><sup>31</sup>.

Alignment of Activities to ensure coordination of programs and activities and avoiding duplication will be satisfied through the pooling of shared resources and staffing the four services mandated in the [WSO Standards](#)<sup>32</sup>. Jointly staffing the four services (Exploratory, Career, Training and Business) is Oregon's method to avoid duplication and ensure coordination of all partners within the one-stop offices.

Executive leadership from VR, HECC, OED, and the Self Sufficiency Program (SSP) are sponsoring a series of Local Area Alignment Meetings in conjunction with the local boards. These meetings bring together local program leaders with a goal of establishing a common vision, goal, communication and leadership plans that will allow them to implement integrated services that are tailored to local needs and situations. An independent facilitator leads the multiday meeting with the local leadership and state leadership present at the same time. This combination of individuals allows the state leadership to demonstrate commitment to the integration efforts and help remove real and perceived barriers to local operational planning and integration. State leadership benefits from hearing local ideas and best practices that can be duplicated around the state and also helps state leadership understand the local needs. By early spring all areas of the state will have had this meeting and will be expected to have established local leadership teams with project plans in place to move their local plans forward.

The WSO Standards require Title II workforce preparation services, which are provided through each WSO Center. Local areas are responsible for ensuring WSO and Title II services are available and appropriate referral mechanisms are in place to connect WSO customers with Title II services as needed. Title II will work with other core programs and one-stop partners to develop a mechanism for referrals and co-enrollment where possible. Local adult education and literacy providers will align participation in one-stop centers with local service goals, supported by informed participant referrals facilitated by one-stop center staff cross-training.

### **Trade Act**

As a partner to the core programs, Trade Act programs align with core programs in this plan.

- Trade Act co-enrolls participants based on systems and partners speaking to each other.
- Trade Act accepts assessments completed with partner staff; likewise, Trade Act provides assessment and training plan information to partners of co-enrolled participants.
- Wrap around services are provided for participants that meet the NEG/SEG or other funding streams requirements from partners.
- Trade Act will refer customers to resources within the agency or community.
- Information sessions to be focused on benefits and services available to affected workers as well as the sector strategies in their area.
- Trade Act will also actively pursue the business community through connections to Rapid Response, On-the-Job training opportunities, and Business Teams within WSO's. Connections to business will include marketing program information, layoff aversion resources, and job talent.

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<sup>31</sup> <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/>

<sup>32</sup> [WSO Standards](#)

- Trade connects to all core programs through methods of assessment and referral to appropriate entities.
- Strategy meetings, which are bi-monthly meeting between Trade, CCWD, local service providers, unemployment insurance, and case managers, cover funding streams and special training opportunities in the area, education of partners in what Trade Act can pay for and services are provided.
- Trade Act refers participants to services outside of what can be provided by Trade to help with barrier removal.
- Conduct comprehensive assessments of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, skills gaps, career interests, employment barriers, and supportive service needs individually and in group settings.
- Make work-based opportunities available to customers in accordance with local area plans and investment strategies.

It is the Oregon Unemployment Insurance (UI) program's goal is to ensure all UI claimants are fully aware of, and appropriately using, the reemployment resources available to them through our workforce system. Some UI program activities are performed in Oregon's one stop centers (WorkSource Oregon offices) and are aligned with programs and activities provided by mandatory one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners. Such activities include providing in-person information and assistance filing UI claims via phone or computer, providing general information about UI eligibility requirements, and referring potential UI eligibility issues to UI merit staff in the program's UI call centers. Through the filing of an initial UI claim, customers initiate the process to become co-enrolled across core and partner programs available in one stop centers.

Employment Services (ES) staff and partner staff in one stop centers maintain the ability to email or call UI merit staff in the UI center and in the UI Operations Policy and Support Unit to directly get assistance to help customers when necessary. Additionally, information is shared with UI claimants about the various programs available in Oregon at the centers on the public computers, hard copy brochures, posters, and public information videos playing on digital displays in the lobby.

The UI program in Oregon is also currently receiving federal grants to provide enhanced reemployment services for UI customers. Some customers are selected for a Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (known as REA or RESEA) as part of their orientation. REA/RESEA interviews are conducted in person by ES merit staff in one stop centers who are co-located with local board service providers.

Oregon's UI program also includes:

- A Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) program which enables customers to receive UI benefits while starting their own business,
- A Training Unemployment Insurance (TUI) program, which enables customers to receive UI benefits while attending school,
- An apprenticeship program which enables customers to receive UI benefits while participating in apprenticeship training programs, and
- A Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) program which enables customers to receive UI benefits while participating in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

Information regarding all of these programs is also provided by staff at WorkSource Oregon centers.

Oregon's UI program is examining other innovative ways to increase the UI claimant reemployment rate. As an incentive to claimants, the agency allows customers to list one work seeking activity for each test taken for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and other similar activities. The program has also been working closely with the Local Workforce Board by the name of Incite to work on a National Emergency Grant which

looks at whether cognitive behavioral therapy techniques can help claimants get reemployed more quickly. Oregon is also working with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy on a pilot project using behavioral economic approaches to create more effective work search results for claimants and is part of an effort being led by the U.S. Department of Labor to reexamine the work search requirements of the UI program to make them more effective.

### **Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals**

The core programs highlighted in this plan and mandatory one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources through implementation of the OWIB strategic plan, local planning process and the WSO Operational Standards. The local plan will identify how workforce partners and programs in each local workforce area will align and implement the vision and goals of the Oregon Workforce Investment Board and requirements of the WIOA ([see Oregon Local Planning<sup>33</sup>](#)). Using the WSO Operational Standards as a statewide framework, all nine workforce areas are responsible for developing systems and processes to better serve WSO customers. The WSO Operational Standards require strong collaboration among system partners and holds local leadership teams accountable for outcomes.

Title II providers in the local areas will coordinate activities and resources to provide high-quality customer services in cooperation with the other core programs. For example, adult education and literacy providers will support cross-training of core program and one-stop center partner staff to support referrals and co-enrollment. Title II providers will leverage connections with core program and one-stop center partners where feasible to include support services for participants, such as transportation, childcare, and housing.

Trade Act staff participate in strategy meetings with local workforce boards and WorkSource offices. These local discussions help align services to meet the changing needs of trade affected workers. Trade Act staff participate in Rapid Response (RR) activities as part of the state and local teams serving the affected workers. Trade Act staff provide case management services to trade affected workers, and assist participants in navigating other services available through their local one-stop. Additionally, Trade Act staff advise and educate program service providers to help them understand program guidelines and protocols, and they work with community and agency partners to coordinate and improve planned services.

Services offered to individuals in WorkSource Centers are coordinated and aligned with the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program to ensure equal access. UI claimants are a targeted population within WSO centers and staff receive UI training to ensure access to information about UI benefits is comprehensive, high-quality, and customer-centered. In addition, Oregon uses a variety of media including brochures, posters, and digital displays in multiple languages in locations to ensure universal access.

### **Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers.**

The coordination and alignment of activities and resources in WorkSource centers will involve multiple stakeholders in order to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers and meet their current and projected workforce needs. WorkSource Oregon stakeholders will align services to businesses through the use of sector strategies and partnerships, the Oregon Talent Council, local workforce Boards, and the WSO Oregon Standards. Additionally, education and training system partners will work directly with industry to improve retention, expansion and recruitment. Industry sectors and groups will work with education, workforce

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<sup>33</sup> [see Oregon Local Planning](#)



development, economic development, and community organizations to focus workforce priorities around key industry issues.

Industry partnership groups provide a place for companies to solve major talent issues, a single place to work with public entities; and an opportunity to share costs to solve industry problems. These partnerships also provide educational partners a forum through which they can learn about evolving industry needs; and a vehicle to identify, build and refine curriculum, programs and credentials. Industry partnerships allow workforce partners to quickly refine their investments based on industry feedback and provide an efficient mechanism through which businesses can access public services.

All WorkSource Oregon centers are required to develop, implement and actively manage two feedback loops aimed at aligning and improving services. Centers will develop a feedback mechanism that evaluates the quality and effectiveness of training funded by WSO. Feedback will be solicited from both the business and trainee to ensure training providers are meeting the needs of business. Feedback will also be solicited from business in order to determine the quality of WorkSource center job seeker referrals. Both mechanisms are designed to improve the workforce system's ability to deliver customer centric services.

The most important business service WorkSource centers provide is connecting job seekers to job openings. Providing quality referrals ensures that WorkSource Oregon is providing a value added service to business and it is supporting local sector strategies, targeted populations, and local investment priorities.

In its new enhanced business services model, WSO staff conduct an on-site employer visit prior to recruiting and referring candidates. WSO staff aim to refer only five candidates to one job opening, unless specified by the employer. Many WorkSource centers use this model to provide a consultative approach when serving business customers. The goal is to meet with business customers, understand their workforce needs, and then collaborate with workforce system partners to design a package of services that meet the business' needs.

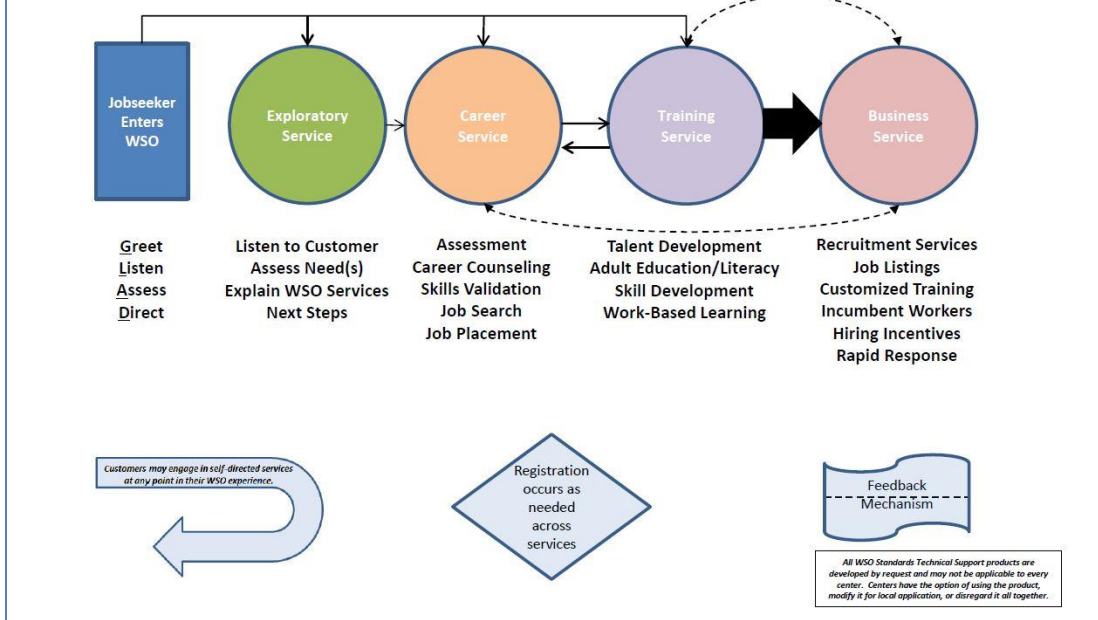
This collaboration includes economic development as a workforce partner in order to develop comprehensive solutions for business customers. The state and local boards also consult with their network of cluster/industry associations, chambers and business leadership councils.

Placement and recruitment activities must include a feedback mechanism between WSO staff and employers. Employer feedback will be solicited to validate the readiness and quality of referrals, to monitor outcomes, and make adjustments to local career and training services based on the feedback received. Feedback will be shared with the Workforce system to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Co-location and co-delivery efforts are designed to offer smooth service delivery and increased leveraged services while generating greater service options for business customers. Collaboration between all workforce system partners is required to ensure the broadest possible service options are made available to the business community. Co-location, co-delivery, and the use of the WSO labor exchange will increase the communication level across the partnerships, to include economic development, resulting in the necessary collaboration to ensure business customers' needs are met through a cost-effective allocation of resources.

The WSO labor exchange allows staff and employers to manage job opportunities, greatly expanding the service delivery options for employers. Jobs may be entered via automated mechanisms, self-service, or staff-assisted services. Employers may also set up an account online to post job listings 24/7, match to qualified candidates, and contact the job seekers directly.

### WSO Job Seeker Customer Flow



Oregon is exploring additional ways to align and integrate business services, by coordinating business outreach efforts and to identify and target Key Industries to increase market penetration for the WorkSource Oregon System and by understanding all the points of contact between businesses and workforce partners.

Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) partner with the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) apprenticeship and On the Job Training (OJT) representatives to ensure that employers are aware of the benefits of hiring a veteran. LVERs also communicate apprenticeship and OJT opportunities for veterans to WorkSource Oregon Business and Employment Specialist and DVOP staff.

The Trade Act Navigator (TAN's), who are integrated into WorkSource Oregon, provide a package of information to employers, which includes On the Job Training (OJT), classroom education, apprenticeship connections and layoff aversion information through Workshare and Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF). The TAN's also make presentations to community, business, partner groups, and coordinate and assist with the planning and implementation of job fairs.

Services offered to employers in WorkSource Oregon centers are also coordinated and aligned with the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. WorkSource staff receive UI training to ensure comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered, including supportive services, to ensure equal access to UI information for employers in Oregon. Additionally, Oregon's UI program also provides the work history for UI claimants to help staff find unemployed claimants who may fit an employer's staffing needs. Other information includes but is not limited to UI tax rate information, information for employers as an interested party in the UI claim filing

process, and the appeal process. Oregon also uses a variety of media including brochures, posters, and digital displays in multiple languages in locations to ensure universal access.

### **Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions**

In 2014, the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) and Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) formed a joint taskforce to develop aligned policies, outcomes measures, guidance, resources, communications, data and evaluation necessary to achieve Oregon’s middle 40 educational and workforce goals. The HECC has responsibility for developing state budget recommendations, allocating state funding, and approving new academic programs at Oregon’s community colleges and universities.

### **Marketing Coordinated System Services and Uniting Communications and Information Sharing**

In order to coordinate education and workforce development services for the benefit of all customers, greater understanding and improved communication paths will need to be built. Work is planned for continued engagement with the HECC, community colleges and universities to begin to build the tools and trainings to increase understanding between these two policy arenas and to identify additional ways to improve joint customer experiences.

### **Building Partnerships to Connect School to Work**

The key to this strategy is the explicit engagement of education at the secondary and postsecondary level with workforce development and business. The OWIB will work to make these connections at the state level and will share best practices from across the state and country on how to make these partnerships successful. The OWIB will do this by engaging key programs housed in the Oregon Department of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission including career and technical education, science, technology, engineering and technology, community colleges, and the Youth Development Council.

### **Locally-driven sector partnerships**

Labor Market Information (LMI) will inform sector strategies, career planning, education and training decisions, business engagement and placement services. Strategies outlined in the board’s local plans regarding service and investments priorities will focus on demand-side aspects including connections to economic development and regional priorities, and the engagement of employers and industry groups.

Strategies at WorkSource Oregon centers will focus on the supply-side elements of sector partnerships utilizing sector-based career pathways and training programs to prepare and connect qualified jobseekers and workers to high-demand sector based occupations and careers. Representatives from community colleges, universities, K-12 and trade schools will supply education and training to the locally-driven sector partnerships depending on the industry’s needs.

Workforce representatives from one-stop service providers, organized labor, and community nonprofits will provide a range of programs from career assessments, job readiness and basic skills training, apprenticeships, youth programs, and other workforce services. The mix of these organizations will vary depending on the sector and targeted needs of the industry.

### **Create a Framework for Effective Partnering within the Workforce System**

The OWIB-HECC taskforce also recommended that to utilize state and local workforce investment plan development and revision as an opportunity to expand support for shared goals. These plans provide a platform for increased alignment between education and training providers and the workforce development system and mutual support of the state’s middle-40 goal.

Title II providers in Oregon are currently co-located with community colleges, which leverages the connection between adult education and literacy programs and postsecondary education and training programs. Oregon actively promotes transitions to postsecondary education through investment of State leadership funds into academic bridge programs such as Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST), Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), and Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills (OPABS) programs. Oregon has also invested heavily in the alignment of adult education content standards with the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards. The CCR standards and training modules have been shared with core programs and partner programs through a series of training sessions supported by the Moving Pathways Forward initiative.

Title IV, Vocational Rehabilitation has MOU's with all 17 community colleges that include language around working with the college's disability services offices to ensure that our joint students get the services and accommodations they need to access educational opportunities.

The Trade Act program has been a strong partner in the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Community Colleges and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant. A Trade Act liaison will continue outreach, marketing, and collaboration with community colleges around the state. Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program has engagement with educational institutions through the Training Unemployment Insurance (TUI) program and the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) program. Both programs enable customers to receive training at education and training providers, including community colleges and area career and technical education schools, while receiving UI benefits. In the initial stages of the application process, the UI program refers eligible customers to WorkSource Oregon to help determine best matches for labor market, career goals, and educational institutions.

### **Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access**

#### **Aligning and Leveraging Resources**

In 2014, the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) and Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) joint taskforce developed recommendations on aligning resources, communications, data and evaluation necessary to achieve Oregon's middle 40 educational and workforce goals. The HECC has responsibility for developing state budget recommendations, allocating state funding, and approving new academic programs at Oregon's community colleges and universities. The OWIB and HECC adopted the taskforce's recommendation that the two boards should establish a mechanism to meet biennially, at the start of the state's budget development cycle, to identify opportunities to support, leverage and co-fund common priorities. Work will continue to implement these recommendations.

Title II extensively leverages resources through its relationships with current providers to provide facilities, services, and matching funds. Title II providers are required to provide a match and CCWD, as the eligible agency, is required to uphold maintenance of effort in support of adult education and literacy programming in Oregon. In addition to the significant financial contribution made by the current Title II provider, the co-location of adult education and literacy programs on community college campuses facilitates strong connections to postsecondary program, including career and technical education and industry recognized certifications. CCWD will work to expand the use of leveraged resources through cross-training of core program and one-stop center staff in an effort to increase referrals to adult education and improve access to educational services for low-skilled adults.

Trade Act encourages participant to sign up for financial aid in the form of grants and scholarships and coordinates with WorkSource Oregon to fund participants through their training plans with use of supportive

services beyond what is available through Trade Act. Trade Act also connects with local boards on scholarship, or “packaging”, opportunities.

Oregon’s UI program encourages people who may be eligible for various types of educational programs to take advantage of them through WorkSource Oregon. Depending on availability, while school attendance may pose an issue for UI claimants to maintain eligibility for benefits, UI merit staff seeks to enable customers to determine the best solution to achieve success in their short and long-term employment goals through education.

Oregon’s UI program also provides information about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits available through the Training Unemployment Insurance (TUI) and the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) programs. As workers lose their jobs through layoff either as a result of foreign trade for the TRA program or other causes not resulting from faults of their own for the TUI program, they have the option of applying for these programs. Oregon leverages resources to increase educational access through sharing information with UI claimants about the programs through public service announcements, press releases, recorded messages on call center phone lines, hard copy brochures, posters, mailers, digital displays, social media, and website messaging.

### **Pursuing Additional Resources to Support Connecting Youth to Education and Work**

Partnerships between the Oregon Workforce Investment Board and local workforce development boards around better connecting youth to education and work continue to grow and flourish. State and local strategies that flow from these partnerships pursue additional, area appropriate funding and resources. One example involves the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (OYCC) and local workforce boards attempting to increase summer and year-round work experiences for youth ages 14 to 24. These strategies employ a competency-based approach to workforce and academic preparation including requirements for youth to demonstrate skills along a continuum of college and career readiness. More information on these strategies can be found at <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com>.<sup>34</sup>

### **Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials.**

#### **Customer Engagement on Education and Training Opportunities**

The 2014 OWIB-HECC taskforce recommended that all middle 40 degrees, credentials, licensures and certifications issued by accredited public and private institutions, registered apprenticeships, recognized industry associations or third party vendors should be included in what is counted toward achievement of the state’s 40-40-20 goal. Credentials that count should be validated by accrediting bodies, third party review, and/or student demonstrations of mastery against set criteria. The taskforce also recommended that the state count the number of Oregonians with credentials and track all middle 40 credentials earned, because there is value in knowing which credentials have been awarded and how these tie to the requirements of the labor market and businesses. This work also allows the state and local areas to improve their ability to match supply and demand.

Title II will be involved in improving access to postsecondary credentials at the state and local levels. CCWD as the eligible agency will invest State leadership funds to expand academic bridge programs for individuals transitioning from adult education to postsecondary education, through research-based programming such as Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST), Vocational English as Second Language (VESL), and Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills (OPABS). Local adult education and literacy providers will be

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<sup>34</sup> <http://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/>

encouraged to explore bridge programs and promote transition to postsecondary education when possible. Title II will work with the State and local boards to clearly define career pathways across the state to promote transition of adult education students into industry recognized certificates, licenses and portable stackable certificates.

### **Targeting Resources for Occupational Training**

Workforce staff will develop and deploy a training program to educate staff in WorkSource Oregon centers and agency central offices about structured work based learning, which includes registered apprenticeship. The training program will help all workforce partners understand the different training options that employers and individuals can access through the workforce system and each of their defining characteristics. The training will also teach staff how to identify an apprenticeable occupation, the characteristics of a good apprentice, and how to refer both individuals and employers to structured work based learning training programs, certificates and credentials. The training program will help WorkSource Oregon staff understand the value of registered apprenticeship and structured work based learning, which will enable them to share the information broadly with employers and other service delivery partners.

In September 2015, the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) approved two motions regarding the requirements for expenditures related to training services, as provided by local workforce development boards. This document clarifies and further defines the OWIB motions and provides guidance for planning and implementation (beginning July 1, 2016). [Click here for more details on Minimum Training Expenditures<sup>35</sup>](#).

### **Rethinking and Restructuring Training and Skill Development**

There are numerous opportunities that Oregon can take advantage of to improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. These activities include developing a statewide Earn and Learn Clearinghouse to promote models of internships, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, etc. to business and industry; promoting opportunities to students, parents, and educators; and building these models in such a way that local boards can administer matches.

Other opportunities include designing a framework for CTE and Community colleges to collaborate on pre-apprenticeship programs developed in response to Sector Partnership demands. Funds will be prioritized for occupational training that gives people the tools that they really need to work in local businesses. By establishing a minimum requirement for funds spent on occupational training, the OWIB is promoting accountability to ensure that the workforce system is truly supporting services that benefit both jobseekers and local businesses. This minimum threshold will be revisited each year of this strategic plan to adjust to the environment of the workforce system.

Effective training often must go beyond classroom training to address all types of learners and provide hands-on experiences. Work-based learning and other innovative strategies that can help individuals understand more clearly what it is like to work in a certain industry or company are important to both improve learning outcomes and to help individuals with career exploration.

### **Provide Technical Assistance/Incentives to Support Adoption of Work-Based Learning Models**

The system will build coalitions and relationships with industry and community partners to create and expand registered apprenticeship programs through two apprenticeship focused positions at OED and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). OED will partner with local workforce boards to ensure that technical

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<sup>35</sup> [Click here for more details on Minimum Training Expenditures](#)

assistance and support for new apprenticeship programs are aligned with industry need and local sector strategies. ODE will partner with secondary and post-secondary institutions and community partners to increase the opportunities for youth to transition from high school into an apprenticeship or a pre-apprenticeship program. OED and the Apprenticeship Training Division will continue to work towards increasing the number of women and minorities involved in structured work based learning and registered apprenticeship programs by working with community partners and the Department of Human Services to provide supportive services during portions of the apprenticeship training period.

Trade Act also supports industry supported credentials that enhance employment in sectors supported by WSO areas. Trade Act will collaborate with the Apprenticeship Program Liaison on available apprenticeship opportunities and educate participants on findings.

Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program also has engagement with post-secondary educational institutions with regard to the Training Unemployment Insurance (TUI), the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA), and the apprenticeship programs. The programs enable customers to receive training at postsecondary institutions while receiving UI benefits.

### **Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies**

The workforce system will establish and enhance strategic partnerships with economic development organizations to assist in any way possible with the development and creation of jobs. Business Representatives from multiple partners including Economic and Workforce Development partners, work together to coordinate services across their region, target specific industries based on information from Economic Development partners and Workforce Analysts, and work together with economic development professionals to enhance and improve business recruitment, retention, and expansion.

CCWD and local area Title II providers will fund allowable activities under The Adult Education and Family Literacy ACT (AEFLA). Title II providers will align activities with local area plans, such as sector strategies and career pathways. These adult education and literacy activities will also be coordinated across the core programs and partners through one-stop center participation, referrals, and co-enrollment where feasible.

Trade Act staff will coordinate with local boards, Regional Solutions Centers, workforce partners, economic development, and training providers to create industry driven on-the-job training opportunities and talent development options based on knowledge gained from employer contacts and meetings.

Regional Solutions is an innovative, collaborative approach to community and economic development in Oregon. The state, in partnership with Oregon colleges and universities, established Regional Solutions Centers throughout Oregon. Starting at the local level to identify priorities, each center works from the bottom up to solve problems and complete projects. These centers integrate state agency work and funding to ensure that projects are finished as quickly and cost-effectively as possible.

### **State Operating Systems and Policies**

#### ***State Operating Systems***

State operating systems to support implementation of the state's strategies are primarily divided into two categories:

- Labor Market Information
- Data Collection and Reporting System

- Operations and Management Systems

### **Labor Market Information**

The Oregon Employment Department's Workforce and Economic Research Division provides accurate, reliable, and timely information about Oregon's state and local labor markets. The division's goal is to provide quality information that helps our customers make informed choices. Workforce development policy makers are a key Research customer group, particularly serving the labor market information needs of state and local workforce development boards.

The division's efforts focus on direct employer surveys, information from tax records, analysis of the data, and dissemination through publications, presentations, and responses to customer requests. Most labor market information is available on-line; allowing staff more time to focus on custom analysis and answering challenging questions about the labor market.

Oregon has long been a leader and innovator in labor market information, with activities and projects such as the Workforce Analyst program, the national award-winning [QualityInfo.org](http://QualityInfo.org)<sup>36</sup> internet site, and our innovative and highly regarded special publications.

### **Data Collection and Reporting Systems**

Oregon's Performance Reporting Information System (PRISM) was established to collect, analyze, and report on workforce development services, customers receiving these services, and employment outcomes after receiving services.

All WIA Title II data are reported both locally and state-wide using TOPSpro Enterprise and reported to the federal Department of Education through the National Reporting System (NRS). Local programs have ongoing data analysis and program improvement opportunities through their performance management software, data quality checklist, database administrators' training, ongoing State training, and annual reporting requirements. Each June, programs submit a Strategic Framework, an evidence-based program evaluation, coupled with a detailed program improvement plan for the next year. In August, local providers submit their federal statistical tables, and the local data quality standards checklist. This process enables local programs to identify and correct data anomalies. Local program directors also identify common performance issues that local programs and State staff address collectively throughout the year.

The State provides technical assistance, facilitates State committees on assessment and data, and engages in ongoing data analysis to supplement annual training in order to ensure accurate data collection and reporting. State data analysis begins with the export of local program data in July. Initial analysis of the State-aggregated database includes a review of a TOPSpro Federal Tables Summary Audit Report. Elements of the audit report identify the total "selected" students available; the number of students dropped, based on nine "drop reasons;" and establishes the number of students who "qualify" for the Title II Federal Report. Similar reports are developed for each grant type: Comprehensive Services, EL/Civics, Corrections, and Outreach Tutoring. The primary data system used for analysis and tracking relating to Oregon Community Colleges and students is the Oregon Community College Unified Reporting System (OCCURS). The OCCURS 2.0 data system provides stricter data security, ease of interfacing for end users at the Community Colleges, increased data reliability and

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<sup>36</sup> [QualityInfo.org](http://QualityInfo.org)



validity, all while allowing external stakeholders the ability to query parts of the system via a web-based datamart.

Employers are required to report wage records to the UI program on a quarterly basis. This information includes the number of hours worked per quarter by employees. This data is used by several programs, including Labor Market Information, Employment Services, and other related State Agencies for many purposes, such as; measuring the effectiveness of various interventions designed to help people become reemployed or better skilled and understanding the composition of Oregon's labor market and industries and seeing trends that can help target services. UI data is also used to help some partner agencies determine whether individuals are eligible for various programs they administer.

At the time an initial claim for Unemployment Insurance (UI) is filed in Oregon, wage records are used to establish eligibility for UI. Data is collected from the initial claim to establish customer records for one-stop partners. Using the records, a profile for the customer is established which is used by Employment Service (ES) to gather information about the success of services offered in the one stop locations.

### **Operations and Management Systems**

The Division of Workforce Operations works to match the needs of Oregon's employers with skilled Oregonians looking for employment and assist job seekers in finding jobs. The division operates several federally mandated programs and runs field offices throughout the state. Workforce Operations works closely with UI to support the reemployment of UI claimants and ensure the integrity of benefit payments, as well as with the Workforce and Economic Research Division.

### ***State Policies***

The WorkSource Oregon (WSO) system integrates the services provided by the Wagner-Peyser Act administered by the Oregon Employment Department (OED) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs administered by the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD).

The [WSO standards](#)<sup>37</sup> were implemented in 2015 and will be incorporated into state monitoring processes and local areas will be held accountable to their successful implementation in each and every WSO location in the state.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB), during its recent strategic planning process, developed four new goals and supporting strategies to address the current needs of the workforce system and customers. The Local Workforce Boards are key implementation partners of these goals and strategies and form collaborative relationships and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) at the local level to deliver services, that align with the state's strategies and that abide by state policy.

Oregon has had a Joint Policy on Common Enrollment and Exits in place since 2012. Initially, this policy established an intake process and automatic co-enrollment across the Wagner-Peyser and WIA title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The policy is currently being revised to include WIOA-based eligibility requirements and references, and there are efforts underway to include other core program partners, although a

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<sup>37</sup> [WSO standards](#)

“common registration” process that includes Title II and Title IV customer data and eligibility requirement continues to pose challenges at both the programmatic (data confidentiality/sharing) and programming (MIS/IT architecture) levels.

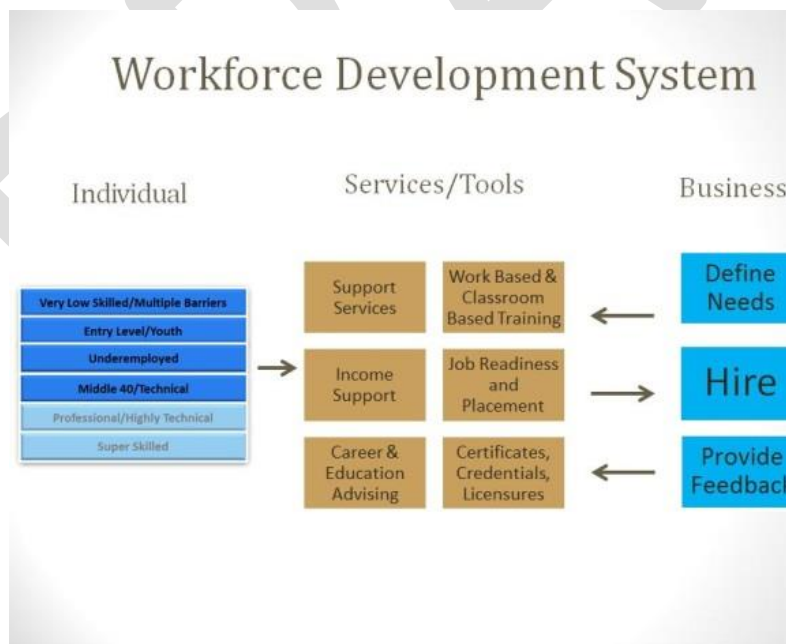
The remaining Joint Policies, the OWIB Youth Policy, and other policies are currently being reviewed by the cross-agency workgroups new policy needs are continually assessed. As new policies are developed and published, they will be housed at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>38</sup>. Current [\*WSO Joint Policies can be found here\*](#)<sup>39</sup>.

The core programs will work to craft policies over time to support the state strategies, including co-enrollment practices and development of a universal in-take. At this time, the core programs do not have a shared case management system, data system, or shared in-take practices. Title II will be invested in the development of state policies that support development of the State’s customer-centric workforce system.

Title IV, VR, will work to align policies as appropriate to ensure that the intent of the Act is honored. Given current management information system common intake practices currently used by Titles I and III are not practical for VR. However, local areas will work with partners to simplify joint referral and information sharing to ensure alignment and non-duplication of services.

**State Program and State Board Overview**

The Workforce Development System is the web of programs and providers, both public and private that prepare workers and job seekers with the information and skills needed to find or maintain employment, and assist employers to employ skilled workers or to increase the skills of their workforce. The Workforce System supports the economic prosperity of individuals, business and communities.



<sup>38</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>

<sup>39</sup> [\*WSO Joint Policies can be found here\*](#)

Oregon's System has three parts: education, economic development and workforce development. There are three state agencies directly responsible for the implementation of the major programs involved in the Workforce System in Oregon. These agencies include the Oregon Employment Department, the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), and the Department of Human Services – Self Sufficiency Programs and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Oregon Business Development Department (Business Oregon) has also been included in an effort to reflect the demand-side of the Workforce System. Business Oregon is the State agency charged with developing and implementing the economic development policy and strategy of the State. Business Oregon's role in the Workforce System is unique; it is the official State agency with the primary focus to support the business community in retaining and creating new jobs for Oregonians.

The governing and advisory boards for the Workforce System include:

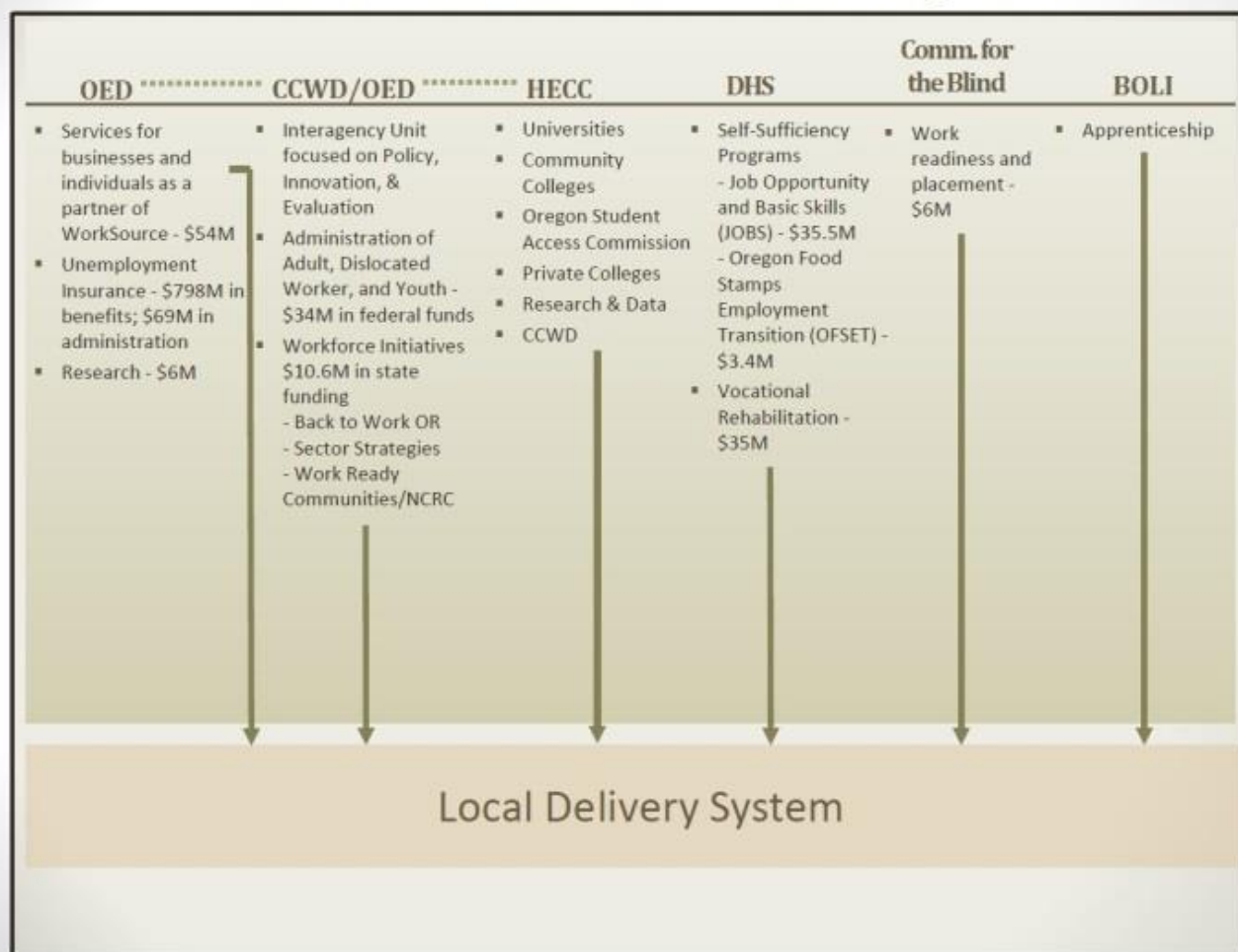
**The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB)** is the Governor's chief advisory body on workforce matters. It is made up of business leaders, organized labor, State agencies, education entities and elected officials. The majority of the members are from business. Oregon has nine **local workforce boards (LWBs)**. These boards have significant autonomy over programming in their jurisdictions and are comprised of business leaders within the community, other community leaders, organized labor, educational institutions and elected officials. The LWBs have special obligations concerning programming for out of school youth and skills-deficient youth.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board is the overall advisory board to the Governor on workforce matters. The OWIB is made up of leaders representing private sector businesses, labor, state, local governments and government agencies. A majority of the nearly 40 members represent the private sector. One of the chief duties of the OWIB is to assist the Governor by developing a five year strategic plan for Oregon's comprehensive workforce system. This system provides job placement and training for youth and adults, employment-related services for veterans, people with disabilities, migrant farm workers, limited English speakers and other Oregonians in need of special assistance. The system also serves employers by providing job listing and qualified applicants, as well as testing, screening and labor market information. The State Board membership board roster can be found on the [OWIB website](#)<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> [OWIB website](#)

## State Roles In Workforce Development



The OWIB and staff will be assisted by multiple teams in carrying out its work. The Workforce Policy Implementation Team (WPIT) will provide inter-agency and core program review of any policy or program recommendations before they are submitted to the OWIB Executive Committee and full board for consideration. The WPIT also has staff teams to assist it in the development of options and recommendations. Staff representatives from the WIOA core programs, labor market information/OED Research Division, and from the (insert list of additional programs we're included in the state plan) programs participate in OWIB committees, including the System Performance Committee, to support implementation of state board functions.

**The Oregon Employment Department (OED)** was created in 1993 and is an active partner in the development of the State's workforce. The agency director is subordinate to the Governor. The mission of OED is to promote employment of Oregonians through developing a diversified, multi-skilled workforce, providing support during periods of unemployment and supporting businesses by connecting them to well-qualified candidates for their job openings. The agency also provides labor market information for use by businesses, policy makers and a variety of stakeholders. OED is also responsible for Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program.

The department offers a number of services and serves employers through timely recruitment of a qualified workforce, customizing state and local labor market information for use as a business planning tool and by offering job-matching services based on the need of each employer. The department serves job seekers and employers by helping workers find suitable employment, providing qualified applicants for employers, supplying statewide and local labor market information and providing unemployment insurance benefits to workers temporarily unemployed through no fault of their own.

The Division of Workforce Operations works to match the needs of Oregon's employers with skilled Oregonians looking for employment and assist job seekers in finding jobs. The division operates several federally mandated programs and runs field offices throughout the state. Workforce Operations works closely with UI to support the reemployment of UI claimants and ensure the integrity of benefit payments, as well as with the Workforce and Economic Research Division.

**The OED Advisory Council** was created to assist the Director of OED in developing or revising program policies and ensuring impartiality and fairness in the implementation of those policies. This includes promoting adequate administrative funding and wise use of agency programs, assisting the director in developing strategies for the solution of workforce problems within the State, assisting the director in assuring the long-term fiscal health of the UI Trust Fund, assisting the director in developing a legislative agenda and gaining approval by the legislature, promoting greater understanding and acceptance of OED programs by the public and promoting cooperation with other state agencies and organizations concerned with workforce problems.

#### **Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)**

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is dedicated to fostering and sustaining the best, most rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond high school. Oregon's higher education system serves hundreds of thousands of students at its seven public universities, 17 public community colleges, workforce programs, private and independent colleges and universities, and private career and trade schools. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) supports the students and communities served by these institutions through statewide statutory responsibilities. The HECC is a 14-member public commission, supported by the HECC agency. The agency includes the Offices of: Executive Director, Policy & Communication; Student Access & Completion; Community Colleges & Workforce Development; Operations; Private Postsecondary Education; University Coordination; and Research & Data. The director of the HECC is appointed directly by the Governor.

**The Oregon Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD)** is the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I and Title II recipient in Oregon and administers the State General Fund allocation to the State's 17 Community Colleges. The Office links postsecondary information with workforce programs designed to (a) be responsive to employer needs and (b) to transition skills-deficient Oregonians into family-supporting jobs.

CCWD's director reports to the executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Oregon Community Colleges are the key access point for the majority of Oregonians seeking a postsecondary credential or degree. The colleges provide the opportunity for over 370,000 students each year to advance their educational levels and acquire new skills regardless of their starting points. CCWD administers the Community College Support Fund (CCSF), the state's contribution to Community College operating costs. Funds are distributed through a formula that is based on the number of full-time equivalent students at each of the 17 Community Colleges. The colleges combine state funding (31%) with property tax (24%) and tuition revenues (45%) to provide programs and services.

CCWD's strategic efforts to align education and workforce training are designed to increase access to, progress in and completion of students in education; skill development programs and to improve the effectiveness and value of the programs and services for students, for employers and for the economic vitality of the community and the State of Oregon. The agency's major accomplishments fall into three broad categories:

- Increasing access and success at Oregon Community Colleges.
- Delivering value-added workforce development programs.
- Measuring results to help ensure Oregonians are prepared for lifelong learning, rewarding work and engaged citizenship. Office Locations CCWD contains no field offices; its central office is located in the Public Services Building in Salem.

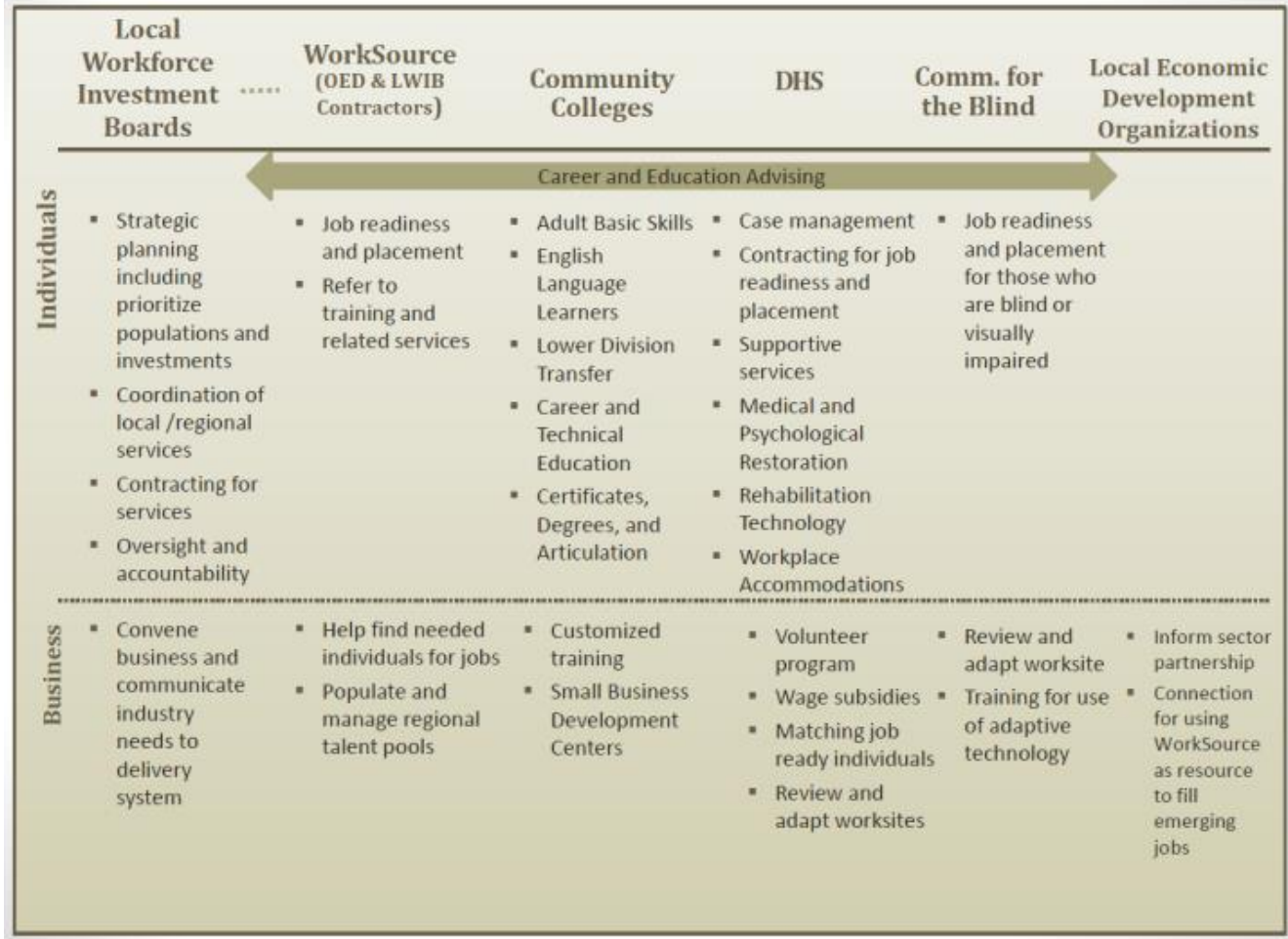
Key divisions within CCWD include the following:

The Workforce Division of CCWD is Oregon's designated recipient of WIA Title I funding. As such, it oversees allocations to the nine LWDBs, and aids the Governor in administering the state-level funds the Governor has access to under WIA. The Workforce Division also provides all staffing and resources for the OWIB. In addition, the Workforce Division administers the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (OYCC) and collaborates with business and communities to promote workforce and economic development within the State.

CCWD's Education Systems Division is primarily responsible for overseeing course and program approval at Oregon's 17 Community Colleges and LWDBs, implementing Accelerated Learning programs and Carl D. Perkins Programs of Study in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education. In addition to providing support to the Community Colleges, the Education Systems Division oversees the Adult Basic Skills (ABS) programming of Title II of WIA (WIA Title II). WIA Title II is a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to assist adults in gaining literacy and numeracy, and to become self-sufficient. The Division also administers Oregon's GED program.

The Operations Division of CCWD provides administrative support to CCWD personnel and programming. It houses Accounting, Budgeting, Procurements and Contracts for CCWD. CCWD's data systems collect information on Community College students, career and technical education students in high school, GED participants, WIA Title IB clients and ABS students. The Information Systems Division of CCWD provides technical support to CCWD personnel and programming, which includes IT, data, reporting and web services.

## Local Delivery of Services to Customers



**The Local Workforce Boards (LWBs)** broker services for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth in nine Local workforce development areas (LWAs) across Oregon. These services are carried out in WorkSource Oregon Certified One-Stop Centers (as identified in the OED section of this report) and are the key access point for Oregonians seeking employment and skill development as well as business customers seeking skilled workers. CCWD provides the WIA Title I and II funds distributed to the LWBs through a formula based on economic and employment factors. The WorkSource system serves over 200,000 Oregonians per year.

The nine Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) that broker services for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth in their Local workforce development areas across Oregon are described below:

1. Worksystems is a non-profit organization that pursues and invests resources to improve the quality of the workforce in the City of Portland, Multnomah and Washington Counties. Worksystems designs and coordinates workforce development programs and services delivered through a network of local partners to help people get the skills, training and education they need to go to work or to advance in their

careers. Partners to Worksystems include employers, labor groups, government, Community Colleges, high schools, community-based and economic development organizations. Their mission is to coordinate a regional workforce system that supports individual prosperity and business competitiveness by ensuring that the public workforce system serves business, by developing qualified employees and by giving current and future workers the skills and support they need to successfully engage, advance and succeed in the labor market.

2. Incite Incorporated is the workforce investment board serving Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties. The core mission of Incite Incorporated is to grow economic vitality by helping businesses find workforce solutions so that they thrive in these challenging economic times. They facilitate training and career readiness for adults and connect youth to business and career opportunities so that they are better able to enter the job market and be an asset to local businesses and the community.
3. Clackamas Workforce Partnership is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building a strong workforce in Clackamas County. Through public-private partnerships, the Council attracts funding to help local businesses proactively address a key challenge to their success - a skilled, competitive workforce. The Council makes critical investments in workforce training and education so that businesses can be competitive and prosperous and provides workforce initiatives and programs which provide employment and training solutions that save businesses time, money and energy in finding and retaining a highly skilled workforce. In addition, the Council funds key community agencies that provide employment and training solutions for job seekers and laid-off workers through WorkSource Clackamas.
4. Lane Workforce Partnership is a business-led workforce development organization dedicated to meeting the workforce skill needs of employers and to helping individuals gain the knowledge and skills to find a first, new or better job. As the LWDB for Lane County, Oregon, the partnership makes investment decisions to promote a demand-driven workforce development system responsive to local businesses, workforce and economic development needs. Their goal is to provide businesses with greater access to a skilled labor pool and to provide individuals with greater employment opportunities. The Lane Workforce Partnership strives to meet its mission – to meet the workforce needs of employers and individuals through partnerships and innovation – by continually evolving as the needs of businesses and job seekers change.
5. The Rogue Workforce Partnership was formed in 1975 as a prime sponsor under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) representing Jackson and Josephine counties. Today, Rogue Workforce Partnership funds contractors that provide workforce resources to businesses, youth and adults throughout Jackson and Josephine counties. Their programs are grouped within four primary service areas: Business Services, Job Seeker Services, Youth Programs and Child Care Resources.

These four new boards were established as local workforce development boards in 2015 and are currently in the process of developing the board vision, mission, and goals for the local areas.

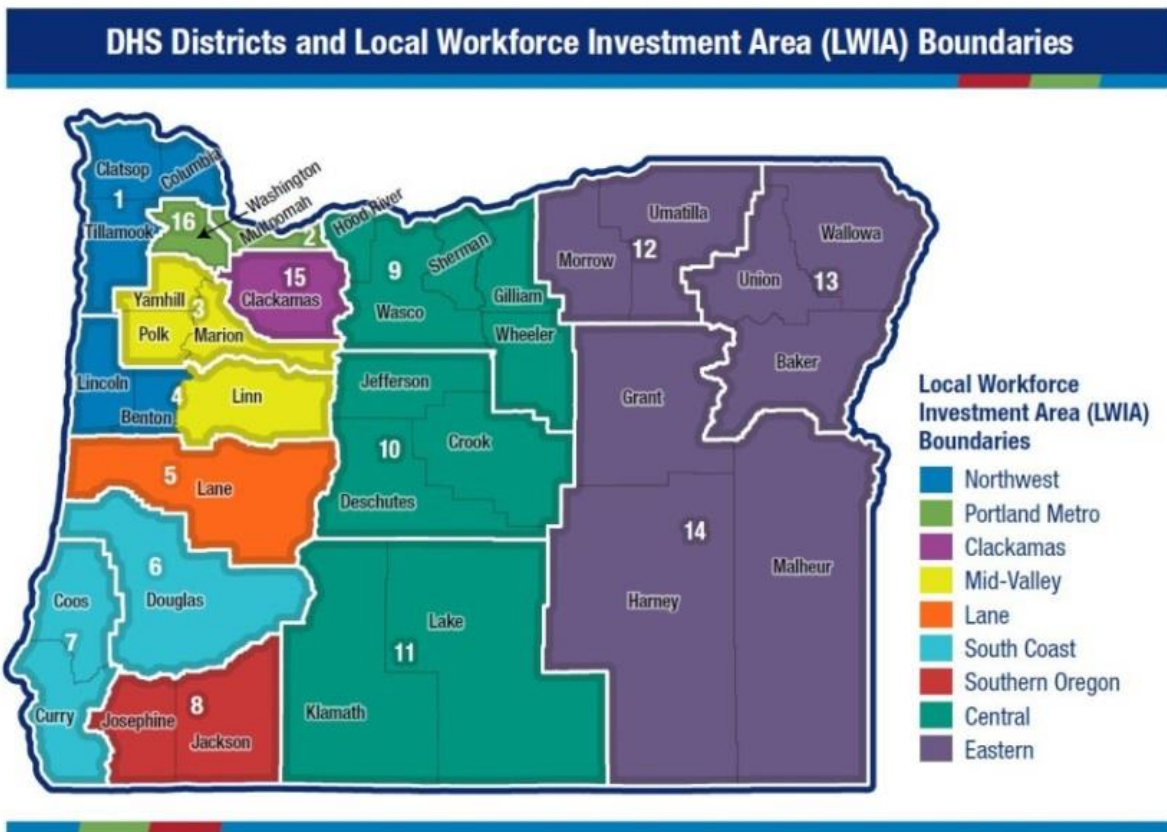
6. East Cascades Workforce Investment Board - Counties Served: Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler
7. Eastern Oregon Workforce Investment Board - Counties Served: Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa.
8. Oregon Northwest Workforce Investment Board - Counties Served: Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln, and Tillamook
9. Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board - Counties Served: Coos, Curry, and Douglas



**The Oregon Workforce Partnership (OWP)** is a non-partisan, private/public, statewide association committed to building a more highly skilled workforce to support and expand Oregon’s economy. OWP is driven by the leadership of 120 local businesses, investing their resources to better align economic, education and training systems for job creation and greater prosperity. OWP works with CCWD on statewide strategies and approaches to achieving these goals.

**Oregon Department of Human Services Department Overview**

Department of Human Services key functions serve children, adults and families and seniors and people with disabilities. DHS is Oregon’s principal agency for helping Oregonians achieve well-being and independence through opportunities that protect, empower, respect choice and preserve dignity, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. DHS provides services to the workforce development arena through its Self-Sufficiency, Aging and People with Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.



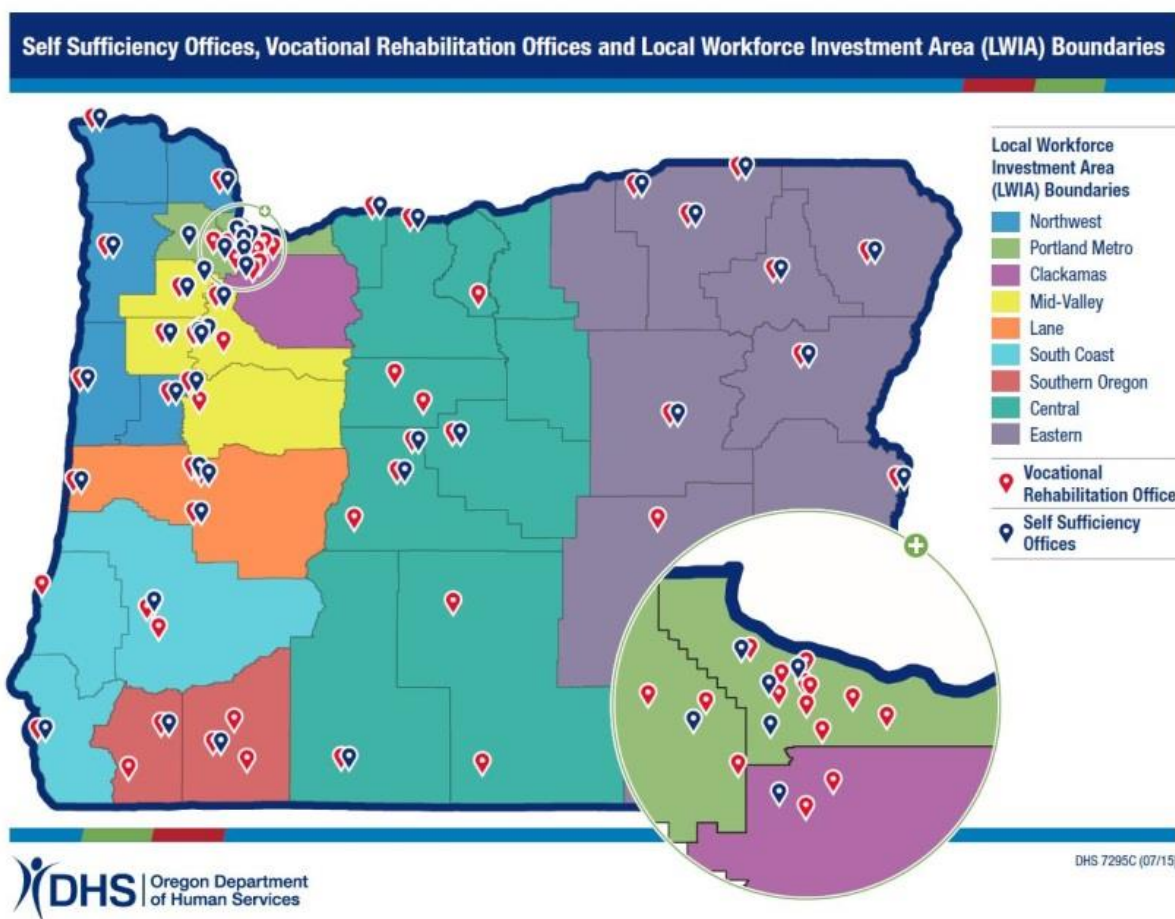
**DHS Self Sufficiency**

The Department’s Office of Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP) provides assistance with basic needs to low income families and individuals, as well as help in finding employment. Basic needs programs provide help with food, cash and daycare through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Employment Related Day Care program. The Refugee Program provides both cash assistance and employment services for individuals and families who fled persecution in their country of origin and were legally admitted for resettlement by the U.S. Government. Workforce related programs include the Job Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS) program, which is operated through TANF, and the Oregon Food Stamp Employment Transition (OFSET) program which is administered through the SNAP program.

### Workforce Related Programs

The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Program is Oregon's employment and training program. Education, training and job placement services are provided to TANF single-parent and two-parent families with the goal of helping prepare for, find and keep a job. Job retention and wage enhancement services are provided to clients transitioning from TANF or the Pre-TANF Program.



JOBS program services are planned for and provided through contracted partners as well as through a network of workforce partnerships including local Workforce Investment Act boards (LWDBS), Employment Department offices, community colleges and other community partners that provide family stability services such as mental health and addiction services. Coordinated service delivery planning, for both workforce and

family stability-focused resources, are conducted through local planning meetings. State leadership and technical assistance support local JOBS program efforts.

A core set of mandatory procedures and services are in place in all areas. However, service delivery mechanisms and program design may vary among the 16 Districts due to differences in local needs and resources. For example, Portland-area offices may deal with clients' transportation related barriers in a different manner than rural offices due to the availability of public transportation. To provide JOBS services to working TANF clients to help them transition from TANF to employment, DHS staff uses a strength-based case management approach. The intent of case management is to help families become self-supporting while assisting them with basic needs. DHS respects and empowers clients by recognizing they are capable, have strengths, and have resources that can help them take control of their lives. DHS assists clients in identifying their needs and building on their strengths while supporting them in meeting their goals. Benefit delivery is integrated with self-sufficiency enhancing services. The outcome of case management is increased family self-sufficiency through individualized case management. Case management takes a team effort. The team consists of the client, the case manager, branch staff and community partners the client may be working with. JOBS services include various levels of Job Preparation and Placement services, Retention and Wage Enhancement services, Self-Sufficiency and Intervention services, Youth and Child services and Teen Parent services.

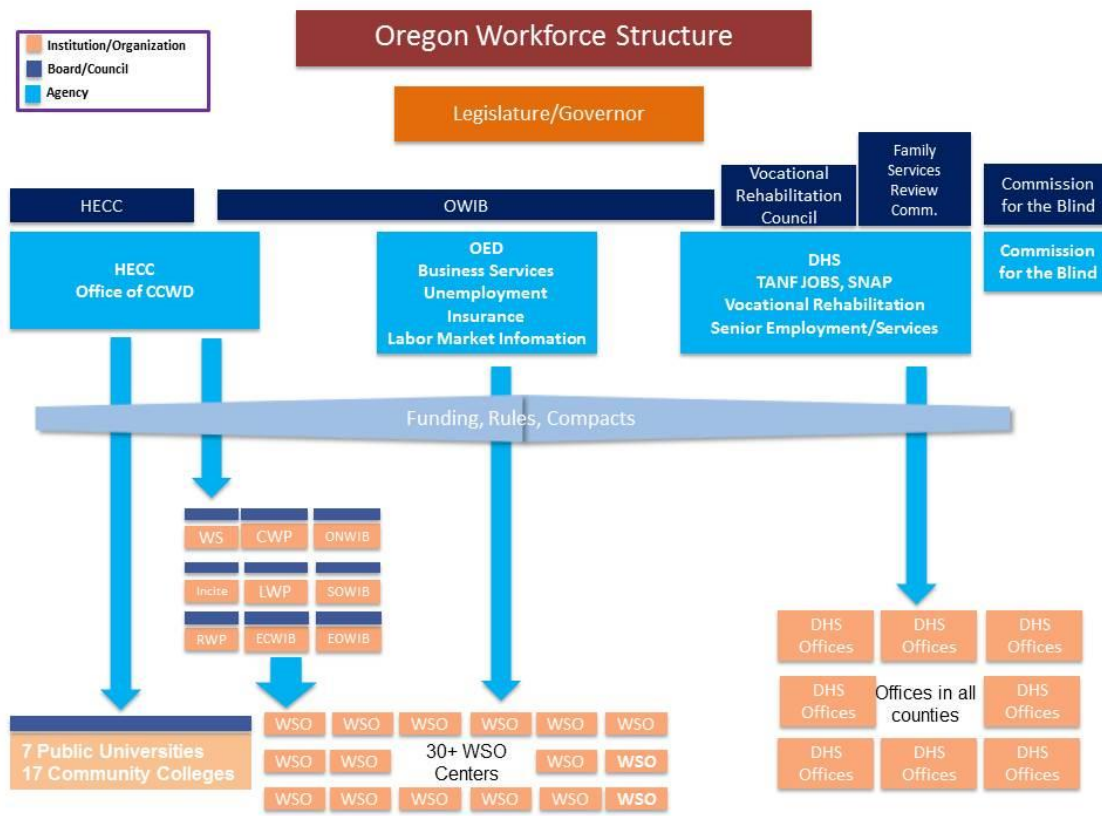
### **Oregon's Employment and Training Program**

Oregon is currently undertaking an effort to expand the Employment and Training Program (E&T) as part of our ongoing investment in the Oregon economy and our communities. As part of the continuum of services done in partnership with partners engaged in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Oregon will provide SNAP participants who are unemployed or underemployed, opportunities to lift themselves out of poverty.

In Oregon there are three different types of Employment and Training (E&T) programs. Oregon is currently working on continuing the expansion of the E&T 50/50 component and it is a program priority. This expansion will include the development of strategic partnerships in local areas, these partnerships will be led by local Department of Human Services (DHS) Managers and Workforce Investment Board (WIB) managers in order to make sure processes are in place to allow SNAP participants to receive seamless services from multiple E&T partnerships.

Oregon's SNAP Program has formed a E&T Steering Committee comprised of multiple partnerships including Workforce partnerships from the WIB's, local DHS Management, Community Collages and private non-profits. This steering committee is charged with developing the framework and a tool kit for local WIBs/DHS Leadership to be able to convene community groups to provide the 50/50 funding and collaboration opportunity. The steering committee will provide statewide leadership and ongoing guidance for the E&T 50/50 program and partners.

The organization of Oregon’s Workforce System is summarized in the following chart:



## Assessment of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners

### Assessment of Core Programs.

Oregon will be using the federal measures as prescribed in WIOA. Available data supports the evaluation of programs at the state and local levels. The service delivery model and economic conditions will be assessed annually against the outcomes achieved during the prior year. Options for continuous improvement will be discussed at the state and local area levels, and performance targets will be adjusted accordingly.

Oregon is researching the use of additional indicators to monitor service delivery in real-time, improve outcomes, and respond to immediate needs of our local communities. Once any additional measures are developed, tested, and approved, the measures will be applied and used to monitor activities on a timely basis. The goal is to support the real-time adjustment of resources and service delivery to match local demand.

Oregon continues to work toward state and local workforce development agencies and boards shifting from a compliance- and program-specific orientation to a highly integrated, outcomes-based system that makes value-added investments based on the [WSO standards of performance](#)<sup>41</sup> and community needs. To the extent that

<sup>41</sup> [WSO standards of performance](#)

Oregon can achieve this, the workforce system will assure that all workforce programs operate efficiently, without unnecessary duplication, and leverage resources. The WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards provide the minimum-level content/services(s) required to be available at all WSO centers. They also build-in an accountability mechanism to ensure that this effort will come to fruition across the entire state. Finally, they offer an opportunity to work together to continually improve the system, engage new partners, and better serve Oregon's job seekers, workers and businesses.

CCWD will conduct annual assessments of Oregon's aggregate Title II performance and performance by local providers. Adult education and literacy providers will be evaluated by individual provider, rather than by local area performance. Overall program quality will be measured by student persistence, retention, and transition to either employment or postsecondary training. Title II performance evaluations will be supported by: regular submission of programmatic performance numbers, quarterly reporting of programmatic activities, and annual financial audit. Regular monitoring of program quality will be used for continuous improvement activities, allowing CCWD to provide technical assistance based on assessment results.

Title II will assess one-stop delivery system partner program services based on the number of cross-trained staff, appropriate referrals, and participant co-enrollment. One-stop partnerships will also be qualitatively reviewed within Oregon's local areas through quarterly programmatic reporting of Title II providers.

VR has incorporated the accountability measures into our rolling monthly performance reports and our quarterly business reviews. Given the long term nature of the measures, proxy measures have been put in place to make managing to the measures achievable. The monthly performance reports are broken down into the fourteen branches for VR. The quarterly business reviews are a statewide roll-up of the outcome data to date. These two reports give us a local view and a chance to review state wide trends. In this way local trends can be identified and we can easily identify areas where higher performance may indicate the presence of a best practice that needs to be duplicated.

Over the first two years of this unified plan local branches will work to develop mechanisms to set local expectations of performance and strategies to enact local VR plans that are congruent with the local LWDB plans. These plans will be used to manage the effectiveness of the programs.

VR is currently revamping its quality assurance processes and will use these statewide to help ensure that service delivery is done to a standard that is consistently high across the state. New service contracts will allow VR to better measure the effectiveness of purchased services through individual providers and service category.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program is an essential part of the safety net for vulnerable Oregon families. TANF stabilizes families and prepares parents for employment that sets them firmly on a pathway out of poverty, and into economic stability and self-reliance. TANF provides supports to keep children safe, healthy and thriving within their own families, financial assistance to stabilize households and training and job search services to help parents find and retain employment

A combination of policy changes and a targeted reinvestment strategy that directs \$29.7 million in savings from a projected decline in the TANF caseload into strategies and policy changes that will improve outcomes for children and families. These reinvestment proposals include reducing the number of participants affected by the "benefits cliff" when they become employed, simplifying eligibility requirements to strengthen family connections and stability for children, expanding family stability services, increasing flexibility in support services to prevent families from entering TANF, and improving program capacity to provide strength-based, customized and outcome-focused case management.

### **Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs.**

One of the key agency programs to help unemployment insurance claimants become reemployed is the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The program is evaluated annually using a combination of federal performance measures and ad-hoc reports developed using the agency's business analysis software. An evaluation form is also available for WSO Centers to assess the quality and effectiveness of staff engagement with RESEA customers. RESEA program data including staff and customer feedback is evaluated by a standing workgroup that focuses on strengthening claimant reemployment efforts and streamlining agency operations and communications to better serve claimants in one-stop centers.

The Trade program is assessed with TAPR, local performance measures for TAN and customer surveys. TAPR provides a quarterly look at effectiveness of the program that would have to be reworked to provide a yearly assessment. Local performance measures are to be determined in each area for the TAN.

Oregon will assess performance for the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program through the State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) each year in compliance with Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) 21-14. The SQSP includes Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) measures, the Tax Performance System (TPS), Cash Management measures, the Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM), and Benefit Payment Control (BPC) measures.

### **Previous Assessment Results**

An analysis of Oregon's one-stop offices was conducted in 2015 and will be used to implement a set of service and performance standards. The partners at WorkSource Oregon, the one-stop centers, have developed statewide operational standards for the centers. The standards recognize that workforce areas are starting at different places and ability to meet all standards will vary across the state. The assessment was used to determine a strategy for implementing the statewide operating standards and will continue to help determine how well we are striving toward full implementation of the standards by region. For the full report, see WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards Self-Assessment Report (April 2015).

Previous Title II assessments focused primarily on enrollment and measurable skill gains, such as GED completions. Over the past two years, Title II enrollment in Oregon has decreased from 16,204 in 2013-2014 to 13,882 in 2014-2015. The number of hours participants received services was nearly identical during the two-year time period, 1,666,063 hours in 2013-2014 and 1,624,815 hours in 2014-2015. On average, Title II students received services for over 100 hours a year. The percentage of pre- and post-tests was also similar between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015; approximately 57% of enrolled participants completed pre- and post-tests. The 2014-2015 outcome measures are not yet available. In 2013-2014, Title II outcomes measures totaled, 710 GED completers, 2,578 participant transitions to postsecondary education, and 1,699 participants entered employment.

Under WIOA, overall Title II program quality will be measured by student persistence, retention, and transition to either employment or postsecondary training. Title II performance evaluations will be conducted on an annual basis with quarterly performance reporting to support continuous improvement activities. CCWD will then adapt its strategies to focus on program quality and effectiveness.

Title IV regularly uses evaluations of data and qualitative information to measure the effectiveness of our program. Evaluations completed in the last two years have resulted in such things as: a revamping our statewide procurement process for job placement service, changes to the job placement service delivery model, training to help staff move clients into plan faster, trainings on specific disability barriers, cross trainings with other agencies to ensure better partnerships, changes to business practices using the LEAN model, and the piloting of some new evidenced based best practices around transition.

An assessment of the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program shown that it is effective in helping speed claimants return to work and in preventing and detecting unemployment insurance (UI) overpayments. Over the past two years, the RESEA program has helped shorten claims duration, reduce exhaustion rates, and increase detection of potential issues resulting in disqualification or overpayment.

In the last two years, Oregon's State Quality Service Plan (SQSP) reports have revealed that Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program needs to improve the quality and timeliness of work. The report has also identified that the program has made progress on many areas. Although more funding was available to provide services to our customers during the recession, systems maintenance, staff training and regular updating of policies and practices were deferred.

The agency is now performing the needed work, while maintaining appropriate levels of performance and customer service, with significant federal funding decreases. Examples include:

- Additional reviews of the adjudication process and more training has resulted in increased Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) quality scores and Oregon exceeding the DOL standard for BTQ for four straight quarters.
- The UI program has also undertaken a LEAN effort to streamline its work processes and imbed a culture of continuous improvement.
- The program has also made progress in overpayment detection and appeals timeliness, and is working towards improvements in prevention and recovery of overpayments.

### ***Distribution of Funds for Core Programs***

Currently the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) distributes Title I formula funds for Youth and Adult to local areas using three equally weighted factors:

- One-third on the basis of the relative number of unemployed individuals in the area compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in the entire state;
- One-third on the basis of the relative excess number of unemployed individuals in the area compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the entire state; and
- One-third based on the relative number of disadvantaged youths/adults compared to the total number of disadvantaged youths/adults in the entire state.

CCWD also uses a hold harmless formula so that no local area receives less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the local area for the 2 preceding fiscal years. Amounts necessary for increasing such allocations to local areas to comply with the hold-harmless are obtained by ratably reducing the allocations to be made to other local areas.

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to allocate dislocated worker funds to local areas based on the average distribution of the data that reflects the following factors as they relate to the workforce areas (this average distribution assumes all factors are weighted equally):

- Total Unemployed
- Excess Unemployed
- UI Exhaustees
- Total UI Claimants
- Declining Industries

The resulting average distribution per workforce area will be applied to the formula dollars the state will distribute to the areas. Effective July 1, 2016, a hold harmless formula will also be applied to dislocated worker funds distributed to local areas.

The Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), which administers the Title I programs in Oregon, is currently in the process of developing WIOA compliant policies for Youth, Adult and Dislocated worker employment and training. The intention of the department is to complete these policies as soon as possible contingent upon guidance available from Department of Labor and based on WIOA ([starting at page 76 in the Act](#)<sup>42</sup>). CCWD intends to include as many policies as possible in this plan by the required deadline. As policies are created and published, they will be made available at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>43</sup>.

### **Awarding multi-year grants or contracts**

CCWD will award competitive grants to eligible Title II providers on a three-year cycle. Eligible Title II providers must demonstrate effectiveness by providing appropriate documentation including:

- Description of program activities and services provided to both low-skilled adults and English language learners;
- Description of how the organization facilitates student transitions from adult education to either employment and/or postsecondary education;
- Outcome data for students under the Workforce Investment Act definitions or similar metrics such as educational functioning level gains,
- GED completions,
- Transitions to employment and/or postsecondary training; and
- Successfully passing a fiscal audit for the two preceding years.

The competitive request for application (RFA) process will be conducted in an open and fair manner. All information related to the RFA will be provided on the Title II website. The RFA will be designed with a single application for all Title II provider applicants, including a published timeline and scoring criteria. The competitive grants will be awarded by county, rather than local workforce development area, to promote access to Title II services in rural areas of Oregon. A single review tool will be used for all applications across the state, including a universal scoring rubric.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation services portion**

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation and the Oregon Commission for the Blind decide through mutual agreement on the distribution of funds between the two agencies. This agreement is reviewed periodically to ensure that

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<sup>42</sup> [starting at page 76 in the Act](#)

<sup>43</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>



the service, staffing, and operational needs of both agencies are adequately met based on the availability of funds. Changes to the current funding levels can be requested by either agency at any time and changes can be made based upon mutual agreement.

### ***Program Data***

#### **Data Alignment and Integration**

In 2015, The Oregon Employment Department was authorized to begin planning for procuring, customizing, and executing an integrated technology platform for the state labor exchange and the Unemployment Insurance programs. The overarching goal of this modernization project is provide better value of service to the customer by utilizing modern technology and products. Ultimately, the new platform would improve functionality and flexibility of these systems while lowering the risk of a major technology failure and providing better service to stakeholders. The feasibility plan will explicitly consider how the system can be effectively leveraged and integrated with other workforce programs, both to make the system easier for the public to use and to improve how the programs interact with each other.

Transforming multiple diverse systems into one integrated system has been an incremental process that has resulted in challenges to reporting aggregate numbers accurately. Although our common customer registration process enrolls customers in all of the W-P and WIA Adult programs for which they are eligible, both W-P and WIA services are still tracked separately.

Although some service/customer data resides in separate systems, Oregon continues to improve the interoperability of systems between systems and agencies. Data-sharing agreements, confidentiality issues, and program-specific requirements continue to create challenges in aligning and integrating data systems. In some cases, Oregon has developed innovative processes, and we continue to explore options at both the functional and administrative levels. For the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, the Employment Services and labor exchange functions, and Trade Act, customer data is passed between multiple systems, and staff have access to view customer data from any of the programs in which a customer is enrolled.

At this point in time, the State's core programs will utilize an aggregate data system to achieve interoperability for common data. The core programs will provide data to the state level data system, PRISM. Title II will collect programmatic data in TOPs Pro and convert that individual data into the CCWD data management system, D4A. Data in D4A will then be merged with PRISM. The data available in PRISM will be aggregate and not utilized for program improvement purposes. CCWD will monitor data submitted by individual adult education and literacy providers as it is transmitted in TOPs Pro for programmatic performance and continuous improvement purposes.

OWIB has established a goal and five strategies around creating a customer-centric, easy to access to workforce system, including developing accountability mechanisms focused on results. Alignment of technology and data systems across the partner programs and agencies are key to creating such a system and accountability mechanisms. The state board will assist the Governor by continuing to focus on system results and the needs or impediments to both measuring and improving the results for individuals and employers.

The user interface layer of this shared system is the WorkSource Oregon Management Information System (WOMIS), a multi-application customer- and staff-accessed system that comprises Customer Registration, Program Eligibility Determination, iMatchSkills® (labor exchange), Trade Adjustment Assistance, some WIA Service Tracking, and other customer services and resources. Enhancing WOMIS requires ongoing analysis and

research, extensive information technology programming and coding, statewide hardware and software changes, and continuing fine-tuning, enhancements, and troubleshooting.

User groups made up of state and local staff continue to monitor the MIS elements for consistency and needed changes. In addition to WOMIS, each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) must use a management information system to record, track, and report on customer data for individuals participating in WIA-funded services and activities.

CCWD encourages all local areas to deploy a customer record tracking and retention process that is efficient and effective for staff and customers, supports a data and file structure that is consistent statewide, and honors the federal Paperwork Reduction Act and state paperless initiatives, while meeting federal performance requirements.

All LWDAs use a single MIS system statewide (I-Trac). Customer demographic and service data is consolidated and checked for errors at the state level before being reported to DOL. At the state level, MIS elements are being reported uniformly, via this web-based platform with expanded data management capabilities making it possible for us to track and report program participant information on any number of federal, state, and local grants and funding streams. These enhancements have allowed data management collection and reporting services for every local workforce board in the state

### **Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success.**

Oregon will be using the federal measures prescribed in WIOA. Available data supports the evaluation of programs at the state and local levels. The service delivery model and economic conditions will be assessed annually against the outcomes achieved during the prior year. Options for continuous improvement will be discussed at the state and local levels, and performance targets will be adjusted accordingly.

Oregon is researching the use of additional indicators to monitor service delivery in real-time, improve outcomes, and respond to immediate needs of our local communities. Once any additional measures are developed, tested, and approved, the measures will be applied and used to monitor activities on a timely basis. The goal is to support the real-time adjustment of resources and service delivery to match local demand.

Title II will track participants who have exited into employment and postsecondary education. A wage record match will be conducted to determine employment of adult education and literacy participants following program exit. The wage record match occurs through an agreement with the Oregon Employment Department and requires the use of participant's social security number. Participants will be tracked into postsecondary education, through CCWD's student database, D4A, using the student's social security number and universal student identification number.

Title IV VR receives UI wage data through a contract with the Employment Department and will track client progress in maintaining employment through the four quarter period following closure.

VR has an agreement with CCWD student database to match VR closed client records via the use of a the client's social security number which will be used to assess the client's progress in completing credentials and obtaining skill gains post closure from VR.

### **Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data**

Oregon currently has the statutory authority in place to share Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data to partners under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 for the purpose of administering state workforce

programs under the Act. As Oregon's cycle for full legislative sessions occurs every two years, the state will update its statutory authority to authorize disclosure of UI Wage Record Data to partners under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act of 2014 no later than July 1, 2017. The UI program will seek information and data sharing agreements to share UI Wage Data with the appropriate state agencies permissible under state and federal law.

Oregon currently uses UI wage data to support federal performance measures. The necessary information sharing agreements are in place. Once federal reporting requirements and record layout are finalized, state and local partners will perform an analysis to determine next steps to effectively and efficiently meet the reporting requirements.

Unemployment insurance wage record match will be conducted to determine employment of adult education and literacy participants following program exit. The wage record match occurs through an agreement with the Oregon Employment Department and requires the use of participant's social security number.

### **Privacy Safeguards.**

All information collected under the programs administered by the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, the Oregon Employment Department and Vocational Rehabilitation is considered confidential. This includes programs under Titles I, II, III and IV, as well as, other required one stop partner programs. State law, rule and policy provide security controls to govern processes, procedures, data systems, information release, and audits. These controls are designed to make sure all confidential information is protected from the time the information is received to the time it is destroyed. Employees and partners are also trained on the appropriate use and security of confidential information, and the penalties for its misuse.

### ***Priority of Service for Veterans***

The State Veterans Program Coordinator provided the following materials in accordance with the Jobs for veterans act, section 4215 of 38 U.S.C to all WSO centers in order to educate the WorkSource Center Staff on the roles and responsibilities of Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs), and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs), and to insure that veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service in all Oregon WorkSource locations:

- Priority of Service example tools
- Customer Workflow diagram example, and
- Department of Labor approved Priority of Service Training for Frontline Staff available online via iLearn Oregon's interactive training site for all WSO staff and partner staff.

The priority of service training materials were disseminated to each WorkSource location in Oregon in order to insure:

- That eligible veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service in the customer intake process, for training opportunities, referrals to employers and for employment based workshops offered at each OED/WorkSource location.
- OED/WorkSource staff can refer special disabled veterans and veterans with barriers to employment to DVOPs for intensive services and case management services.
- So each Business and Employment Specialist staff member can provide excellent customer service and core employment services to those veterans that are not eligible to meet with a DVOP.

WorkSource Oregon centers have posters indicating serving in the military entitles customers to priority of service and all front line staff are trained to ask the question as well as provide priority of service to covered persons. The centers provide color coded initial intake forms that contain DVOP eligibility questions to help local WorkSource Oregon staff identify veterans and spouses that are eligible for DVOP services. If the veteran or eligible spouse self discloses that he or she has a significant barrier to employment or disability that qualifies him or her for DVOP services, business and employment specialist staff promote the intensive employment services that a DVOP can provide and facilitate a warm hand off or a referral via phone or email to DVOP staff. All WorkSource Oregon field offices have approved local office plans in place that outline how each office will provide priority of service and refer eligible veterans and spouses to DVOP specialist for intensive employment services. All local office plans are monitored and updated each program year.

### ***Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System***

Local-level Equal Opportunity Coordinators are required to monitor facilities for compliance at least every two years. The State Universal Access Coordinator (UAC) completes a site visit to area WSO locations on a rotating basis to ensure compliance with ADA accessibility. The State UAC's oversight Monitoring Review Guide includes specific monitoring review guidelines to ensure that all plans and contracts contain the required assurance language.

Current Oregon practices designed to broaden the composition of those considered for participation and employment at the WSO Centers include but are not limited to the following:

- Designated bilingual positions postings
- Recruitment of applicants with bilingual skills and experience
- Identification and testing of staff with bilingual skills
- Information exchange and collaboration with community organizations regarding translators, interpreters and resources for Limited English Proficiency
- Publication of selected materials in languages other than English.
- Use of telephone interpreters and contract interpreters as needed to provide language assistance to customers on a case-by-case basis.
- Disability awareness and cultural sensitivity training for staffs
- Accessibility to auxiliary aids and assistive devices and staff who have been trained in all WIA regions
- Participation in local and statewide job related events. Among these are job fairs, school career days, media features stories, seminars and networking groups.

State recipient agencies and LWAs will conduct programmatic and architectural accessibility compliance site reviews for their own and sub-recipient sites (at least every two years) and training for recipient and sub-recipient staff, on an on-going basis. The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal is utilized as a field evaluation. WSO centers are required to do a self-assessment as part of the Annual Compliance Review.

Although the DNP funding has ended, the WSO system continues to benefit from the legacy of experience and assistance provided by the Navigators. These benefits include:

- Provision of information for WSO staffs regarding service delivery for customers who experience a disability or people who have encountered multiple barriers to employment. Navigators provided specialized assistance and guidance to available resources to help the WSO Center staff better meet the needs of jobseekers with disabilities and others experiencing barriers to employment. An example of

this might be training and advising staff on how to meet the needs of a customer who is deaf or providing guidance on jobsite accommodations. Navigators also provided information on resources for services that went beyond the ability of the Center.

- Provision of information that WSO staff can use to assist job seekers to get information about available programs and services that might impact their search for employment and to assist the jobseeker in breaking down barriers to employment through access to resources such as Career and Resource Mapping Workshops, resource coordination and assistance in negotiating Integrated Resource Teams.

Provision of information on assistive technology and accommodation that WSO Staff can be use are available to assist employers who will be employing individuals with disabilities. WSO staff also learned how to give employers information about an underutilized labor pool, tax savings information, and conduct outreach to agencies/organizations that serve people with disabilities.

In each WSO center staff are trained in disability etiquette and how to ensure customer receive requested accommodations. The on-site compliance review will combine a review of summary materials as completed in a desk audit compliance review with an architectural accessibility review of the recipient's facilities, operations and procedures. Physical review of each facility may be done in collaboration with CCWD and other state agencies.

## **Section IV. Coordination with Combined State Plan Programs**

If the State is submitting a Combined State Plan, describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination of the core programs and the other programs and activities covered by the Combined State Plan.

Oregon is submitting a Unified Plan. This section does not apply.

## **Section V. Common Assurances**

These assurances are currently being reviewed and discussed across the core programs in Oregon's Workforce System. When the decision-making process is complete on these assurances, they will be posted along with the plan on Oregon's WIOA website and submitted by the deadline required by DOL for federal review and approval.

## **Section VI. Program Specific Requirements for Core Programs**

### **Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I: General Requirements**

#### ***Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.***

In October, 2014, the Governor designated five new local workforce areas. The designation process conformed to Section 116 of the WIA and TEG 37-10, and aligns with Section 106(b)(4) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Nine Workforce Investment Areas have been designated by the Governor.

They are:

1. Multnomah, Washington Counties and the City of Portland
2. Clackamas County
3. Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties
4. Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln and Tillamook Counties

5. Lane County
6. Jackson and Josephine Counties
7. Coos, Curry and Douglas Counties
8. Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler Counties
9. Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa Counties

### **Determining Local Areas**

Local areas were designated under WIA Section 116(a)(4), Designation on Recommendation of State Board. As required in the Act, areas were designated upon request of the Local Elected Officials. The requests were brought before the State Workforce Investment Board. The Board recommended the designation of areas to the Governor. Designation took place during the initial implementation of the WIA. In 2014, local elected officials recommended that the Governor consider new boundaries within two existing local areas comprising a 24 (non-contiguous) county local area and an adjacent three county local area.

In August 2013, Oregon's Governor Kitzhaber issued an Executive Order clarifying expectations that all Local workforce development boards (LWDBs) would be expected to expand their roles to better support the development of local solutions to labor market challenges. Other Workforce Redesign efforts were occurring at the same time, and the Governor realized that these efforts, combined with the Executive Order, might require – or benefit from – organizational changes for some local areas.

In March 2014 the Governor issued a letter inviting LWDBs and chief local elected officials to consider realigning local workforce development area boundaries, to allow for greater alignment of workforce boards with local economic development and job creation strategies, better align with Regional Solutions Teams boundaries, and support local decision making.

The role of the OWIB in designation included reviewing forwarded designation requests from the Governor determining/evaluating whether there was compelling evidence that a designation would improve a variety of factors providing opportunities for public comment throughout the process (see Section II.) and making final recommendations to the Governor.

For the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Governor Kate Brown designated nine Local Workforce Development Areas (local areas).

### **Initial Designation**

Four local areas were designated as a local workforce development area (LWA) for the purposes of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), and requested initial designation as described in WIOA Section 160(b)(2).

Additionally, these local area performed successfully and sustained fiscal integrity for the two years preceding the enactment of WIOA, as defined in WIOA Section 106(e), and were approved to continue to be a local area for the purposes of WIOA, through June 30, 2017 (PYs 2015 & 2016).

The four local areas receiving approval for initial designation are:

- Multnomah and Washington counties and the City of Portland
- Clackamas County

- Lane County
- Jackson and Josephine counties

### **Designation on Recommendation of the State Board**

In 2014, local elected officials recommended that the Governor consider new boundaries within two existing local areas comprising a 24 (non-contiguous) county local area and an adjacent three county local area.

The Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, the Governor, and the Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) collaborated to develop a voluntary, locally initiated procedure for LWA Designation Requests, based on guidance found in the Workforce Investment Act, Final Rule, TEGL 37-10 *Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Appropriations Act Provisions on the Designation of Local workforce development areas*, and contact with DOL/ETA Region 6 staff.

On October 22, 2014, the Governor designated five new local workforce areas. The designation process conformed to Section 116 of the WIA and TEGL 37-10, and aligns with Section 106(b)(4) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This entire process, including the State Board review criteria, public comments, and the Governor’s approval letter, became part of Oregon’s State Plan via *WorkSource Oregon State Plan Modification #01-14*, and Oregon received official approval of the modification and designations from the Department of Labor on January 20, 2015. This modification is in effect through June 30, 2016.

The five local areas so designated are:

- Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties
- Benton, Clatsop, Columbia, Lincoln and Tillamook counties
- Coos, Curry and Douglas counties
- Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Sherman, Wasco, and Wheeler counties
- Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa counties

Oregon believes that the designation process aligns with the intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It provides additional flexibility to local boards and allows them to focus on local economic issues, while potentially strengthening their strategic roles locally and across the state. This should allow these new, smaller, local boards to better serve the specific need(s) of their community(ies) while ultimately fostering regional collaboration. For additional information and details, please see related documents here <http://www.oregon.gov/owib/boardmeetingsandevents/Pages/boardmeetings.aspx><sup>44</sup>

### **Appeals Process**

The draft appeals process in Oregon that is required in section 106 can be

[http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment\\_a\\_-\\_wioa\\_local\\_area\\_designation\\_process\\_-\\_draft.pdf](http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment_a_-_wioa_local_area_designation_process_-_draft.pdf)<sup>45</sup>. As policies are finalized they will be posted at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.oregon.gov/owib/boardmeetingsandevents/Pages/boardmeetings.aspx>

<sup>45</sup> [http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment\\_a\\_-\\_wioa\\_local\\_area\\_designation\\_process\\_-\\_draft.pdf](http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment_a_-_wioa_local_area_designation_process_-_draft.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>

The draft appeals process in Oregon that is required in section 106 can be [http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment\\_a\\_-\\_wioa\\_local\\_area\\_designation\\_process\\_-\\_draft.pdf](http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment_a_-_wioa_local_area_designation_process_-_draft.pdf)<sup>47</sup>. As policies are finalized they will be posted at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>48</sup>.

### ***Statewide Activities***

Oregon does administer state funds for use within the workforce development system. This state funding is flexible and provides the system the ability to innovate and use this funding as governor needs dictate. CCWD is currently drafting WIOA compliant policies and anticipates that the policy will be ready by the time this plan must be submitted to DOL. As policies become finalized they will be published, distributed and posted at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>49</sup>.

### **Governor's set aside funding**

While the state is ultimately responsible for the delivery of all Rapid Response services according to 133(a)(2), CCWD works in partnership with local Title I providers Dislocated Worker Liaisons, who are under the guidance of Local workforce development boards (LWDB) and local elected officials, to provide all pre-layoff activities. The State of Oregon prides itself on having a very collaborative and all-encompassing pre-layoff strategy that includes employers, workers, and partners. CCWD's Dislocated Worker Unit, is responsible for the coordination of lay off activities throughout the state, providing technical assistance to a statewide network of Dislocated Worker Liaisons to assure the highest level of services to affected workers in the State of Oregon.

The state holds back funds specifically to provide rapid response and additional assistance to Local Workforce Areas (LWA). These funds are governed by CCWD policy number 589-20.10 which clearly outlines four ways in which local areas may access funds. All funds are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Rapid Response Funds can be utilized for pre layoff activities such as surveys, information sessions, on-site resource rooms, transition team set-up, peer advocates, etc.

Local Areas can access Additional Assistance Funds to provide a gap fill while a LWA has a pending National Emergency Grant (NEG) application, or in the cases where the closure or layoff does not meet DOL participant thresholds for NEG. Funds may also be used for layoff aversion projects.

CCWD and local Title I providers have an agreed upon Joint Communication Plan which is implemented whenever either party is notified of a layoff or closure, regardless of size. The joint communication plan outlines a conversation that the local areas and state will have during any layoff or closure activities. These conversations determine next steps and inclusion of additional state and local partners and resources and if the services will be offered on site or at the local WorkSource Oregon Centers.

The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice (WARN) is not the typical method in which the state receives notification or information about layoffs or closure. In the State of Oregon most layoffs or closures do not meet the thresholds required to activate the WARN Act. State Rapid Response Liaisons often learn about layoffs or closures through local media, local elected officials, local and state economic development partners, or affected workers contacting either the state or local WorkSource Oregon Center. Layoff information is also gleaned from a variety of local print and on line sources, one of these sources is "Around the State" a weekly

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<sup>47</sup> [http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment\\_a\\_-\\_wioa\\_local\\_area\\_designation\\_process\\_-\\_draft.pdf](http://wioa.weebly.com/uploads/3/9/2/2/39223489/attachment_a_-_wioa_local_area_designation_process_-_draft.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>

<sup>49</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>



publication from the Oregon Employment Department, which is a compilation of information gathered by labor market analysts throughout the state.

Rapid response activities are unique to each closure or layoff. Rapid response activities include information sessions on a variety of topics ranging from unemployment insurance, health insurance, re-employment services to training opportunities or workforce information and may be brought on site to the affected company. Services are determined by the needs of affected workgroup and their employer in conjunction with local Workforce staff.

If the layoffs are trade related or the affected company is trade certified, then all relevant TAA requirements and guidelines are followed.

CCWD is currently drafting policy updates and anticipates that these policies will be ready by the time this plan must be submitted to DOL in early March of 2016. The department is waiting on addition federal guidance. As policies become finalized they will posted at <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html><sup>50</sup>.

### **State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses**

Should the Governor declare a state disaster, FEMA may respond by also declaring a federal disaster. Once/if these two declarations are made, HECC- OCCWD will work with the local workforce board and its providers/partners to apply for a National Emergency Disaster Grant.

The purpose of these grants is to provide temporary disaster relief. This can happen in a limited number of ways but includes the following:

- Temporary employment to provide food, clothing, shelter and other humanitarian assistance for disaster victims
- Demolition, repair, cleaning, renovation and reconstruction of damaged or destroyed public structures, facilities and lands located within the declared disaster area
- Training for people dislocated due to the disaster that need to be returned to gainful employment

An emergency declaration by Oregon's Governor is not sufficient to apply for funding assistance.

### **Rapid Response on behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)**

As part of the State's Rapid Response to layoff and dislocation events, contact is made with the employer and RR services should, whenever possible, be scheduled to begin within 24 hours. As part of these services, the Dislocated Worker Liaison/RR Coordinator will coordinate with the local area team members which include the Trade Act Navigator. The Trade Act Navigator (TAN) represents the Trade Act program on area Rapid Response team. The TAN will collaborate locally with WorkSource Office (WSO) staff, the Workforce Board, and the Central Trade Act Unit to meet dislocated worker needs on a local level.

This navigator will communicate if a petition for Trade Act has been, or will be, filed for planning efforts and attend all planed RR activities planned by the RR team. The Trade Act Navigator is responsible for providing an overview of "potential Trade Act benefits" and Next Steps if a petition is granted. They will also act as lead presenter at the Trade Act Information Sessions (TAIS) that follow notification of the approved petition. At the

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<sup>50</sup> <http://wioa.weebly.com/policies-and-guidance.html>

TAIS the covered individuals will complete required eligibility determination paperwork and upon entitlement will be scheduled for a work session with a Trade Act Case Manager to develop their Trade Act Training Plan.

At the TAIS the covered individuals will complete required eligibility determination paperwork and upon entitlement will be scheduled for a work session with a Trade Act Case Manager to develop their Trade Act Individual Service Plan.

Oregon provides early intervention with the Trade Act program.

The Trade Act leadership team participates in bimonthly statewide strategy meetings to plan rapid response activities and participates in statewide RR training Quarterly. This Trade Act leadership team provides statewide communication on all Trade Act Petition Activity.

If petition is or will be filed on behalf of affected worker group a high end overview of Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act (TAARA) services and benefits will be provided. Contact information for the Central Trade Act Unit and detailed instructions on how to follow the status of their petition on doleta.gov will also be provided.

Oregon's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program participates in early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. UI staff are included in the team of cross-agency representatives for Rapid Response who meet with affected workers.

## **Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements**

### ***Alternative Training Models***

TAA and WIOA pursue on-the-job training opportunities with employers and make appropriate OJT-related referrals for work-ready jobseekers based on the talent of the participant and the need of the employer. TAA to work with the Apprenticeship Program Liaison on opportunities to develop relationships with local apprenticeship programs and training centers to make this training model available to customers.

### ***Registered Apprenticeship***

The Oregon Employment Department (OED), in conjunction with the Apprenticeship Training Division (ATD) of the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), will undertake a number of activities in order to expand structured work based learning training options for employers and individuals.

OED and ATD will develop and deploy a training program to educate staff in WorkSource Oregon centers and agency central offices about structured work based learning, which includes registered apprenticeship. The training program will help all workforce partners understand the different training options that employers and individuals can access through the workforce system and each of their defining characteristics. The training will also teach staff how to identify an apprenticeable occupation, the characteristics of a good apprentice, and how to refer both individuals and employers to structured work based learning training programs. The training program will help WorkSource Oregon staff understand the value of registered apprenticeship and structured work based learning, which will enable them to share the information broadly with employers and other service delivery partners.

OED and ATD will build coalitions and relationships with industry and community partners to create and expand registered apprenticeship programs through two apprenticeship focused positions at OED and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). OED will partner with local workforce boards to ensure that new

apprenticeship programs are aligned with industry need and local sector strategies. ODE will partner with secondary and post-secondary institutions and community partners to increase the opportunities for youth to transition from high school into an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program. OED and ATD will continue to work towards increasing the number of women and minorities involved in structured work based learning and registered apprenticeship programs by working with community partners and the Department of Human Services to provide supportive services during portions of the apprenticeship training period.

Training WorkSource Oregon staff on the value of apprenticeship in addition to providing staff support to create and expand apprenticeship programs represents a significant emphasis by the state to encourage local partners to increase the use of structured work based learning strategies.

### ***Training Provider Eligibility Procedure***

Under WIA, Oregon had a waiver for subsequent eligibility. Beginning July 22, 2015, Oregon allowed Eligible Training Providers to be grandfathered onto the new ETP List effective July 1, 2015 until December 31, 2015. Because the WIOA requirements are significantly more stringent than Oregon's past Eligible Training Provider policies, Oregon is instituting an ETPL transition procedure for ETP programs to apply for Continuing Eligibility past December 31, 2015. The transition procedures will remain in place until WIOA-compliant criteria are developed.

The transition procedure requires a continued eligibility application for training providers that were previously eligible under WIA and those who were eligible during the WIOA transition period. A critical component of this transition period is the requirement that the training provider indicates they are able to comply with the WIOA requirements for their eligible programs. Due to an existing data sharing agreement between Oregon Employment Department and Higher Education Coordinating Commission – the oversight body of both public and private training providers – training providers will primarily be required to only submit student social security numbers in order to provide student performance data. Program data will still need to be supplied by the training provider. The state will receive and review the applications and make eligibility determinations for the State ETP List.

Long-term, Oregon intends to integrate the ETPL application process into the existing program approval process schools already go through with the Higher Education Coordination Commission. This would apply to community colleges, private career schools, and vocational schools. Apprenticeships will be included on the list by indicating their interest prior to quarterly publication of the ETP List.

### **Youth Program Requirements**

Oregon encourages local areas to develop youth programs that will provide paid work experiences, provide labor market information and opportunities to connect to local in-demand sectors, and support post-secondary transition and retention. Oregon aims to increase the number of individuals that obtain a post-secondary education. Oregon's goal is that by 2025, 40 percent of Oregonians will have a baccalaureate degree or higher, 40 percent will have an associate's degree or certificate in a skilled occupation and for the 20 percent without postsecondary credential to have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) has developed a youth goal which addresses the current need to develop the skills of the emerging workforce. The goal states: "Create and develop talent by providing young people with information and experiences that engage their interests, spur further development, and connect to Oregon Employers."

Examples of ways in which OWIB will help local youth programs meet this goal include:

- Create pipeline plans, as part of Oregon’s sector strategy approach, to connect in-school and out-of-school youth to opportunities in local sector partnerships.
- Pursue additional resources to support local youth initiatives in both rural and urban communities.
- Provide technical assistance and/or incentives to support adoption of work-based learning, apprenticeships, and internships.
- Build partnerships to increase youth exposure to job and career opportunities and better connect school to work.

As allowed under WIOA, local areas determine and establish their individual youth program design for WIOA youth funds. Some local strategies used to deliver the WIOA program elements include:

- Partnering with local industry sectors and business to offer occupational skills training.
- Job readiness training and ongoing job coaching including job search, resume writing, interviewing skills and soft skills development.
- College preparation including campus tours.
- Computer skills workshops and general tutoring.
- Mentoring opportunities.
- Career awareness and exploration.
- Money management and hands-on cash handling.

***“Requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion***

The State defers to local areas to determine the need for and to develop criterion and policy for this purpose. When a Local Workforce Development Board does establish this criterion the following policy conditions must be met:

- Distinguish separate elements/definitions for In-School (ISY) and Out-of-School (OSY) participants
- Barriers already established by the WIOA cannot be included in the local Needs Additional Assistance policy
- Required documentation must be identified and defined for each criterion established
- In a single program year, not more than 5 percent of the ISY served can be determined eligible using this criterion

Local areas that choose to use this criterion in their OSY or ISY eligibility must create a policy that is adopted by the Board and included in the Local Plan.

***State’s definition of “alternative education”.***

Per ORS 336.615 Alternative education program means a school or separate class group designed to best serve educational needs and interests and assists students in achieving the academic standards of the school district and the state.

***Definition of not attending school and attending school***

Oregon has developed a definition for this purpose.

Not attending School:

Not attending any school as defined by State law as:

- a) A youth who does not have a GED or secondary diploma and is not enrolled in secondary education; or
- b) A youth who has a GED or secondary diploma and is not enrolled in post-secondary education; or
- c) A youth who is attending an alternative education program, an adult education program under title II (ABE/ESL), or YouthBuild or Job Corps programs.

Attending School:

Attending school as defined by state law as:

A youth who is enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education including GED and homeschool.

### ***Basic skills deficient definition***

Basic Skills Deficient means an individual who:

1. Is a youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test.
2. Is a youth or adult that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society

The State defers to Local Workforce Development Boards to develop criterion and policy for the second part of the definition. When a Local Workforce Development Board does establish this criterion the following policy conditions must be met:

- Local Board must further define what will determine if a youth is unable to demonstrate these skills well enough to function on the job, in the individual's family or in society
- In assessing basic skills, local programs must use assessment instruments that are valid and appropriate for the target population, and must provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for people with disabilities
- Local programs must test individuals on a generally accepted standardized test to determine basic skills deficient eligibility
- Creation and policy must be included in the Local Plan

## **Title I Assurances**

These assurances are currently being reviewed and discussed across the core programs in Oregon's Workforce System. When the decision-making process is complete on these assurances, they will be posted along with the plan on Oregon's WIOA website and submitted by the deadline required by DOL for federal review and approval.

## **Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Employment Services)**

### **Professional development activities for Employment Service Staff**

In April 2015 a workgroup formed to identify training needs for WSO staff so they can successfully provide high quality services to our customers. In addition to State representation, this workgroup included individuals from

urban and rural communities and encompassed management and front line staff, local providers, and community colleges.

The workgroup identified the knowledge and competencies all WSO staff should have and provided the WSO Training Team with a roadmap that has been used to develop and deliver relevant training to all nine Workforce Areas throughout Oregon. The WSO training curriculum is based on the National Career Development Association's (NCDA) guidelines. As a nationally recognized training, this curriculum prepares WSO staff to meet the demands and needs of the world of work by examining the many aspects of the career development process (i.e. labor market information, career theory, and diverse and targeted populations). As WSO staff complete this multiple-course curriculum, they have an opportunity to apply for and receive a global credential from NCDA for the career development work they do.

The workgroup suggested that staff need Enhanced Business Services Training, which takes a more holistic approach to assisting the employer with their recruitment needs. Enhanced Business Services has proven to be a high value recruitment strategy for employers and the training ensures that WSO staff will continue to be able to provide employers with high quality services.

### ***Employment Services staff trained to identify UI eligibility issues***

The WorkSource Oregon and Unemployment Insurance (WSO/UI) Connectivity Group encompasses staff from both Employment Services and UI programs. They discuss issues that pertain to the shared UI customer and their overall experience with the system. The team also identifies potential training opportunities. For example, throughout 2015 several 'joint' training programs were developed and delivered to educate staff from both programs regarding their shared customer. These programs also included specific training courses for WSO staff regarding UI eligibility and issue detection.

### **Meaningful Assistance to UI Customers through one-stop centers**

Front line staff in one-stop centers receive special training to help guide customers in filing for unemployment insurance benefits and to connect them with appropriate resources to address questions and issues related to their unemployment claim. Resources to assist customers in one-stop centers include access to the online claims system, phones for connecting with UI staff and claiming weekly benefits, pamphlets and brochures regarding UI information, and several online videos addressing frequently asked UI questions such as how to file an initial claim for benefits, how to report weekly earnings, and how to report work seeking activities. Employment Services staff and partner staff in Oregon's one-stop centers also maintain the ability to email or call UI program staff in the UI center and in the UI Operations Policy and Support Unit to directly get assistance to help customers when necessary.

### **Reemployment assistance to UI claimants**

One-stop centers in Oregon offer a variety of services to customers, including Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants, to assist them with their efforts in becoming job ready and/or finding new work.

Most UI claimants are required to complete an electronic profile for job matching purposes and attend an orientation with Employment Services staff. Only claimants attached to a closed union, in approved training (including apprenticeship programs), who commute while living out of state, or who have a definite return to work date within 28 days of their lay off date do not have to complete these steps. The orientation includes a review of their electronic profile for completeness and provides an overview of services available to job seekers through one-stop centers and partners.

Of those claimants, some are selected for a Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (known as REA or RESEA) as part of their orientation. Initial REA/RESEA interviews are conducted in person by ES staff who are co-located with Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) service providers. The REA/RESEA includes an overview of UI eligibility requirements for remaining able, available and actively seeking work. It further provides more customized discussions with each claimant about “next steps” that could assist the person with becoming reemployed sooner as part of a basic reemployment plan.

Each REA/RESEA includes an audit of the claimant’s recent work search efforts for both detecting deficiencies (which are reported to UI centers for review) and to aid the customer in determining ways to make his/her work search as successful in finding work as possible. Some of the claimants who complete the initial REA/RESEA may be selected for subsequent REA/RESEAs in order for additional work search review and personalized assistance with finding work. Second and third REA/RESEA interviews are completed through a combination of in person meetings and telephone discussions.

### **Wagner-Peyser funds to support UI claimants**

Through the filing of an initial Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim, customers initiate the process to become co-enrolled across core and partner programs available in Oregon’s One Stop Centers. UI claimants in Oregon are required by law to complete registration with the state’s employment service at one of the One Stop Centers within several weeks of filing the claim.

In Oregon, Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are required by law to complete registration and attend an in-person orientation interview with Employment Services (ES) staff at one of the One Stop Centers. During the orientation and in subsequent meetings, UI claimants requiring assistance in seeking work receive the necessary guidance and counseling to ensure they make a meaningful and realistic work search from ES staff. ES staff also provide counseling, testing, occupational and labor market information, assessment, and referrals to employers for UI claimants and refer information to UI staff about UI claimants’ ability or availability for work, or the suitability of work offered to them. Lastly, ES staff refer issues to UI staff for investigation when they identify people that may not be applying for suitable work when directed to, accepting offers of suitable work or actively seeking work, among other potential UI eligibility issues they may identify.

Oregon’s Unemployment Insurance (UI) program provides referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs with regard to the Training Unemployment Insurance (TUI) program and the Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) program. Eligible customers are referred to one-stop locations to help determine best matches for labor market, career goals, and educational institutions. Information about the programs is also provided to customers through public service announcements, press releases, recorded messages on call center phone lines, hard copy brochures, posters, mailers, digital displays, social media, and website messaging.

All unattached claimants must complete the Welcome Process, described above, within 14-days of filing an initial claim for unemployment benefits as a condition of benefit eligibility. The agency, through specific federal funding, also conducts Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) interviews for claimants identified as most likely to exhaust benefits and UCX (military) claims. This initiative is an important element of the agency’s strategy to help claimants become reemployed and address the issue of long-term unemployment. RESEA also helps to prevent and detect benefit overpayments.

Claimants selected for RESEA, in addition to completing the Welcome Process, also receive an overview of unemployment benefit eligibility and weekly work search requirements, which helps to avoid unintended

overpayments during the course of their claim. Potential issues discovered that may affect the claimant's eligibility for benefits are referred to unemployment insurance for review. RESEA claimants are also provided a "work search advisory and reemployment plan" that identifies eligibility requirements and work seeking activities specific to each claimant, including one or more job-search activities or "Next Steps" that are mutually agreed upon with staff.

RESEA claimants are selected for up to two additional RESEA interviews if they remain unemployed and continue to claim benefits. During each subsequent RESEA interview, staff review and update the claimant's work search advisory and reemployment plan, refer the claimant to appropriate resources and services, and assess the claimant's ongoing eligibility for unemployment benefits. Potential eligibility issues detected are referred to unemployment insurance for review.

### ***Coordination of Labor Exchange***

All unattached claimants filing an initial claim for unemployment benefits are notified by letter of the requirement to register with the state's labor-exchange system and meet with staff to complete enrollment activities, referred to as the Welcome Process. Claimants have 14-days from notification date to complete the Welcome Process. At the time of notification, a flag is added to the individual's unemployment claim for the week in which enrollment activities must be completed. If a person attends timely, the flag is inactivated and no stop is placed on the claim. If the person fails to attend by the due week, that week, once claimed, will not be paid.

### ***Registration of UI Claimants***

All unattached claimants are required to register with the state's labor-exchange system as a condition of benefit eligibility. Staff work with the claimant to gather additional information to ensure the registration is complete and reflects the type of work the claimant must seek as part of receiving unemployment benefits. A quality registration helps ensure the claimant is matched to suitable job listings by staff and employers using the state's labor-exchange system.

### ***Administration of Work Test***

As part of the agency's Work Test, claimants are notified of their rights and responsibilities when filing an initial claim for unemployment benefits, including a written notice of their monetary determination and work search expectations. Staff in one-stop centers are trained in issue detection and referral procedures. Staff are also trained how to address potential issues with claimants and help them identify solutions, including agency resources and services, to overcome potential barriers to receiving unemployment benefits.

### ***Provision of Referrals***

Claimants registering with the state's labor-exchange system are automatically enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser (Title 1) and, if eligible, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs (Title 3). This is accomplished through the state's unified registration system that is used to determine a customer's eligibility for both Title 1 and Title 2 programs.

As part of the initial Welcome Process, staff refer claimants to education and training programs, including job-finding workshops, available through the one-stop system and appropriate to the individual's needs and career goals. Staff also demonstrate how to access labor market information and career information to make informed choices.



## **Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)**

### *Assessment of need*

Agriculture continues to be one of Oregon's multi-million dollar industries and is a chief contributor to the Oregon economy. The industry counts on 90,000 migrant seasonal farmworkers to hand-harvest the crops each year. Oregon's predominate agricultural regions are eastern Oregon, the Columbia Gorge, southern Oregon and the Willamette Valley. The most diverse region is the Willamette Valley, which specializes in growing a variety of vegetables, the highly lucrative blueberry industry, hazelnuts, Christmas trees, hops, nursery products and the ever-expanding vineyard industry. The Columbia Gorge is famous for cherries, apples and pears. Malheur and Umatilla counties in Eastern Oregon combine cooperative efforts with Idaho to produce seed crops, potatoes, watermelons, sugar beets and onions.

Oregon agriculture depends extensively on a consistent migrant workforce but growers are concerned that various factors such as the ageing of the workforce, and a younger generation that chooses not to follow in their parents' paths but instead pursue higher education, jobs in the manufacturing sector, food service and construction opportunities may diminish the availability of agricultural workers.

The migrant farmworkers that do come to Oregon many times face inadequate, unstable housing. The employers that provide good housing for its workforce often find their employees return the next season. Agricultural employers that do not have good housing for farmworkers are generally in a continuous struggle to find farmworkers to meet their harvest demands.

Factors that could help retain or bring in more workers include a drought in California that reduced the jobs there, driving more workers to Oregon. Oregon's high minimum wage, one of the highest in the country may also help attract workers from other states. An alternative option for the future of Oregon's agricultural workforce is the growing use of the H-2A program which allows agricultural employers to bring temporary workers from foreign countries to harvest the crops. Another option to meet employers need for workers is the Agriculture Recruitment System, which involves recruiting in neighboring states for workers. One of the requirements imposed by the alternative recruitment systems is a higher wage called the Adverse Effect Wage Rate which 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.

Oregon has been designated as one of the top five states in the country with the highest estimated year round migrant seasonal farmworker (MSFW) activity. Due to this designation, the Oregon Employment Department (OED) will assess designation of significant offices and the number and placement of full-time staff to increase awareness in the MSFW community of employment opportunities as well as wage and safety issues. This requires that full-time, year round staff be assigned in areas of high MSFW concentration to insure MSFWs are aware of and are offered appropriate workforce services. Presently seven of Oregon's American Job Centers are designated as significant offices and a re-evaluation will occur this year to determine appropriate staffing to meet the needs of MSFWs across the state. The remainder of the field office MSFW outreach staff will conduct outreach activities as needed during their perspective area's peak season. While some new areas may arise with a potential significant office designation evaluations will be conducted and discussed to encourage a thorough assessment and availability of staffing potential. While some areas may not be designated significant offices outreach time with partner agencies has been improved resulting in contacting a much higher percentage of MSFWs in those areas. OED is committed to exploring the availability of conducting outreach activities to reach hidden pockets of MSFWs that do need to be informed of their legal protections, the Complaint System

and the services available to them at any of OED's one-stop centers. The MSFW program and the ability to provide qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate services to MSFWs are hampered by reduced funding, and perhaps the absence of program-specific funding. Oregon's Wagner-Peyser grant has declined over \$1 million (-11%) over the last seven years, further diminishing the resources available for mandated activities. Funding constraints limit the impact for all customers with significant barriers, in particular the underserved, hard to reach, MSFW population. Oregon's Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners will be included in regional and local planning to insure MSFW program customers are considered in their program service provisions. Currently the only training resource available for MSFWs is the National farmworkers Jobs Program with limited grant dollars to serve the high number of Oregon MSFWs.

### ***Outreach Activities***

OED will assign full-time MSFW representatives to appropriate locations in coordination with local leadership based on data supporting the needs of the area. OED is also conducting wage and practice surveys to assess real-time agricultural working conditions to better determine requirements for H2A job listings and to help employers recruit workers.

OED is leveraging outreach activities with Section 167 partner, the Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC), local interest groups and employer groups through employer and worker forums and farmworker support groups.

The department's outreach goal for the MSFW PY 2016 is to contact 30,000 MSFWs and increase that by 3 % during the next 3 years. OED will look to reach an estimated 1500 Agricultural employers as the H-2A program is and will continue to increase in Oregon. While Oregon provides workforce services in 37 statewide offices the main MSFW outreach activities will be focused out of the designated seven significant offices, Hermiston,, Ontario, Woodburn and The Dalles, Beaverton-Hillsboro, Salem and Medford. Outreach focuses on marketing the services, benefits and the Complaint System available to farm workers from OED staff, education training partners, and other MSFW services providers. OED will also educate agriculture employers about the responsibilities they have to workers as well as the job placement services provided. Partner agencies that conduct outreach to MSFWs come into contact with an average of 10,000 MSFWs on a yearly basis per the data they provide to OED on quarterly reports. In the next four years OED staff will experience an increase in the H-2A program by agriculture employers requiring more frequent field visits to those workers which will be working in conjunction with Oregon domestic MSFWs.

Significant offices will be initiating yearly agriculture employer forums to address workforce needs, and provide educational seminars on employment regulations to prevent enforcement agency intervention and possible fines. Wage surveys will also be coordinated by the Foreign Labor Coordinator with the field MSFW outreach staff on a yearly basis. While the designated significant offices have full time staff dedicated to MSFW outreach, all other field offices will continue to have office staff provide services & information to MSFWs that visit any one-stop center. The Monitor Advocate will also be available to assist any offices with outreach and the marketing job search services and the Complaint System. Evaluation and assessment of several field offices that are located in high concentration of MSFW activity will continue to be evaluated by the State Monitor Advocate who will work with management and or the state administrator on suggestions and recommendations for changes in the coming year.

### ***Outreach by Wagner-Peyser and Other Agencies***

OED will use Spanish and English language radio, TV and print to inform MSFWs about workforce services. This will include efforts to secure regular 'job shows' with standardized content areas on Spanish language

radio where they do not exist. WSO will seek at least one Spanish language radio interview about OED services per year in each workforce area with Spanish language radio coverage and in appropriate sub-areas. In Program Year 2016, the Monitor Advocate will work with any and all groups to explore opportunities for strengthening partnerships in radio outreach activities. Staff will continue to offer to speak at partners' staff meetings and provide them with up-to-date information about workforce services and commitments. The State Monitor Advocate will engage in conducting outreach activities alongside outreach workers and conduct presentations to partner agencies. MSFW representatives will conduct traditional one-on-one outreach to farmworkers. This aspect of outreach will focus on directly reaching migrant farmworkers, including those living in labor camps. Oregon also has a population of farmworkers who require information in indigenous languages to effectively learn about workforce services.

When possible OED outreach staff will work with local partners to identify and engage interpreters to assist with outreach to indigenous language speakers. MSFW representatives will publicize seasonal agricultural and other work opportunities to increase MSFW awareness of the opportunity. OED will heighten publicity efforts to notify workers about seasonal agricultural work, including work listed for recruitment throughout Oregon and the US through the Agricultural Recruitment System and the H-2A Foreign Labor Certification Program. Standardized bilingual job flyers will be available for posting and distribution within communities and to partners. Offices will use lists of local organizations that work with farmworkers to email or deliver flyers for wider publicity.

### ***State strategy***

All OED field offices will collaborate with workforce partners and service providers leveraging training services for MSFWs. Partners will include OHDC/ National Farmworker Jobs Program 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 1 providers, 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.

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers are recognized in Oregon's One-Stops as a targeted population group entitled to effective and equal access to the full range of workforce services. Federal regulations require that they receive workforce services on a quantitatively proportional and qualitatively equivalent basis as those provided to non-farmworkers. Using an integrated service delivery all customers will be offered a comprehensive menu in Spanish and English of skill enhancement products, including but not limited to occupational training. In addition, staff of American Job 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 the new 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.

They 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 US DOL 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 Americas Job Centers for complete and quality registrations for ongoing notification of employment opportunities. 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 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 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. The menu of 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 OHDC's National Farmworker Jobs Program in the 5 areas of the state in which they operate. Information about services from community partners including food, clothing, and housing, and transportation, medical, social and legal assistance will also be a continuing referral. With significantly increased concerns over an adequate labor supply for Oregon agriculture, OED expects our labor exchange system will become a critical resource for agricultural employers.

### ***Services provided to Agricultural Employers***

Training resources through the broader workforce system are also of interest to agricultural employers. They 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. WorkSource Oregon 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 the responsibility for connecting local employers to OED offices. 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.

OED will undertake a number of activities to better prepare for increased requests for recruitment assistance locally and with listings. Staff at both the field office and administrative office levels will update and, as necessary, expand their networks of agricultural employer/ agricultural organization and farmworker contacts so they can get accurate information on conditions in their areas. Account representatives in those parts of the state with significant labor-intensive agriculture will keep in contact with key agricultural employers for ideas to increase awareness of recruitment options and other workforce system services.

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 key 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.

### ***Other Requirements***

#### **State Monitor Advocate statement**

As the State Monitor Advocate I have been engaged in the writing of Oregon's AOP and agree with the plan set for providing workforce services to the targeted Migrant Seasonal Farmworker population and agricultural employers. I will have the opportunity to review and approve the final version before final submittal.

Fernando Gutierrez, State Monitor Advocate

#### ***Public Comment***

Section 167 of the National Farmworker Jobs Program ( NFJP) grantees, other appropriate farmworker groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations, have been given an opportunity to comment on the State AOP.

Below is the list of organizations from which feedback and suggestions are solicited. Responses to the comments will be posted along with the comments of the Unified State Plan as a whole.

- Columbia Gorge Growers Shippers, Executive Director
- Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Attorney
- Oregon Association of Nurseries, Wilsonville Executive Director
- Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, Compliance Manager
- Oregon Department of Agriculture, Special Assistant to the Director
- Oregon Farm Bureau, Director of Governmental Affairs
- Oregon Human Development Corporation, Executive Director
- Oregon Human Development Corporation, Operations Director
- Oregon Law Center, Farmworker Office, Managing Attorney
- Pinos y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, President
- State of Oregon Governor's Office, Affirmative Action Officer
- US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, Portland District Office
- US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, Community Outreach Specialist

#### ***Assessment of Previous AOP PY 14-15***

The MSFW Outreach and employment services delivery progress during July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015 while making strides in some areas the SWA also failed to accomplish its primary goal, ensuring that services to MSFWs be provided qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to the services provided to other job seekers. The performance measures established by DOL are; Placement of 42.5 % of total active 5,525 applicants, OED's end of the year performance fell short at 6.81 %. The other critical and very important performance measure is the placement of 3% of total active MSFWs in Non-ag jobs, OED's placement result in

that category was 2.35%. Several issues can be attributed to this non-performance by OED. In February 2014 the DOL sent out TEGL 13-13 informing OED that Oregon was a designated significant state and would need to assign full-time, year-round staff to provide employment and outreach services to MSFWs. This directive was not implemented by OED until the end of the Program Year contributing to the failure to meet DOL established goals. The SMA brought these deficiencies of services and concerns repeatedly to higher management to no avail throughout the PY. Had the directive been implemented statewide attention could have been paid to providing career guidance and the marketing MSFWs into the non-ag marker sector to meet the established performance measures. Since then seven offices have been designated significant and assigned seven full-time, year-round MSFW representatives. Training for those representatives is in progress and we hope to meet the Goals set by DOL this year.

MSFW outreach workers are also in need of vehicles allowing them to conduct outreach to areas that are hard to access but where the majority of MSFWs work. This need would also allow outreach workers to provide services to our important agricultural employer base.

Data shows that in 3 to 4 program years the SWA has had very high numbers of MSFWs registered, but that number has fallen dramatically due the inability of conducting comprehensive vigorous outreach to both MSFWs and Oregon's agricultural employers who continue to express the need of appropriate referrals from the SWA. Some significant offices with senior outreach workers have engaged in providing, inviting and conducting services to agricultural employers and that is a projected plan for all significant offices.

To meet and improve the services to this targeted population the SWA, Oregon Employment Department management need to provide training to all local office staff and management to make them aware of the MSFW program goals, have managers hold MSFW representatives accountable for those goals, increase awareness of employers about the Workforce system and responsibilities to workers, and provide vehicles capable of reaching the MSFWs to promote vigorous outreach.

### 2013 Oregon Agricultural Employment Estimates

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	AA
Bend MSA (Deschutes County)	720	740	740	780	770	770	770	780	770	760	730	730	750
Corvallis MSA (Benton County)	710	750	820	880	890	900	1,020	1,070	970	1,040	1,200	1,070	940
Eugene MSA (Lane County)	2,030	2,090	2,170	2,210	2,280	2,380	2,360	2,470	2,350	2,490	2,240	2,130	2,270
Medford MSA (Jackson County)	1,390	1,560	1,600	1,480	1,470	1,660	1,640	2,070	2,400	1,840	1,670	1,650	1,700
Portland MSA (Oregon portion)*	12,170	13,150	13,580	14,430	15,140	18,240	20,970	18,880	17,010	15,590	14,810	13,100	15,590
Salem MSA (Marion & Polk Counties)	8,210	8,940	9,460	9,740	10,790	13,360	15,740	13,770	12,440	12,010	11,010	8,740	11,190
<b>Baker</b>	540	540	570	600	620	600	590	600	600	670	580	560	590
<b>Clatsop</b>	190	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	200	440	640	500	270
<b>Columbia**</b>	410	470	500	510	490	380	350	350	350	340	340	330	400
<b>Coos</b>	500	500	510	510	520	530	530	540	530	520	520	500	520
<b>Crook</b>	430	420	440	490	480	470	480	520	460	430	420	410	450
<b>Curry</b>	200	200	210	220	230	240	240	250	300	320	230	220	240
<b>Douglas</b>	1,190	1,190	1,190	1,240	1,290	1,340	1,660	1,480	1,440	1,360	1,290	1,280	1,330
<b>Gilliam</b>	150	150	160	150	150	160	180	180	170	150	150	150	160
<b>Grant</b>	330	330	340	360	350	360	350	350	360	340	340	350	350
<b>Harney</b>	520	520	540	550	550	560	570	560	530	530	510	510	540
<b>Hood River</b>	1,910	2,360	2,480	2,090	2,100	3,170	4,440	5,340	4,300	3,560	1,590	1,650	2,910
<b>Jefferson</b>	490	580	690	860	830	790	740	820	810	700	600	560	710
<b>Josephine</b>	460	470	490	500	510	500	490	490	500	500	480	480	490
<b>Klamath</b>	1,290	1,310	1,350	1,590	1,640	1,690	1,750	1,630	1,670	1,840	1,500	1,390	1,550
<b>Lake</b>	590	590	610	620	640	670	720	760	740	760	620	640	660
<b>Lincoln</b>	230	230	230	230	230	240	230	230	230	230	240	230	230
<b>Linn</b>	2,400	2,430	2,400	2,440	2,650	2,790	3,040	3,150	2,880	2,780	2,670	2,550	2,680
<b>Malheur</b>	1,310	1,320	1,540	1,820	1,900	2,220	2,260	2,050	2,030	1,970	1,670	1,480	1,800
<b>Morrow</b>	1,070	1,120	1,280	1,310	1,490	1,460	1,370	1,610	1,590	1,320	1,180	1,110	1,330
<b>Sherman</b>	150	140	140	150	150	150	150	160	150	150	150	140	150
<b>Tillamook</b>	620	620	620	630	640	640	640	630	640	650	630	640	630
<b>Umatilla</b>	2,520	2,750	2,910	3,080	3,450	3,910	4,040	4,320	3,790	3,540	2,830	2,470	3,300
<b>Union</b>	540	540	550	640	640	690	880	810	660	590	550	530	640
<b>Wallowa</b>	350	340	350	370	370	370	400	410	390	360	350	360	370
<b>Wasco</b>	980	1,100	1,060	1,320	1,440	5,760	9,720	2,110	1,130	920	940	1,010	2,290
<b>Wheeler</b>	160	160	150	160	160	150	170	170	160	160	160	160	160
<b>Oregon</b>	<b>44,350</b>	<b>47,370</b>	<b>49,370</b>	<b>51,670</b>	<b>54,570</b>	<b>67,160</b>	<b>78,480</b>	<b>68,470</b>	<b>62,200</b>	<b>58,360</b>	<b>52,530</b>	<b>47,510</b>	<b>56,840</b>

\* Portland MSA is comprised of Columbia, Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas, and Yamhill counties.

\*\*Statewide figure does not add Columbia county twice (Columbia County included in Portland MSA)

Columns and rows may not add due to rounding

AA = annual average

2013 Benchmark

## Wagner-Peyser Assurances

These assurances are currently being reviewed and discussed across the core programs in Oregon's Workforce System. When the decision-making process is complete on these assurances, they will be posted along with the plan on Oregon's WIOA website and submitted by the deadline required by DOL for federal review and approval.

## Adult Basic Education and Literacy Programs

### Aligning of Content Standards

The Oregon Adult Basic Skills (ABS) Learning Standards Initiative, adopted by the Oregon Council for Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD) in April 2010, reflect a common vision of what adults need to know and be able to do in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math to carry out their life goals and purposes. Oregon's ABS Learning Standards are contained in a Learning Standard Frameworks, which provides detailed information for instruction and are organized by educational functioning levels (EFLs) as defined by the US Department of Education, Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and reported

through the National Reporting System (NRS). Additionally, the Oregon ABS Learning Standards are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards of the Common Core State Standards.

In 2014, on the advice of OCTAE, the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) undertook a project to align the Oregon ABS Learning Standards to the National College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards, in order to assure that adults are ready to transition to a career and/or postsecondary education and training upon exit from ABS. OCTAE recommended several national experts who were well-versed in the national CCR standards to perform gap analyses and identify where the Oregon Frameworks needed to increase rigor, focus and scope. These experts then drafted revised standards' frameworks. Starting in 2015, teams of Oregon standards experts worked to finalize and publish the revised Oregon ABS Learning Standards Frameworks for use by Title II programs and others in adult education. Experienced Learning Standards trainers then revised the existing Learning Standards Orientation, Learning Circles, and Reading, Writing, Math and Listening/Speaking Institutes and created new trainings to incorporate the revised standards, focusing material more clearly on work, work readiness and career training skills, and incorporating the use of technology. Trainers also reviewed courses such as the College and Career Awareness curriculum to better align content with the Learning Standards.

### **Local Activities**

CCWD, as the eligible agency, will fund eligible providers to operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities. Following guidance provided by OCTAE, CCWD will extend current grants through June 30, 2017. CCWD awards grants to local providers using a performance-based funding model. This funding model will continue during the competitive award process that will take place between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017; with new contracts, guided by WIOA, in place by July 1, 2017. The competitive request for applications (RFA) process will be conducted in a fair and open manner, with equal access to information for current and future providers. Grants will be awarded to providers based on county of service rather than local workforce development areas.

Local funding will be allocated on a formula that takes into account:

- Number of adults in the target populations serviced.
- Number of hours of instruction.
- Percentage of time each student attends.
- Number of students with paired pre- and post-tests.
- Ability of the local eligible provider to meet and exceed local performance targets.

Additional RFA considerations for funding include ability of adult education and literacy provider's to address the specific considerations in section 231(e) of WIOA. CCWD has determined that overall program quality will be measured by student persistence, retention, and transition to either employment or postsecondary training. Potential provider's responses to program intensity (section 231(e)(5)), instructional practices (section 231(e)(6)), contextualized learning (section 231(e)(8)), and development of career pathways (section 231(e)(10)) for participants will be weighted in a manner to represent their contribution to program success. Potential providers will also be required to demonstrate past effectiveness, as well as their ability to maintain high-quality information management and reporting capacity to report measurable participant outcomes. Preference will be granted in the RFA to providers who have strong linkages to community partners, workforce services, and postsecondary education (including career and technical education and industry recognized certificates) to better ensure smooth transition.



Local activities will focus on the design and the delivery of adult education and literacy programs that transition adult learners to either work or postsecondary education. Local providers of adult education and literacy programs will be responsive to local area needs, including a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs. Providers will use instructional practices that include the essential components of: reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction.

Adult education and literacy programs in Oregon will provide:

- 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.

Providers will offer integrated education and training concurrently and contextually with both workforce preparation activities and workforce training for the purpose of career advancement. The Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills (OPABS) which incorporates specific sector strategies into ABS classrooms will be explored as a model for integrated education and training. In addition, Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) and Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs will be promoted by CCWD, to further expand integrated education and training, as well as promote transition to postsecondary training programs.

Additionally, local providers may offer options in distance learning instruction and activities. The Oregon ABS Distance Policy and Application approved by OCTAE are used by local programs for distance learning applications. These applications are reviewed by CCWD for adherence to policy.

### **Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals.**

Oregon will continue to support corrections education programs under section 225 of WIOA in accordance with Title II. Academic programming within Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities will include adult education and literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, peer tutoring and special education where feasible, . Corrections education has well established academic programs that utilize professional instruction and peer tutoring support. In addition to continuing existing adult education and literacy activities, DOC, in partnership with educational providers, will explore integrated education and training and career pathways. The goal of career pathway exploration, in a limited number of facilities, is to increase the number of institutionalized individuals transitioning to postsecondary education.

Funding for corrections education programs will be awarded to DOC which is the sole source provider of corrections education in the state. DOC will receive a proportional funding award based on ability to respond to the title II subtitle C, Considerations. DOC will focus responses and program performance on measurable skill gains, such as Educational Functioning Level gains and GED completions.

### **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**

In preparation for implementation of Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education under WIOA, Oregon convened the EL/Civics Advisory Committee, which was composed of state and local EL/Civics providers, to identify Oregon's best practices associated with EL/Civics curriculum development, instruction, and support

services, both current and historic. These best practices, in association with WIOA guidance, will shape the development of the competitive RFA related to section 231(e)(13).

Oregon has contracted with national experts to align the State's current ABS Learning Standards in Reading, Writing, Math and Listening/Speaking with the College and Career Readiness Standards. This will ensure that instruction for EL/Civics by local providers will be aligned with the national standards. CCWD will explore additional professional development options to prepare local providers to meet WIOA guidelines, including the online learning platform for Oregon Adult Learning Standards, expansion of I-BEST and VESL programs, and development of career pathways that will transition participants to either employment or postsecondary training.

Title II providers in Oregon will be encouraged to conduct outreach activities targeting English language learners who are professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs will promote co-enrollment of participants, where appropriate, in Title I and III services to support job placement activities.

CCWD will extend current grants through June 30, 2017. Oregon currently awards grants to local providers using a performance-based funding model. This funding model will continue during the competitive award process that will take place between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 new contracts will be in place by July 1, 2017. 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.

CCWD will afford flexibility for local programs to implement activities to best serve local populations of English language learners. Program activities will be in alignment with WIOA requirements and be focused on program performance targets. Once programs are contracted through the RFA process, EL/Civics programs will become part of the annual monitoring activities. CCWD will offer professional development opportunities for providers to explore new instructional methods and practices, collaborate with colleagues from around the state, and provide forums for continuous program improvement activities.

Research-based instructional methods and practices will be used to provide both English language and career instruction designed to meet the needs of English language learners (ELL) in a way that both advances students toward their goal of speaking English and supports their career goals in a timely manner. The Oregon Adult Learning Standards have been aligned with the national College and Career Readiness Standards to help programs and partners design effective learning experiences that meet the needs of their students; and trainers are redesigning their Learning Standards trainings to prepare Oregon instructors to meet those needs. In the past, math instruction was not part of the instruction of English language learners, but in the future, ELL students will have that option. Likewise, Listening/Speaking will be expanded to include native English speakers and Generation 1.5 students (children of immigrants).

Expansion of I-BEST and VESL options for English language learners (ELL) will be supported by CCWD. There will be continuing professional development for Title II providers in methods and practices that facilitate ELL participants' transition to postsecondary programs and pursuit of industry certifications. In addition, CCWD will explore and promote techniques and resources to accelerate the path for immigrant professionals who wish to re-enter their professions through skills assessments, credential validation, transcript evaluation, connections to professional organizations, and pursuit of credentials.

CCWD will explore and support methods to increase and streamline referrals between WIOA programs where feasible, support professional development for Title II providers, and work with other WIOA agencies to create effective referral processes, performance indicators and outcomes. CCWD will facilitate inter-agency communication strategies and support the efforts of local Title II programs to collaborate with organizations, agencies and employers that serve their populations. CCWD will leverage the existing efforts of sector strategies, refocused employer engagement efforts and stronger referral systems between ABS and workforce partners to better serve English language acquisition students.

### **State Leadership**

The proposed State leadership activities are consistent with WIOA guidance; Oregon has and will continue to focus on professional development activities to effectively transition to WIOA. Required adult education and literacy activities identified to develop or enhance the adult education system in Oregon include:

- The continued alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners to implement the strategies identified in the State Plan, such as development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals engaged in adult education and literacy activities. Career pathway development will occur at the local level and be guided by the State accepted definition. State leadership funds will be invested to expand Oregon ABS Learning Standards alignment with CCR standards coursework and to promote additional Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) and Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs in Oregon.
- High quality professional development programs will be developed and/or acquired to improve the instruction provided at the local level. Existing professional development will be enhanced through the alignment of College and Career Readiness content standards. In addition, an online training platform has been built and will be expanded to assure that Oregon ABS Learning Standards training and other training is available and accessible to all instructors of Title II participants throughout Oregon. This professional development will focus on incorporating the essential components of reading, writing, math, listening and speaking instruction and specific needs of adult learners.
- Development of instructional practices and dissemination of promising practices in adult education and literacy will occur through the Oregon Council for Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD). All Title II providers will participate on the OCABSD and have access to current instructional and professional development materials. In addition, models and promising practices occurring within Oregon will be shared on the CCWD Adult Basic Skills website.
- Technical assistance will be provided to Title II adult education and literacy providers to promote development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the recently aligned and revised Oregon ABS Learning Standards.
- New elements of WIOA, such as the role of eligible providers as one-stop partners, will be supported through technical assistance from CCWD. CCWD has been actively engaged in the development of one-stop center definitions and the establishment of access for adult education participants to employment, education, and training services within one-stops.
- CCWD supports the use of technology to expand professional development opportunities for instructors, eligible providers, and to improve system efficiencies. The continued implementation of the online training platform for the Oregon ABS Learning Standards will be available and accessible to all instructors of Title II students throughout Oregon. The CCWD Adult Basic Skills website will also be

upgraded to provide technological links to current instructional and professional development materials and information. All RFA related materials will be provided on the CCWD Adult Basic Skills website to provide open access for current and future Title II providers.

- Monitoring and program improvement processes will be developed to mirror the performance outcomes under WIOA. Evaluation of program quality will be conducted on an annual basis in order to monitor program's performance and to drive continuous improvement. CCWD will develop a monitoring plan for adult education and literacy providers. The monitoring plan will be available as part of the Title II competitive grant process and viewable on CCWD's website.

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. CCWD will investigate the development and implementation of an adult education and literacy orientation that may be applied universally across providers. An established orientation process with identified learning outcomes that prepares students to enter into adult education and literacy programs, will assure that learners entering the program will be more likely to be successful and be counted toward performance measures.
- The CCWD State ABS Team will investigate data management needs in order to prepare for WIOA data requirements. Additional resources may be contracted to support the state in exploring data management and information sharing to ensure data responsiveness and reporting (e.g., I-Trac, D4A).
- The CCWD will utilize Poverty Simulation kits to increase awareness of the many challenges that Title II and workforce system participants face related to poverty. The increased awareness the simulations can bring to campus and workforce system partners is expected to result in policy and practice changes that will benefit Title II and other workforce system participants.

### **Assessing Quality**

CCWD as the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities on an annual basis. The annual assessment will be supported by: regular submission of programmatic performance numbers (e.g., number of students enrolled, hours attended, matched pre and post-tests, etc.), quarterly reporting of programmatic activities, a biannual desk audit, and annual financial audit. CCWD will be increasing the frequency of reporting in order to more effectively utilize TOPS data for program improvement. Regular monitoring of program quality will create a culture of continuous improvement, allowing CCWD to tailor technical assistance to areas of greatest need based on assessment results. Adult education and literacy providers will be assessed by individual provider, rather than by local area performance. Overall program quality will be measured by student persistence, retention, and transition to either employment or postsecondary training.

## **Adult Basic Education and Literacy Programs Certifications and Assurances**

These assurances are currently being reviewed and discussed across the core programs in Oregon's Workforce System. When the decision-making process is complete on these assurances, they will be posted along with the plan on Oregon's WIOA website and submitted by the deadline required by DOL for federal review and approval.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

**The Title IV VR programs portion of the plan will go out separately for a public comment period starting January 11, 2016. Details about that public comment period, including locations and times for in-person public comments will be posted at <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/Pages/Index.aspx><sup>51</sup>, as they become available.**

## **Vocational Rehabilitation Certifications and Assurances**

These assurances are currently being reviewed and discussed across the core programs in Oregon's Workforce System. When the decision-making process is complete on these assurances, they will be posted along with the plan on Oregon's WIOA website and submitted by the deadline required by DOL for federal review and approval.

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/Pages/Index.aspx>

## Appendix 1: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Oregon is waiting on further guidance from DOL on Performance Goals and for the federal/negotiation process to be completed.

Performance Goal	Projected Proposed Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							

Performance Goal	Projected Proposed Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance
Rehabilitative Services							
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Credential Attainment Rate							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							

Performance Goal	Projected Proposed Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance
Measureable Skill Gains							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Effectiveness in Serving Employers							
Adults							
Dislocated Workers							
Youth							
Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange							
Adult Education							
Rehabilitative Services							
Combined Federal Partner Measures							
1							



Performance Goal	Projected Proposed Baseline	PY 2016 / FY 2017			PY 2017 / FY 2018		
		Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance	Proposed	Negotiated	Final Change in Performance
2							
3							
State / Governor Education and Workforce Measures							
1							
2							
3							