



Oregon

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January 17, 2020

Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Senate Interim Committee on Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-4048



Re: Follow Up Requests on the Department of Human Services Updates agenda items

2020 Legislative Concepts

During the 2020 Legislative Concepts discussion Senator Golden asked if there was an age that youth must be in order to consent to an adoption. All kids as developmentally appropriate should be engaged in their case planning. At age 12, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to engage and collaborate with the child on the decision to move forward with an adoption. At age 14, youth can only be adopted if they legally consent.

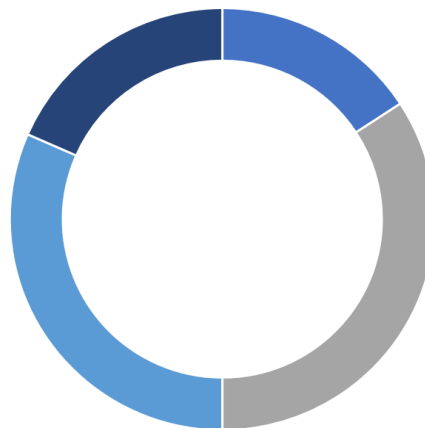
Good News

There was a question about how many children in the Oregon Foster Care System were currently placed out of state. As of January 16, 2020, 17 Oregon children are placed out of state.

Budget Change Requests

DHS Position Package Letter 3 - DHS put forth an ask (DHS Position Package Letter 3) for new positions that mitigate risk for the agency, supporting four bodies of work: APD Provider Time Capture; APD Hearings Unit; Regional Business Supports and Occupational Health, Safety and Emergency Management. Senator Linthicum requested additional details about how many positions would be allocated to each body of work and the functions of the Regional Business Supports.

- Occupational Health, Safety and Emergency Management (6 Positions)
- APD Provider Time Capture (13 positions)
- APD Hearing Unit (12 positions)
- Regional Business Supports (7 positions)



Occupational Health, Safety and Emergency Management:

- 1 Emergency Coordinator

“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”

- 1 Emergency Manager
- 2 Continuity of Operations Analysts
- 1 Trauma Services Coordinator
- 1 Deputy Administrator

APD Provider Time Capture:

- 9 Analysts for planning, outreach, engagement and implementation
- 3 Training and Development Specialists
- 1 Administrative Support Specialist

APD Hearings Unit:

- 8 Program and Policy Analysts
- 1 Training and Development Specialist
- 1 Hearings Unit Manager
- 2 Administrative Support Specialists

Regional Business Supports:

One hub consisting of one of each of the following positions:

Contracts Coordinator	Data Analyst	HR Business Partner	Facilities and Motor Pool Coordinator	Safety and Emergency Management	HR Workforce Liaison	Regional Business Supports Coordinator
<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Hold a number of calls with a local nonprofit to negotiate details in their contract	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Extract and attempt to interpret local data to track performance.	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Track and closely manage employee reclassification requests with Central HR.	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Regularly problem-solve issues with vehicle availability so that service delivery isn't interrupted.	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Meet police to respond to an overnight break-in at an office location.	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Coordinate time-consuming recruitment activities such as job postings and reference checks.	<i>Without this position, program staff might have to:</i> Continually locate the right points of contact and resources from Salem to meet their local business needs.

Workforce Retirements: Director Fariborz Pakseresht was asked what percent of our staff will be retiring in the next five years. While we cannot know if our staff will choose to retire once they become eligible, we were able to pull data on the number of our employees who will be eligible for retirement.

This data was pulled on January 15, 2020 and reflects our current workforce. It is important to note that the data provided for 2025 is also reflective of our current workforce and does not account for new employees joining the agency between then and now. Additionally, the 2025 data is inclusive of the data listed for 2020, so please note that from 1/1/2020 to 1/1/2025, 779 additional current employees could become eligible for retirement which is a change of 8.6% percentage points.

Number of DHS Employees Eligible for Retirement				
Retirement Date	Total Employees	Not Eligible to Retire	Eligible to Retire	%
1/1/2020	9,033	8,268	765	8.5%
1/1/2025	9,033	7,489	1,544	17.1%

*Pulled on 1/15/2020

Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents Rules

During Dan Haun's presentation, Senator Byer stated that the proposed federal rule change to the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) seems as though it should benefit Oregon as our utility costs are some of the lowest in the nation, and that a national average should then result in a higher deduction than Oregonians currently receive.

However, creating a single national methodology cannot account for nuanced and significant differences in heating and cooling costs for households within states and precludes states from being able to account for the variables that influence differences in heating and cooling costs. Those variables include household size, geographic area, and fuel source. For example, a household of three or four in a single-family home heated with oil would have substantially higher energy costs than an individual living alone in a small electric-heated apartment. County and regional differences in climate for example coastal Oregon to Eastern Oregon can also lead to very different average expenditures from one part of the state to another. The proposed rule as written will prohibit states from accounting for factors such as household size, housing type, main heating fuel, and geographic area. This in turn will result in less accurate and more inequitable benefits between households with different energy costs.

While some states may see a benefit to this policy change, the unique dynamic that Oregon faces due to the above variables means that on the whole Oregon would see a reduction in SNAP benefits based on the change to our current federally approved methodology.

For reference, we have enclosed a copy of the public comment submitted to the federal Food and Nutrition Services on the proposed SUA rule change.