



Senate Interim Committee on Labor and Business

Oregon Employment Department Response to
COVID-19 Pandemic - Update

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September 22, 2020



Benefits impact during pandemic

- **March 15 – August 22: over \$4 billion in benefits**
- **March 15 – September 12: \$4.4 billion in benefits**

	At last hearing	As of September 12
Regular unemployment	\$1.3 billion	\$1.5 billion
FPUC	\$2.4 billion	\$2.6 billion
PUA	\$127 million	\$180 million
PEUC	\$58 million	\$77 million
Work Share	\$54 million	\$62 million

Three layers to getting benefits

Claim processed as valid

- Enough recent work history covered by UI system
- As an “employee”
- Not used for another claim
- No claim in another state

Claim processing

Not disqualified

- Fired for misconduct
- Quitting without good cause
- Refusing work without good cause
- Prior fraud

Clarification or adjudication of issues

Weekly eligibility

- Claim filed
- Able to work
- Available for work
- Actively seeking work
- Not too much earnings

People claiming and paid

March 15 through September 19, 2020

Unemployment Insurance

- 553,800 applied
- 360,000 paid
- 49,000 received PUA
- 88,000 have non-valid UI claim
- 7,250 disqualified from UI
- 51,000 haven't claimed weeks
- 28,000 only claimed waiting week

PUA

- 165,000 applied
- 56,000 paid
- 32,000 received UI
- 1,200 cancelled
- 20,000 have excess earnings
- 33,000 have other issues

Total

- 605,000 applied
 - 416,000 paid (68.8%)
-

Historically about 2/3 of people who apply can receive benefits

Adjudication remains a top priority

- Difficult to track in ways other than how U.S. Dept. of Labor requires
- Estimate about 49,000 people have claims requiring adjudication
- Includes people receiving benefits pending adjudication
- Includes where adjudication impacts only one week
- Hundreds of new adjudicators are gaining speed and proficiency
- Work with vendor is speeding up the adjudication process

Overpayments

	Fraud	Non-fraud	Not claimant caused
Repay overpayment	X	X	X
Additional penalties	X		
Accrues interest	X	X	
Collect through repayment plans	X	X	
Collect through garnishments and other efforts	X	X	
Work with Dept. of Revenue to collect	X	X	
Collect by offsetting against UI benefits	X	X	X
OED can waive benefit offsetting			X



More is underway

- Incrementally increased automation
- Ongoing hiring
- More cross-training
- Breaking down silos
- The recent fires have slowed down progress in other areas

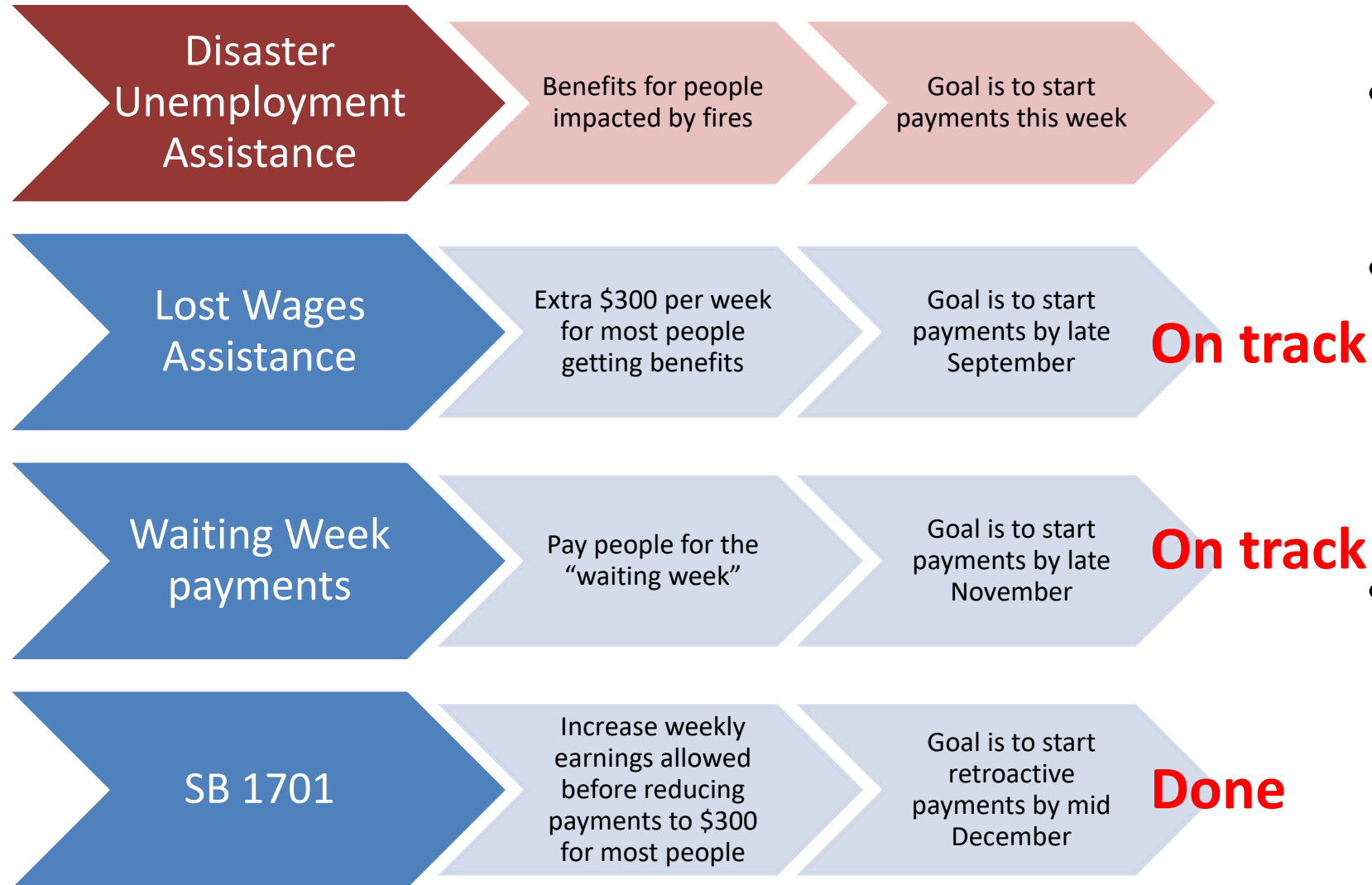
Technology status

- Phone system is more stable, has increased capacity and flexibility. Does not yet show Employment Department as the caller; wait times continue to be too long.
- Reporting and data tracking is proceeding, now requires less work from our mainframe team
- Modernization is proceeding, Notice of Intent to Award was issued

Wildfire impacts

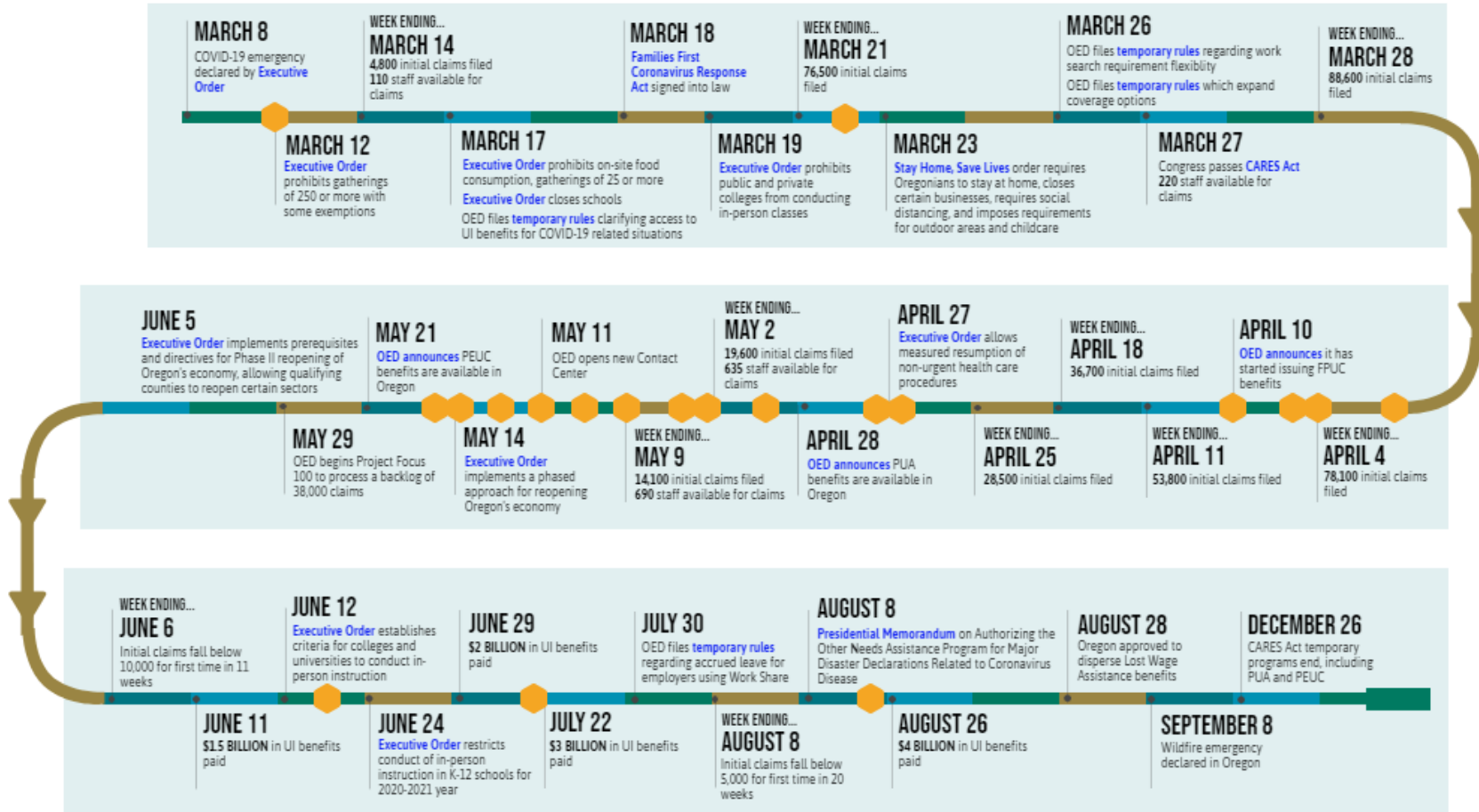
- Implementing Disaster Unemployment Assistance program this week
- Proactively prioritizing claims of those impacted by fires
- Option on “Contact Us” form for those impacted by fires to ask for assistance – we are prioritizing these claims
- Some offices briefly closed due to damage, smoke, evacuation
- Many employees having to miss work to deal with fires’ impact


Very rough timeline



- Very preliminary estimates
- Any new programs or other program changes would change this timeline
- Unexpected system needs could also impact these estimates

TIMELINE OF COVID-19 EVENTS



 Unemployment Insurance Program Letters are guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor - [click icon to access](#)



**-11.5
MILLION**

Net nonfarm job loss in the U.S. from
February 2020 to August 2020



**1.4
MILLION**

U.S. total nonfarm payroll jobs added in August



8.4 %

August 2020 U.S. unemployment rate



3.7%

Projected employment gain for the U.S. from 2019 to 2029

In early 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics will share new research with
COVID-19 lens on employment projections, at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/>



**-160
THOUSAND**

Net total nonfarm job loss in Oregon from
February 2020 to August 2020



**11.3
THOUSAND**

Oregon total nonfarm payroll jobs added in August



7.7%

August 2020 Oregon unemployment rate



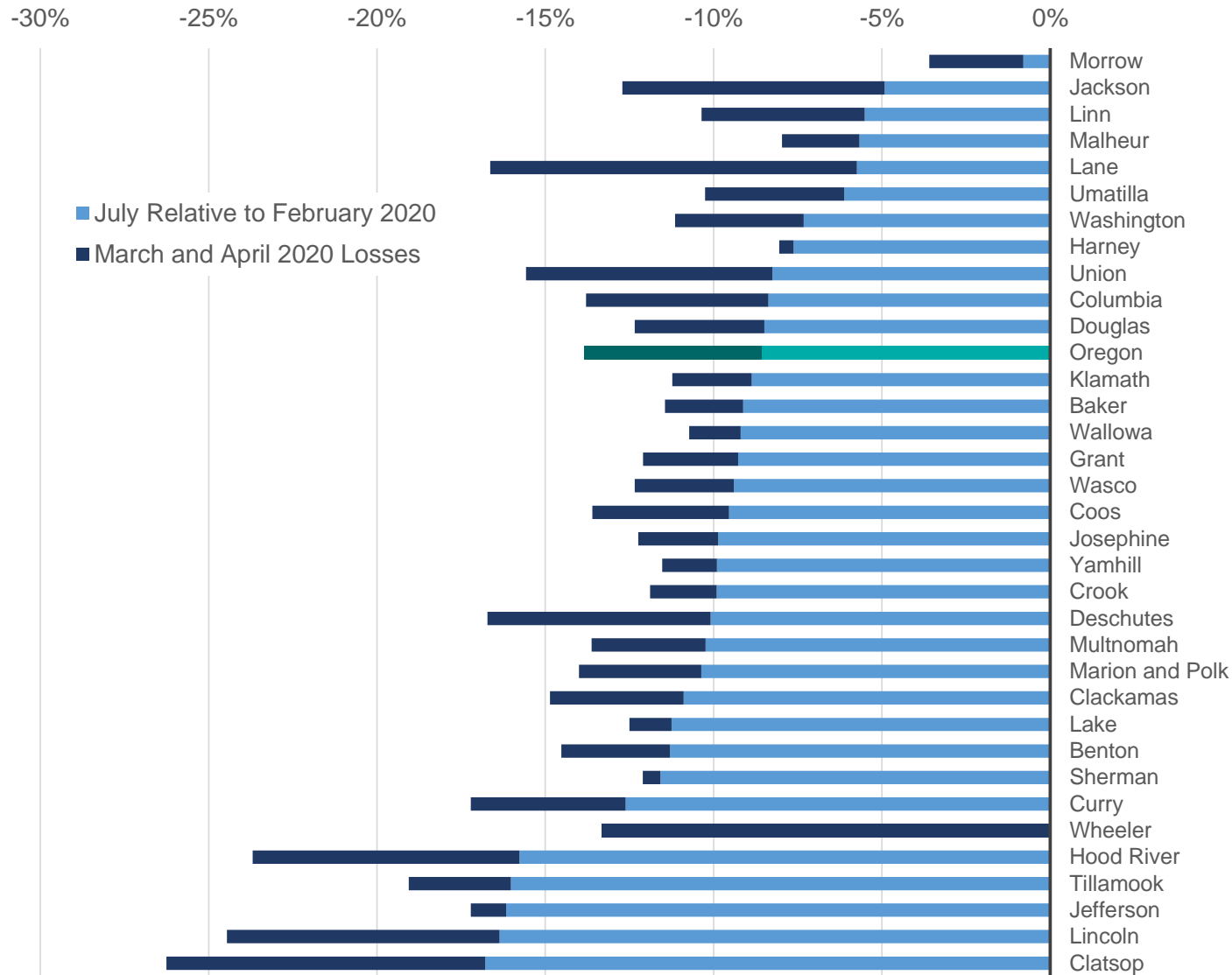
9/2020

Oregon statewide and regional employment projections for 2019
to 2029 released at end of this month

Data tools will be updated, and COVID-19 related analysis to follow



Oregon COVID-19 Recession Job Losses by County Seasonally Adjusted, February to July, 2020



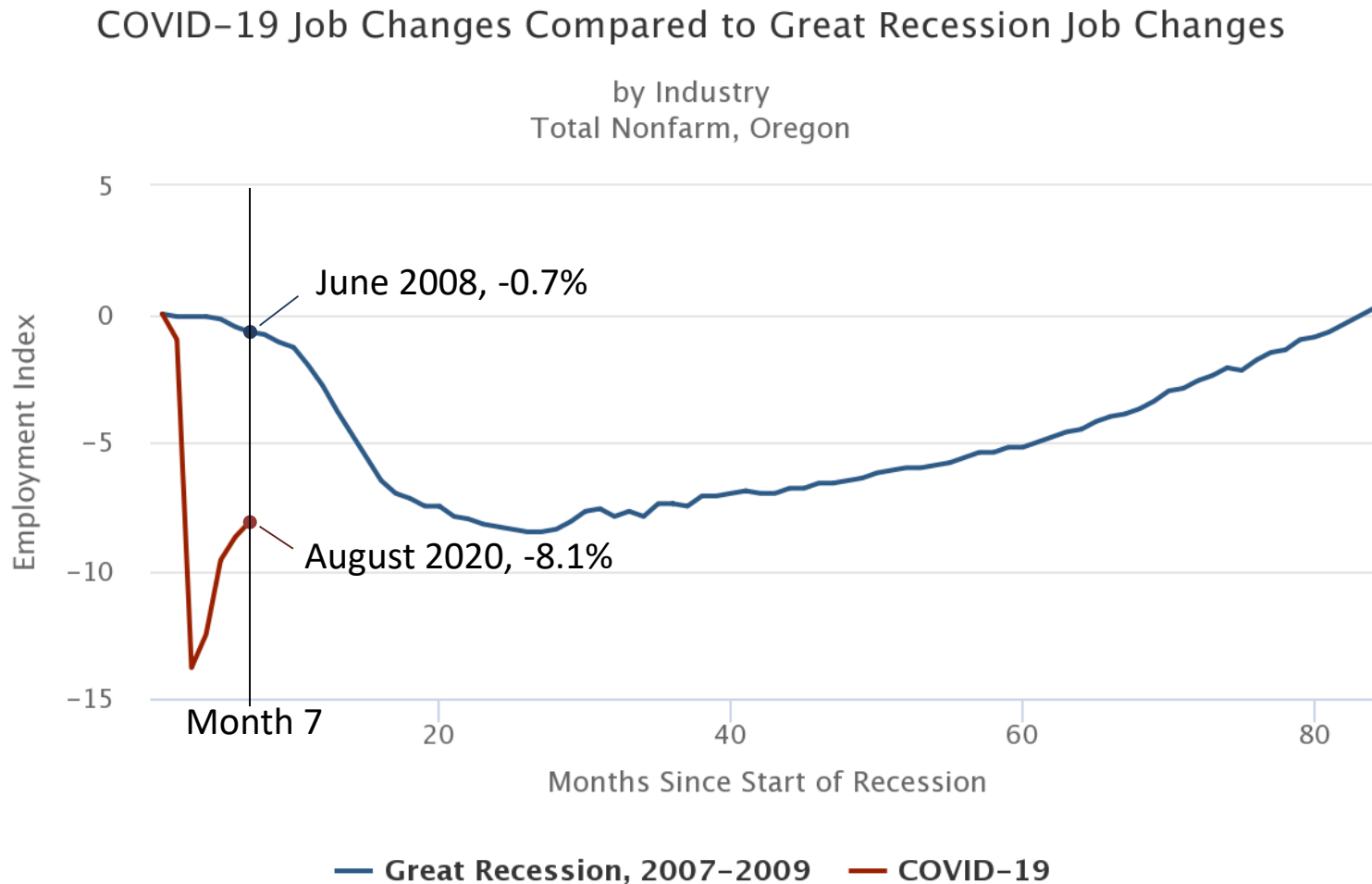
Most counties are still a long way from the last employment peak too.

Counties along the north coast were among the hardest hit in by share of total jobs lost.

Source: Oregon Employment Department, Current Employment Statistics; Gilliam County (+8.0% February - July) not shown



Oregon jobs have bounced back significantly...and are still a long way from the last peak.



Source: Oregon Employment Department QualityInfo.org

We're in the seventh month of the COVID-19 recession. Employment plunged by 13.8 percent over two months, and was back to 8.1 percent below the February peak as of August.

Seven months into the Great Recession, Oregon had lost 0.7 percent of total nonfarm employment.

Thank You

