



# House Interim Committee on Business and Labor

June 2022 Update

David Gerstenfeld, Acting Director  
Renee Royston, Modernization Director

June 1, 2022



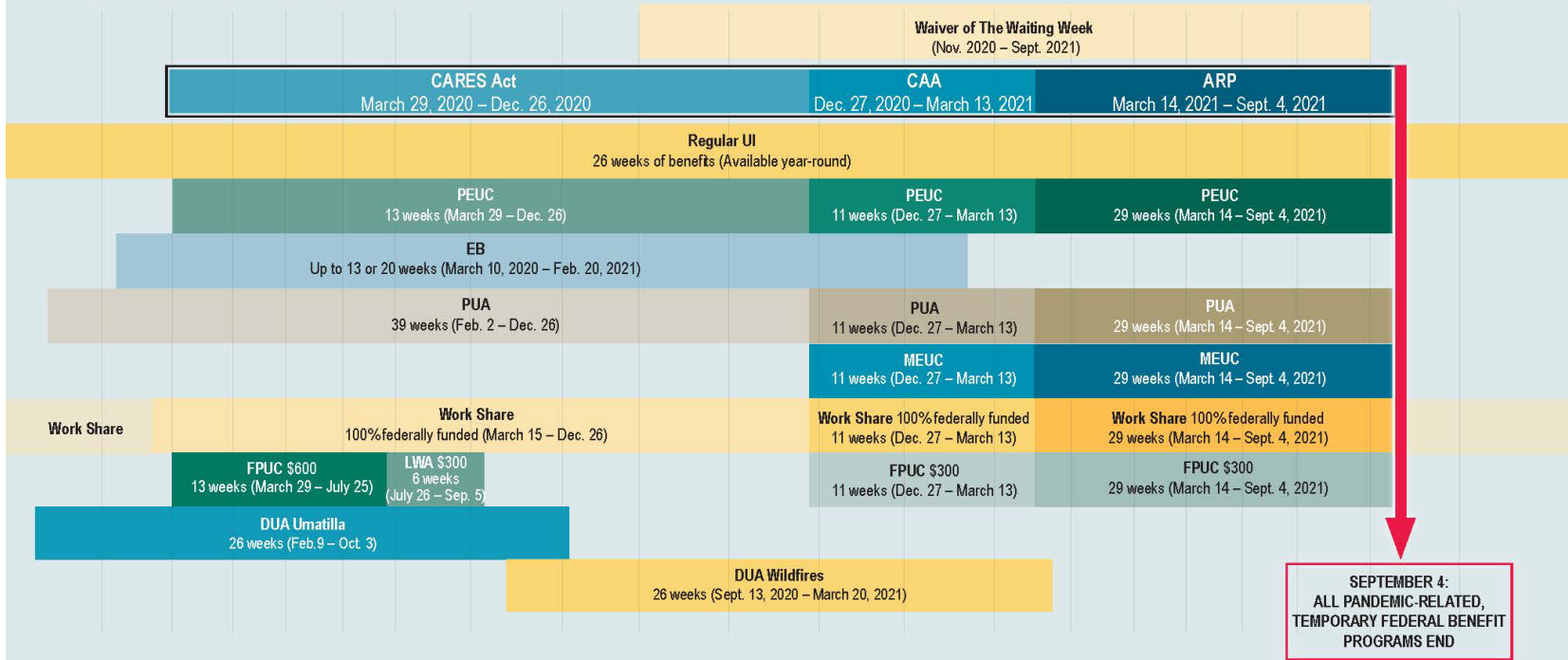
# Legislative Asks

- Implement federal programs and changes in state law
- Improve communication with customers and legislators
- Address claims backlog and pay benefits quickly
- Speed up adjudication process
- Allow remote work
- Promote Work Share
- Fight Fraud
- Get Oregonians back to work and help employers get employees



# UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AVAILABLE 2020-2021

FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER



## How OED Delivered

# Implement Federal Programs

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)
- Lost Wages Assistance (LWA)
- Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC)
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)



## How OED Delivered Implement Changes in State Law

- Sept. 2020 SB 1701 (2020) – Implemented earnings disregard
- Oct. 2020 SB 1703 (2020) – Began receiving self-employed income info.
- Nov. 2020 Governor's Directive – Waived the Waiting Week
- May 2021 HB 3178 (2021) – Updated earnings disregard and implemented definition of "unemployed"
- Sept. 2021 HB 3389 (2021) – Began UI Tax Relief implementation
- July 2021 SB 172 (2021) – Began UI Overpayment Relief implementation



# How OED Delivered

## Improve Communication

### Customers and the Public

- Weekly media briefings
- Engagement through social media
- Contact Us form
- Performance Dashboards
- Expanded FAQs on the website
- Phone system enhancements
- Outgoing calls to customers
- National Guard to answer phones
- Webinars
- Contracted with other agencies and organizations to engage with underserved communities

### Unemployment.Oregon.gov

- Focus on Unemployment Insurance
- Available in 16 languages
- Forms, FAQs, applications, etc.

### Legislators

- Regular Director's Office updates
- Online dashboards for providing project updates
- Secure system for reporting which constituents needed help
- Escalation process for high-priority claims



# EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT INFORMATION DASHBOARD

As of May 23, 2022

<b>3.7%</b> Apr Unemployment Rate*	<b>\$12.1 Billion</b> Total Benefits Paid**	<b>4,200</b> Jobs Added in April	<b>100,145</b> Q1 Job Vacancies***
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For the period of May 16 - May 20, 2022			For the period of May 8 - May 14, 2022	
<b>94.4%</b> of Calls Answered within 5 Minutes	<b>4.2%</b> of Calls Answered Between 5 and 15 Minutes	<b>9,381</b> Calls Answered Last Week	<b>96.2%</b> of Contact Us Submissions Resolved within 7 Days	

For the period of May 15 - May 21, 2022			
<b>1,911</b> Initial Claims Submitted	<b>22,372</b> Weekly Claims Submitted	<b>\$9,142,815</b> Benefits Paid	<b>16,181</b> Customers Paid

Served by WorkSource Oregon for the month of April 2022			
<b>13,888</b> Job Seekers Served	<b>641</b> Employers Served	<b>51,338</b> New Job Listings****	<b>61,714</b> Open Listings****

\*Seasonally Adjusted

\*\*From March 15, 2020 through report date

\*\*\*Q1 = Jan-Mar, Q2 = April-June, Q3 = July-Aug, Q4 = Sep - Dec

\*\*\*\*These listings include those from WorkSource Oregon and the nonprofit National Labor Exchange (NLx)



## How OED Delivered

# Address Claims Backlog & Pay Benefits Quickly

- Reassigned staff from throughout the agency to help with backlog of claims processing and adjudication
- Between March 2020 and December 2021, we hired 1,698 additional UI staff
- Shortened training time for new employees
- Focus 100 and Focus PUA projects
- Benefits While You Wait Program
- Brought Oregon National Guard members to help with outbound communication and other tasks





## How OED Delivered

# Speed Up Adjudication Process

- Adjudicators were part of the 1,698 hired between March 2020 and December 2021
- Contracted with vendor to perform initial stages of fact-finding
- Workforce Operations staff called customers to clarify the reason for their separation
- Launched Focus Adjudication project in October 2020



## How OED Delivered **Allow Remote Work**

- Established a large-scale remote and secure system
- Worked with DAS to increase bandwidth for statewide virtual connections
- Increased UI call center phone system capacity to accommodate for more calls and more staff
- Addressed hardware, infrastructure and IT resource challenges to permit remote work



## How OED Delivered Promote Work Share

- Work Share team was expanded to accommodate peak staffing of 100
- Work Share Employer participation was at an all-time high
  - 1,710 employer participants
  - Partial benefits of at least one payment to more than 70,000 workers
- Oregon paid out most in Work Share benefits nationwide in August and November of 2020



## How OED Delivered Fight Fraud

- Increased fraud/investigations work output from about 30 FTE pre-pandemic to 70 FTE by October 2020
- Constantly evolving approaches to deal with new and shifting fraud threat
- Partnered with state and federal agencies to detect and prevent fraud
- Those partnerships continue as we hold those accountable for committing fraud
- Early adopter of new fraud combating tools available through the NASWA integrity center



## How OED Delivered

# Helping Oregonians Get Back to Work

- Enabled remote customer service options
- Reinstated work seeking requirements in May 2021
- Reopened all 38 WorkSource Oregon Centers in July 2021
- Increased one-on-one meetings of customers with reemployment specialists
- Training & development opportunities for job seekers by partnering through “Grow with Google”
- Focus on equity for customer-assistance



## How OED Delivered

# Helping Oregonians Get Back to Work

- Working with LinkedIn with job openings and sourcing candidates outside of iMatchSkills
- Partnered with local employers and community organizations to hold hiring events
- Screening applicants and referring top candidates
- Resource connections to community partners as appropriate
- Targeted outreach to underemployed



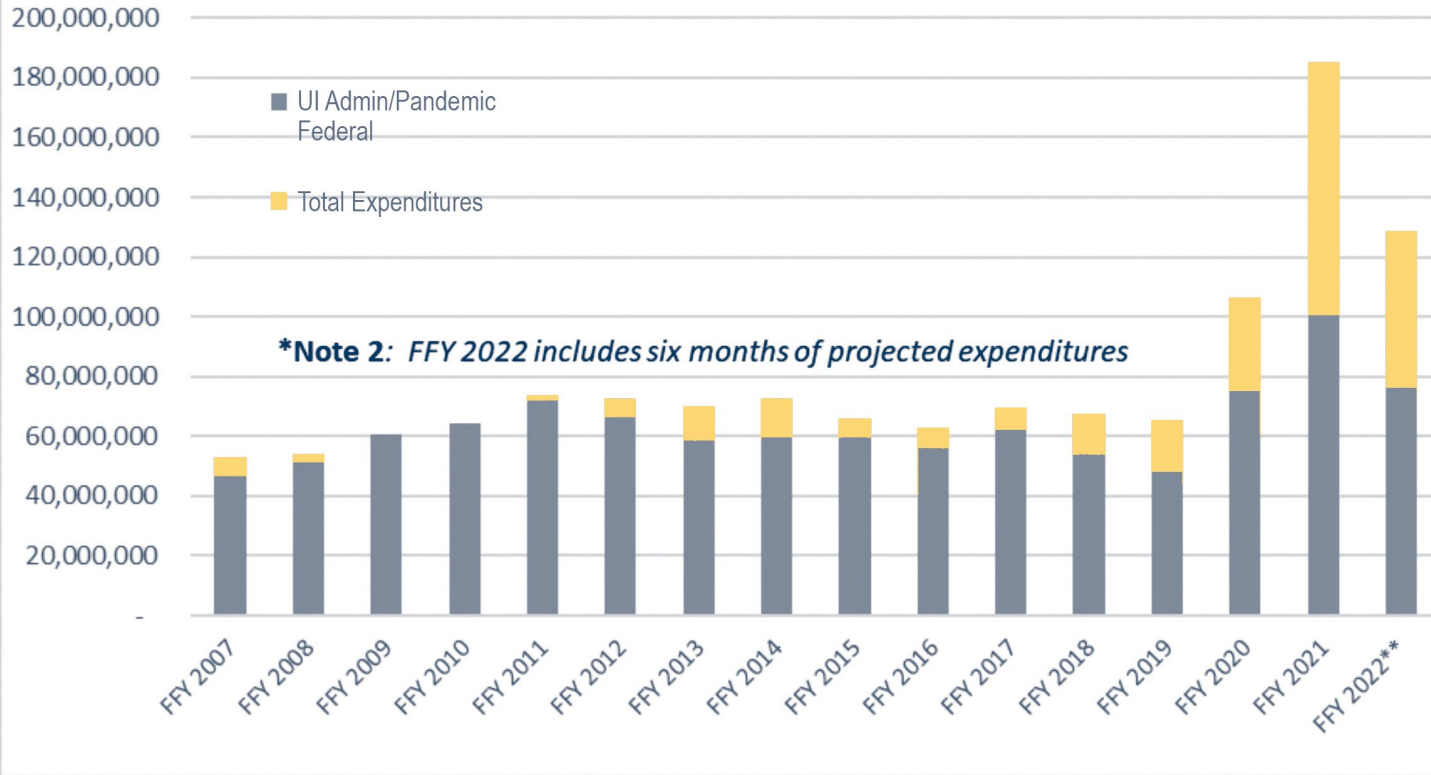
## How OED Delivered

# Help Employers Get Employees

- Job fairs, hiring events and virtual open houses to promote open opportunities offered local and statewide
- Screening applicants and validating skillsets to refer top candidates
- Outreach to new and existing employers to be aware of challenges and needs
- Site visits to learn what quality referrals and candidates look like for that employer
- Providing important workforce data and analysis to help employers and policymakers



## Federal UI Administrative Funding v. Total Expenditures





# Plan for balancing the budget

- Hold nearly 1,000 positions vacant through attrition
- Defer selected IT projects and hardware replacement
- Reduce Services and Supplies
- Use Other Funds
- Mitigate risks
- Protect Modernization and Paid Leave Oregon efforts



# Where is OED going

## Modernization

- September 2022 – Frances Online Phase One
- January 2023 – Paid Leave Oregon contributions
- September 2023 – Paid Leave Oregon benefits

## Continuous improvement efforts

- Increasing equity work to better help BIPOC and other historically underserved communities
- Sustainable workloads for employees and additional training for those hired during peak pandemic hiring/training
- Strategic organizational changes to support the agency's agility, preparedness and resilience

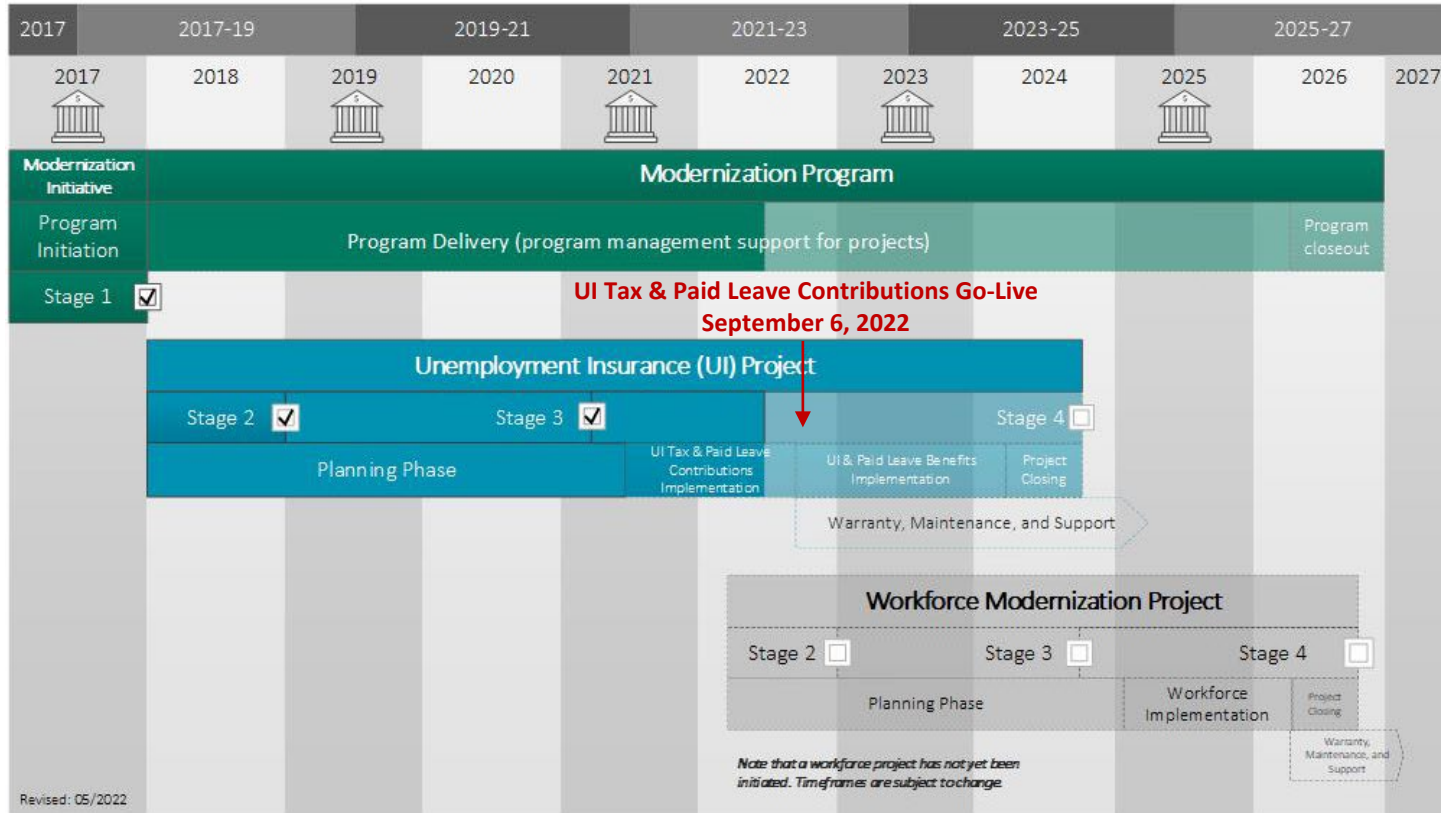


# Modernization Update and Demo

Renee Royston, Modernization Director  
Maggie Gleason, Project Director, FAST Enterprises (Demo)

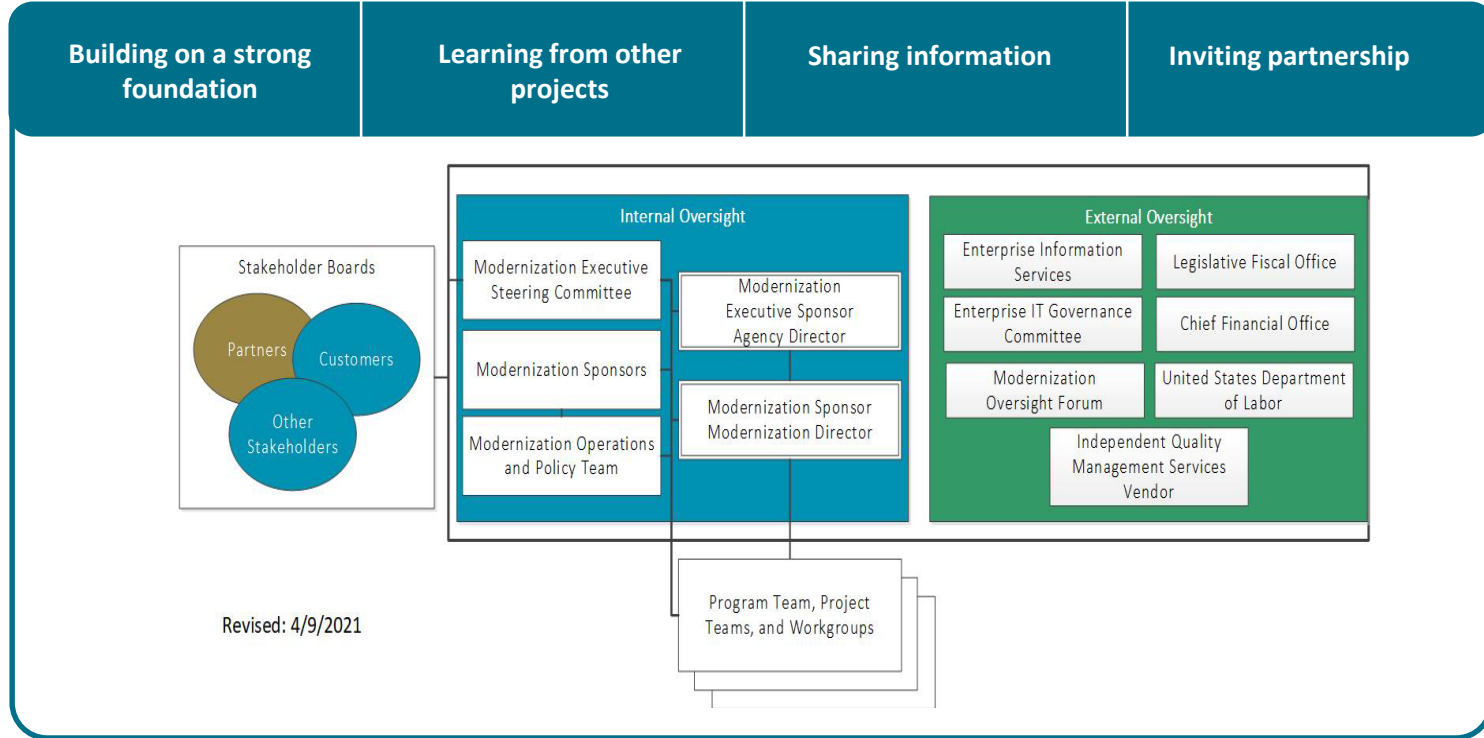


# Modernization Program Timeline



Revised: 05/2022

# OED Modernization Program Governance and Oversight



# UI Modernization Project

## Scope

Unemployment  
Insurance Tax

Paid Leave Oregon  
Contributions

Unemployment  
Insurance Benefits

Paid Leave Oregon  
Benefits

## Schedule

### Rollout 1

UI Tax and  
Paid Leave Contributions

July 2021- Sept 2022  
*Go-live Sept 6, 2022*

### Rollout 2

Paid Leave Benefits  
Sept 2022 – Sept 2023

UI Benefits  
Sept 2022 – March 2024

## Budget

**Project Baseline Budget\***

\$106,121,029

**Total Expended to Date\*\***

\$20.9 million

### Source of Funds

**Modernization Fund..** \$81,697,283

**Other funds.....** UI and Paid Leave

**General fund loan.....** Paid Leave

\*+10% - \$116,733,132  
-10% - \$95,508,926  
*As of April 2021*

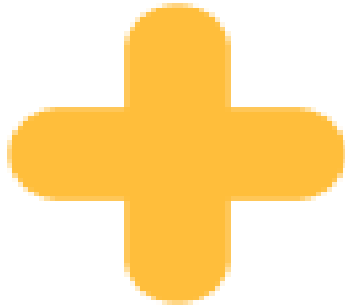
*\*\*As of March 2022*



# Independent Quality Assurance Rating

## Overall UI Modernization Project Health

**Current  
Status**



**Current Trend**

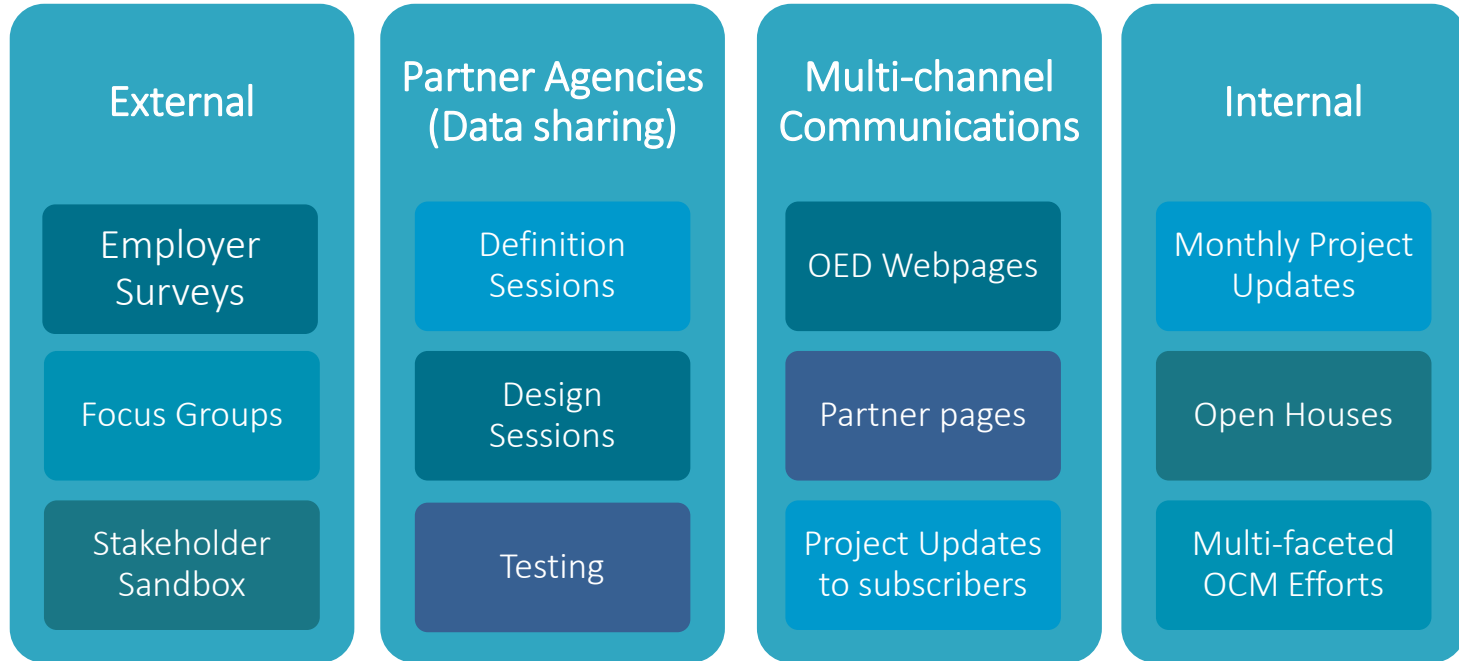
- Project has no open issues
- Actively managing identified risks
  - Schedule
  - Organizational Readiness
  - IT Resources

*Risks are assessed on a monthly basis. Risk mitigation strategies are in place.*

*For quarter ending March 2022*

# Current Focus

## Stakeholder Engagement and Communication





# Online Self-Service Today

## Current system capabilities: Individual systems

### **OPRS:**

- File a New Report
- Amend a Report
- View Outstanding Reports
- View Past Reports
- Offer link to our partners to Pay amount due for Combined Reporting (Revenue Online)
- Access to Zen Desk Support Portal for Self Led Educational Assistance

### **Employer Account Access (EAA):**

- Employer can access their account to view and pay past due balances
- Need a PIN (If the user gets locked out or forgets their PIN has to call the agency for reset)

### **File and Appeal Online:**

- Currently employers can file an appeal online
- Available on Oregon.gov page under hearings process information page.





# FRANCES ONLINE Self-Service

Expanded functionality: All in one application

## Combined Reporting

- Beginning 2023, filing State Wide Transit Tax (STT) and Paid Leave contributions on the combined report

## Manage Account Information

- Action center to alerting customer of action
- Update account information in real-time
- Identity verification
- Add and manage users and update users' demographics
- Manage mail and correspondence preferences
- Manage associated Authorized Reps and TPAs
- Review rates

## Electronic Submissions

- Submit documentation
- Submit Corporate officer exclusion
- Submit to elect into coverage
- Submit a Tax Authorization and Power of Attorney

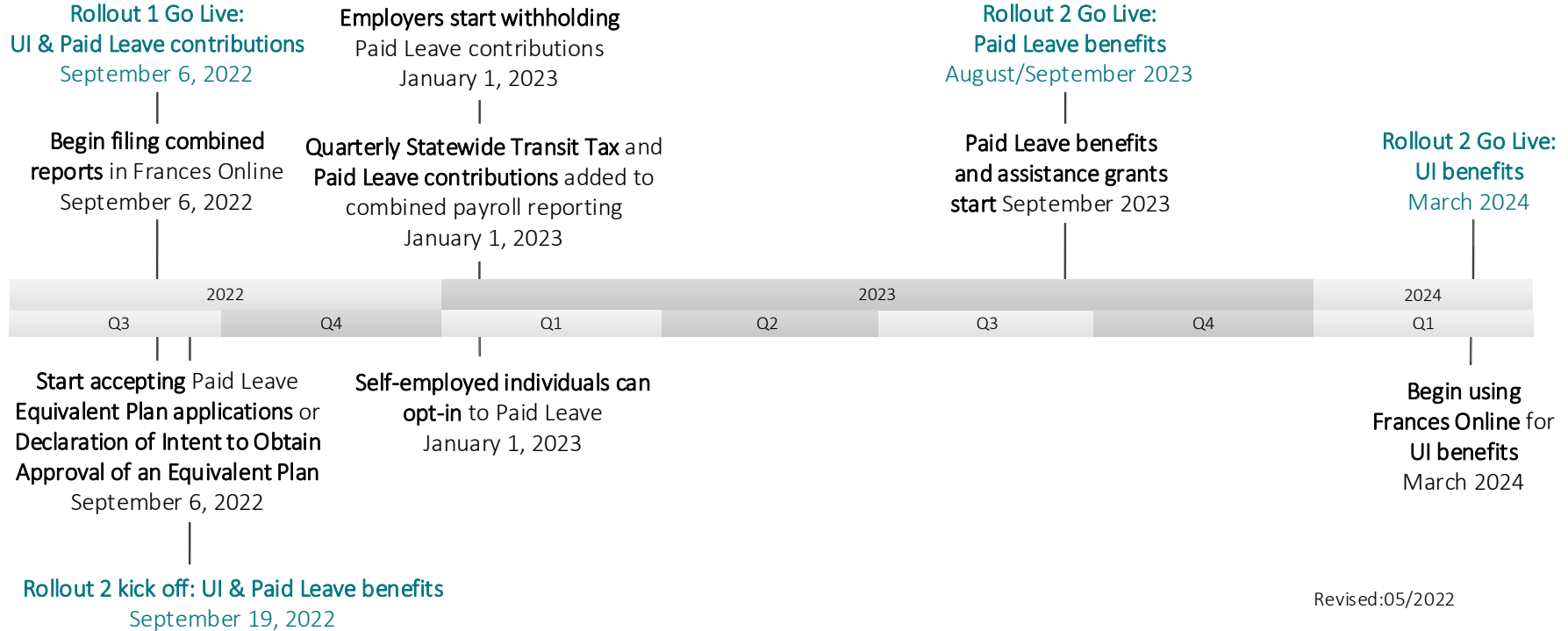
## Customer Service

- Secure messaging
- Interactive assistant

## Submit Requests

- Submit a business change in status request
- Request or withdraw an appeal
- TPA registration and bulk filing
- Refund request
- Refund replacement request
- Request a Payment Plan online
- Request FUTA Certs
- Ask for Redetermination
- View and print letters
- Audit referral
- Apply for and manage an Equivalent Plan
- Register for self-employed contributions

# Frances Online Timeline



Revised:05/2022



# Frances Online Demo

Maggie Gleason, Project Director, FAST Enterprises



**Thank You**

