

LC 184
2026 Regular Session
1/9/25 (DFY/ps)

D R A F T

SUMMARY

Digest: The Act creates a new office in DHS to provide human services in emergencies. The Act creates grant programs for emergencies. (Flesch Readability Score: 67.2).

Creates the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management within the Department of Human Services. Sets forth the powers and duties of the office.

Establishes the Oregon Public Assistance Grant Program, administered by the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, to issue grants to government units and certain nonprofit organizations to perform emergency-related work to protect public health, safety or property.

Establishes the Oregon Individual Assistance Grant Program, administered by the Department of Human Services, to issue grants to address critical emergency-related needs of individuals.

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT

2 Relating to emergency management; creating new provisions; and amending
3 ORS 401.025 and 401.534.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1.** **(1) The Office of Resilience and Emergency Manage-**
6 **ment is established within the Department of Human Services.**

7 **(2) The Director of Human Services shall appoint a Director of**
8 **Resilience and Emergency Management. The Director of Resilience**
9 **and Emergency Management shall supervise and control the office and**
10 **is responsible for the organization of the office and the performance**
11 **of the duties, functions and powers of the office.**

12 **(3) The office shall serve as the principal unit within the depart-**
13 **ment responsible for:**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 **(a) Coordinating emergency preparedness, response and recovery**
2 **activities that affect human services programs and clients; and**
3 **(b) Supporting the needs of the public when impacted by emergencies or other major disruptions.**

5 **(4) In carrying out its responsibilities, the office shall:**

6 **(a) Coordinate with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, local and tribal governments and other public or private**
7 **entities to ensure integrated planning and delivery of mass care, individual assistance, human services recovery and intermediate housing;**

10 **(b) As requested by the Director of Human Services, support continuity of the department's programs, operations, and service delivery**
11 **before, during and after disruptions; and**

13 **(c) Perform other duties assigned by the Director of Human Services or required by law or rule.**

15 **(5) The office may enter into agreements and acquire services, materials, supplies or equipment necessary to perform its duties before, during and after a disruption.**

18 **(6) The office may adopt rules necessary to implement and administer this section.**

20 **SECTION 2. ORS 401.025 is amended to read:**

21 **401.025. As used in this chapter:**

22 **(1) "Emergency" means a human created or natural event or circumstance**
23 **that causes or threatens widespread loss of life, injury to person or property,**
24 **human suffering or financial loss, including but not limited to:**

25 **(a) Fire, wildfire, explosion, flood, severe weather, landslides or mud**
26 **slides, drought, earthquake, volcanic activity, tsunamis or other oceanic**
27 **phenomena, spills or releases of oil or hazardous material as defined in ORS**
28 **466.605, contamination, utility or transportation emergencies, disease, blight,**
29 **infestation, civil disturbance, riot, sabotage, acts of terrorism and war; and**

30 **(b) A rapid influx of individuals from outside this state, a rapid migration**
31 **of individuals from one part of this state to another or a rapid displacement**

1 of individuals if the influx, migration or displacement results from the type
2 of event or circumstance described in paragraph (a) of this subsection.

3 (2) "Emergency service agency" means an organization within a local
4 government that performs essential services for the public's benefit before,
5 during or after an emergency, such as law enforcement, fire control, health,
6 medical and sanitation services, **human services**, public works and engi-
7 neering, public information and communications.

8 (3) "Emergency services" means activities engaged in by state and local
9 government agencies to prepare for an emergency and to prevent, minimize,
10 respond to or recover from an emergency, including but not limited to coor-
11 dination, preparedness planning, training, interagency liaison, fire fighting,
12 oil or hazardous material spill or release cleanup as defined in ORS 466.605,
13 law enforcement, medical, health and sanitation services, **human services**,
14 engineering and public works, search and rescue activities, warning and
15 public information, damage assessment, administration and fiscal manage-
16 ment, and those measures defined as "civil defense" in 50 U.S.C. app. 2252.

17 (4) "Local government" has the meaning given that term in ORS 174.116.

18 (5) "Major disaster" means any event defined as a "major disaster" under
19 42 U.S.C. 5122(2).

20 **SECTION 3.** ORS 401.534 is amended to read:

21 401.534. (1) The Oregon Disaster Response Fund is established in the State
22 Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. **Interest earned by**
23 **the Oregon Disaster Response Fund must be credited to the fund.**
24 Moneys received from federal grants for disaster response efforts shall be
25 deposited into the Oregon Disaster Response Fund. Moneys in the fund are
26 continuously appropriated to the Oregon Department of Emergency Man-
27 agement to be used to:

28 (a) Help state agencies and local government units with immediate dis-
29 aster response and recovery efforts related to federally declared disasters in
30 this state; and

31 (b) Implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a federally de-

1 clared disaster in this state during the period of immediate recovery from the
2 disaster.

3 (2) The Oregon Disaster Response Fund may receive gifts, grants, be-
4 quests, endowments and donations from public and private sources for pur-
5 poses related to the fund.

6 (3) The department shall adopt rules for the disbursement of moneys from
7 the Oregon Disaster Response Fund.

8 (4) If there are expenditures from the Oregon Disaster Response Fund, the
9 Director of the Oregon Department of Emergency Management shall report
10 to the Emergency Board, or to the Legislative Assembly if it is in session,
11 on:

12 (a) The nature and severity of the disaster;
13 (b) The actual and projected deposits into the fund;
14 (c) The sources of actual and projected expenditures from the fund;
15 (d) The nature of in-kind donations received; and
16 (e) The rationale for expenditures and allocation of payments to state
17 agencies and local government units.

18 (5) Following the final expenditure for a particular disaster, the director
19 shall issue a final report to the Emergency Board, or to the Legislative As-
20 sembly if it is in session. The report must include an aggregate description
21 of the factors described in subsection (4) of this section.

22 **SECTION 4. Sections 5 to 8 of this 2026 Act are added to and made**
23 **a part of ORS chapter 401.**

24 **SECTION 5. (1) The Oregon Department of Emergency Management**
25 **shall establish and administer a state infrastructure emergency re-**
26 **covery grant program, to be known as the Oregon Public Assistance**
27 **Grant Program, to issue grants to qualified recipients, subject to**
28 **available funding.**

29 **(2) Grants under the program must be used to pay for work per-**
30 **formed before, during or after an emergency to protect public health,**
31 **safety or property, including, without limitation, debris removal and**

- 1 **work to protect or restore public services or public infrastructure.**
- 2 **(3) The Governor may activate the program if:**
 - 3 **(a) The Governor determines that an emergency has occurred or is imminent and finds that assistance from the state is warranted; and**
 - 5 **(b) The department recommends that the program be activated.**
- 6 **(4) The Governor shall inactivate the program when the Governor finds that assistance from the state is no longer warranted.**
- 8 **(5) While the program is active, the department may issue grants to qualified recipients pursuant to requests from counties or tribal entities. A request on behalf of a city may be made by the county in which a geographic majority of the city lies. Requests must be in writing and must include the following information:**
 - 13 **(a) Confirmation that the requester has taken appropriate action under the local emergency plan;**
 - 15 **(b) An estimate of the amount and severity of damages and losses and a description of the impact of the emergency on the public and private sectors;**
 - 18 **(c) A description of the nature and amount of local resources which have been or will be committed to alleviate the results of the emergency;**
 - 21 **(d) A preliminary estimate of the types and amount of supplementary state emergency assistance needed; and**
 - 23 **(e) A certification by the requester that the obligations and expenditures for the current emergency will comply with all applicable cost sharing requirements agreed on between the department and the requester.**
- 27 **(6) The department may adopt rules to administer and implement the provisions of this section, including rules governing eligibility requirements, the form and manner of requests and evaluation of requests by the department.**
- 31 **(7) As used in this section, “qualified recipient” means:**

- 1 **(a) A state agency;**
- 2 **(b) A local government;**
- 3 **(c) A federally recognized Indian tribe in Oregon;**
- 4 **(d) A school district or education service district; and**
- 5 **(e) A nonprofit organization that provides critical services or es-**
- 6 **sential social services, such as a hospital, long term care facility,**
- 7 **school, community center, food assistance program or shelter.**

8 **SECTION 6. The Oregon Public Assistance Grant Program Account**
9 **is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the**
10 **General Fund. Interest earned by the account must be credited to the**
11 **account. The account consists of moneys appropriated, allocated, de-**
12 **posited or transferred to the account by the Legislative Assembly or**
13 **otherwise and interest earned on moneys in the account. The moneys**
14 **in the account are continuously appropriated to the Oregon Depart-**
15 **ment of Emergency Management to carry out the Oregon Public As-**
16 **sistance Grant Program described in section 5 of this 2026 Act. The**
17 **department shall ensure that no more than 10 percent of the moneys**
18 **in the account are used to pay costs of coordination and distribution**
19 **of assistance under the program.**

20 **SECTION 7. (1) The Department of Human Services shall establish**
21 **and administer an individual grant program, to be known as the**
22 **Oregon Individual Assistance Grant Program, to issue grants to ad-**
23 **dress critical emergency-related needs of qualified individuals, subject**
24 **to available funding.**

25 **(2) The Governor may activate the program if:**

26 **(a) The Oregon Department of Emergency Management recom-**
27 **mends that the program be activated, the Governor determines that**
28 **an emergency has occurred or is imminent and the Governor finds**
29 **that assistance from the state is warranted; or**

30 **(b) The Governor has declared an emergency under ORS 401.165.**

31 **(3) The Governor shall inactivate the program when the Governor**

1 finds that assistance from the state is no longer warranted.

2 (4) While the program is active, the Department of Human Services
3 may issue grants pursuant to requests from counties or tribal entities.
4 A request on behalf of a city may be made by the county in which a
5 geographic majority of the city lies. Requests must be in writing and
6 must include the following information:

7 (a) Confirmation that the requester has taken appropriate action
8 under the local emergency plan;

9 (b) An estimate of the amount and severity of damages and losses
10 and a description of the impact of the emergency on individuals and
11 households;

12 (c) A description of the nature and amount of local resources which
13 have been or will be committed to alleviate the results of the emer-
14 gency; and

15 (d) A preliminary estimate of the types and amount of supplemen-
16 tary state emergency assistance needed.

17 (5) Grants under the program may be used only to pay for:

18 (a) The provision of services to qualified individuals for critical
19 emergency-related needs, which may include, without limitation:

20 (A) Temporary rental assistance;

21 (B) Repair or replacement of owner-occupied homes that serve as
22 a primary residence, including repair or replacement of privately
23 owned access routes;

24 (C) Assistance with immediate needs;

25 (D) Assistance with essential personal property needs that are not
26 covered by insurance;

27 (E) Assistance with other serious needs that are not covered by in-
28 surance; and

29 (F) Other critical emergency recovery services as approved by the
30 Oregon Department of Emergency Management; and

31 (b) Agreements with local governments, tribal entities or disaster

1 recovery organizations for the delivery of services described in para-
2 graph (a) of this subsection, including payments for staffing or other
3 administrative needs.

4 (6) Assistance to individuals may be in the form of direct financial
5 assistance or payments to another entity on behalf of individuals.

6 (7) The Department of Human Services, in consultation with the
7 Oregon Department of Emergency Management, shall adopt rules to
8 administer and implement the provisions of this section.

9 (8) As used in this section:

10 (a) "Immediate need" means:

11 (A) A life-saving or life-sustaining item or activity that is essential
12 to prevent, mitigate or overcome an adverse condition caused by an
13 emergency; and

14 (B) Other equipment that is essential for daily household needs.

15 (b) "Qualified individual" means:

16 (A) An individual who is displaced by an emergency from the
17 individual's primary residence;

18 (B) An individual whose primary residence is rendered
19 uninhabitable by an emergency; or

20 (C) An individual with a disability whose primary residence is ren-
21 dered inaccessible or uninhabitable to the individual as a result of
22 damage caused by an emergency.

23 **SECTION 8.** (1) The Oregon Individual Assistance Grant Program
24 Account is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct
25 from the General Fund. Interest earned by the account must be cred-
26 ited to the account. The account consists of moneys appropriated, al-
27 located, deposited or transferred to the account by the Legislative
28 Assembly or otherwise and interest earned on moneys in the account.
29 The moneys in the account are continuously appropriated to the
30 Oregon Department of Emergency Management.

31 (2) The department may make moneys in the account available to

1 the Department of Human Services to carry out the Oregon Individual
2 Assistance Grant Program described in section 7 of this 2026 Act.
3 Moneys that are made available from the account to the Department
4 of Human Services that are not expended for the Oregon Individual
5 Assistance Grant Program must be redeposited in the account.

6 **SECTION 9.** The Oregon Department of Emergency Management
7 and the Department of Human Services shall establish an agreement
8 and protocols for sharing data related to the Oregon Public Assistance
9 Grant Program and the Oregon Individual Assistance Grant Program
10 established under sections 5 and 7 of this 2026 Act.

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