



Employment First Capacity Report

July 1, 2017 – December 31, 2021

January 1, 2022

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
I. Legal Direction	2
A. Settlement Agreement Provisions	2
B. Executive Order 15-01 Provisions	2
II. State Achievements	3
A. Transformation Grants.....	3
B. Innovation Grants	6
C. Clackamas Community College Job Coaching Certificate Project	7
D. Jobs Plus Pilot	7
E. Project SEARCH	8
F. WISE Training & Technical Assistance	9
G. Employment First Training	10
H. Employment First Communications	11
I. Discovery Service Redesign	12
J. Employment Outcomes System (EOS)	13
K. Employment First Road Map Project	14
L. SELN Consultation	14
M. Department of Education Trainings & Capacity Building Projects	15
N. Vocational Rehabilitation Trainings and Projects	16
O. Prospective Provider Orientation Training & Enrollment Online Tool	19
W. Reviewer Interviews and Suggestions	19
Summary	28

Introduction

Specific requirements are outlined in both the *Lane v. Brown* Settlement Agreement and Executive Order 15-01 to help ensure that Oregon has sufficient provider capacity to deliver employment services to those in the Sheltered Workshop and transition-age target populations. This report details the efforts of Employment First to build and maintain capacity in the 2020-2021 reporting period. In addition, it summarizes the capacity building efforts undertaken since the original report in 2017.

I. Legal Direction

A. Settlement Agreement Provisions:

XI. PROVIDER CAPACITY

1. Oregon shall, subject to the availability of sufficient funding, maintain until at least June 30, 2019, grants for the transformation of existing sheltered workshop providers or the development of new Supported Employment Services or the expansion of existing providers that will assist individuals obtaining Competitive Integrated Employment and working in Integrated Employment Settings. DHS shall make diligent efforts to secure sufficient funds for the obligations set forth in Section XI.

X. TRAINING

1. Oregon shall, subject to the availability of sufficient funding, maintain until at least June 30, 2019, a technical assistance provider(s) to offer competency-based training, ongoing assistance, and support for evidence-based practices to agencies that offer Supported Employment Services. DHS shall make diligent efforts to secure sufficient funds for the obligations set forth in Section X.

B. Executive Order 15-01 Provisions

VIII. Provider Capacity

State agencies will make good faith efforts, within available budgetary resources, to ensure that there are enough qualified employment providers to deliver the services and support necessary for individuals in ODDS/VR target populations to receive Employment Services consistent with this order.

II. State Achievements

A. **Transformation Grants:**

Living Opportunities and Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) agencies were selected to mentor organizations committed to the transformation process statewide through the Employment First grants.

Organizations were mentored, and competitive-wage jobs were developed in community businesses, in rural and urban settings, for individuals with a wide variety of abilities and support needs. The following table shows the transformation grant recipients.

TABLE A1. Transformation Grant Receipts

T/TA	Organization	Phase 1		Phase 2			KEY
		Round 1	Round 2	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	
WISE	Albertina Kerr			X			WISE
	ASI		X		X		Living Opportunities
	Bethesda		X	X			New Full Grant
	CCS	X					Continuing Full Grant
	CSI		X	X			Continuing T/TA Only
	Eastco	X		X			Quit
	Exceed		X	X			New T/TA Only
	Garten	X		X			
	Horizon					X	
	Imagine Possibilities			X			
	Mentor	X			X		
	MVA	X					
	Pearl Buck	X				X	
	Rise	X					
	Rockwest					X	
	Shangri-La	X					
	SERP		X	X			
	Sunny Oaks		X				
	Sunshine					X	
	TVW	X		X			
	WITCO	X					
	Work Unlimited				X		
	WVRC		X				
Living Opportunities	Abilitree			X			
	Arc of Lane Co		X	X			
	CAS			X			
	Edwards Center			X			
	MVA			X			
	Opportunity Connections	X			X		
	Opportunity Foundation	X		X			
	PCL	X					
	PearlBuck		X				
	Southern Oregon Aspire	X			X		
	Southern Oregon Goodwill		X				
	Star of Hope		X			X	
	Sunshine					X	
	Sunrise	X			X		

WISE was contracted to initially support 16 Oregon employment service providers in the transformation process. The contract was extended to a second phase and WISE was contracted to again support 16 organizations. Living Opportunities was contracted to support nine providers in the first phase and 11 in the second phase of the contract. Three of those providers were supported by both Living Opportunities and WISE at different points in the contract

timeline. All the providers in phase one of the project received grant awards. Some of the providers in phase 2 received grant awards and some did not (T&TA only on Table A1).

During the project, the employment landscape in Oregon for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) improved. By September 2020, the 44 sheltered workshops that were open when the project began were closed. As of March 2019, 75 percent of workshops had already closed their doors and 85 percent of the 1,926 people who worked in those settings had exited those services. Between March 2015 and March 2019, supported employment grew by 162 percent from 577 to 1,509 people. These and other changes are demonstrations of Oregon’s transformation because of Employment First policies and practices.

Table A2 shows the providers that were awarded transformation grants:

TABLE A2. Transformation Grant Amounts

	2017-18	2018-19
RECIPIENTS	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Abilitree		\$ 50,000
Albertina Kerr		\$ 71,000
Arc of Lane County	\$ 100,000	
ARC		T&TA only
ASI	\$ 110,000	\$ 50,000
Aspire	\$ 125,000	T&TA only
Bethesda Lutheran	\$ 80,000	\$ 35,000
Catholic Community Services	\$ 100,000	
Community Access		\$ 75,000
Cornerstone		\$ 35,000
CSI	\$ 50,000	T&TA only
Eastco	\$ 100,000	\$ 35,000
Edwards Center		\$ 75,000
Exceed	\$ 125,000	\$ 100,000
Garten	\$ 150,000	\$ 100,000
Goodwill of Southern Oregon	\$ 110,000	
Horizon		\$ 50,000
Imagine Possibilities		\$ 35,000
Mentor	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
Mid-Valley Rehabilitation	\$ 125,000	
MV Advancements		\$ 50,000
Opportunity Connections	\$ 70,000	T&TA only
Opportunity Foundation	\$ 150,000	\$ 100,000
Partnerships in Community Living	\$ 100,000	
Pearl Buck	\$ 125,000	\$ 100,000
Rise	\$ 35,000	
SERP	\$ 125,000	T&TA only
Shangri-La	\$ 125,000	
Star of Hope	\$ 80,000	\$ 35,000
Sunny Oaks	\$ 35,000	
Sunshine		\$ 36,444
Sunrise	\$ 125,000	\$ 50,000
TVW	\$ 125,000	\$ 100,000
Willamette Valley Rehabilitation Center	\$ 100,000	
WITCO	\$ 50,000	
Work Unlimited		\$ 35,000

B. Innovation Grants

The Oregon legislature appropriated dollars in the 2015-17 session to fund innovative projects aimed at increasing Employment First capacity throughout the state. The purpose of these innovation grants was to expand efforts to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for people with I/DD. Twenty-two grants were awarded totaling \$458,422. The innovation grant contracts are now concluded; however, some of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funding will also be utilized for restoration and capacity building. The list of innovation grantees can be found here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Pages/training.aspx>.

The grant results can be found here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Pages/provider-resources.aspx>.

C. Clackamas Community College Job Coaching Certificate Project

The Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) recognized a need for additional comprehensive training for current and prospective job coaches. ODDS partnered with Clackamas Community College’s Customized Training Department to develop a 64-hour certificate program to train direct service professionals and job coaches. This training is intended to create a funnel for new workers to enter the I/DD workforce and create additional capacity for training existing job coaches.

The eight-module training curriculum was completed in September 2021 after an internal pilot and a “train-the-trainer” event was concluded. ODDS is partnering with Treasure Valley Community College to pilot the curriculum externally with an expected start date of September 2022.

D. Jobs Plus Pilot

The JOBS Plus Pilot is a partnership between ODDS and ODHS Self-Sufficiency to increase the number of direct service professionals and job coaches providing supports to people eligible for ODDS funding.

JOBS Plus is a six-month subsidized program sponsored by ODHS Self-Sufficiency that provides work experience for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients. Employers hire work ready JOBS Plus participants and are reimbursed for wages up to Oregon’s minimum wage as well as payroll taxes and worker’s compensation premiums. Employers may also qualify for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). TANF clients are placed in a temporary job to provide work experience and are paid at least minimum wage. TANF clients continue to receive medical benefits, transportation, and childcare assistance during their work experience.

ODHS’ Background check Unit has streamlined processes to allow potential JOBS Plus applicants to be pre-screened and placed on the long-term care registry prior to receiving a job assignment to reduce barriers to getting a job.

ODDS and Self-Sufficiency placed this pilot on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several ODDS providers have successfully placed Jobs Plus candidates into jobs as Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) using this process.

E. Project SEARCH



Figure 1. First Project Search cohort, State of Oregon site.

Project SEARCH is a nine-month internship training program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Project SEARCH students train in nine-month unpaid internships and rotate three times within that time, allowing them to try three different types of jobs in a variety of departments. The instructor and skills trainers stay on site with the students. Nationally, about 75 percent of Project SEARCH interns become employed in the community at 16 hours or more per week, far above the national employment rate of 35 percent for people with I/DD.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a hiatus in the Project Search program for the last two years. Prior to the pandemic there were seven Project Search sites including Albertina Kerr's Kaiser Westside, Kaiser Sunnyside, City of Salem sites, Garten's State of Oregon and Corban College sites, Pearl Buck's Peace Health Riverbend hospital site and Community Access Service's City of Portland site.

During the COVID-19 hiatus, the State of Oregon worked on updating policies and procedures and created a Project Search steering committee with representatives from ODDS, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE). The steering committee

designated two Project Search co-coordinators and an application process for providers. Additionally, there are plans to initiate a Request for Grant Proposals using ARPA funding to fund a youth transition program(s) for the first time in Oregon.

F. WISE Training & Technical Assistance

ODHS contracted with WISE to provide technical assistance and training to execute the Oregon Statewide Employment First Project. Table F reports the attendance at each type of In-Person Training from 10/2013-12/2019. During this time, 3,073 training seats were filled.

TABLE F. WISE Training & Technical Assistance

ACTIVITY	METRIC	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	TOTALS
		AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	
OELN - Intro to Supported Employment, Discovery & Employment Planning	Number attended	91	83	154	103	111	180	111	833
OELN - Job Development & Marketing	Number attended	79	71	108	122	71	106	144	701
OELN - Social Security Benefits & Work Incentives	Number attended	59	34	147	116	72	75	123	626
OELN - Systematic Instruction & Follow-along	Number attended	97	63	167	202	131	123	130	913
TOTALS		326	251	576	543	385	484	508	3073

ACRE Certificate of Completion. OELN and its instructors became ACRE-accredited in 2016, so participants who completed all four OELN classes received an ACRE Certification of Completion. ODHS grandfathered participants who completed OELN classes prior to 2016 and decided to accept a combination of non-ACRE and ACRE OELN training for a state-issued certificate. In 2018-2019, a total of 92 people achieved an ACRE Certificate of Completion by completing the four-seminar ACRE-accredited OELN in-person series (at least 28 had completed OELN classes prior to this contract period), and 10 others completed a combination of ACRE and non-ACRE classes and achieved an Oregon Employment Learning Network Certificate of Completion.

WISE developed a total of 32 on-demand trainings for ODDS. In the beginning the primary role of the contractor was to provide statewide in-person training to help support agencies transforming from sheltered employment to competitive integrated employment. The final year of the contract was focused on creating materials to support on-demand learning. The on-demand trainings that were developed through this contract are free and accessible 24/7 via the state's learning management system.

Most of the online trainings covered ODDS supported employment services, such as job coaching, job development and discovery. One training was developed specifically for families and those who support people who are receiving employment services. Ten additional trainings were about Oregon's supported employment system in general and were targeted to VR Counselors, Services Coordinators and Personal Agents.

WISE was the fiscal intermediary for the ACRE reimbursement program, and reimbursed providers for attending an ACRE certification curriculum via Griffin Hammis, Virginia Commonwealth University or WISE. During the time of the program, these curriculums cost \$300-\$600. A total of 45 providers' staff achieved ACRE certification and all providers were reimbursed accordingly.

Wise was also the fiscal intermediary for the Technical Assistance (TA) program. It was a type of mentoring service for providers who requested support on a variety of topics. The program paid qualified providers to provide TA services to employment providers that requested support on topics such as policy writing, staff training, job development modeling, Discovery program development and fiscal stabilization. In total 14 plans were approved by ODDS for a total of 289 TA hours.

G. Employment First Training

In 2017, the primary vehicle to provide statewide training to employment professionals in Oregon was the Oregon Employment Learning Network. During the last five years, the training offerings have expanded to include many additional trainings as outlined in the ODDS training catalog and Table G below:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Documents/Department-Approved%20Employment%20Service%20Provider%20Training%20Courses.pdf>

TABLE G. Employment First Training

		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ACTIVITY	METRIC	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Bringing it All Together and Business Assets Training	Number of enrollees				47
Collaboration, Coordination and Communication Training	Number of enrollees				149
Discovery Training: Approval Criteria	Number of enrollees				356
Discovery Training: CDP and IPE	Number of enrollees				331
Discovery Training: Community Based Experiences	Number of enrollees				359
Discovery Training: Introduction to Discovery	Number of enrollees				402
Elsevier College of Employment Services (CES)	Number approved for training				100
Elsevier College of Employment Services (CES)	Number enrolled				51
Employment and Supplemental Security Income Training	Number of enrollees				83
Employment Expectations, Conversations and Informed Choice Training	Number of enrollees				84
Employment Information Gathering Training	Number of enrollees				52
Employment Plan Development Training	Number of enrollees				28
How SSA Work Incentives Support Employment Training	Number of enrollees				117
Job Coaching Training: Fading	Number of enrollees				126
Job Coaching Training: History	Number of enrollees				283
Job Coaching Training: Job Preservation	Number of enrollees				106
Job Coaching Training: Job Start	Number of enrollees				114
Job Coaching Training: Natural Supports	Number of enrollees				103
Job Coaching Training: Task Analysis	Number of enrollees				135
Job Coaching Training: Task Design	Number of enrollees				160
Job Coaching Training: Teaching Strategies	Number of enrollees				149
Job Development Training: Business Exploration	Number of enrollees				43
Job Development Training: Marketing	Number of enrollees				49
Job Development Training: Representing the Job Seeker	Number of enrollees				34
Job Development Training: Supported Employment Introduction	Number of enrollees				98
Job Development Training: Working with Employers	Number of enrollees				29
Job Development Training: Workplace and Job Analysis	Number of enrollees				37
Negotiating and Mediating Employment Issues Training	Number of enrollees				52
ODDS-Approved Benefits Counselors	Number of counselors				13
On-Demand Core Competency Training	Number completed all 12 modules	1,408	2,497	3,222	3,609
Open Future Learning On-Demand Training	Number approved for program				1,115
Open Future Learning On-Demand Training	Number enrolled per month				50-200
Six Stages of Supported Employment Training	Number of enrollees				50
The Pursuit of Employment Training	Number of enrollees				17
Understanding Developmental Disability Services Training	Number of enrollees				115
Understanding How Employment Affects SSDI Benefits Training	Number of enrollees				66
Understanding VR, Tribal VR and OCB Services Training	Number of enrollees				66
Understanding, Schools, Transition Planning and Employment Training	Number of enrollees				64

H. Employment First Communications

Communications and outreach activities for Employment First are centered on outreach and awareness requirements in Executive Order 15-01 and Lane v. Brown Federal Settlement Agreement. These requirements are to ensure communications is used to solve the complicated policy issues of transitioning individuals into competitive, integrated employment. The Employment First communications officer develops and executes strategies for communicating the vision, goals, implementation plan and activities, and results of Lane v. Brown Settlement and Employment First initiative.

Table H shows the communications activities conducted since the 2017-2018 reporting year.

TABLE H. Employment First Communications		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ACTIVITY	METRIC	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
"Family Friendly" Employment First Outcomes & Successes Report	Number published	1	1	1	1
"Guide to Employment" developed with Oregon Self-Advocacy Coalition	Editions published		1		
COVID-19 webpage	Number launched				1
Direct Support Professionals Promotional YouTube video	Number of views				1,200
Employer Engagement videos	Number produced		4		
Employer Engagement videos	Number of views		2,200		
Employment First messages	Number of subscribers				3,000+
Employment First presentations	Number delivered	2	3	4	2
Employment Outcomes Survey provider outreach	Number of channels	3			
Home & Community Based Services Fact Sheets	Number published	6			
Home & Community Based Services YouTube video	Number produced	1			
How-to become a Personal Support Worker Job Coach Powtoon	Number produced		1		
How-to become a Personal Support Worker Job Coach Powtoon	Number of views		900+		
I/DD Policy webpage	Number published	1			
Impact Oregon Job Board	Number of new users				20,000
Impact Oregon Job Board	Number of total visitors				120,000
National Disability Employment Awareness Month panel event	Number hosted				1
National Disability Employment Awareness Month Webinar Series	Number of sessions				4
Other employment-related communications	Number published				4
Outcomes & Success Report	Number published		1		1
Peer-to-Peer Mentoring video	Number produced		1		
Personal Support Worker fact sheet	Number published	1			
Personal Support Worker Job Coach video	Number produced	1			
Personal Support Worker Job Coach Worker Guide	Number published	1			
Podcasts	Number produced		11	15	12
Podcasts	Number of listens since launch				15,902
Print story about people with significant disabilities	Number published	1			
Project SEARCH story	Number published		2	1	
Provider and Partners webpage redesign	Number of redesigns		1		
Provider transformation stories	Number published	1	1		
Sheltered Worker Fact Sheet	Number published	1			
State as a Model Employer media	Number published	2	1		
Stories about people leaving sheltered workshops for community employment	Number produced	9	8	5	1
Success Stories	Number published	21	20	8	4
Videos focusing on people working 20 hours or more	Number produced	2	2		
VR/ODDS Quarterly Calls	Number held		4	4	4
Weekly Employment First Messages	Number published	34	26	16	15
YouTube video about people with significant disabilities	Number produced	3	2	2	1

I. Discovery Service Redesign

Discovery is a person-centered, time-limited, employment planning service. It can help an individual obtain, maintain, or advance in a competitive integrated job at or above minimum wage. Activities in the service can vary and can identify an individual's interests, strengths, and abilities.

ODDS and its stakeholders collaborated to redesign Discovery. Using the Discovery Fidelity Scale developed by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, the Discovery Stakeholder group recommended that ODDS structure the service to build on itself. With that charge, Discovery now has distinct stages:

1. The Pre-Discovery Referral Process: By documenting and discussing past employment experiences, the person and the team determine if Discovery is a good investment of the person's time. Information is ingrained in the person's Discovery experience.
2. The Home Visit
3. Six Community Employment-Related Experiences
4. Development of Career Themes, An Employment Prospecting List and next steps

TABLE I. Policy Documents and Related Information (Effective 9/1/2021)

Discovery Guidelines for SCs PAs and Providers Worker Guide	7/1/2021
Instructions-Opening-Discovery-Profile	4/14/2021
Discovery Profile 2021	3/23/2021
Discovery Employment Tour Prompts and Ideas	3/23/2021
Discovery Home Visit Sample	3/23/2021
Pre-Discovery Checklist	3/23/2021
Discovery Experiential Components Worker Guide	3/23/2021
Virtual Discovery Changes	9/1/2021

J. Employment Outcomes System (EOS)

EOS (<https://eos.oregon.gov/>) is one of the primary tools used by ODDS to collect data from providers on employment outcomes. Providers are required to enter their data into EOS twice per year. In addition, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), family members and case managers can use EOS to find providers and make choices based on services offered.

Some of the most recent changes to EOS include:

- An updated tool to help website users easily compare employment providers and services ranging from benefits counseling to job coaching
- Providers can now specify service capacity by county
- A new “employment dashboard” tab that helps visualize the employment progress that Oregon has achieved
- Easier access for providers to get into EOS and update data and capacity information
- A new homepage look, including color scheme and EOS branding

A training video is available (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nljg15lrnAA>) to help providers learn how to put their data into EOS. Although twice-yearly reporting is required,

providers can go into EOS at any time to update capacity. For instance, if a provider organization has benefits counseling or job coaching capacity in a specific county, they can enter that so individuals in services and case management entities can see where there is capacity.

K. Employment First Road Map Project

The supported employment service system in Oregon is a web of interconnected tasks and decisions made by many people. People considering supported employment are naturally curious about what they're getting themselves into, and past attempts to convey all possible pathways through the service system were stymied by the inherent limitations of tools such as flowcharts.

Borrowing the architecture from another complex domain – taxes – the Employment First Road Map Project seeks to overcome the complexity using a web-based TurboTax like approach. By answering a series of questions designed to enable the user to define their situation, the platform builds an individualized guided path through the service system. At the end of the session the user should not only have a better understanding of the supported employment system as it applies to their situation, they'll also have the option to print or save an Adobe Acrobat version of their individualized road map: with user-specified information such as contact information for their local CDDP, brokerages, VR branch office, school Youth Transition Program (YTP) program, and information about any of the employment services they expressed interest in during their time on the website.

The [Road2Work](#) website went live in January 2019, and since then it has been accessed by 138 users. There is a plan to publicize the tool to attract more users.

L. SELN Consultation

ODHS continues to contract with the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) to receive monthly technical assistance to improve integrated employment outcomes.

M. Department of Education Trainings and Capacity Building Projects

Prior to the Lane v. Brown settlement agreement, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) established the Transition Technical Assistance Network (TTAN) to collaborate across agencies to improve the design and delivery of employment services for students with disabilities throughout Oregon’s education, vocational rehabilitation, and developmental disability service systems. Since that time, the TTAN has grown to include ODE Transition Network Facilitators, ODDS Regional Employment Specialists and VR Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), including dedicated Pre-ETS Coordinators. Table M highlights ODE’s TTAN activities that focused on cross-agency collaboration to improve employment service delivery and post-school outcomes for students experiencing disabilities.

TABLE M. TNF, Pre-ETS, VR Youth Team

ACTIVITY	METRIC	2017-18 AMOUNT	2018-19 AMOUNT	2019-20	2020-21 AMOUNT
Agency 101 training for school psychologists	Number of school districts receiving	1			
APSE Conferences - Transition Toolkit Presentation	Number of presentations delivered		2		
BEST Trainings	Number of counties receiving	9			
Breaking Barriers Conference	Number of conferences organized		1		
Career Resource Network	Number of counties				7
CDP Training	Number of counties receiving	4			
CDP-IEP Overlap training	Number of counties receiving	1			
Collaborative Problem-Solving Training	Number of counties receiving	4	4		
Confederation of School Administrators Conference presentation	Number of presentations	1	1		
Cross-Agency training	Number of entities receiving	4			
Educator Institutes	Number of counties receiving	14			
Employer Engagement & Appreciation events	Number of events held	2	3		
Employment First Team Meetings	Number of meetings attended	27			281
Family Transition Community Information Events	Number of events held				2
File Verifications	Number completed		7		
Friendship & Dating Class	Number of classes taught				10
Guided Group Discovery trainings	Number of entities receiving	6			7
Heart of Oregon Camp LEAD (Leadership, Empowerment, Advocacy and Development)	Number of students participating				24
High Quality Transition IEP Training	Number of counties receiving	9			
Independent Living Fair	Number of events held				3
Inter-Agency Collaboration presentation to county employment council	Number of counties receiving	1			
Job coach training	Number of counties receiving		5		
Mock Sheltered Workshop training	Number of school districts receiving	4			
Morning of Learning Presentation (VR youth services & Pre-ETS)	Number of events held				5
Motivational Enhancement Group Intervention Training	Number of entities receiving	6			14
Motivational Enhancement Group Intervention Training	Number of 10 session classes completed		16		
Online Charter Schools - Transition Service Supports	Number of schools receiving				4
OR Assoc. of Higher Ed & Disability Conf. Navigating the IEP presentation	Number of presentations	1			
Oregon Statewide Transition Conference	Number of attendees	600			
Oregon Transition Podcast	Number of episodes produced				8
Parent Night Events	Number of events held	5			1
PATH Trainings	Number of entities receiving	14	18		1
Person-Centered Plan Training	Number of trainings delivered	21	13		
PIES Trainings	Number of trainings delivered	9			
Post-School and Annual IEP Goals training	Number of school districts receiving	2			
Post-School Outcomes Survey training	Number of trainings delivered	7			
Post-secondary school visits	Number of colleges visited				3
Pre-ETS	Number of students receiving				1907
Pre-ETS and Transition Services Agreements	Number of school districts participating				66
Professional Learning Community (PLC) Meetings	Number of meetings facilitated				46
Regional Employment Collaboration (REC) Training	Number of counties receiving	3	24		
Regional Job Clubs	Number of counties receiving	4	13		4
Seamless Transition Boot Camps	Number of counties receiving	5			
Seamless Transition Meetings	Number of schools receiving				8
Spotlight on Success Training	Number of trainings delivered		4		
Statewide Transition Conference	Number of attendees		650		652
STEPPS Training	Number of trainings delivered		3		
Summer Work Experience	Number of IDD students participating	100	181		
Summer Work Internship for Transition (SWIFT)	Number of IDD students participating		20		
System Performance & Review presentation	Number of entities receiving	8			
TA agency-brokerage collaboration training	Number of counties receiving	4			
TA School-Based Businesses	Number of school districts receiving	1			
TA Secondary IEP Development/Transition Planning	Number of school districts receiving	3			17
Transition Linkage Coalition Meetings	Number of meetings facilitated				10
Trauma Informed Care for Education training	Number of counties receiving	4			
Tribal relationship building	Number of tribes contacted		4		
Virtual Agency Resource Night	Number of counties receiving				5
Virtual Independent Living Fair	Number of events held				1
Virtual Mock Interviews with Local Employers	Number of events held				6
Youth Job Fairs	Number of events held	6			5
Youth Transition Program (YTP) Regionals - MSW/Transition Training	Number of trainings delivered		5		
YTP Technical Assistance Provider Site Visits	Number of site visits				192

N. Vocational Rehabilitation Trainings and Projects

Since the first reporting period in 2017, VR has seen consistent growth in the number of I/DD and transition aged youth clients. Employment First has become much more of a movement

than a policy, aligning VR, ODDS and ODE core values and long-term shared purposes. The partnership includes several unique formal and informal cooperative opportunities designed to share knowledge and provide value for our joint consumers. Examples include:

- Shared membership on local, regional, and state Employment First committees,
- Joint participation on Lane v Brown Settlement Agreement oversight and steering committees,
- Creation of a joint VR/ODDS Implementation of Supported Employment working group (VOISE)
- Shared membership in a “Triage” committee designed to bring executive leadership from both VR and ODDS together to work through particularly challenging cases involving I/DD and transition clients.
- A new collaborative VR and ODDS “Think Tank” offered as a virtual drop-in case staffing for VR staff twice a month.
- Creation of a VR/ODDS/ODE Project Search steering committee with joint responsibility for statewide coordination.
- A series of virtual Partner Agency Collaborating Together (PACT) trainings presented jointly by VR/ODDS and ODE (see Section M) that provided agency staff training in effective and collaborative transfers between schools, VR and DD services.
- VR implemented virtual and on-demand video trainings for staff including:
 - Financial Needs Test
 - ORCA eSignature Process
 - Maximizing Hours for VR Participants
 - Notices of Proposed Action (NOPA)
 - Virtual Intake Process including tutorials
 - Virtual Case Staffing Agendas
 - SSA Disability Verifications in ODHS Mainframe
 - Eligibility Training
 - Oregon VR Standards for Ethical Conduct
 - Advanced Practices for Effective Helpers
 - Job Placement Services Contract Overview
 - Job Developer Orientation Training
 - Motivational Interviewing and Motivational Enhancement Group Intervention (MEGI) Training

VR has focused on providing virtual service delivery to individuals with disabilities during the COVID pandemic. These changes required a huge shift related to policy, procedures, and staff/partner training.

In addition to the trainings, VR developed other resources including: Supporting VR Clients with High-Risk Health Conditions, SSA Benefits Data Request Training and Accepting Electronic Signatures quick-reference guides.

Lastly, in addition to VR's contribution to transitioning sheltered workshop participants to competitive integrated employment (CIE), the total count of transition-age individuals receiving a new Supported Employment Service from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2020 was 4,675. Of that number, 4,025 have received an IPE from VR. This means that 86 percent of transition-age individuals received an IPE from VR (versus 50 percent required by the settlement agreement). TABLE N Vocational Rehabilitation shows the communication and training activities conducted over the 2017-2021 reporting years:

TABLE N. Vocational Rehabilitation		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
ACTIVITY	METRIC	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Administrative rule changes	Number of administrative rules updated				8
COVID response policy - Oregon VR Use of Electronic Signatures	Number of policies adopted				1
Development of interactive training & technical assistance for job developers	Number of contracts let				2
Disability-specific virtual training for I/DD clients	Number of trainings offered				3
Job Developer Orientation Training (JDOT) for New Job Developers	Number of trainings		22		
Job Developer Resource Guide & Desk Manual	Number of editions published				1
Job placement lunch & learn trainings	Number of trainings held				8
Job placement lunch & learn trainings	Number of attendees				353
Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) trainings to VR staff	Number of trainings held				10
Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) trainings to VR staff	Number of staff trained				200
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)	Number of services provided to transition youth	19,000+			
Provider training for complex I/DD and co-morbid mental health conditions	Number of RFAs issued				1
Region 1 "Tools & Tips when working with I/DD Individuals" training	Average number of attendees per week				15
Rural Stakeholders Group meetings	Number of topics covered				26
Serving Clients with Significant Barriers to Employment (Track 3)	Number of sheltered workshop clients served			157	
Subminimum Wage Advising	Number of clients advised	1239	990	676	25
Virtual Intake Process training	Number of trainings held				8
Virtual Intake Process training	Number of students trained				160
Virtual Job Developer Orientation Training	Number of trainings held				16
Virtual Job Developer Orientation Training	Number of employment providers trained				540
Virtual Job Developer Orientation Training for Rural Areas	Number of trainings held				1
Virtual Job Developer Orientation Training for Rural Areas	Number of employment providers trained				20
Virtual Job Placement Services Overview for Job Developers training	Number of trainings held				5
Virtual Job Placement Services Overview for Job Developers training	Number of students trained				100
Virtual Pre-ETS	Number of schools participating				3
Virtual Pre-ETS	Number of providers participating				4
Virtual Pre-ETS	Number of I/DD youth participating				56
Vocational Rehabilitation Inservice	Number of I/DD-relevant sessions		32	8	
Vocational Rehabilitation Inservice	Number of I/DD session attendees		200+	545	
Vocational Rehabilitation Job Placement Service Contracts	Total number of contracts	234	211	215	
VR I/DD Liason Counselor Group meetings	Number of meetings		12		
VR staff "Mentor Minute" monthly virtual meetings	Number of topics presented				11
VR/ODDS/CME/Provider Service Crosswalk training & tool	Number of tools developed				1
VR-ODDS Implementation of Supported Employment (VOISE)	Number of meetings held			12	12
Winter work experience for youth	Number of programs participating				4
Winter work experience for youth	Number of I/DD youth participating				15

O. Prospective Provider Orientation Training & Enrollment Online Tool

One strategy to build capacity is to recruit and enroll new employment professional providers such as Personal Support Worker (PSW) Coaches, Independent Contractors, and provider agencies. However, enrolling as an ODDS provider and a VR contractor is complicated, error prone and the ensuing frustration with the process could potentially deter otherwise qualified

providers from joining the team. In addition, coaching prospective providers through the enrollment process over the phone/via email is time consuming for ODHS staff.

To increase the number of qualified providers certified to provide employment services, Employment First built online tools to provide prospective PSW Job Coaches and Independent Contractors with every form, guide, and link necessary to apply to become an ODDS enrolled provider and a VR contractor, to do so on the first try and with minimal to no ODHS staff coaching. ODDS is now undertaking a project to develop a mandatory orientation training for all prospective providers and all service settings – including employment. This training is intended to improve service delivery quality by enabling prospective providers to make informed decisions about becoming I/DD service providers, and then give them the knowledge necessary to successfully take the plunge. An integral part of this project is building a Medicaid agency online tool applicable to all endorsements and service settings. Building on its PSW Job Coach and Independent Contractor tools, Employment First is contributing to the project by providing the development capability for this expanded online tool.

P. Reviewer Interviews and Suggestions

The Independent Reviewer (IR) in Lane v. Brown has visited all regions of Oregon during the 2020-21 reporting period. During the visits she interviewed VR Counselors, Community Developmental Disabilities Programs (CDDPs) and Brokerage representatives, provider agencies, educators and other stakeholders. She shared the outcomes of the interviews with state leadership to raise awareness of policy and procedures implementation across the state. The state is currently working to implement these recommendations as follows.

- 1. Independent Reviewer: The 2020 program review showed that there has been great progress in the understanding of school transition programs on the Mock Sheltered Workshop guidance, however there are still concerns over how in-school businesses are run, whether or not they are integrated, and the fact that they are mostly unpaid or that funds made are used for “social events.” ODE should either expand or create updated guidance on in-school businesses, identify best practices and guidance. This recommendation is ongoing.*

Update: In 2020, ODE required that all transition programs review the Mock Sheltered Workshop (MSW) policy and indicate that they were aware of the policy and guidance. Further, in 2021, ODE with ODDS reviewed its current MSW guidance, and updated the guidance to be clearer. ODE developed a training and provided that training to all TTAN

staff on Dec. 8, 2021, to ensure that TA could be provided across the state:
<https://sites.google.com/mesd.k12.or.us/oregontransitioneducation/employment>.

2. *Independent Reviewer: In the 2020 program reviews, some schools are still reporting low rates of participation in YTP of students with I/DD and even fewer are students with significant disabilities. In addition, during the 2020 program reviews several interviewees reported different selection processes for YTP. ODE and VR should work together on developing a standard and also on tracking. These programs show great promise along with the summer work programs, but paid work experiences should not only be coming through summer employment or these programs. ODE does not track the number of students who have had a paid work experience. ODE also does not do any formal tracking on when transition services begin for students with IDD. There remained some variation on what age transition services are starting from the 2020 program review. Further guidance and tracking on what age transition begins for students with IDD, and what paid employment opportunities are available would enable schools to connect students with available opportunities that they would otherwise miss and ensure that transition planning and services are starting before 18. This recommendation is ongoing.*

Update: ODE has updated the Oregon Administrative Rules to reflect the age at which transition should begin, as well as who should be included. The new rule can be found here:
<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/viewSingleRule.action?ruleVrsnRsn=282668>

3. *Independent Reviewer: It is still a concern, from the 2020 program reviews, that local public school districts in Oregon are still not frequently playing a significant role in helping current students with I/DD access paid, individualized work experiences and would benefit from greater technical assistance, information, and encouragement from the State. Coordination and communication between the education system and the adult service system was again raised by multiple interviewees. This recommendation is ongoing.*

Update: ODE received technical assistance from the past IR, Cathy Ficker Terrill on this topic in 2018-2019. With COVID-19, many community experiences and paid work experiences were placed on hold. However, ODE and VR continue to support YTP and expand YTP (in 2020, 828 youth or 27 percent of the total YTP student count were

individuals eligible for ODDS services – which is likely an undercounting because many students do not access ODDS services until post-transition). Further, Seamless Transition, which often includes paid work experience is expanding in 2021 with new training for school districts interested. ODDS will offer grants for transition Project Search programs in 2022. ODE has updated its MSW guidance and is emphasizing the need for paid community-based employment. Summer work has also expanded to be year-round. Some summer work information includes:



21_RFA_Summer_Ja
n_InfoSessionPM25.Summer Work 2021.Guidebook PPT 091:



ReStarting RFA



Seamless

4. *Independent Reviewer: To ensure that Oregon is delivering employment services, consistent with an individual's abilities and choices, there must be provider capacity for the full range of employment services, no matter where an individual is physically located. Provider capacity is an issue that the state has been in open conversation about with stakeholders during monthly Employment First meetings. There remain areas in the state of Oregon where all types of employment services are not available, including Discovery and Job Development. The State is working diligently to increase employment providers. This is a provider capacity problem. The state has made efforts to aid capacity building. ODDS has also provided start-up and innovation grants, provider technical assistance grants and reimbursement for online ACRE/APSE training for rural development to help providers expand into new areas. As a result, Albertina Kerr and CAS are now in Hood River; Rise is now in Eastern Oregon; Trellis is considering Southern Oregon, and Full Life is in Clatsop county. And, as noted above, ODDS has rolled out a jobs board website with some unique features that will help address capacity statewide. The state has taken strides, however, this must be a focus of 2021 as the pandemic is currently affecting capacity building and many providers have lost staff and funding. This recommendation is ongoing.*

Update: Capacity in rural areas has been a challenge, historically. In 2020 and 2021, ODDS has enhanced its rural capacity building workgroup, which meets monthly to share resources, and trainings. Eastern Oregon Support Services Brokerage supported by ODDS (the main Brokerage in Eastern Oregon) has hired someone to focus on capacity building. ODDS will be issuing grants utilizing ARPA funding that will focus on rural capacity building. Further, despite some setbacks, new providers and services have recently started in Eastern Oregon.

In the Ontario area, Thrive and WITCO, among others, continue to serve other parts of Eastern Oregon. ODDS has concentrated efforts on bringing on PSW Job Coaches in Southern Oregon and expanding providers such as Trendsitions and Voice of Reason (VOR). In the coastal areas of Oregon, while some providers have ended services (such as Mentor Oregon), others have taken on those services including Bay Area Enterprises and Star of Hope. This is due to diligent work by Regional Employment Specialists and VR branch managers to expand and replace lost capacity. More information can be found in the COVID recovery plan, here:



COVIDcapacityplan.
pdf

5. *Independent Reviewer: A plan has not been submitted, but this is understandable given the pandemic. This should be a focus of the state in 2021, and the state should develop and submit the plan referenced above by June 1, 2021. Several providers reported in the 2020 program review that the rate structure does not accommodate people with more significant support needs and that job development funding through VR is not enough to support people with I/DD. The plan should address these provider capacity concerns.*

Update: See the following:



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capacitystarCOVID2Visio-
.26.pdf



TrajectoryCovi
dRecovery.pdf



LifeCourseCapacity
Conversation3.321.p

6. *Independent Reviewer: There has not been a data system developed or implemented. During the 2020 program reviews the lack of a system for data collection and information outside of eXPRS was raised by multiple interviewees. The state should provide an update on progress towards a statewide data system for tracking employment data and a monitoring system for CDPs by September 1, 2021.*

Update: ODDS has implemented a data system – the Quality Assurance Field Review system has been utilized, which is why there have been updated CDP reports in 2020 and 2021. This is a data system, that has integrated employment reviews. The tool can be viewed here: <https://obiapps.dhs.sdc.pvt/DDQAFR/>. Further, ODDS has received funding to design

and implement a case management system, which is outlined on the ARPA funding, here: <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/DD/Documents/Final-ODDS-10percent-FMAP.pdf>

7. Independent Reviewer: The state did complete the audit of Career Development Plans in 2020, and has incorporated the CDP audit in the QA process per SA.VIII.1.

Update: The Career Development Plan, or CDP, has continued to be monitored and reported on in 2021.



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8. Independent Reviewer: In order to reduce wait times, the state should continue to explore ways to streamline the VR process using technology.

Update: VR has worked diligently to streamline the process. Specifically, VR has [implemented electronic signatures](#). Further, ODDS and VR continue to implement and train the [statewide release of information form](#), which was a recommendation by the previous IR. VR re-issued rules on supported employment to ensure that individuals with more significant barriers to employment can access services as outlined in OAR 582-072-0040. VR has brought on several new business relations staff and updated policy to ensure VR can effectively engage business to provide opportunities for services to all individuals who access VR. Further, despite the pandemic, VR has issued updated guidance on micro-enterprise and self-employment for easier access to employment. AR 20-01 included a CIE toolkit to assist VR staff in ensuring placements are CIE. [AR 20-04](#) clarified that services could be provided virtually to ensure that access to VR services continued. [AR 20-06](#) re-emphasized the need for timely determinations, and [AR 20-07](#) specifically allowed virtual intake and application.

In addition to these policies, VR provided training on the virtual intake process, including 14 video tutorials, as well as the e-signature process. VR also provided training on virtual job placement services, and virtual Job Development Orientation Training (JDOT) training to keep providers up to speed on requirements. Overall, VR has continued to operate and streamline the process as possible to ensure timely access to VR services.

9. *Independent Reviewer: The caseloads of VR counselors who primarily serve individuals with IDD should be evaluated and reduced where appropriate.*

Update: VR has limited position authority, as do all state programs in Oregon. VR advocated, along with ODHS, for additional positions in 2019-2021, but only one new position was allocated, and it was not a VR Counselor position. VR will continue to advocate for this.

10. *Independent Reviewer: The state should continue to expand training opportunities so that all VR counselors have a comfort level and the knowledge to support people with IDD.*

Update: VR has worked diligently to provide these trainings. Specifically, VR has provided:

- a. JDOT virtually for all providers.
- b. JDOT training for rural areas.
- c. Several Motivational Interviewing trainings including MI basics.
- d. Maximizing Hours for VR.
- e. Virtual Intake Process Tutorials.
- f. Ongoing contract with Cornell.
- g. Continued In-Service, which had a track specific for VRCs and providers serving people with I/DD.

11. *Independent Reviewer: The state should analyze and report on barriers to receiving employment services for class members interested in working.*

Update: Based on this recommendation, ODDS has reviewed barrier data in CDPs. Overall, ODDS has identified that concerns regarding transportation, communication and behavior support/medical support needs are the most prominent barriers.

Regarding transportation, ODDS is implementing a transportation agency rate in July 2022. Further, ODDS is working with Carepool to try and bring this service to Oregon so that a safe and accessible rideshare program can be utilized. ODDS will also be using ARPA funding to review our transportation system and improve it as possible.

In terms of communication, these frequently were identified and resolved utilizing the CDP process. Job coaches and new technology information can frequently resolve these concerns.

Finally, in terms of behavioral and medical concerns, ODDS and VR are working on an Interagency Agreement specific to this type of support cross system, as well as with technical support providers such as Cornell and SELN to ensure that individuals can have their medical/behavioral needs met on the job.

ODDS will continue to track barriers (and innovative solutions) so that barriers can be addressed.

12.Independent Reviewer: The state should review the length of time class members spend in Employment Path Community settings and Small Group Employment and consider whether to implement policies or directives that this is a support services should be time limited and ultimately lead to CIE.

Update: ODDS does not have plans to time-limit employment path or small group services further than they are already limited.

13.Independent Reviewer: Creation of a case management system would assist in all parts of the CIE process so that relevant agencies know when different employment services are being delivered and when shifts and transitions need to happen without emails and phone calls. This was raised multiple times as a reason for delay in the 2020 Program Review. A comprehensive case management system would allow the state to have accurate data and information across the state and across ODDS (including CDDPs and brokerages), VR, and transition. Access to data continues to be an issue, a comprehensive case management system would provide all entities and the clients access to the same information which would improve employment outcomes.

Update: ODDS received legislative funding for a statewide case management system and started development of this system in 2021.

14.Independent Reviewer: During the 2020 Program Review, interviewees cited failures to include relevant stakeholders in the CDP process, as well as in the IEP process, as a reason for delays in services or for individuals with IDD not being connected to the appropriate adult service agencies. Most interviewees from the adult service system reported minimal direct interactions with transition programs and with the IEP process.

Very few referrals were coming directly from school transition programs to employment providers. In addition, some Brokerages, CDDPs and VRCs reported participating in IEP meetings, however the common refrain was that this occurred only “when we know about it.”

Update: This is a requirement in the rules for ODE and ODDS. Specifically, it is stated that educators must invite partners (if the individual desires and is okay with this) to IEPs. In the ODDS rule it states that case management entities must attend IEPs if invited. ODDS and ODE have continued to share this information broadly. ODDS/ODE have also trained TNFs and Regional Employment Specialists on this information to ensure that this is addressed. If the state of made aware of a specific situation, the school district or ODDS/ODE addresses it immediately.

15.Independent Reviewer: ODE should develop guidance for transition staff on best practices for ensuring that adult agencies (especially VR, but also case management entities and ODDS providers) attend IEP meetings as regularly as possible. VR participation in IEP meetings would likely have a significant positive impact on helping youth obtain CIE upon transitioning to adult services. VR should develop similar guidance for its own staff to conduct frequent outreach to school districts and to parents of transition-aged youth with I/DD to facilitate their inclusion in IEP meetings and ensure the smoothest possible transition from high school to VR services. The state should submit such guidance to the independent reviewer by December 2021.

Update: See above.

16.Independent Reviewer: The State improve coordination between school districts, VR and ODDS.

Update: One way to do this is through the Seamless Transition program, which is being rolled out and re-trained as needed. Project Search also requires local Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs), which will be required for future Project Search Programs. ODDS/VR/ODE have an MOU/IAA that is reviewed, updated, shared with the field, etc. frequently.



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17.Independent Reviewer: The state should re-train CDDPs and Brokerages on who should be included in the CDP process, and create guidance on how to include the individual with IDD, as well as the relevant agencies, including providers that should participate. The state should submit such guidance to the Independent Reviewer by December 2021.

Update: ODDS has made this widely available in the CME/VR trainings, as well as in the new Clackamas Curriculum. There were 12 new, on-demand trainings for CMEs/VRCs in 2020/2021. Further, ODDS has worked with Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition to create a guide and is ensuring this information is available to all:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EMPLOYMENT/EMPLOYMENT-FIRST/Documents/OSAC-Employment-Guide-2019.pdf>.

18.Independent Reviewer: The 2020 program review made clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on provider capacity in terms of staff and funding, which has exacerbated pre-existing provider capacity challenges that have led to people being unable to access employment services, as described above.

In addition to the ongoing Recommendations concerning provider capacity, in light of the impact of the pandemic, the State should develop a pandemic recovery plan to rebuild and re-strengthen provider capacity. The plan should include how to deliver support and funding to supported employment providers so that they can recruit, train, and mentor staff. It should be designed to restore the number of provider staff to at least its pre-pandemic level. The State should report on this plan to the Independent Reviewer by June 1, 2021.

Update:



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Summary

Based on the ongoing commitment of ODHS to funding transformation grants, as well as the good faith efforts to provide sufficient provider capacity evidenced by the projects and activities describes in this report, Oregon continues to meet the requirements of the Settlement Agreement and Executive Order 15-01.