

# Government to Government 2016 Annual Report



2016 Oregon Legislative Commission on Indian Services Spring Gathering and State Agency Training



*“We believe that different cultural perspectives strengthen our teams and discussions, and lead to creativity and innovation in the way we approach our work.”*

## About the Oregon Employment Department

The mission of the Oregon Employment Department is to Support Business and Promote Employment. Through the delivery of its services in more than 40 locations throughout the state, we accomplish our mission by:

- Supporting economic stability for Oregonians and communities during times of unemployment through the payment of unemployment benefits;
- Serving businesses by recruiting and referring the best qualified applicants to jobs, and providing resources to diverse job seekers in support of their employment needs; and
- Developing and distributing quality workforce and economic information to promote informed decision making.

The Employment Department provides services through its major divisions:

- Unemployment Insurance;
- Workforce Operations; and
- Workforce and Economic Research

The Employment Department closely aligns with the Governor’s priority to create a seamless system of education. Our agency supports this priority by providing multiple pathways to learning and careers, especially to underserved populations.

It is the policy of the Oregon Employment Department to provide equal opportunity in employment, training and advancement, and to administer its employment practices, without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veterans’ status, or disability.

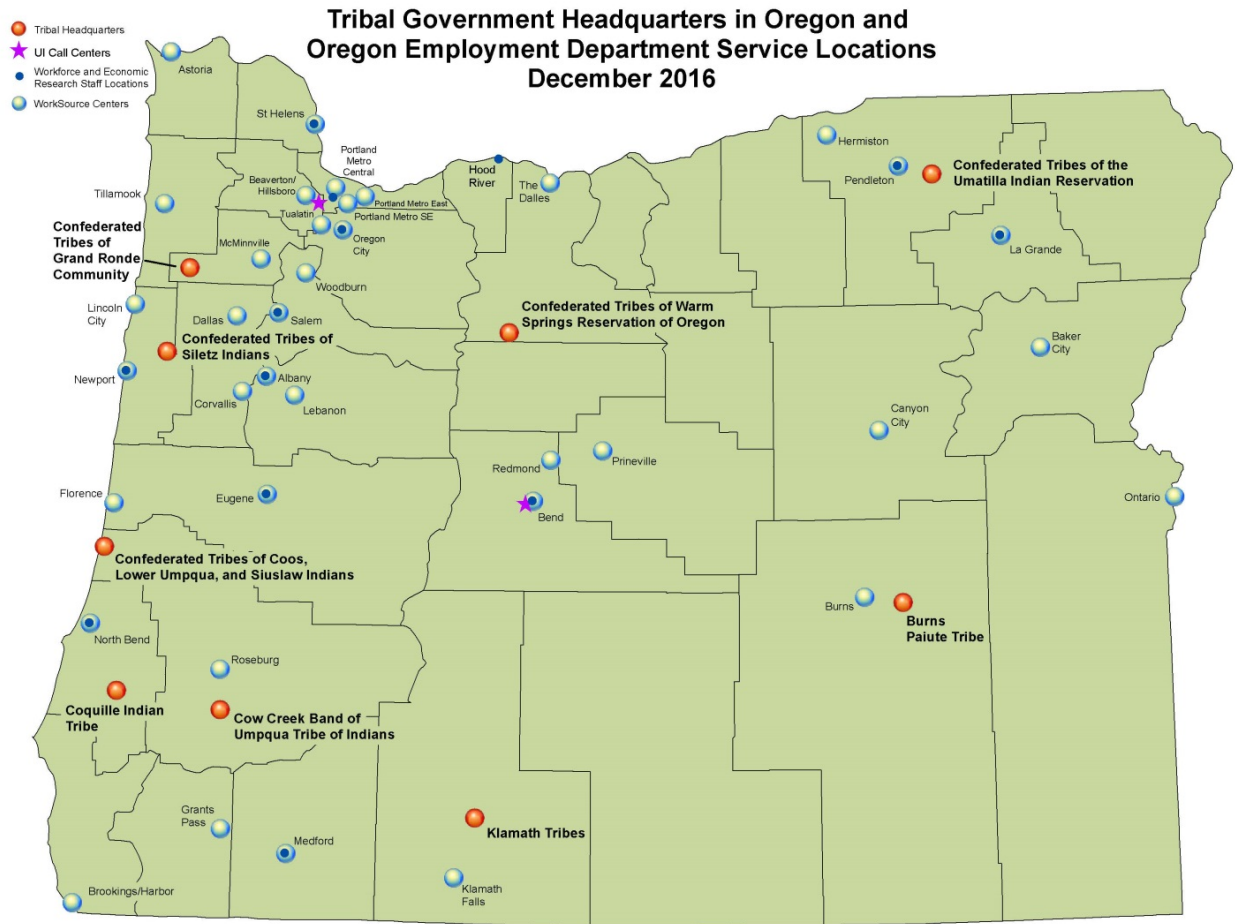
Through the leadership of the Director, Executive Team, and our Equity and Inclusion Council (comprised of agency leaders who partner with the Executive Team and advise on matters of diversity and inclusion), it is expected that each employee of the agency treat all customers, and fellow employees, with respect.

We aspire to be seen as an employer of choice because we are welcoming and accessible with a work environment that is inclusive and supportive. We believe that different cultural perspectives strengthen our teams and discussions, and lead to creativity and innovation in the way we approach our work. We look forward to continuing and expanding on the mutually beneficial relationships that have been built with Oregon’s tribal governments and businesses.

## Commitment to Cultivating Tribal Relations

The Oregon Employment Department values its relationships with Oregon’s tribes. The Department administers three employment-related programs– Workforce Operations, Workforce and Economic Research, and Unemployment Insurance– that positively impact tribal organizations and tribal members.

*“It is the policy of the Oregon Employment Department to recognize and respect the culture, history, and traditions of Oregon’s American Indians, and to cooperate and communicate with Oregon’s tribal governments and members.”*



**Note:** The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Call Center locations are where workers file claims via the internet or over the telephone, not walk-in services.

In 2016, the department strengthened our commitment to tribal relations by adopting a new [policy on Tribal Government to Government Relations](#). It is the policy of the Oregon Employment Department to recognize and respect the culture, history, and traditions of Oregon’s American Indians, and to cooperate and communicate with Oregon’s tribal governments and members. The department is also guided by [Executive Order 96-30: State/Tribal Government to Government Relations](#).

Tribal governments are separate sovereign nations with powers to protect the health, safety and welfare of their members and to govern their lands. This tribal sovereignty predates the existence of the U.S. government and the State of Oregon and the Oregon Employment Department acknowledges the significant stature of the state’s first peoples.

## Responsibility

The Employment Department’s Director is the primary liaison to tribes. The Director and agency representatives actively participate in the quarterly Government to Government Economic Development and Community Services Tribal Cluster and Legislative Commission on Indian Services meetings and events.

The Director has primary responsibility for issues and programs affecting the tribes. These programs include, but are not limited to, services to assist tribal members in finding employment and tribal companies in finding workers, as well as the provision of

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economic and workforce information to support the tribe’s workforce and economic development efforts. The department also seeks opportunities to involve representatives of the tribes in advisory roles for the department and for Oregon’s workforce system.

All members of the Employment Department’s Executive Team are responsible for communicating and implementing our policy throughout their area of responsibility.

**The Director:**

- Notifies employees, by email or other means, of the provisions of [Oregon Revised Statutes \(ORS\) 182.162-182.168](#) and this policy during December of each year.
- Seeks input from representatives of Oregon’s tribes as programs or policies that might impact the tribes are developed.
- Ensures that managers and employees who communicate or work with tribes receive training, annually, on the legal status of tribes, the legal rights of tribal members, and other issues of concern to tribes.
- Attends annual or more frequent meetings of state agency leaders and tribal leaders.
- Develops and submits an annual report on the activities of the Department relating to Indian tribes.
- Ensures compliance with relevant state and federal laws relating to relationships with Indian tribal entities.

**The Executive Team:**

- Communicates and partners with the tribes in a manner that fosters mutual respect and that seeks opportunities for collaboration.
- Promotes and improves government-to-government relations between the Employment Department and the tribes.

**Agency Contacts:**

Kay Erickson, Director  
503-947-1477 or [kay.erickson@oregon.gov](mailto:kay.erickson@oregon.gov)

Graham Slater, Deputy Director  
503-947-1631 or [graham.j.slater@oregon.gov](mailto:graham.j.slater@oregon.gov)

Andrea Fogue, Legislative and Public Affairs Manager  
503-947-1301 or [andrea.j.fogue@oregon.gov](mailto:andrea.j.fogue@oregon.gov)

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## 2016 Agency Highlights

### Workforce Operations

#### Overview

Workforce Operations primarily serves businesses and job seekers to help grow a robust Oregon economy by supporting innovative local workforce delivery systems focused on serving communities. Through customizable services that solve challenges such as recruitment and training, Workforce Operations identifies, screens, and refers job applicants to employers. Workforce Operations assists businesses secure federal tax credits and offset training costs for hiring specific populations such as persons receiving public assistance, people with disabilities, veterans, and the long-term unemployed (longer than six months). Between December 1, 2015 and November 30, 2016 the program served over 11,000 employers and more than 182,000 job seekers.

Through a collaborative, customer-centric service delivery model, Workforce Operations works with partner agencies and organizations to assess and improve the job-readiness of candidates, assist job seekers in obtaining employment, teach them job search skills, and coach them on job search strategies, options, and expectations. Primary partners include: regional and local training providers (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I); the Oregon Workforce Investment Board; Local Workforce Development Boards; Office of Workforce Investments (an interagency partnership between the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and Employment Department); Department of Human Services’ Self-Sufficiency and Vocational Rehabilitation programs; Commission for the Blind; Oregon’s 17 independent community colleges; and local economic development organizations.

#### 2016 Activities and Initiatives

In 2016, approximately one third of the Employment Department’s WorkSource Oregon offices throughout the state partnered with a tribal government or tribal business. These relationships were mostly business recruitment, exploratory services, job seeker workshops and labor market information regarding wages and unemployment. They also include: recruitment of employees for tribal businesses; regular networking with tribal employers’ Human Resource Departments; and working with tribes on local workforce investment boards.

Examples of these local partnerships include:

- The Klamath Falls WorkSource Center provides recruitment assistance to the three tribes that make up the Klamath Tribes: Klamath, Modoc and Yahooskin. The Klamath Tribes continue to lease a cubicle in our WorkSource center one day a week to meet with Klamath Tribes members. The Klamath Tribes sends an Employment Specialist from the tribe to participate in our WorkSource Local Leadership Team meetings and update the Leadership Team on tribal employment programs and services.
- The Roseburg WorkSource Center works with both the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians and their entity UIDC (Umpqua Indian Development Corporation) which includes Seven Feathers Casino. UIDC is an active member in the community. Representatives attend our Oregon Employer Council Douglas County monthly meetings, participate in and co-sponsor the annual Career Expo.
- The Dalles WorkSource Center is developing a partnership to support the small business owners that operate as part of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish

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Commission which includes the Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce tribes. This support will include offering training services to the tribal population.

- The McMinnville WorkSource Center works closely with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community and their affiliated casino Spirit Mountain Casino to provide business and employment services.
- The McMinnville Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff attended the 4th Annual Native American Veterans Summit at the Confederated Tribes in Grand Ronde, which is hosted by the Native Wellness Institute. The Employment Department provides outreach activities, including employment information on current job openings to veterans with significant barriers to employment, and collaborates on a case by case basis with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community’s employment and vocational rehabilitation counselors to provide services to homeless Native American veterans.
- The Eugene, Florence, and Springfield WorkSource Centers contact the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians about job fairs and workshops.
- The Florence WorkSource Center works with the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians Tribe (Three Rivers Casino) to assist with their recruitments and post jobs. The casino is notified of all job fairs and is given the opportunity to participate. The casino attended the fall job fair at Lane Community College. The participants from Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians also attended the spring job fair.
- The Newport and Lincoln City WorkSource Centers have been working with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) group within the Siletz Tribe, providing them monthly classes on job readiness.
- The Coos Bay WorkSource Center has a good working partnership with the Coquille Indian Tribe. The Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians Tribe opened another Three Rivers Casino in Coos Bay in January of 2016, hiring an additional 90 people.
- The Brookings WorkSource Center works with California tribes, through the Smith River Rancheria and the Elk Valley Rancheria, periodically with the labor exchange. Although the tribes’ business is in California, Brookings is in their demographic for both customers and employees.
- The Madras WorkSource Center works with TANF and Jobs Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS) clients from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, providing job readiness and employment assistance. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Human Resources Manager is invited to all of the Central Oregon Local Leadership Team meetings that are held bi-weekly in Bend with the East Cascade Workforce Investment Board.
- The Burns WorkSource Center has a standing relationship with the Burns Paiute Tribe and provided 15 job listing services to assist with filling open positions.
- The Canyon City WorkSource Center works closely with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs providing recruitment services for their job openings and job seeker services to local tribal businesses and members.

*“Tribal governments and businesses across Oregon request information about employment trends by industries and occupations. Research staff typically provides workforce and economic information to help with grants; to assist decision makers in prioritizing training resources; and demographic, commuting pattern and labor shed studies.”*

- The Pendleton and Hermiston WorkSource Centers work with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (Wild Horse Resort & Casino) providing business and employment services, labor market information, job seeker tools, and help with unemployment benefits.

## **Workforce and Economic Research**

### **Overview**

Workforce and Economic Research collects, estimates, analyzes, publishes, and distributes employment-related economic information to a variety of customers to aid in their decision making. Primary customers include private businesses, the unemployed and other job seekers, state and local workforce boards, elected officials and other policy-makers, education and training entities, students, government agencies and news media. This information helps customers understand current and future workforce trends and economic conditions. Data for the previous year is collected in the first quarter of each year so the most up to date information on outreach is for 2015. In 2015, Workforce and Economic Research responded to 6,400 customer information requests; gave roughly 340 presentations with a total audience of more than 14,000; distributed over 370,000 reports and publications; and welcomed roughly 400,000 visits to their QualityInfo.org website and 8,000 visits to their Workforce and Economic Research blog (OregonEmployment.Blogspot.com).

### **2016 Activities and Initiatives**

Workforce and Economic Research works with tribal governments and businesses in a variety of ways. Tribal governments and businesses across Oregon request information about employment trends by industries and occupations. Research staff typically provides workforce and economic information to help with grants; to assist decision makers in prioritizing training resources; and to inform demographic, commuting pattern and labor shed studies.

Examples of these partnerships include:

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the states with the ability to produce current unemployment rates for American Indian Areas (formally known as Indian Reservations) of certain sizes, dependent upon data availability. These estimates can currently be produced for nine of Oregon’s 21 Areas.
- At times, some Oregon-based tribes have been randomly selected to be in the Employment Department’s wage and employment surveys. Although this may be viewed as more of a survey for the department, it is a method used to share information back to employers, planners and others.
- There is an ongoing relationship with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation where the tribal entities know what information a Workforce Analyst or Regional Economist can provide, and there are contacts established where the customer can call when they have general questions about the economy or labor markets, or to request specific information. Our staff typically works with the Economic Planner for the tribe on economic development activities. On at least three occasions during the past year the agency has provided employment, job applicant, and wage information for occupations related to different economic development projects that the tribe was pursuing.
- There is an ongoing relationship with the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians where the tribal entities know what information a

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Workforce Analyst or Regional Economist can provide, and there are contacts established where the customer can call when they have general questions about the economy or labor markets. Our staff also sends monthly updates of the Coos, Curry, and Douglas County Economic Indicators to the tribes.

- Staff from our Workforce and Economic Research Division published a short article on Indian Tribal government employment in Umatilla County.
- There is an ongoing relationship with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Klamath Tribes: Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin, where the tribal entities know what information a Workforce Analyst or Regional Economist can provide, and there are contacts established where the customer can call when they have general questions about the economy or labor markets. Our agency staff has provided data for a few small data requests on employment and wages from both tribes. Staff also works together quite frequently with the economic development leader for the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The local Governor’s Regional Solutions Team has included our staff in visits to the reservation to do outreach and conduct meetings.

## **Unemployment Insurance**

### **Overview**

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) program provides temporary, partial wage replacement for workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. The income provided to unemployed workers partially stabilizes the economy in local communities experiencing high unemployment during economic downturns. The UI program also promotes reemployment and the preservation of a trained, local workforce for businesses during economic downturns. The UI program administers UI benefits, such as federal extensions when they are available, and other specialized programs with partners that include the United States Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) and other state agencies.

Based on quarterly data, between January 1 and September 30, 2016, approximately 105,600 workers claimed benefits and received approximately \$381.2 million in UI benefits. Workers file claims via the internet or over the telephone through an integrated call center, which handled about 277,000 calls. The UI program also collects UI payroll withholding taxes and deposits the funds in the UI Trust Fund. Within this same time, nearly 123,800 employers were served, more than 6.2 million individual wage records were processed, nearly \$38.8 million in payroll taxes were collected, and nearly 1,400 payroll audits were conducted. Through a combined payroll reporting system, the UI Division processed employer quarterly payroll reports for the Department of Revenue, the Department of Consumer and Business Services, and the Employment Department.

### **2016 Activities and Initiatives**

From time to time, employees working for tribal governments and businesses in tribal areas need help when they are out of work through no fault of their own. Unemployment Insurance provides a valuable safety net to provide economic stability for unemployed workers until they can become reemployed.

Examples of these partnerships include:

- For the most part the interactions that our UI program has with tribal entities are the same type we have with all employers: we receive payroll reports and UI contributions (tribes are generally reimbursing, not taxpaying, employers); contact them for information about people who have filed for UI benefits; and provide assistance when businesses lay off employees.



*“In 2017, we strive to cultivate our existing relationships by seeking new opportunities to partner with all of Oregon’s tribal governments.*

- A special interaction with tribal governments is when the agency pursues debt collections (benefit overpayments). We work with the tribes as we sometimes issue garnishments to them which they generally do, but are not required, to honor. This activity can range from informal communications to participating in hearings or submitting documentation to tribal courts to support garnishments.

In 2016, the Employment Department provided services to all nine of Oregon’s tribal governments. In 2017, we strive to cultivate our existing relationships by seeking new opportunities to partner with all of Oregon’s tribal governments.



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