
**Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
Annual Report Narrative**

OREGON

Program Year 2009



WORKSOURCE

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WorkSource Oregon

The state workforce development agencies and community partners have moved to a unified, simplified approach in delivering services to job seekers and employers through the implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act.

Oregon's workforce system serves Oregon workers by:

- helping people update their workplace skills,
- launching them toward higher wages, and
- referring them to jobs or educational career paths based on new technologies or innovations.

By bringing private industry together into a partnership with public providers, state agencies and educational institutions, Oregon offers a diverse array of workforce services throughout the state. This statewide network of public and private partners and services is collectively referred to as WorkSource Oregon.

WorkSource Oregon:

- Provides businesses with skilled workers, making hiring and training as simple as possible;
- Helps job seekers find jobs through skill matching, job search assistance, skill assessments, training and support services;
- Collaboratively leverages resources to align initiatives in the education, workforce and economic development arenas;
- Provides leadership to shape the education programs and workforce services that benefit individuals, businesses, and communities in Oregon;
- Broadens public access to skills, knowledge, and career opportunities;
- Fosters innovation in instruction, delivery, and data collection and dissemination; and,
- Meets public stewardship and accountability expectations to federal, state, and local funders and partners.

Alignment and Integration

“Integration will enhance the use of limited and declining funding through a more efficient use of resources and an elimination of program duplication and requirements. Integration will systematically improve the coordination of Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act funded services to achieve improved customer outcomes and more efficient and effective customer service.”

- Compass Policy for Alignment and Integration

Oregon is implementing an integrated service delivery model that effectively responds to 21st century industry demands. New methods and program design will ensure that our services and training are aligned with current local and regional labor market requirements. The goal is to create a new local workforce system that is skill based and will move each One-Stop Career Center client through a common set of value added services designed to increase their employability and their chances of retaining jobs and advancing in them.

The state workforce development organizations and community partners have moved to a simplified, unified approach in delivering "market driven" services to job seekers and employers through the implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act. At the same time, a collaborative approach to the delivery of technical assistance, training and capacity building to support state workforce development partners also is occurring among state agencies.

Oregon has taken the first steps to implement an integrated service delivery system, involving the design of a new service delivery model and the creation of a data-sharing infrastructure. These efforts at system and service integration affects the major workforce partners [Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), Oregon Employment Department (OED), Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD)] by:

- Moving beyond partnership to multi-disciplinary service integration
- Establishing integration minimums that are expected in all local areas
- Requiring that LWIBs convene the partners and are accountable for the development of an integrated service delivery system with OED and the LWIB

Multi-disciplinary service integration for all customers who come to a WorkSource Oregon physical location will:

- Increase the quality of services being delivered through OED and CCWD
- Focus on skill and talent development of job seekers as well as current workers
- Increase the wages, retention and advancement of Oregonians
- Positively impact the economic well being of the State

This is a substantial endeavor, affecting state and local policies and procedures, service delivery, staff training, resource management and sharing, cross-agency alignments, and multiple, often shifting, priorities based on federal and state requirements and customer and staff needs.

Representatives from WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and partner staff comprise the Integration Leadership Team. The Integration Leadership Team, informed by workgroups and other stakeholders, helps guide and align policy and procedure in the integrated service delivery environment.

In early 2010, the Integration Leadership Team created a high-level vision graphic of the relationship between WorkSource Oregon and Oregon's job seeking and business customers (see next page). The Integration Leadership Team presented this graphic to field staff along with an implementation plan to guide Oregon's ongoing strategic efforts and influence Oregon's "Measures of Success."

"Oregon needs competitive companies, productive people and innovative ideas to grow and keep stable, high-paying jobs in our state.

Oregon's WorkSource Centers have recently reorganized themselves to provide more relevant and valuable employment services to Oregonians based on skill development. These services are even more relevant in the economic downturn in which we now find ourselves."

– Theodore Kulongoski
Governor

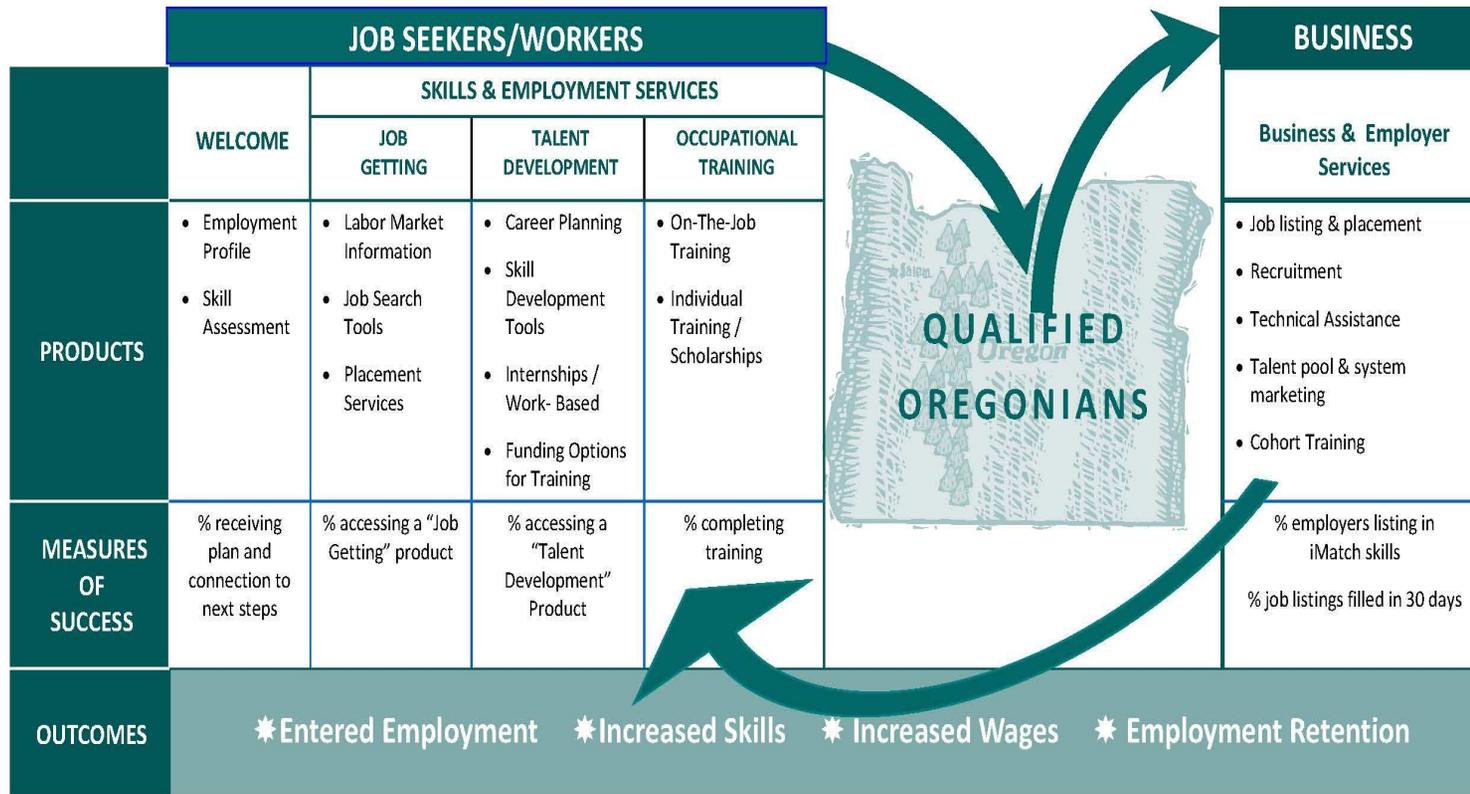
"Over the last year, all the partners that make up Oregon's workforce system have worked hard to bring about real change in workforce program delivery while serving a record number of job seekers in the worst recession since the Great Depression. Working together, we can transform Oregon's workforce and education training system so that all employers and workers can compete in the global market."

– Dave Williams
NW Natural
Chair, Oregon Workforce Investment Board



WORKSOURCE OREGON
 “Oregon’s Public Workforce System”

280,000 PEOPLE SERVED



Progress and Innovation

Workforce integration has caused positive change to how services are delivered throughout the state. In order to increase the quality of services being delivered the following elements were implemented:

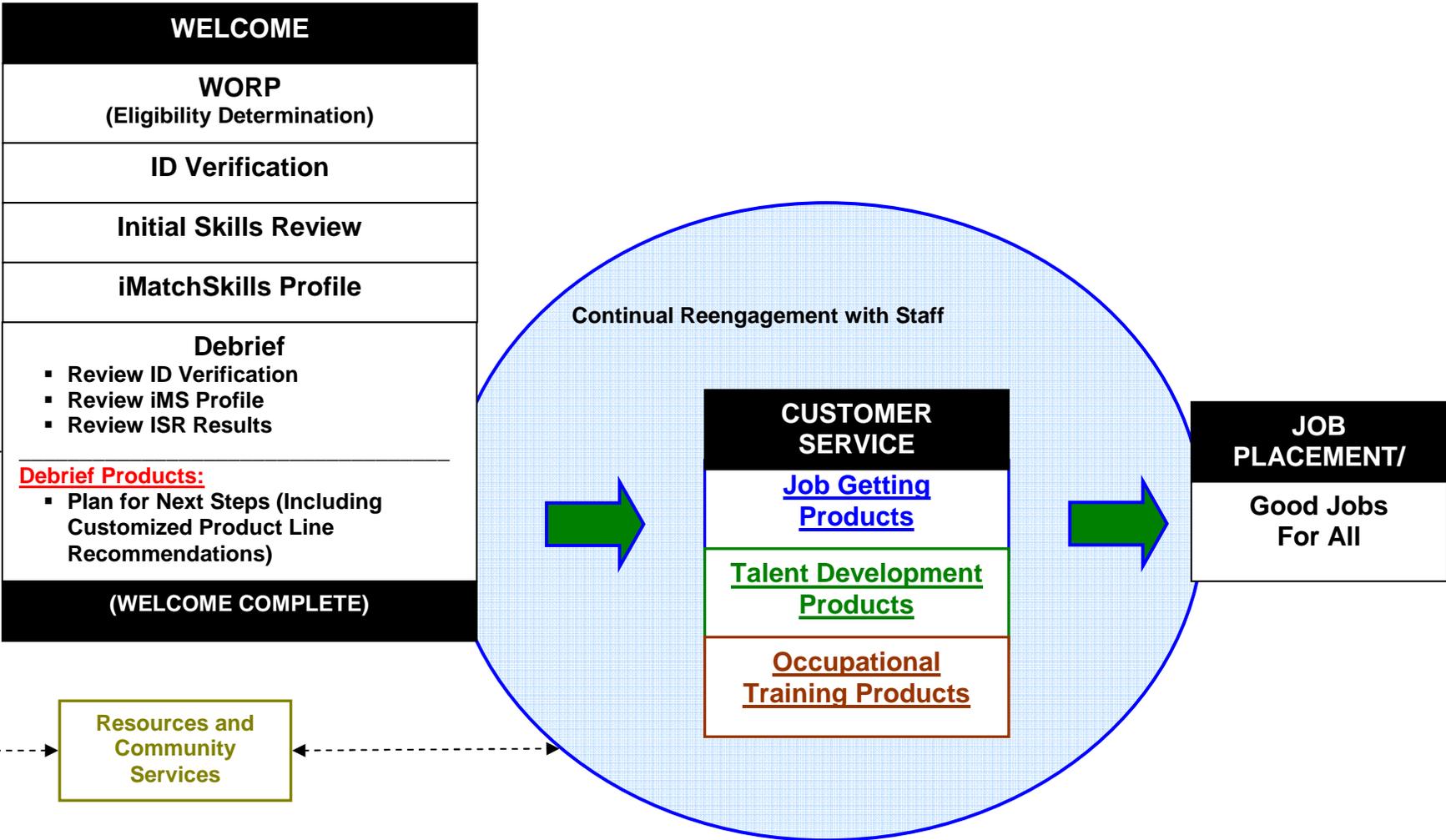
- all customers are registered using a common intake process;
- an integrated customer flow that clearly defines a service delivery process with a sequence of demand-driven, universal services;
- a focus on skill and talent development of job seekers, including unemployment claimants and current workers will begin with a standardized skill review;
- a focus on placing training completers into training related employment;
- an electronic menu of demand-driven skill enhancement products; and
- matching of job seekers and current workers with occupational training.

These transformational activities are in complete alignment with the Oregon Strategic Plan, “Winning in a Global Marketplace” and build on that foundation. We are addressing the need to change so that Oregon can be globally competitive; respond to changing demographics; address declining federal funds; and help customers leave as a better job candidate by knowing their skills and developing their skills and getting the best possible job with their skills.

Through workforce integration, staff is assigned by function rather than funding/program and formed into teams to provide service to customers, from initial intake and registration to skill development and job placement. Oregon realizes that many job seekers need more than just a referral to a job — they may need skill review, skill development services, training, support services, child care, resume development and access to tools such as computers and fax machines to conduct an effective work search.

The WorkSource Oregon Job Seeker Flow diagram (next page) is a visual representation of how the job-seeking customer “flows” through the integrated service delivery environment and access the skills and employment services he/she needs. Ongoing workgroups are defining statewide minimums for procedures, services, and products (Job Getting, Talent Development, and Occupational Training).

WorkSource Oregon Job Seeker Flow (Service Levels and Product Lines)



Performance

CCWD has a long history of working with and supporting local efforts to meet and exceed state, federal or local performance measures. Performance measures are an integral part of CCWD's work, and are incorporated into the services provided through community colleges, the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title IB and Title II programs, and Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education programs.

Federal performance measures include the US Office of Management and Budget common measures that now affect WIA Title IB, WIA Title II, and Carl D. Perkins programs.

The Integration Leadership Team and various workgroups have developed a set of Statewide Integrated Service Performance Goals, for which goals will be determined and state and local area performance monitored. These goals and measures should serve the dual purpose of informing us of our system's success and identifying areas where improvement is needed. A workgroup is currently reviewing the following list, proposed by the Integration Leadership Team:

WorkSource Oregon Integrated Service Performance Goals

Welcome Complete	Percent of new customers entering an office <u>for the first time</u> who complete all steps of the Welcome process each calendar month.
Accessed a Job Getting Product	Percent of "Welcome Complete" who were referred to a Job Getting Product
Accessed a Talent Development Product	Percent of "Welcome Complete" who were referred to a Talent Development Product
Training Completers	Of the customers referred to Occupational Training, the percent who completed the training
Entered Employment (All)	Percent of all registered customers entered employment each month
Average Earning	Percent of wage increase (by eligibility group) for customers with entered employment
Employment Retention	Number of customers retained in employment for 3 months
Entered Employment by Staff Referral	Number of Staff Referred Entered Employment each month

State Evaluation

Oregon continues to evaluate the impacts of the workforce system. Initiatives include a renewed interest in further developing Oregon's long-standing system wide performance measurement system and data warehousing, continued emphasis on WIA performance analysis and improvement, increased efforts to implement the WIA common measures, and an initiative by the Oregon Workforce Investment Board to track the implementation of its new strategic plan.

The state has undertaken or plans to undertake the following efforts in the area of program evaluation:

- Data from our system wide performance measures continues to be available for the employment related indicators, basic skills attainment, and TANF caseload management. This system wide performance data is available at www.prism.state.or.us. The site includes analysis of the data. Current discussions include changing some of the definitions of the indicators to more closely reflect Federal measures.
- Oregon is increasing the emphasis on developing the "next generation" data system. Efforts include connecting with a planned data warehouse for Oregon's K-20 education system, a desire for more flexible reporting on system wide data, and warehousing data for the reporting of common measures for federal compliance.
- Annual quality assurance reviews address multiple aspects of program compliance and program improvement.
- Oregon's Labor Market Information system continues to be responsive to state and local Workforce Investment Board needs, and supplies information and analysis to assist with evaluation initiatives. Recent studies have included job and industry growth analysis, industry cluster analysis, studies of the occupational needs and growth of various industries and industry groupings, and local/regional profiles, all of which assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of workforce programs in the state.

Cost of workforce investment activities relative to the effect of the activities on the performance of participants

The significant economic downturn in Oregon and efforts to establish a common customer pool for all WorkSource Oregon customers (WIA and W-P), combined with lengthy lags in data (such as retained employment or earnings increase) makes calculating some specific costs difficult at this point. In general, the demand for resources by adults, dislocated workers, and youth far exceed the available resources for helping people identify and improve their skills, and obtain the best possible job.

At the local level, there may not yet be a clear enough connection between accounting data and individual participant records to be able to track some cost measures for particular service or set of services. Oregon plans to address these cost issues as we move forward.

Uniform Reporting

Transforming many systems into one integrated system has been an incremental process that has resulted in challenges to reporting aggregate numbers accurately.

In our integrated service environment, tracking W-P and WIA services, including a common exit date, across systems has been challenging. Significant progress has been made in the data warehouse system and both Wagner-Peyser and WIA data has been loaded into the system for initial testing. Oregon continues to make progress in the development of a data warehouse environment that will support integrated reporting and allow for the tracking of a common exit date across workforce programs.

Although our common customer registration process enrolls customers in all of the Wagner-Peyser and WIA Adult programs for which they are eligible, both W-P and WIA services are still tracked separately, making determination of a “common” exit date, based on services received from any partner difficult for staff to calculate. In early 2010, technical specifications and initial design began on a project to automate this process.

The user interface layer of this shared system is the *WorkSource Oregon Management Information System (WOMIS)*, a multi-application customer- and staff-accessed system that will include Customer Registration, Program Eligibility Determination, iMatchSkills (labor exchange), TAA, WIA Service Tracking, and other customer services and resources.

Implementing and enhancing WOMIS requires ongoing analysis and research, extensive Information Technology (IT) programming and coding, statewide hardware and software changes, and continuing fine-tuning, enhancements, and troubleshooting.

User groups comprised of state and local staff continue to monitor the MIS elements for consistency and needed changes. Oregon has reduced the number of regional MIS system from five to two different systems. At the state level, MIS elements are being reported uniformly, and Oregon’s goal is standardization of reporting elements at the local level as well.

Information on participants in the workforce investment system

Participant information for 2009-10 is being provided in the WIA Title IB Annual Report Form (ETA 9091).

Waivers

Below are the waivers for which Oregon has received approval, with information on how the waivers have changed the activities of the state and local areas, and how activities carried out under the waivers have directly or indirectly affected state and local area performance outcomes, where known.

Waiver of the period of subsequent eligibility for eligible training providers.

Without this waiver, Oregon would not be able to maintain a robust Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). Requiring “all students” data reporting in the WIA resulted in training providers, particularly community colleges, to refrain from putting training programs on the list. Currently, there are 195 providers and 1815 training programs on the list. It is worth noting that a majority of the training programs on the list are offered by community colleges, often the only training provider in most regions of a largely rural state. These programs would not be on the ETPL if not for the waiver.

Oregon expects WIA reauthorization to provide states with more flexibility to develop systems of more utility to states’ individual situations. Oregon’s stringent consumer protection laws for education programs makes the quality assurance goal of the ETPL unnecessary. In addition, the flexibility allowed through this waiver has helped Oregon develop career pathways programs that not only are nationally recognized but also provide WIA participants and other students with options they would not otherwise have had.

Waiver allowing for the use of state set aside rapid response funds for the purposes allowed for statewide activities funds.

This waiver has allowed for an increase in the funds available for the Employer Workforce Training Fund, Oregon’s incumbent worker training program and demand-side capacity building program. The waiver increases the amount available for the direct training of incumbent workers and simplifies the program for participating employers. A total of 65 percent of the funds goes to local areas for incumbent worker training.

While the use of Rapid Response funds for this program has been reduced due to the need for Rapid Response activities in the down economy, the EWTF continues to train incumbent workers in demand occupations in every part of the state. We have had to further reduce the amount of Rapid Response funding in this program due to the increased restrictions DOL has put on the use of the funds. Nevertheless, since the implementation of the waiver,

Oregon has trained 32,242 incumbent workers in 810 projects statewide, saving many jobs and making Oregon companies more competitive and able to grow or survive.

Waiver to allow the Oregon workforce system to forego reporting of the WIA required performance measures and adopt and report the “Common Measures” for federal job training and employment programs.

The simplified performance management and reporting across systems allowed by this waiver has been instrumental in developing a fully integrated workforce system, since the service delivery system now has the same outcome measures regardless of the agency and funding source. The simplification has reduced the administrative burden, freeing up funding to allow serving more participants. The ability for the system to focus on common measures has allowed local boards to hold providers accountable to more relevant and easily understandable measures. It has also simplified the work of the line workers allowing them to serve our integrated customers more effectively.

Waiver limiting the provision of incumbent worker training to 15 percent statewide activities funds.

This waiver results in local boards being able to use all or a portion of formula funding for incumbent worker training, allowing greater flexibility in meeting the needs of targeted sectors and incumbent workers. It enhances the ability of local Workforce Investment Boards to improve job retention, avoid layoffs and increase the competitiveness of sectors targeted in local areas.

The state set up policy for application locally to the state to implement this waiver. To date no local areas have applied. Oregon has advised the local areas regarding the restrictions placed on the waiver this year by DOL and has amended policies to assure compliance.

Waiver of the prohibition of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for youth.

This waiver allows ITAs for youth, giving local areas the flexibility to meet the needs of individual youth.

This waiver is relatively recent and it is too soon to quantify its effects on local performance at this time. Anecdotally, we have evidence of an increase in ITAs due to their application to the youth population. LWIBs are appreciative of the additional flexibility offered them through this waiver.



WORKSOURCE OREGON

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To conserve resources, this report was originally published in an electronic-only format.