



The Portland Metro Workforce Development Board

# Strategic Workforce Plan

2020–2024

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the steepest economic downturn since the Great Depression. The onset of the pandemic caused regional unemployment claims to reach nearly 213,800 and experts predict the regional will not return to pre-pandemic job levels until 2025. While the full impact of the pandemic has yet to unfold, Black Indigenous and People of Color, women, immigrants, disabled individuals, younger, less educated, and lower-income workers have disproportionately suffered from the health and economic devastation caused by the pandemic.

The COVID-19 crisis has also revealed serious flaws in the systems intended to serve and support people during difficult times. More than 48,900 are currently unemployed, a 121% increase from February 2020. Over the course of the last year, the number of regional residents living in poverty increased substantially. Thousands more are behind on rent, struggling to put food on the table, and running out of options. When you unpack the numbers, Black, Indigenous and People of Color, immigrants, women, and lower income workers are once again disproportionately bearing the brunt of the economic downturn and safety net failures.

To return from the COVID-19 crisis as a stronger region, we must strengthen our commitment to those residents most impacted by the COVID crisis. We can't go back to the way things were. The inequities highlighted by the crisis cannot be allowed to continue. This will require us to continue building partnerships with community-based organizations and especially those offering culturally and population specific services. Our efforts must put racial equity and front-line workers at the center and bring decision making and solution building as close to the community as possible - allowing local voices to respond to local economic circumstances, priorities and needs. We need to continue to build connections beyond skills and address other barriers such as childcare, transportation and housing. We must support equitable economic recovery that is strategically responsive to the current economic context and promotes the creation of high-quality regional jobs.

Responding to a crisis of this magnitude will require unprecedented collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including governments (at all levels), community-based organizations, businesses, labor unions, philanthropy, economic development, and educational institutions.

This plan identifies four goals to support equitable economic recovery, build a more inclusive, coordinated, and adaptive regional workforce system, and foster a more equitable and prosperous future for our region.

**Mission:** To coordinate a regional workforce system that supports individual prosperity and business competitiveness.

**Vision:** People have the skills and support they need to successfully engage, advance, and succeed in the labor market and employers have qualified employees to grow and thrive.

**Guiding Principles:** Collaboration — Equity — Accountability — Inclusiveness — Relevance — Excellence



## 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4
<p>The regional public workforce system* is aligned, provides integrated services, efficiently uses resources, and continuously improves to provide maximum value for employers, job seekers, workers, and community-based partners</p>	<p>Regional workers most impacted by COVID-19 – including Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color, individuals with disabilities, women, immigrants, younger, less-educated, and lower-income workers – have the skills and supports they need to fill current and emerging quality jobs</p>	<p>Regional youth facing barriers* gain the academic knowledge, work skills and support services needed to succeed in the workforce of today and the future</p> <p>* Barriers may include income, houselessness, race, disability, LGBTQIA, foster care, the juvenile justice system and other life circumstances that qualify youth for public assistance.</p>	<p>Employers can find the regional talent they need to recover, grow, and remain competitive</p>
<p><b>2023 PRIORITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recalibrate WorkSource service delivery and process flow from pandemic disruptions. Include input from community and workforce service providers to improve access to services and results, and account for changes in how customers are increasingly accessing services virtually in the post-pandemic period.</li> <li>Inform and promote the value of WorkSource across organizations and communities through services such as ITAs, Cohort Trainings, WEX, OJT, and Training Stipends.</li> <li>Strengthen business relationships and customer connections to employment in WorkSource.</li> </ol>	<p><b>2023 PRIORITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen community connections to WorkSource Portland Metro and maintain a high-functioning, community-based provider network that benefits from a variety of Worksystems grants and programs.</li> <li>Secure partnerships and resources including housing supports, childcare, mental health services, legal services, and transportation that address barriers and increase success for people in poverty, people of color, and other disadvantaged populations.</li> <li>Build a community of practice to provide Career Coach professional development opportunities and evolve service delivery to be more trauma-informed and culturally responsive.</li> </ol>	<p><b>2023 PRIORITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build relationships with organizations that provide workforce prep and related support for youth and young adults. Identify resources to support the breaking down of barriers, expanding access to supports such as childcare, incentives, enhanced mobility, and affordable housing in order to improve career placement results.</li> <li>Involve community-based organizations and culturally specific service providers to give input, improve access, process, and inform continuous improvement of work experience and youth program services.</li> <li>Increase knowledge and awareness of youth workforce development system services; and increase participation of organizations and communities to ensure access for underrepresented youth</li> </ol>	<p><b>2023 PRIORITIES</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate Quality Jobs Framework into all work, including the Regional Sector Workforce Plans, informing our regional training and employment priorities, and community and employer partnerships</li> <li>Align Program Supply and Industry Demand through improved internal communications, a clear focus on Quality Jobs in targeted sectors, and improved systems to track progress and success.</li> <li>Develop and communicate clarity of Sector Leads' role through consistent staff training, further development of the Sector approach based on national best practices, and an expanded role in developing training and employment services throughout the system</li> </ol>
<p><b>SUCCESS &amp; PROGRESS INDICATORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised WorkSource Oregon Standards are implemented across 5 WorkSource Portland Metro Centers.</li> <li>Center Leadership Teams that include Worksystems, OED, WIOA Title 1B, DHS, and other partners are meeting regularly at all WSPM Centers to coordinate the delivery of workforce development services that are integrated across partners.</li> <li>Increase proportion of priority populations accessing high-value services such as ITAs, Cohort Trainings, WEX, OJT, and Training Stipends through WorkSource.</li> <li>WorkSource Center dashboard created to monitor customer flow, services, and customer feedback.</li> <li>WorkSource orientation created to inform community organizations, employers, and local leaders of system services.</li> <li>Increase customer job placement into target-sector occupations with Quality Job characteristics.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SUCCESS &amp; PROGRESS INDICATORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of Economic Opportunity Program and Aligned Partner Network customers benefiting from high-value WorkSource services such as training scholarships, work experience, and cohort trainings.</li> <li>Increase the number and proportion of partners and providers who are community-based, culturally specific, and population-specific.</li> <li>Increase in support services such as housing, childcare, mental health, legal, and transportation that enables success for job seekers with barriers.</li> <li>Career Coach feedback regarding access to WorkSource services, centralized services, service provider training, technical assistance, and communities of practice.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SUCCESS &amp; PROGRESS INDICATORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth have increased access to needed supports</li> <li>Partner and youth feedback is incorporated and used to improve all aspects of our programming (this can include paid internships, WorkSource services, provider training, technical assistance, and communities of practice)</li> <li>Increase the number and proportion of partners and providers who are community-based, culturally specific, and population-specific to ensure system services are relevant and accountable</li> </ul>	<p><b>SUCCESS &amp; PROGRESS INDICATORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize and activate Quality Jobs Project Team and Workplan</li> <li>Increase the number of engaged employers in targeted sectors to network connections and hiring outcomes into target-sector occupations with Quality Job characteristics.</li> <li>PCEF-funded career coaching leads to placement of priority customers into employment with PCEF employers.</li> <li>Increase consistent and relevant connections of Sector Leads with program partners (EOP, APN, WorkSource, youth) to effectively communicate industry needs and opportunities as articulated by Sector Industry Panels and employers, including continuation of Sector trainings and the launch of Sector newsletters.</li> <li>Launch and successfully onboard use of a system-wide CRM for tracking Quality Job employer engagement and outcomes in targeted sectors and with network partners.</li> </ul>

\* For purposes of this plan, the Regional Public Workforce System is defined as those resources and organizations required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the State of Oregon to provide integrated services via WorkSource Oregon, including the Oregon Employment Department, the Oregon Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Oregon Department of Human Services - self-sufficiency programs, Adult Basic Education programs administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act resources managed by Worksystems.