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Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative Releases Quality Jobs Framework to attract workers, support business growth, create more equitable economy

PORTLAND-SW WASHINGTON (July 18, 2022) – While the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced its Good Jobs Initiative in January 2022, the Portland-Southwest Washington region’s three workforce development boards have been tackling the issue of job quality since 2021.

On July 18 the three boards, operating in partnership as the Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative (CWWC), released the Quality Jobs Framework, a blueprint of actionable, detailed strategies for companies to improve their jobs and work conditions.

The CWWC believe an equitable economic recovery must include strategies and actions that address long-standing inequities and economic disparities – something that is central to the framework.

“The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic decline calls for bold, deliberate changes to stabilize the region’s workforce and ensure an equitable economic recovery,” said Bridget Dazey, Executive Director of Clackamas Workforce Partnership. “We are excited to introduce the Quality Jobs Framework to help increase the number of quality jobs and improve the regional economy for everyone, especially those hit hardest by the pandemic.”

What is a Quality Job?

Under the framework, a quality job includes the following characteristics:

- **A sufficient income** to afford a decent standard of living.
- **Safe and inclusive working conditions** that offer employees dignity and respect while encouraging their workplace engagement.
- **Predictable hours** to minimize hardship on employees and their families.
- **Comprehensive benefits** that increase economic security and improve health and overall well-being.

- **Accessible and transparent hiring and onboarding** to ensure employers and employees are set for success.
- **Training and advancement opportunities** to build skills and access new roles and responsibilities.

“We are implementing at the local level what's being discussed nationally about job quality,” said Miriam Halliday, CEO of Workforce Southwest Washington. “In addition to improving conditions for workers, quality jobs are good for business and can contribute to increased employee morale and productivity and decreased turnover.”

The framework was developed over a six-month period in consultation with a council of 19 participants representing business, workers, labor, service providers, and government agencies. Their work included research, case studies, a nationwide scan of best practices and interviews with relevant organizations and leaders.

COVID-19 originally inspired the Quality Jobs Initiative, with its significant, ongoing impact on the regional economy and workforce. At the same time, mass protests and social unrest following the murder of George Floyd renewed calls for policymaking centering racial justice and equity.

Adding to this, companies continue struggling to recruit, hire and retain workers amid “The Great Resignation.” In response to these myriad challenges facing individuals and businesses, CWWC responded with the Quality Jobs Framework to provide a regional approach to (1) defining quality jobs, (2) provide guidance on standards companies can adopt, (3) identify resources to help businesses implement in accordance with their workplace needs, and (4) develop a roadmap of actions, steps and metrics.

“Companies, municipalities and nonprofits that are looking for employees and are wanting to help create a more equitable regional economy should consider adopting the Quality Jobs Framework,” said Andrew McGough, Executive Director of Worksystems. “We encourage them to get started today and connect with their local workforce board for assistance or view the resources available on our websites.”

The Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative is a partnership of the region’s three local workforce development boards – [Clackamas Workforce Partnership](#), [Workforce Southwest Washington](#) and [Worksystems](#).

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The Columbia-Willamette Workforce Collaborative (CWWC) is a partnership that delivers a unified approach to serve industry, support economic development and guide public workforce investments in the Portland-Southwest Washington area. Members are [Clackamas Workforce Partnership](#), [Workforce Southwest Washington](#) and [Worksystems](#). The three organizations have been collaborating for approximately 12 years and their partnership has brought nearly \$61 million of funding for workforce development into the Portland-Southwest Washington metro area.

Clackamas Workforce Partnership is a nonprofit organization which serves as an advocate for workforce development within Clackamas County and the State of Oregon. Our mission is to address critical

workforce, educational, and training challenges, and develop a skilled workforce that meets the needs of businesses and strengthens the local economy of Clackamas County. Learn more at www.clackamasworkforce.org.

Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) is the Local Workforce Development Board designated by federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation to oversee the public workforce system in Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Clark counties. WSW is a nonprofit organization and funds services that help individuals gain skills to obtain good-paying jobs or advance in their careers and help companies recruit, train and retain workers. Since 2003, WSW has invested more than \$120 million in Southwest Washington. Learn more at www.workforcesw.org.

Worksystems is the Workforce Development Board for the City of Portland, Multnomah and Washington counties. Worksystems is a nonprofit agency that accelerates economic growth by pursuing and investing resources to improve the quality of the workforce. Learn more at www.worksystems.org.