

Oregon 2024 Self-Sufficiency Standard: Findings & Uses in Workforce Development

The Self-Sufficiency Standard is a **measure of income adequacy** that is based on the **costs of basic needs** for working families:



Housing



Health Care



Child Care



Miscellaneous



Food



Taxes and Tax Credits



Transportation

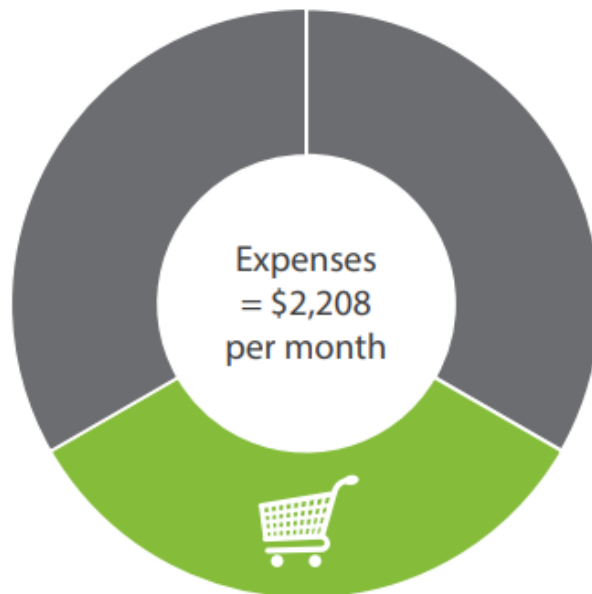


Emergency Savings

Why do we need the Self-Sufficiency Standard?

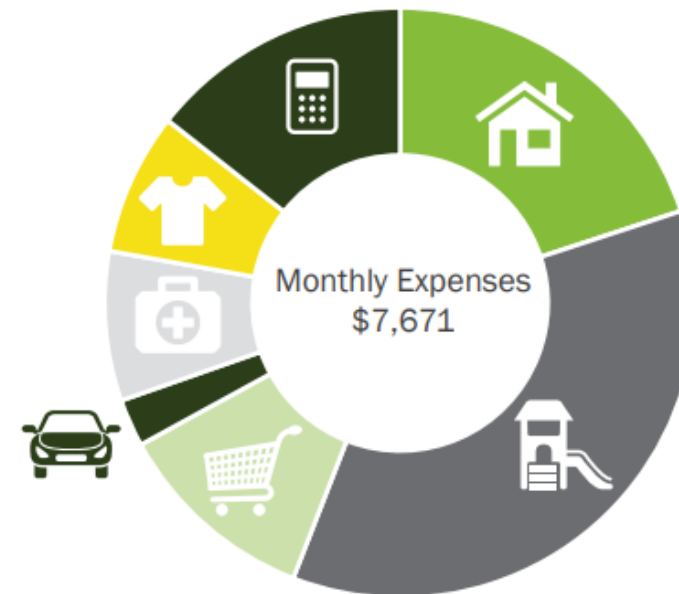
The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates the real costs of meeting all basic needs. In contrast, the official poverty measure is based only on the cost of food.

OFFICIAL POVERTY MEASURE
Food is 1/3 of the budget and
all other costs are 2/3 of the budget.



29% The official poverty measure only covers
29% of the cost of all basic needs as defined
by the Self-Sufficiency Standard

SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD
Housing and child care account for almost
half of the family budget in the Standard.

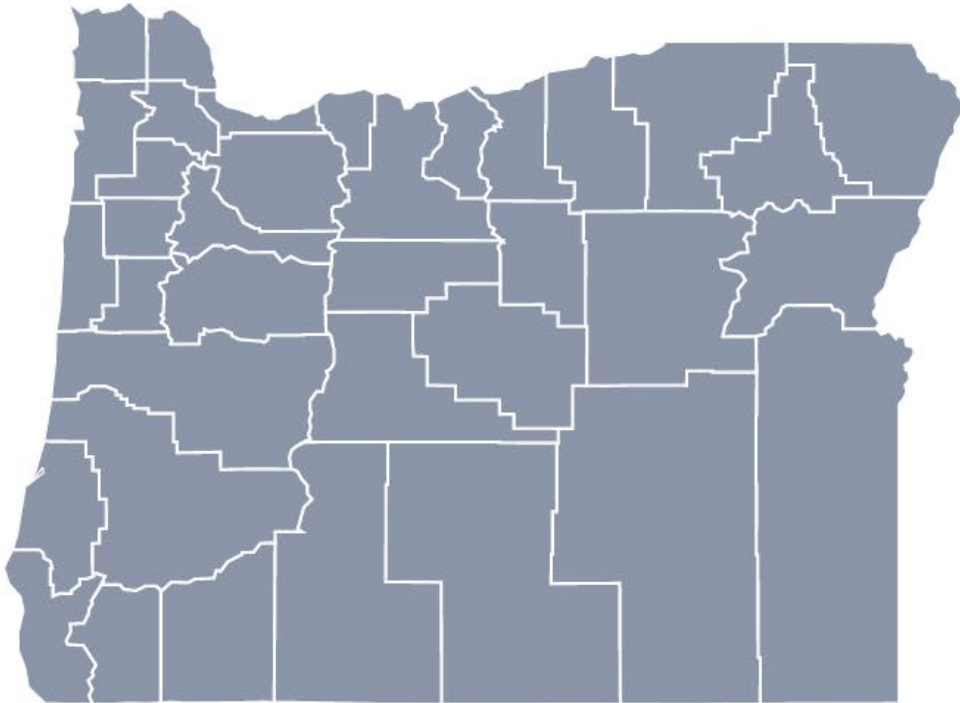


Multnomah County
2 adults + 1 infant + 1 preschooler

Place Matters

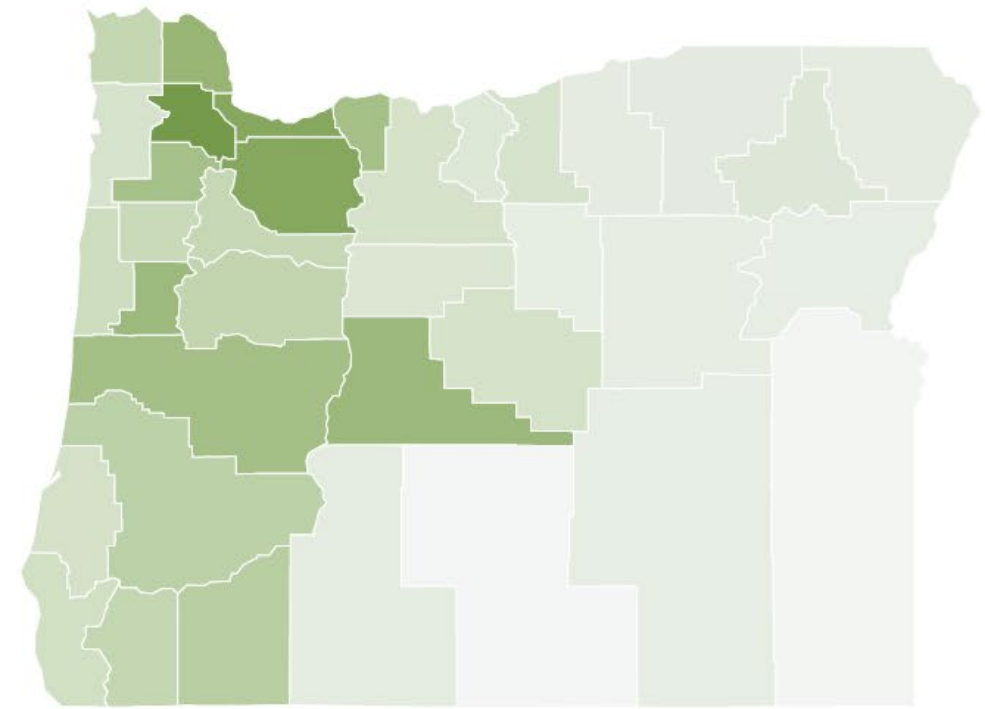
The OPM is the Same Throughout Oregon

According to the OPM in 2023, a family of two with an annual income of \$19,720 or more was not considered poor anywhere in Oregon.



The Standard Varies within Oregon

The Standard varies across Oregon counties. An adult with a preschooler needs \$46,338 to \$81,827 annually to meet basic needs depending on the area.



\$46,338  \$81,827

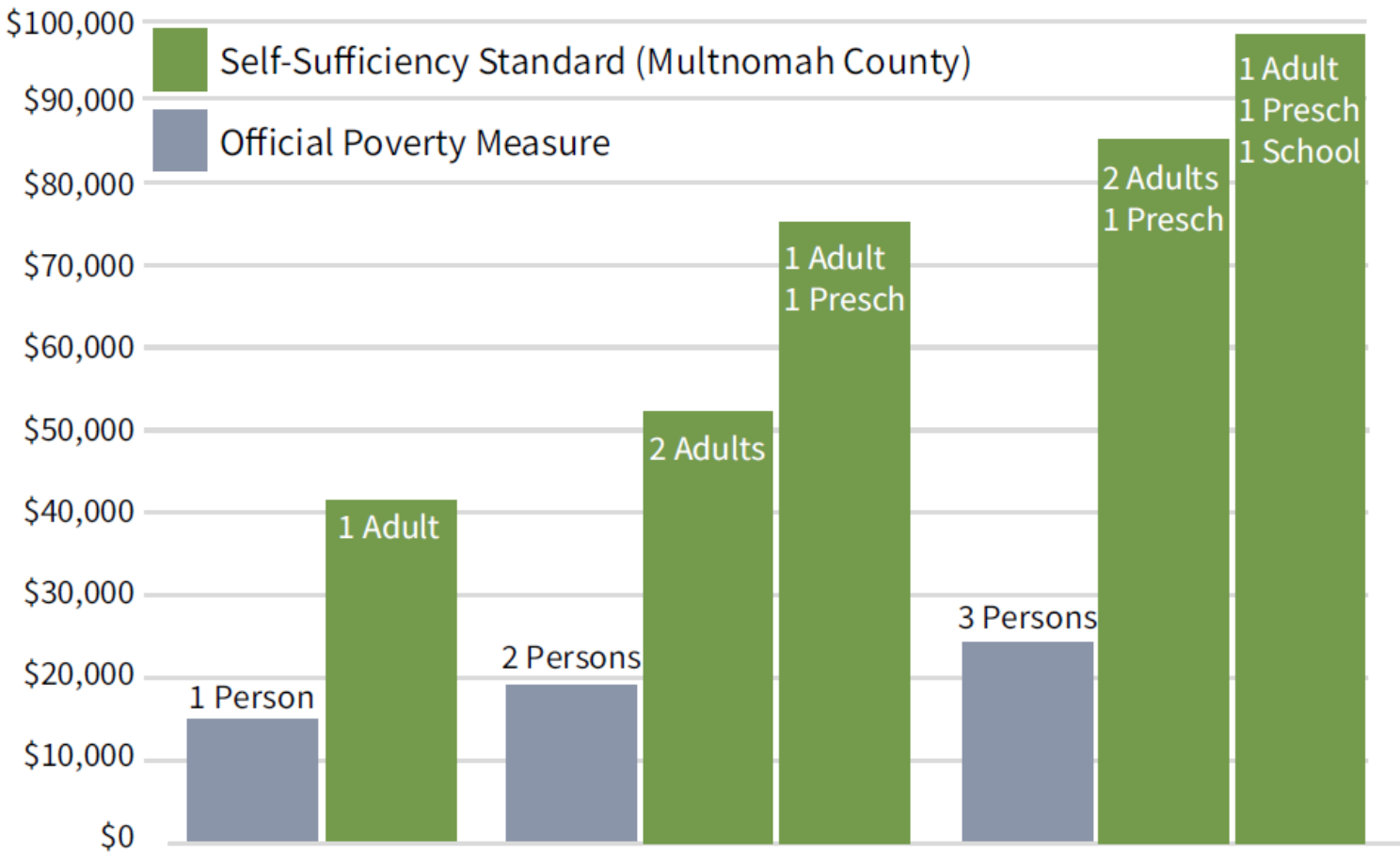
Expenses Vary by Age

The OPM Increases at a Constant Rate

The official poverty measure increases by a constant \$5,140 for each additional family member and therefore does not adequately account for the real costs of meeting basic needs.

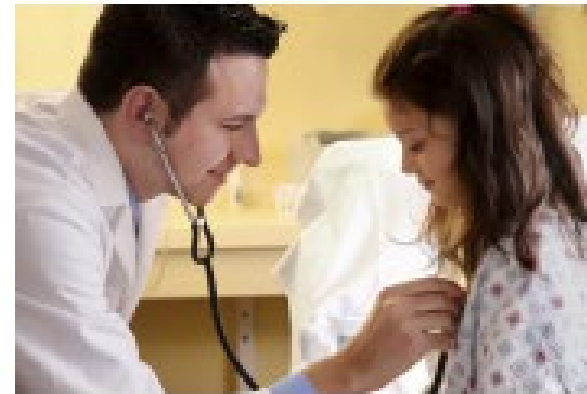
The Standard Varies by Family Type

The Standard changes by family type to account for the increase in costs specific to the family member, whether this person is an adult or child, and for children, by age.



How much does a family need to make ends meet? It depends . . .

On where they live



On the age of family members

On how many people are in the family





CENTER FOR WOMEN'S WELFARE

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

School of Social Work

HOME

THE STANDARD ▾

STATE DATA

NEWSROOM ▾

ABOUT US ▾

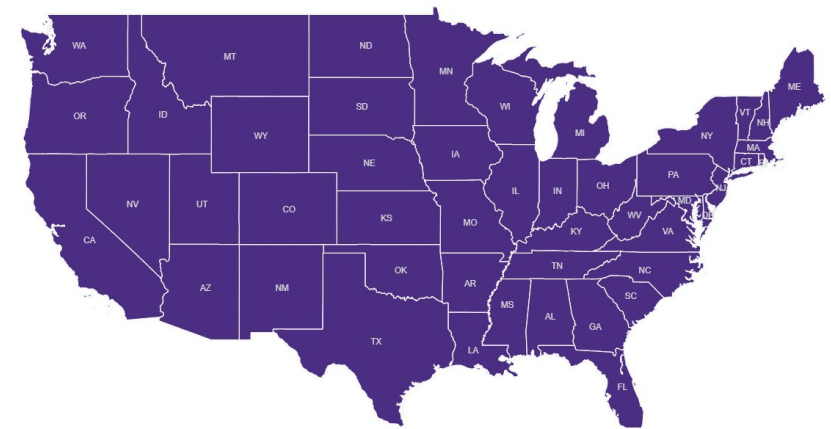
COVERING COSTS IN OREGON

One adult taking care of a preschooler and school-age child needs to earn \$49.55 per hour in Portland to cover their basic needs.

[Click here to read more](#)

Self-Sufficiency Standard by State

Click on a state or view the [state list](#).



Can these families make ends meet?



Can this family make ends meet?



Can this family make ends meet?



Phlebotomist
\$50,443

Fire Inspector
\$128,426

Combined Earnings
\$178,869

Monthly Costs	Clackamas	Multnomah	Washington
Housing	\$2,038	\$2,046	\$2,083
Child Care	\$1,296	\$1,548	\$1,548
Food	\$887	\$946	\$906
Transportation	\$880	\$200	\$872
Health Care	\$685	\$685	\$685
Premium	\$441	\$441	\$441
Out-of-Pocket	\$244	\$244	\$244
Miscellaneous	\$724	\$687	\$754
Broadband & Cell Phone	\$145	\$145	\$145
Other Necessities	\$579	\$542	\$609
Taxes	\$1,792	\$1,641	\$1,920
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)
Child Tax Credit (-)	(\$167)	(\$167)	(\$167)
Self-Sufficiency Wage			
Hourly	\$22.97	\$21.41	\$24.29
Monthly	\$8,085	\$7,536	\$8,551
Annual	\$97,015	\$90,437	\$102,614
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly Contribution)	\$62	\$59	\$64

Can this family make ends meet?

Stocker and Order Filler



Soon to be Full Time
Daycare Attendee



Can these families make ends meet?

Monthly Costs	Clackamas	Multnomah	Washington
Housing	\$2,038	\$2,046	\$2,083
Child Care	\$1,601	\$1,877	\$1,877
Food	\$560	\$598	\$572
Transportation	\$459	\$100	\$454
Health Care	\$567	\$567	\$567
Premium	\$441	\$441	\$441
Out-of-Pocket	\$126	\$126	\$126
Miscellaneous	\$626	\$622	\$659
Broadband & Cell Phone	\$104	\$104	\$104
Other Necessities	\$522	\$519	\$555
Taxes	\$1,720	\$1,697	\$1,929
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	(\$50)	(\$50)	(\$50)
Child Tax Credit (-)	(\$167)	(\$167)	(\$167)
Self-Sufficiency Wage			
Hourly	\$41.79	\$41.42	\$45.04
Monthly	\$7,354	\$7,290	\$7,926
Annual	\$88,252	\$87,484	\$95,117
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly Contribution)	\$270	\$265	\$312

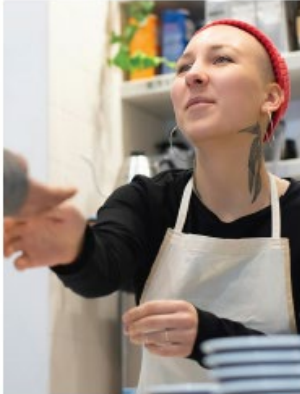
Distribution Manager
\$104,063

Stocker and Order Filler
\$42,065



What isn't being measured?





Overlooked & Undercounted Struggling to Make Ends Meet in Oregon

Prepared for Worksystems Inc.

Key Findings

Oregon has 442,293 households that live below the Self-Sufficiency Standard



83% of households below the Standard had at least one working adult



42% of households below the Standard had at least one child



61% of householders below the Standard had at least some college credit, a Bachelor's degree, or an additional graduate degree



33% of households below the Standard received food assistance



80% of households below the Standard paid more than 30% of their income towards their cost of housing



21% of households below the Standard were married couples with children



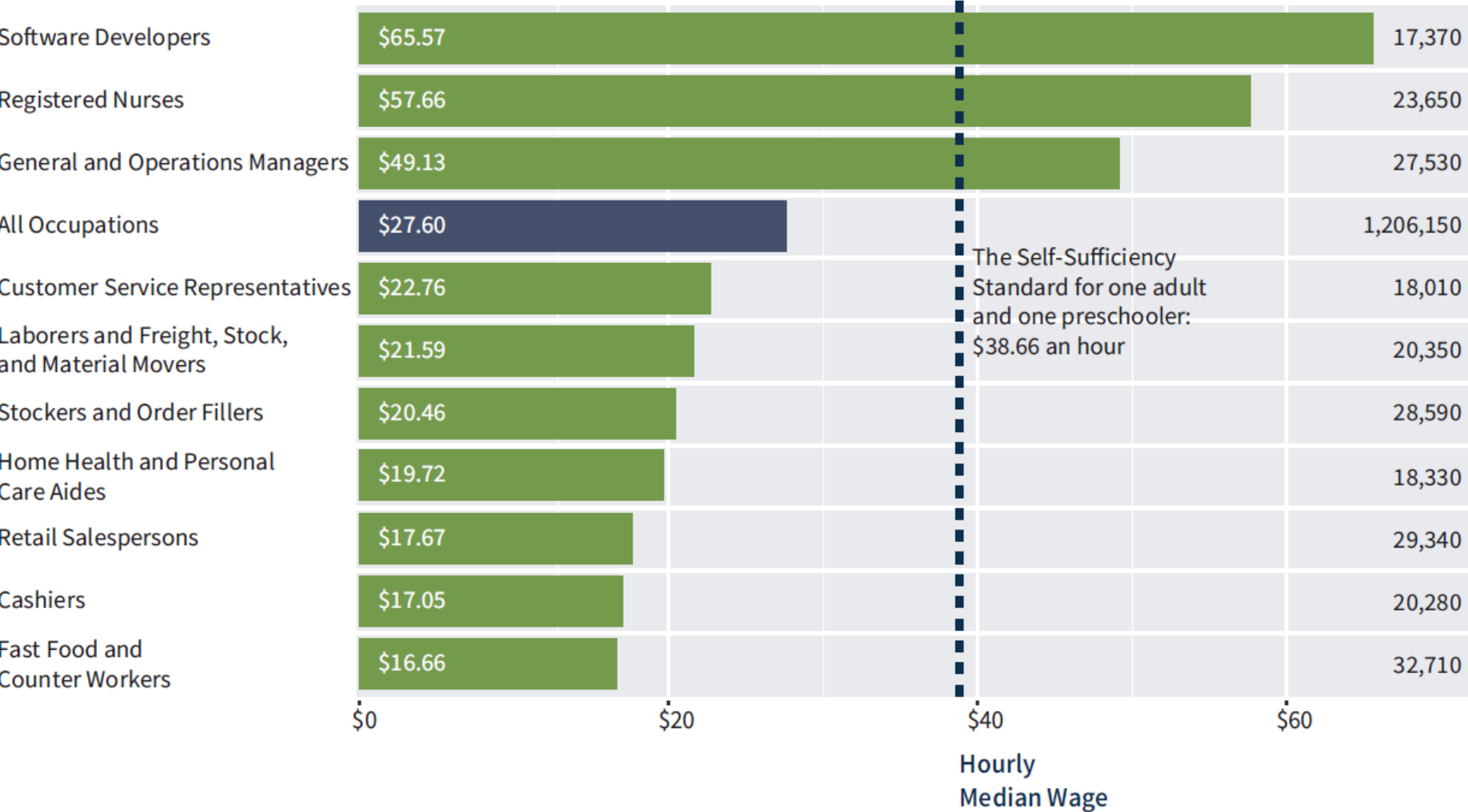
12% of households below the Standard did not have health insurance



3% of households below the Standard did not have access to the internet

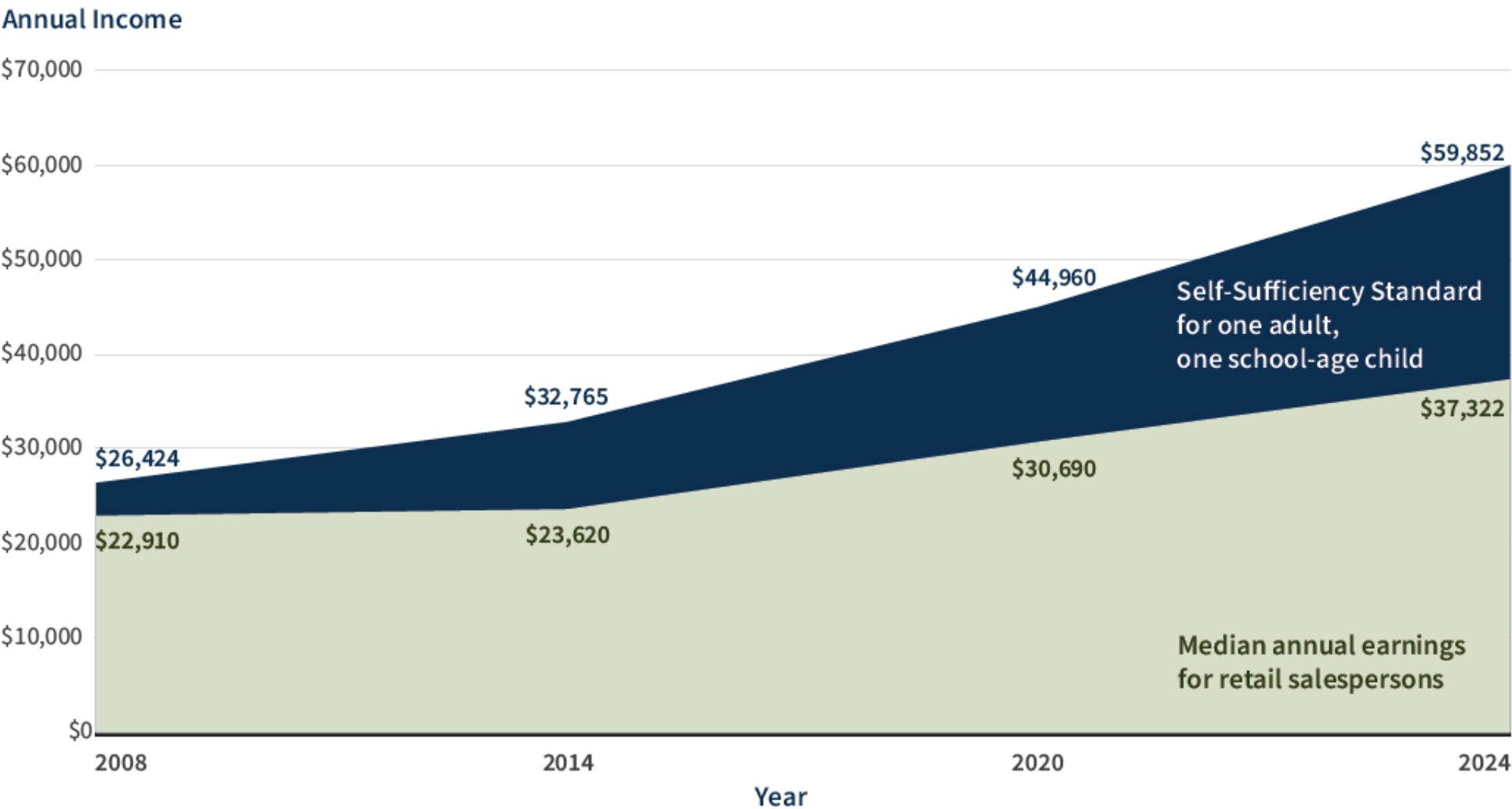
Most Common Occupations

Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA (MSA) Top Ten Occupations



7 of the 10 largest occupations do not pay a Self-Sufficiency Wage

Different Rates of Growth



Between 2020 and 2024, the median annual earnings for retail salespeople increased 22% while the cost of living for an adult with a school aged child increase 33%.

Ways to use the Self-Sufficiency Standard

Policy Analysis	<i>The Self-Sufficiency Standard is used as a tool to evaluate the impact of current and proposed policy changes.</i> The Standard can be used to evaluate the impact of a variety of work supports (such as SNAP/Food Stamp Program or Medicaid) or policy options (such as changes in childcare co-payments, tax reform, or tax credits) on family budgets.
Counseling Tool	<i>The Self-Sufficiency Standard is used as a counseling tool to help participants in work and training programs access benefits and develop strategies to become self-sufficient.</i> Counseling tools allow users to evaluate possible wages, then compare information on available programs and work supports to their own costs and needs. Clients are empowered with information and tools that allow them to develop and test out their own strategies for achieving self-sufficient incomes.
Evaluation Tool	<i>The Self-Sufficiency Standard is used to evaluate economic development proposals and outcomes for clients and grantees.</i> Using the Standard can help determine whether businesses seeking tax breaks or other government subsidies will create jobs that pay “living wages.” By evaluating wages and outcomes in terms of the Standard, programs are using a measure of true effectiveness. Such evaluations can help redirect resources to approaches that result in improved outcomes for participants and more efficient use of limited foundation and government funding.
Benchmark for Wage Setting	<i>The Self-Sufficiency Standard is used as a guideline for wage setting.</i> By determining the wages necessary to meet basic needs, the Standard provides information for setting wage standards.
Targeted Allocation of Resources	<i>The Self-Sufficiency Standard is used to target job training resources and helps demonstrate the pay off for investing in education and training.</i> Using a targeted jobs strategy, the Standard helps to match job seekers with employment that pays Self-Sufficiency Wages. Through analysis it is possible to determine the jobs and sectors on which to target training and education resources, including training for occupations that are nontraditional for women and people of color.
Support Research	<i>Because the Self-Sufficiency Standard provides an accurate and specific measure of income adequacy, it is frequently used in research.</i> The Standard provides a means of estimating how poverty differs from place to place and among different family types. The Standard also provides a means to measure the adequacy of various work supports, such as child support or childcare assistance, given a family’s income, place of residence, and composition.
Community Indicator	<i>Community indicators and scorecards help communities to examine the well-being of residents.</i> The Self-Sufficiency Standard provides communities with an indicator of the cost of living at a basic needs level and, in some communities, we have measured how many households are living below the Standard. These are also excellent educational tools for the public and government officials.

How does Worksystems use the Self-Sufficiency Standard?

2024 Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon

Defining the income working families need to meet basic needs



HOME

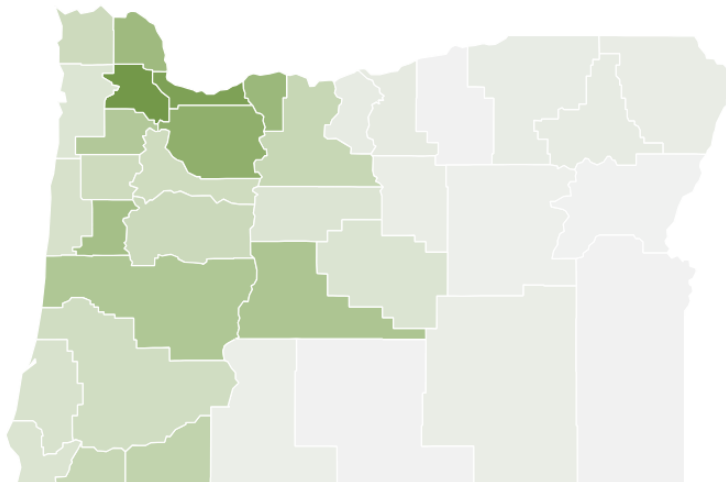
MAPS

HISTORICAL

Select Family Type to Explore

Adults	Infants	Preschoolers	School-age	Teens
<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>

The Self-Sufficiency Standard Varies by County in Oregon



Select a button to change the map view

SSS vs Poverty

SSS vs Earnings

[Self-Sufficiency Standard Dashboard - Worksystems](#)

Publications

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2021

October 2021 | Lisa Manzer & Annie Kucklick

Overlooked and Undercounted 2021: Making Ends Meet in Oregon

October 2021 | Lisa Manzer & Annie Kucklick

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2017

December 2017 | Diana Pearce

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2014

October 2014 | Diana Pearce

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2011

April 2011 | Diana Pearce

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon 2008

July 2008 | Diana Pearce

Career Planning

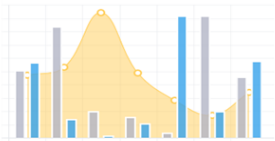
Prosperity Planner

For Oregon Residents

Get Started!

Prosperity Planner allows you to:

- Identify the wages you need to earn to be self-sufficient
- Develop a budget that covers your basic expenses
- Learn about resources that may help lower expenses



You can also:

- Test different career and living options
- Find out if the career options you're exploring will help you achieve financial independence
- Make a financial plan to reach your career goals



Living expenses



Child care and dependencies



Career options



Financial growth

Washington residents are encouraged to use [Self Sufficiency Calculator](#).

Adapted for use by Worksystems, Inc., a WorkSource Oregon partner, with the permission of the Workforce Development Council of Seattle King County.

Welcome to the Prosperity Planner! This budget tool will assist you in deciding what type of job to pursue, what types of work supports you might qualify for, and where you might choose to make changes to your expenses to meet your personal and family financial goals.

Target Sectors Target Occupation



Two or Fewer Years of Post-Secondary Education



Anticipated Growth During Next Ten Years (2022-2032)



200+ Jobs in the Region (2022)



Occupational Median Wage At or Above \$21/hr.



Worksystems' Quality Jobs and Targeted Sectors



Setting the Stage

I want you to think about your ...

- Your best job
- Your dream job

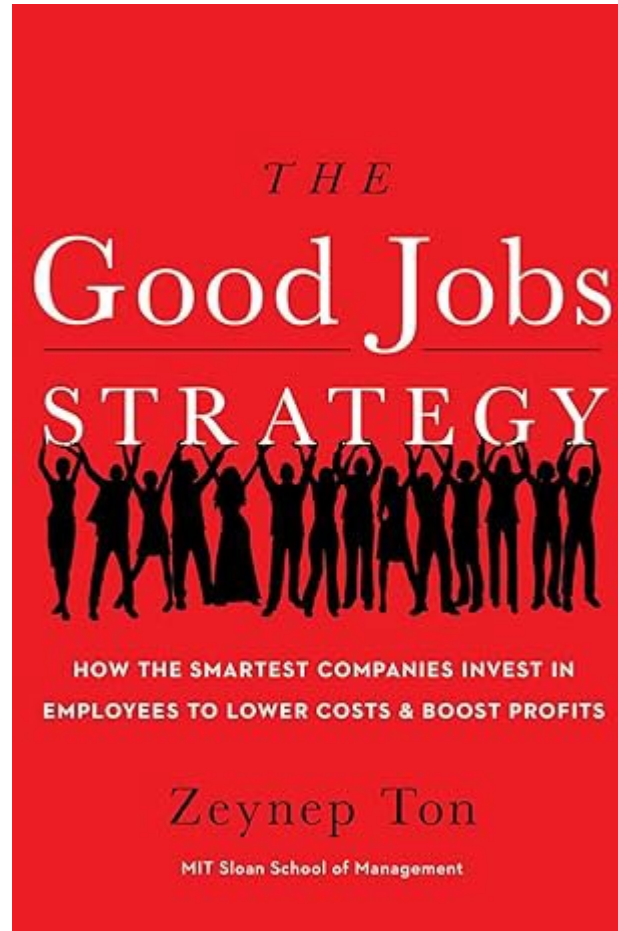


My Introduction to Quality Jobs



My Introduction to Quality Jobs

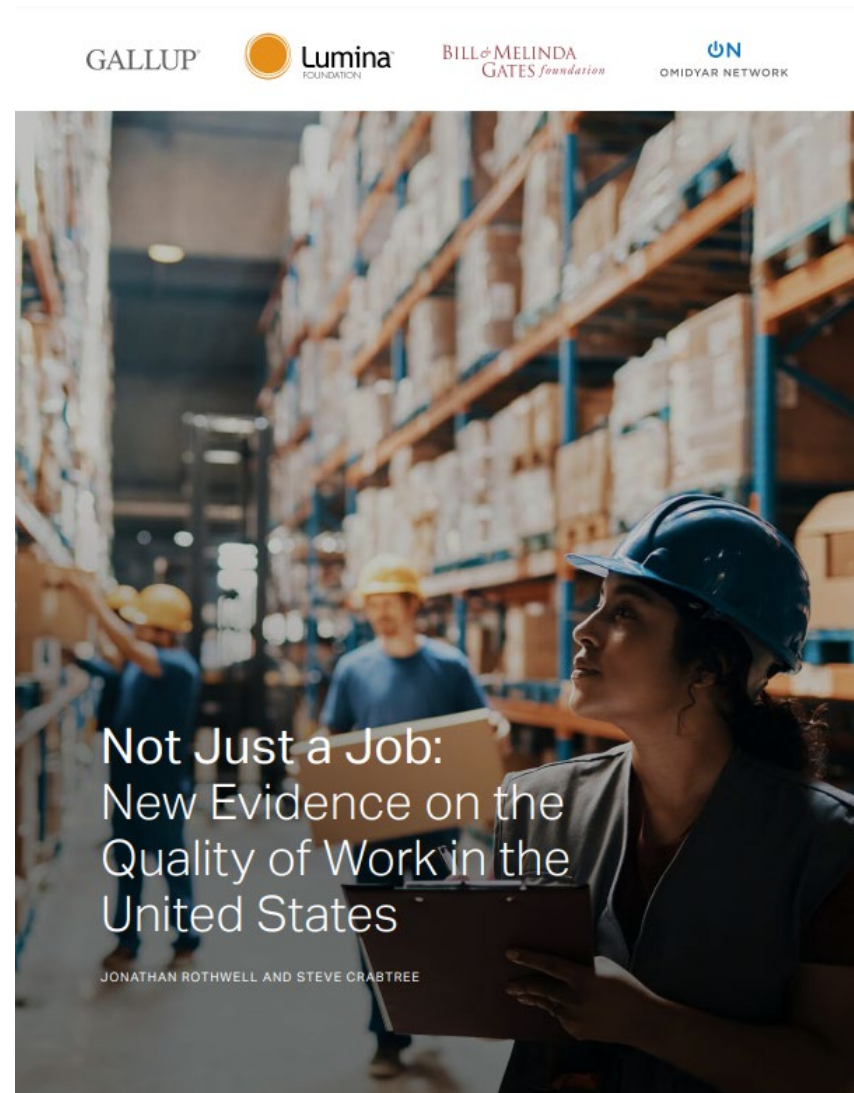
My Introduction to Quality Jobs



Not Just a Job

Only 40% of employed Americans are in good jobs.

- **Low-income workers** are more likely to be “disappointed” with all aspects of job quality.
- **Older workers, white workers** and those with high levels of education are most likely to be in good jobs.
- **Nearly one-third (31%) of black women** work in bad jobs.



[Link to Report](#)

Our Quality Jobs Framework

A quality job helps workers achieve financial stability and mobility, while prioritizing equity and worker voice.

Self-Sufficiency Wages

Comprehensive Benefits

Predictable Schedule

Worker Safety and Engagement

Accessible and Equitable Hiring Practices

Training and Advancement Opportunities



Integrated Services Advancing Quality Jobs



- ✓ Occupational skills and training
- ✓ Support Services
- ✓ Career Coaching services
- ✓ On-the-Job Training
- ✓ Work Experience
- ✓ Paid Work Opportunities
- ✓ Career Exploration
- ✓ Career Fairs and Hiring Events
- ✓ Industry-Driven Training Cohorts
- ✓ Industry Panels

Quality Jobs Occupational Profiles

TARGETED SECTORS

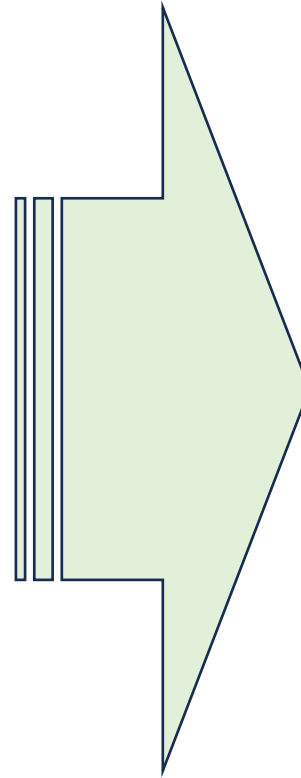
Healthcare and Social Assistance

Early Childhood Education

Advanced Manufacturing

Construction

Cross - Sector



TARGETED OCCUPATIONS

Peer Worker

ECE Assistant Teacher

Advanced Manufacturing Technician

Electrician

Computer User Support Specialist

Peer Worker Profile

DISCOVERING QUALITY JOBS PEER WORKERS

worksource
OREGON
Portland Metro

WHAT ARE QUALITY JOBS?

Quality Jobs offer competitive wages and benefits, predictable hours, and opportunities for advancement without requiring a college degree. They exist in high-growth industries that value skills gained through alternative routes such as training programs, military service, lived experience, and more.

WHAT ARE PEER WORKERS?

Peer Workers are people with lived experience of mental health or substance use challenges who provides support to others facing similar situations. They are a growing and in-demand workforce, and they serve in roles from entry-level support to leadership and licensed counseling.

YOU MIGHT ENJOY THIS JOB IF YOU ARE:

- Empathetic to what others are going through.
- Comfortable discussing difficult topics.
- Good at listening and offering resources and guidance.
- Understanding and adaptable to the needs of others.
- Interested in supporting people in recovery.

PEER WORKERS WORK AT:

Community-based organizations
Day centers
Higher education institutions
Hospitals
Housing or residential treatment centers
Government institutions
Non-profits
Treatment centers

THEY ARE ALSO KNOWN AS:

Barracks Support Specialists
Certified Recovery Mentors
Culturally Specific Recovery Support Mentors
Engagement Specialists
Outreach Workers
Peer Mentors
Peer Support Specialists
Recovery / Peer Navigators
Residential Aides / Counselors
Workforce / Peer Navigators

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A QUALITY JOB:



Living Wages: Starting pay for peer workers is **\$21-\$25 per hour**. Many employers pay more for bilingual and multi-lingual peer workers.



Accessible Hiring Practices: No degrees or prior work experience required. Some companies will invest in training post-hire to help Peer Workers build a career in Behavioral Health.



Comprehensive Benefits: Many employers offer a full benefit package, including medical, dental, vision, paid time off, and retirement savings, which can **increase your total compensation by up to 30%**.



Training and Advancement Opportunities: Wages may increase by **25% with experience** and **50-100% with added credentials and education** through degree and non-degree pathways.

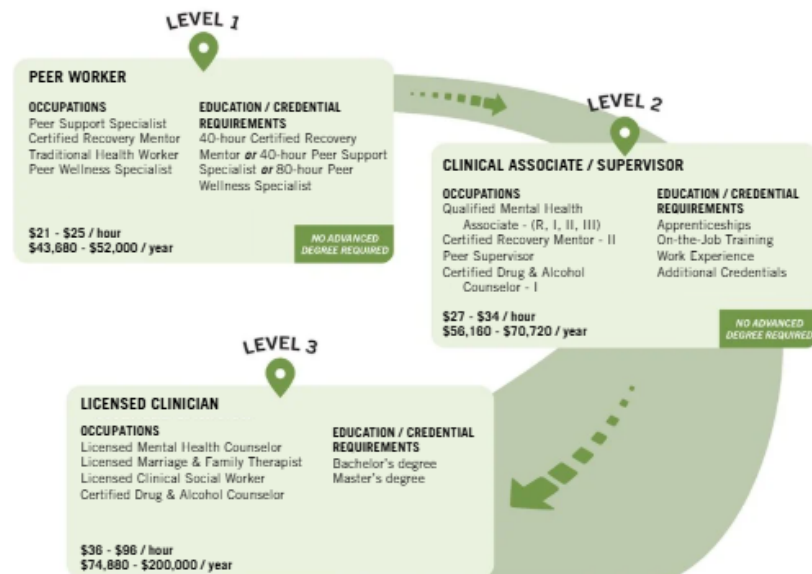


Predictable Schedule: Full- and part-time schedules are available during day and night shifts, with options for overtime. Schedules vary between employers and the type of role.



Worker Safety and Engagement: Peer Workers can **combat burnout and prioritize self-care** by joining local support groups like PeerZone and Peer Support for Peer Support Specialists.

CAREER PATHWAYS FOR PEER WORKERS



COMMON QUALIFICATIONS:

- 18 years or older
- High School Diploma or GED equivalent
- Lived experience with mental health or addiction treatment
- Additional qualifications based on employer or job

Individuals who don't meet all of these criteria might have pathways through specific employers and/or Oregon Health Authority.

INSIDER TIPS:

- Your lived experience is a huge asset in this field.
- Culturally specific and multilingual peer workers are in high demand.
- Check job ads carefully to ensure the organization and setting is right for you.

GET STARTED

CONNECT WITH A WORKSOURCE REP

Talk to your career coach or get in touch with a WorkSource representative today at worksourceportlandmetro.org.

GET A HEAD START

WorkSource offers scholarships for training and certification. Learn more about applying by attending a free virtual info session. Visit worksourceportlandmetro.org/events to register.

WorkSource is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. To place a free relay call in Oregon, dial 711. This program financed in whole or in part with funds provided by the U.S. Department of Labor through Worksystems — the Portland Metro Workforce Development Board.

work
SYSTEMS



Liza Morehead, PhD
Research & Data Analyst,
Worksystems
lmorehead@worksystems.org



Annie Kucklick, MSW
Director of Research and Impact,
Center for Women's Welfare
akuckl@uw.edu



Casey Milligan
Sr. Project Manager:
Business Service, Quality Jobs Lead
Worksystems
cmilligan@worksystems.org