



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Jan. 13, 2022

### **Media Contact:**

Rebeka Gipson-King

[OED\\_Communications@employ.oregon.gov](mailto:OED_Communications@employ.oregon.gov)

# **Jan. 13, 2022 Oregon Employment Department Media Statement**

Our next media availability is scheduled for 1 p.m., Wed., Jan. 19

## **Economic Update**

Today the Employment Department [published the latest results](#) from the Oregon Job Vacancy Survey. Oregon's private employers reported 103,000 job vacancies between October and December 2021. While that's a slight decline (-4%) from the record-high 107,000 job openings reported in summer 2021, employers are still actively recruiting for 88% more job openings than they were at the end of 2020.

Hiring demand between October and December 2021 was widespread across Oregon's economy. Five different sectors had at least 10,000 job vacancies. They included health care and social assistance; construction; retail trade; leisure and hospitality; and manufacturing.

Employers were also reporting near-record difficulty filling vacancies. Three out of four job openings (76%) were identified as hard to fill in the fall. In both Oregon and the U.S., there are more job openings than there are



unemployed people. For every seven unemployed workers, there are 10 job openings. There just aren't enough workers for this near-record high number of job openings.

Oregon's [private health care sector](#) reported even greater difficulty, with 9 out of 10 job openings (87%) identified by employers as hard to fill between October and December. Oregon's health care sector has both the largest number of job openings (16,000), and the largest number of hard-to-fill vacancies (13,900) in the state. Personal care aides, nursing assistants, and registered nurses accounted for the majority (57%) of difficult-to-fill vacancies in health care.

*More details about Oregon Job Vacancies are also available on [QualityInfo.org](#), on the publications page under Job Vacancy Survey.*

## **Hiring Healthcare Heroes Job Fair a Success**

Nearly 150 employers from across Oregon met yesterday with approximately 300 job seekers during the statewide "Hiring Heroes for Healthcare" virtual and in-person job fair. The job fair was sponsored by the Oregon Employment Department and its WorkSource Oregon partners.

"It is rewarding to connect talented people with Oregon employers. We advertised this event to people working in California, Washington and Idaho, and we are encouraged with the out-of-state participation in our virtual hiring events," said Adalberto Rubio, OED business service analyst.

The next statewide job fair will be in March 2022; however, local offices continue hosting smaller hiring events regularly. "We encourage people to check the events page at [WorksourceOregon.org](#) or WorkSource Oregon [LinkedIn page](#)," Rubio said.



## **Department Issues Scam Alert**

The Department has discovered that scammers are calling Oregonians pretending to be with the Employment Department. These scammers are masking their phone number so it looks like the call is coming from an OED phone number.

“The Oregon Employment Department will never ask you to provide your credit card information for you to receive benefits,” said Sara Cromwell, unemployment insurance division deputy director for benefits. “If you are unsure if the phone call is a scam, hang up. Then call us or fill out a [Contact us form](#). We have short phone wait times now, and we are quickly responding to Contact Us inquiries.”

## **2020 UI Fraud Report Issued**

Paying unemployment benefits in a timely manner, while protecting the Oregon UI Trust Fund, is a core principle of the Oregon Employment Department. Fraudulent claims are an ongoing concern of the department and other UI programs throughout the nation.

That concern was greatly heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis, due in part to the increased financial incentives for fraudsters. This week, OED is sharing the [Unemployment Insurance Fraud - Calendar Year 2020 report](#).

“The good news is that Oregon has not seen losses on the scale of some other states,” said Lindsy Leahy, unemployment insurance division director.

Fraud occurs when a person intentionally provides false or misleading information to obtain unemployment insurance benefits. During the time of skyrocketing pandemic related workloads, preventing fraud became an even greater challenge for the UI system nationally and in Oregon.



Oregon’s low rate of pandemic era UI fraud compared to some other states is due to the dedication of OED employees who diligently worked to keep up on ever-changing trends in UI fraud and prevent it along with their vigilant efforts to protect Oregon’s UI Trust Fund. Leahy, the Department’s UI division director, serves on the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Integrity Center steering committee, where fraud prevention is a top priority.

“Fraud remains a significant threat to Oregon’s UI system, but we continue dedicating significant resources and efforts to combat it,” Leahy said.

The figures in the report represent a snapshot in time. OED continues to receive tips and investigate other potential fraud for benefits paid in 2020. This means that report numbers will increase as more cases are confirmed. This data also does not reflect the many fraudulent or ID theft claims that the department caught before any benefits were paid.

During the height of the pandemic, OED declined to answer specific questions about fraud to prevent the disclosure of information that could be used by fraudsters to further scam the system.

“Now that the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program has ended and work in the program is winding down, we can publicly share some information about fraud that occurred in calendar year 2020 without creating undue further risk,” Leahy said.

## **Department Sending 1099G Tax Forms**

The Oregon Employment Department is sending more than 400,000 [1099G tax forms](#) to people who received unemployment insurance benefits in 2021.

1099G is used for people filing federal and state income taxes to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Oregon Department of Revenue.



People can expect to receive the 1099G form by Jan. 31, 2022. The form will be on the [Online Claims System](#) in February under the tab “1099G Tax forms” toward the bottom of the page.

Sara Cromwell, unemployment insurance division deputy director for benefits, urges people to inform the Employment Department if they receive a 1099G and did not claim benefits in 2021. “If you didn’t file a claim last year, this means someone may be trying to steal your ID. Please complete our [online ID theft form](#) or call 503-947-1995, so we can review the claim for possible fraud,” she said.

More information on the [1099G](#) form is at [unemployment.oregon.gov](http://unemployment.oregon.gov). For more information on what to do if your identity has been stolen, visit the [IRS website](#).

###

Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact: 971-673-6400. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, call 711 Telecommunications Relay Services.