

Greater Eastern & NE Oregon Regions: Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wheeler & Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties

Courtney Warner Crowell

Regional Solutions Coordinator, Eastern Oregon

Office of Governor Kate Brown

Cell: 541-429-2120

Courtney.crowell@oregon.gov

Employment and Economic Response to COVID-19
Weekly Summary: Sunday, March 22

This digest is a compilation of information and resources related to employment, commerce and economic development issues surrounding COVID-19. There are numerous online resources for those seeking health-related information, including daily COVID-19 updates from the Oregon Health Authority at <https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>.

Business Resources

State guidance for small businesses While restaurants, bars and other establishments that offer food or beverages for sale are restricted to carry-out or delivery, the state has guidance for other types of small businesses. The state urges these businesses to assess their practices, implement strong social distancing measures, and close their doors temporarily if they cannot put the new guidance in place. The state also urges businesses to keep the health and safety of Oregonians at the forefront as they make hard business decisions. Updated and current information from the state on coronavirus can be found [here](#).

Business Oregon has an [extensive list of resources for businesses](#) related to COVID-19, including information on financing, childcare, [free and discounted business coaching](#) and more.

Business Oregon has developed Business Survival Tips During a Pandemic, viewable [here](#).

The state has set up a [Rapid Response task force](#) designed to promote economic recovery and help businesses respond to layoffs and the dislocation of workers. The team will work directly with businesses and their employees to assist in layoff aversion strategies, help affected workers apply for unemployment benefits and find access to health care resources and training so they can get back to work rapidly.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has created a [Coronavirus Small Business Guide](#), with a range of resources for employers.

[Worker and Unemployment Resources](#)

Many people are contacting the Oregon Employment Department and asking if WorkSource Centers are open to walk-in customers during this time of closures and social distancing.

While the situation could change day-to-day, the centers remain open as of Thursday, March 19. Staff and customers are asked to take some simple health precautions, which includes limiting the number of customers at any given time and adhering to social distancing protocols. The Oregon Employment Department has timely information on [unemployment insurance related to COVID-19](#).

Oregon Employment Department has adopted [temporary rules](#) for unemployment insurance benefits flexibility and issued a [news release](#) related to COVID-19 and layoffs, closures and unemployment insurance. Email the department with COVID-19 related employment questions at OED_COVID19_Info@oregon.gov

Greater Eastern & NE Oregon Regions: Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wheeler & Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties

Courtney Warner Crowell

Regional Solutions Coordinator, Eastern Oregon
Office of Governor Kate Brown
Cell: 541-429-2120
Courtney.crowell@oregon.gov

Oregon is seeing a very large number of new unemployment insurance claims, with long wait times both in person and over the phone. While WorkSource offices remain open across the state, people should strongly consider [applying online for benefits](#) through the Oregon Employment Department.

[Cities and Counties](#)

Oregon was recently designated as eligible for Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance. This is an important declaration because it makes SBA loans available statewide to small businesses and private, nonprofit organizations to help alleviate economic injury caused by COVID-19. Loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. The interest rate is 3.75 percent for small businesses and 2.75 percent for non-profits. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, and applicants can apply online at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants can also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information.

More on land use decisions subject to the 120 and 150 day rules in ORS 227.178 and ORS 215.427: The statutory time limits for local land use authorities to decide applications is causing some anxiety at the local level. The state is exploring options to temporarily suspend the 120 and 150-day time clocks, though how and whether this will happen is uncertain. Meanwhile, the Department of Land Conservation and Development asks local land use authorities to contact all current development review applicants and request that they provide a written waiver of the 120 or 150-day requirement. Jurisdictions that are compelled to hold a public hearing on a land use application should consider hearings via teleconference. For more information on this issue contact DLCDD's Community Services Division Manager Gordon Howard at gordon.howard@state.or.us.

[Policy and Legislation](#)

The **[Family First Coronavirus Response Act](#)** was signed into law **March 18**. The FFCRA requires certain employers to provide employees with paid sick or family leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions will apply from April 2, 2020 through December 31, 2020. The law is applicable to private employers with fewer than 500 employees, as well as all government employers. Summary of details [here](#).

Governor Kate Brown [announces a new order](#) to preserve surgical masks, gowns, and gloves

Governor Kate Brown Announces [New Executive Order](#) For Higher Education Institutions

Oregon adopts temporary changes to [Child Care Rules](#) in response to COVID-19 state of emergency

Wyden Introduces \$17B Bill to Relieve Small Business Loan Payments for 6 Months. Read more [here](#).

Greater Eastern & NE Oregon Regions: Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wheeler & Baker, Union, and Wallowa Counties

Courtney Warner Crowell

Regional Solutions Coordinator, Eastern Oregon

Office of Governor Kate Brown

Cell: 541-429-2120

Courtney.crowell@oregon.gov

Wyden, Merkley Announce Senate Passage of Families First Coronavirus Act. Read more [here](#).

Non-Profit Organizations

The [Oregon Food Bank's Food Finder](#) website has locations of food pantries and other food assistance resources across the state.

The Oregon Community Recovery Grant program will [provide funds to nonprofit organizations](#) in Oregon that are affected by the outbreak of COVID-19. For questions on the program email grants@oregoncf.org.

The Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems at Oregon State University have COVID-19 information related to [small farms and food safety](#).