



REGIONAL SOLUTIONS OFFICE GOVERNOR KATE BROWN

Employment and Economic Response to COVID-19 Weekly Summary: Sunday, April 12

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

The Internal Revenue Service has developed a [resource \(Spanish\)](#) with details and support for taxpayers, businesses, tax-exempt organizations and others – including health plans – affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Eastern Oregon Regional Economic Recovery Team has put together a useful [one-page guide](#) that covers the most relevant funding and relief options for small businesses, all on one easy to access page.

The U.S. Small Business Administrations has FAQs regarding participation of [faith-based organizations](#) in the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury has written a [one-page summary](#) on the small business Paycheck Protection Program. The program continues to generate considerable interest and questions from small business owners, and this summary covers the basics.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) issued an [interim final rule](#) on the implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The rule was made effective immediately and the [loan application](#) was updated to reflect the changes. The rule states that worker cooperatives and many others including agriculture, purchasing, and consumer food co-ops, will be able to access Paycheck Protection Program loans.

Worker and Unemployment Resources

The restaurant and lodging industries are offering free access to online professional development courses. Scholarships are being offered to hotel and restaurant industry employees to help pay for certifications and career advancement courses that normally are not free. Read more on the [courses offered](#) and eligibility requirements.

The Internal Revenue Service has information to help ensure that everyone gets Economic Impact Payments as soon as possible. The payments, also referred to as stimulus payments, are automatic for

most taxpayers, including taxpayers who filed tax returns in 2018 and 2019 and most seniors and retirees. Others who have questions about the payment can find more information [here](#).

Record Initial Claims for Unemployment Benefits Continue in Oregon: In three weeks' time, the Oregon Employment Department has received 269,900 initial claims for unemployment benefits. By comparison, net job losses in Oregon totaled 147,800 for the duration of the Great Recession. [Read the news release](#) from the Oregon Employment Department on the latest statewide data.

The Oregon Employment Department has written a guide on the federal CARES ACT, signed into law March 27. The Act provides enhanced unemployment insurance benefits and pandemic unemployment assistance for Oregonians. [Here's what you need to know](#).

WorkSource Oregon centers are no longer accepting in-person appointments, starting today, April 7. The Oregon Employment Department will continue to offer job seeker and employer services by phone, email and Skype. Everyone is encouraged to file claims online or to contact a [local WorkSource center](#) for more information.

The Oregon Office of Economic Analysis has a new [blogpost](#) on unemployment insurance claims. Initial claims last week set new records at the state and national level, with 92,700 claims received statewide last week. That breaks the previous record of 76,500 set the week before, which was basically triple the previous record set during the Great Recession.

Cities and Counties

State agencies are asking Oregonians to [voluntarily refrain from outdoor burning](#) while communities respond to COVID-19.

Main Street America conducted an online survey last week to assess the impact of COVID-19. More than 5,850 small businesses responded to the survey, with more than 40 percent of those operating in communities with less than 10,000 residents. [View the full survey results and report](#).

Oregon closes recreational hunting and fishing to non-residents to limit travel amid COVID-19 restrictions: The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has closed recreational hunting, fishing, crabbing and clamming to non-residents due to travel concerns related to COVID-19. [Read the news release](#).

The Oregon Water Enhancement Board has new information that will impact cities, counties and other organizations that have pursued grant funding for some water-related projects. Lottery revenue funds a majority of the projects, and those revenues are expected to drop due to COVID-19. [Read the board FAQs](#).

The Oregon Home Builders Association (OHBA) and multiple state agencies partnered on a news release on [COVID-19 jobsite recommendations for the construction industry](#). The site also has a COVID-19 webpage with more information for contractors.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife [announced](#) that recreational salmon and steelhead fishing in Oregon waters of the Columbia River will remain closed indefinitely.

People who have student loans can find timely information on recent relief related to COVID-19, including the suspension of federally-held student loans through September 30, 2020. [Find FAQ's](#) with new information for borrowers of student loans, provided by Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley's office.

USDA Rural Development has taken a number of immediate actions to help rural residents, businesses and communities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. [Read the full announcement](#) to learn more about the opportunities USDA Rural Development is implementing to provide immediate relief to customers, partners, and stakeholders.

The state of Oregon has information on COVID-19 available in Spanish, including these [FAQs](#).

Travel Oregon has compiled state and national data on how COVID-19 has impacted the travel and tourism industries. The report will be updated weekly and is available [here](#).

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Policy and Legislation

Governor Brown Announces Distribution of First COVID-19 Rapid Testing Instruments in Rural Oregon: Governor Kate Brown announced that Oregon has distributed its first Abbott ID NOW rapid testing instruments to rural Oregon hospitals. The first hospitals to receive the COVID-19 rapid testing instruments are Curry General Hospital in Curry County, Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Morrow County, and Lake District Hospital in Lake County. The point-of-care COVID-19 testing machines are capable of returning positive or negative test results in minutes. The three hospitals will begin validation testing this week, and rapid testing will not be immediately available to the public. [Read the news release.](#)

Governor Kate Brown Convenes COVID-19 Medical Advisory Panel: Governor Kate Brown convened the first meeting of her COVID-19 Medical Advisory Panel April 7, a group of doctors, infectious disease experts, and medical professionals from across the state who will review the status of COVID-19 in the state and make recommendations to the Governor on future response efforts. [Read the full news release.](#)

Public schools in Oregon will remain closed for the rest of this academic year, Governor Kate Brown announced Wednesday. The school closure, originally set to end in late April, was postponed until June as the state focusses on slowing the spread of COVID019.

Governor Kate Brown aligns dates on dine-in prohibition with Stay Home, Save Lives Order: On April 7, Governor Kate Brown issued [Executive Order 20-14](#), aligning the effective date for the prohibition on dine-in food and drink consumption in Oregon with that of her [Stay Home, Save Lives](#) order. The dine-in prohibition will remain in effect until lifted by the governor.