

# WORKSOURCE OREGON



*Helping Employers Find People, Helping People Find Jobs.*

by RANDY SANDERS



**WorkSource**

**Website:**

[http://worksourceoregon.org/  
home/worksourcecenters/  
250-st-helens](http://worksourceoregon.org/home/worksourcecenters/250-st-helens)

**Job Seekers Start**

**Here:**

<http://worksourceoregon.org/job->

WorkSource Oregon is a state-wide resource available to all Oregonians who are seeking employment. An organization that has been around for years, it's a powerful and vital tool bringing employers, employees, government agencies and the private sector together for the good of all. There's so much more to WorkSource Oregon than finding jobs.

It's a web of services designed to help sustain job growth and be an integral part of creating successful Oregon business as well as training and finding employment for job hunters. It's an efficient network bringing counties into workable districts with similar characteristics. Pooling resources and agencies together under one roof is the goal. It's designed to be a one-stop-shopping experience, so to speak.

The agencies involved include: Oregon Economic & Community Development, Department of Human Services, Oregon Disabilities Commission and many more. They offer economic development information, training information and even child care resources, but that's not all. These are skilled people who can help job seekers write impressive resumes, or improve their current ones.

Finding work can be a stressful and daunting experience. It's helpful working with professional people who can prepare you for interviews, help write cover letters and even design a check list so you have the confidence and the essentials to walk into any interview and get that job!



(left): Columbia County  
Commissioner Henry Heimuller

Whether you're accessing their website's daily listings of jobs, or doing a walk-in visit at a nearby office, WorkSource Oregon has dedicated, skilled staffers always ready to help you.

But there is also a component ready and willing to help business large and small. Success stories from WorkSource Oregon include companies like Coastal Farm and Ranch in Cornelius. They started by using all of WorkSource's advertising services and located perspective employees. Applicants were directed to the WorkSource office, then pre-screened and prepared for the interview at Coastal's human resource division. This saved Coastal Farm and Ranch valuable time and money by sending targeted applicants to where they are needed.

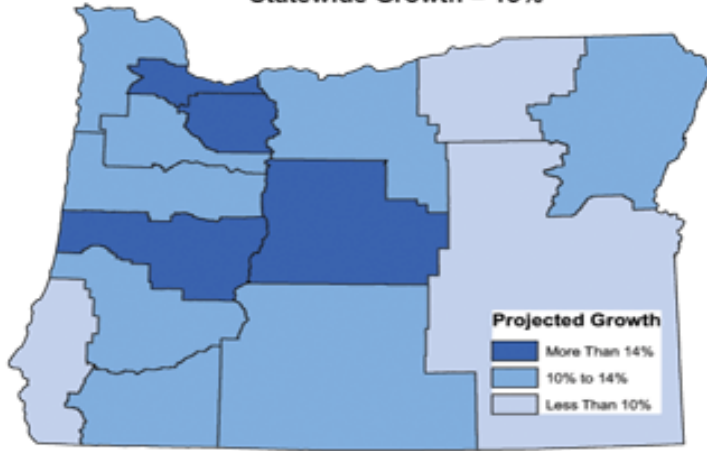
When Safeway in Tillamook moved their store out of the flood plain and into the downtown area, WorkSource teamed with city planners to bring a store into downtown that would compliment the district. WorkSource Oregon opened its office so the Safeway Company could interview new employees, stage recruiting events, even provided them space for the training classes new employees needed to start.

The WorkSource model has served the state well for years, but Governor John Kitzhaber determined the need for a complete reorganization plan. Whether it's because leaner public budgets are challenging government organizations to combine services without sacrificing results, or just a vision, the Governor wants to reshape the map and merge Oregon counties into new, like-minded districts.

This reorganization task falls on a working group of county commissioners from across the state; Columbia County Commissioner Henry Heimuller is among them. He explains how his county will go from being part of the Oregon Consortium and Oregon Workforce Alliance, to a new plan of WorkSource districts, still being hammered out.

"Columbia County has been part of TOC/OWA (The Oregon Consortium of WorkSource Alliance) for decades, but the Governor has decided that we should engage in a more concentrated relationship within the WorkSource areas. North Oregon Coast counties such as Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook are assembled with Eastern Oregon counties because they're all

**Faster Job Growth Projected in Portland Area and Central Oregon,  
2012-2022  
Statewide Growth = 15%**



considered rural. We have more in common with rural Eastern Oregon counties than we do urban areas like Multnomah, Clackamas or Washington County. Originally, the thought was to merge Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook counties together into its own district. That idea falls short of meeting the criteria required to formulate a district because at least one million dollars of federal WorkSource funding must be allocated annually to have your own district office.”

The Commissioner believes that once these new districts are designed and agreed upon, Columbia County could become part of a new district that includes the counties of: Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln and Benton. The district office location will remain in its current location in Benton County at least for the time being. Each county will host its own office, providing services locally for its citizens. Columbia County’s existing office is in St. Helens. He feels this issue is critical to all citizens seeking employment and understands the challenges workers face when looking for employment. He acknowledges the importance of accessing services locally, within their own county.

“Every county must have its own office location. We’ve advocated for this in the past and will continue doing so. Regardless of any changes resulting from this reorganizational process, folks still must be able to attend a local WorkSource office in each county, across the state. It’s unreasonable to ask people who live in Columbia County to drive to Astoria, for instance, to use WorkSource services. In the unfortunate event that a person loses their job or gets displaced, they’ll be able to come into a local office and take advantage of the many ‘One-Stop’ services. Each office reaches out with a variety of WorkSource programs, state unemployment programs, veteran’s employment services and more, all in one building, one location. These are all resources aligned with each other to produce results. For instance, if a person cannot find employment that involves their particular skill set, they’ll enjoy many options available to them without ever leaving the building. They might just walk across the hall and into other organizations who can help them. Another solution, for folks

## St. Helens WorkSource

### office:

500 N. Hwy 30, suite 320

503.397.4995

*Unemployment claims are not handled by the local office.*

### Unemployment Toll Free:

1.877.345.3848

866.345.1878 FAX

### HOURS:

8am till 5pm

Mon thru Fri

*Closed on legal holidays.*

willing to try a new skill set, is locating employers who will teach them new skills, and perhaps even pay them as they train for this future position. Accessing a variety of available programs without leaving the building is exactly how this whole thing should work.”

Commissioners who make up the WorkSource reorganizational team are working at a feverish pace to meet the Governor’s expectations by the November deadline. They’re challenged with a time frame of less than a year to have the new map redrawn. Once that’s accomplished, it will be almost another two years before the legislature weighs in, contractors are selected and the new system is fully functioning.

“The driver for this change comes from the Governor’s office, all the way around. None of the WorkSource areas asked for this change. We feel that we already have a pretty good functioning system operating as TOC/OWA . Some of the areas, like Clackamas, were running one county, out of one office, but using the same amount of staffing as we were running 24-

counties. So we feel that we’ve maintained TOC/OWA as a fairly efficient system.”

“I currently don’t have a map of what the new lines might look like. Unfortunately, until the contracts are completed, nothing can be printed.”

Governor Kitzhaber’s original intention was to use the same mapping process currently existing for another organization called, Oregon Solutions. Commissioner Heimuller is quick to explain how this system is impractical.

“The Governor wanted to map out WorkSource like Oregon Solutions, but trying to super-impose an entire system’s operation into the same footprint of a completely different organization isn’t realistic. Oregon Solutions has its own unique focus, unlike that of WorkSource. You have to take into account the individual characteristics of what both of these organizations accomplish. We believe that we’ve assembled the best option for allowing WorkSource to flourish by mapping it out the way that we’re proposing.”

Districts should share much of the same characteristics and resources, Commissioner Heimuller points out. It makes sense

that they should be encompassed into the same districts with the same similarities. Because Columbia County's features include: fishing, forestry, industry and manufacturing, it makes more sense to associate them with Tillamook and Clatsop, as opposed to an urban county like Multnomah or a high desert, ranch county like Malheur.

Regardless of how or when these district maps will be completed, it won't effect your individual access to WorkSource Oregon. If you are an employer looking for actual resources that will help you secure the employees you need to grow your business, or if you're someone looking for work, call their office at (503) 397-4995 or visit at 500 North Highway 30 in St. Helens. Hours are 8 to 5pm, Monday through Friday, closed on legal holidays.