

Meeting:	Paid Leave Oregon Advisory Committee				
Date/time:	January 9, 2025, 1:00pm				
Location:	ZoomGov				
Attendees:	P (Present) A (Absent) S (sent sub)				
	Facilitator: Karen Madden Humelbaugh Scribe: Michael Orosco				
Members		Staff		Guest	
P	Karen Madden Humelbaugh	P	Michael Orosco		
A	David Gerstenfeld	P	Shannon Ball		
P	Jeannine Beatrice	P	Juan Serratos		
A	Amanda Dalton (employers)	A	Jack Patterson		
P	Jenny Dresler (employers)	P	Kandi Quezada		
A	Rich Reynolds (employers)	A	Kelley Ofoni		
P	JaJetta Dumdi (employers)	A	Accacia Nepote		
P	Catie Theisen (employees)				
P	Courtney Veronneau (employees)				
P	Anna Richards Roberts (employees)				
P	Odalís Aguilar-Aguilar (employees)				

Agenda

Docket #	Topic	Purpose	Presenter
1.0	Welcome	Inform	Karen Madden Humelbaugh &
1.1	Member Roundtable		Jeannine Beatrice
1.2	Agency Updates		
1.3	Approval of October Notes		
- In the future meeting is being reduced to 90 minutes as we have generally do not use the full two hours. - If anyone needs to contact us to follow up, you can do so through emailing Michael. - David is out so Jeannine will be representing the Directors office. - Jeannine – Legislative days were in December in front of House, Labor and workplace standards, the Senate, labor and business for updates about how things are going. Also invited to House education committee to talk about Unemployment Insurance and Paid Leave Oregon program. Preparing for budget presentation for the 2025 session. Focus is customer service and employ engagement, and operational excellence. - October notes approved.			
2.0	Quarterly Data Update	Inform	Karen Humelbaugh
Since the beginning of the program, we have paid over \$861 million in benefits, which in 2024 alone we paid over \$684 million in benefits to over 73,000 unique Oregonians. Just let that settle in how many Oregonians this program is assisting during some of life's most important moments in just one year			

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- Last January's Advisory Committee meeting we reported our average wait time was over 52 minutes, our average wait time now is around 20 minutes. We are still working on processing times but from calendar year 2023 to calendar year 2024, our processing days went down by about 23% (down from 38 to 29).
 - Based on your feedback we received our letters to customers, our employer letters, and have been working on providing employer additional information.
 - We also revised the serious health condition form to address feedback from staff and customers to support more efficient claim processing.
 - And we have worked with our staff and managers and created metrics for all aspects of the Paid Leave Oregon program.
 - Preplacement leave is a new reason someone can take Paid Leave starting 1/1/25; therefore, in 2024 we worked on changing our forms, instructions and administrative rules to include this new leave.
 - Since the October advisory committee meeting, the projected months reserve are higher at the end of 2024 and 2025 as the benefit payments are lower than we projected for the first part of the year, but the benefit payments have been the same as we projected the last six months of 2024; the revenue collected, and administrative expenses are staying about what we projected. In 2024, Ayesha estimated we would receive 131,000 applications and we received about 127,000 thus far (as of 12/16/24) so we will receive about the amount we projected, which is about 360 applications a day.
 - We are estimating to receive about 410 applications a day in 2025. So much is continuing to be estimated as we still don't know Oregonians trends and are continuing to watch the Trust Fund weekly as we are optimistic that the reserves will increase but so much is still up in the air.
 - Since our last October Advisory Committee meeting, we have received about 30,500 applications, which is about 7,000 less applications received then the previous quarter. In total over the life of the program we have received over 174,000 applications. (This only includes ID verified claims). We have broken out the additional two weeks of pregnancy disability leave and so the percentages have changed a little since the last time we have met but not much.
 - Around 86% of all claimants have received at least one payment.
 - The percentage of employees that work in Oregon that we expected to have taken Paid Leave in 2024 was about 7%. For 2024, we have received unique claims from about 3.7% of the Oregon workforce.
 - The Total Claimants Not Paid represents claimants who have a Paid Leave Claim that has completed the ID Verification stage, is Monetarily Eligible, and the Claim Status is Allowed. Payments have not been made to these claimants because no weeks have been claimed or weeks claimed have been denied.
 - Pre-placement will start to show up next quarter.
 - Our goal is to be around 21 days to process an application. We got close to that number in October and November but have been starting to creep up again so I am working with the managers to see what has changed and how we can get that back down.
 - We hired staff to answer the phones and so you can see our wait times have been decreasing.
 - In a year, we have paid over 800 million dollars in payments! We have issued over 1,000,000 individual payments to 103,802 people thus far (788,281 consecutive leave and 235,586 intermittent leave).
 - Grant applications overall are quite low, and denials are fairly high. This is generally due to misunderstanding of the grant qualifications.
 - Self-employed applications continue to come in slowly. We have received almost 300 more self-employed applications since September.
 - Thus far, about 300 self-employed individuals, or an uptake rate of about 16%, have received benefits totaling over \$1.6 million. We anticipated about 2,800 self-employed applications with a 50% uptake rate so self-employed are taking less benefits than anticipated.
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- From October through December, the distribution across rural, urban, and frontier areas has remained relatively stable, with minimal changes. The data shows minimal changes in demographic distribution.
 - The Paid Leave Oregon claimants are trending similar to the US Census demographics. We will continue to watch this carefully that we continue to serve folks in all race groupings at a rate that is similar to the overall population in the state.
 - Direct comparison between male/female from Paid Leave approved applicants and the Oregon Labor Force data from the Census. The US Census Bureau only tracks "male" and "female" responses without consideration for other genders and sexes. While Paid Leave data is more inclusive, which impacts percentage comparisons with the Oregon Labor Force. Please note that "Male" includes cis- and trans-men; "Female" includes cis- and trans-women. Gender Diverse includes: agender, nonbinary, two spirit, gender fluid, gender flux, and more.
 - We are watching carefully the income levels of folks we serve as well and this is a place where we are trending in the right direction- better parity of those served in all income levels. The first few months we were heavily serving higher income folks- likely due to access to resources and information.
 - But we have continued education and outreach for folks earning less annually and in industries where leave has not traditionally been available and are starting to see the needle move with more folks being served. Individuals making less than \$30,000, we have seen an increase of over 5% in applications since April in that income bracket. We will continue to monitor to make sure we are reaching the right people.
 - Minimum wage 28k for full time one year.
 - Since we last met, the equivalent plan annual renewals were due. We had about 650 equivalent plan employers that have about 44,000 employees, decide not to renew and either withdrew or were terminated their equivalent plan. However, we had about 260 new employers (that have about 16,000 employees) switch to equivalent plans. So, for 2025, as of right now, we have more than 400 less employers, with over 30,000 employees, choosing to participate in the state plan instead of having an equivalent plan from the previous year.
 - Movement- overall more people are now on the state plan/more employers. We will see if this trend continues.
 - With about 13% of the workforce being covered by an Equivalent Plans, we are looking to see if the loss of contributions and benefits paid negatively affects the Trust.
 - Using the average 7% take-up rate – at this point it appears there may be an overall impact to the Trust Fund in 2025 of about \$101 million (\$256,000,000 contributions not received minus \$155,000,000 in benefits not paid).
 - I want to take the time to thank the insurance providers as their willingness to work with us. Equivalent plan insurance providers willingly provided reporting information to us earlier this summer that we reported data to this group on and they are continuing to work with us to make sure we will get the correct data reported by the equivalent plan employers that is due here on January 31st. We really appreciate their willingness to work with us!

Questions/Answers:

- Why does Pre-Placement Leave only intermittent? It seems to be a restriction over consecutive.
 - Intermittent allows for taking specific days when they are needed. Consecutive does not allow for that. We will follow up with the policy team on this.
 - Is Pregnancy Leave specific to the two additional weeks?
 - It is exactly those two weeks. The birthing parent would get the two additional weeks on top of the 12 weeks for bonding, giving a total of 14. There are no birthing parents that do not qualify for the
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additional two weeks. Note: the two weeks can be taken prior to birth or after depending on the situation. The total number of weeks will be the same no matter what combination of leave type you take.

- Are the new staff being hired additional or replacement?
-These public service reps are additional to the current staff we have. We believe we are still close to our approved positions titles of around 380-390 with this hiring.
- Is self-employed claiming more that they are putting in?
-Roughly 670K in contributions vs 1.6mil paid out.
- Do we know what the demographics are for equivalent plans? As the numbers may be different then what we are seeing based on who the equivalent plans are serving.
-Equivalent plans are roughly 16% and we have requested that businesses voluntarily send us their data on this matter and thus far they are willing.

3.0

2025 Outreach Plan

Inform

Luis “Alex” Caicedo

- Here’s a look at our current outreach team.
 - Monica serves as our Outreach Manager, and we have Sarah Ambrosek, our Operations and Policy Analyst for the outreach team.
 - Chris Grace continues her fantastic work in the eastern part of the state. She’s a well-known figure in outreach across state government—everyone knows Chris!
 - Next, we have Esgar Avila, who joined us about recently will be focusing on outreach in the Gorge and the Pendleton-Hermiston area.
 - In southern Oregon, we have Laura Ayala, who has been with us since October 2022. She’s been doing incredible work in the South Coast, including Douglas and Coos counties, and has also helped out in Central Oregon alongside Chris.
 - We are currently in the process of hiring someone for Central Oregon.
 - For the southern and mid-Willamette Valley, we’re excited to introduce Alex Caicedo. He’s responsible for outreach along the coast and in Lane and Douglas counties, bringing valuable experience from WorkSource.
 - We also welcome Andrea Valencia Costa, who is onboarding now. She will take on outreach in the Salem-Kaiser area and the mid-Willamette Valley.
 - Lastly, Meghan covers the Portland metro area, which includes Multnomah, Clatsop, Columbia, Washington, and Clackamas counties. Andrea and Meghan also share outreach efforts in Yamhill County.
 - We participated in the Asian Celebration and numerous Pride events, including Albany Pride, Eugene Pride, Bend Pride, and Portland Pride, among many others.
 - We also engaged with the community at the Deschutes County Fair and the Portland Rose Festival.
 - Additionally, we celebrated Juneteenth at several events.
 - On average, our team attends about 10 to 12 community resource fairs each month.
 - For example, Laura and Meghan were at the Pecan Workers Summit in June, showcasing our commitment to diverse outreach.
 - This is just a glimpse of the many activities we’re involved in, including regular interactions with community organizations and professional groups.
 - Our focus will be on raising awareness about paid leave in Oregon, enhancing engagement with priority populations, and building stronger relationships with potential partners.
 - We plan to collaborate closely with state agency outreach teams and partner with nonprofits, cultural organizations, and advocacy groups.
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- Additionally, we're working with faith-based institutions to disseminate information. Churches serve not only as places of worship but also as community hubs and event spaces, attracting a diverse range of individuals.
 - This makes them an invaluable resource for our outreach efforts.
 - We will continue to engage with community leaders as paid leave ambassadors.
 - Our ultimate goal is to increase our outreach contacts by 30% compared to the previous year.
 - A common question I receive from staff is about our outreach to human resource professional groups and employers. The answer is yes—we are actively engaging with everyone we can.
 - Here are some of the organizations we collaborate with:
 - The Oregon Health Authority
 - The Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association
 - Community partner outreach programs, including the Migrant Education Conference
 - The AFL-CIO
 - The Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs
 - The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
 - Various cultural and labor organizations
 - The Small Business Development Corporation
 - Our wonderful Chris Grace is currently organizing a training session with the Small Business Development Corporation. We plan to visit their satellite offices to present to very small businesses—those that often don't belong to traditional chambers of commerce.
 - We also maintain strong relationships with the Workforce programs, including the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Outreach Program and Employer Services.
 - We really want to spend additional time with are those listed on this slide – priority populations, self-employed individuals, medical providers and their staff, and employers. A priority population is a group of people who are more likely to experience health inequities or be negatively impacted by the environment than the general population.
 - Methods we are going to use to reach those audiences:
 - Events (online & in-person).
Strategic marketing and outreach for Paid Leave hosted events. Leverage our existing contacts to increase awareness and attendance.
 - Social media (virtual sessions)
In multiple languages other than English and Spanish
Podcasts that cater to varying levels of literacy and preferences (eg; language) for consuming information
Create social media cards and partner with other agencies (eg; OHA)
Paid Social media campaigns
 - In person business outreach
 - Community Specific Websites and Forums
Specifically, priority populations where they might seek information and support
 - Ethnic Media Collaboration
Partner with ethnic newspapers, radio stations, and TV channels to run stories, ads and interviews about Paid Leave Oregon
 - Create and maintain engagement forums
Engage folks who have completed our survey and indicated they are interested in further engagement.
Initiate forums with small groups to gather more detailed feedback on Customer Experience
 - Long term goals and larger programs we'll be focusing on:
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- One of our key objectives is to enhance and intensify the training we provide to HR professionals and leave administrators regarding Paid Leave Oregon.
 - By doing so, we can better support these individuals, enabling them to assist their employees more effectively.
 - We also aim to improve communication and collaboration with other state agencies, such as the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority.
 - These organizations often interact with our clients who may be unaware of our program or facing challenges related to taking leave or navigating their claims.
 - Building strong relationships with these agencies is crucial for assisting Oregonians in accessing our services.
 - Additionally, we plan to collaborate with community organizations to facilitate information sharing and support with the paid leave application process. Our goal is to empower these organizations to help clients with application issues and completion.
 - We are also in the process of developing an interstate network of outreach teams to share best practices, strategies, and innovative ideas.
 - As previously mentioned, we aim to increase our outreach contacts by 30%, boost web traffic by 20%, and enhance brand awareness by 30%.
 - Lastly, and very importantly, we are committed to identifying and addressing barriers to accessibility and utilization of Paid Leave Oregon.
 - One way we plan to improve accessibility to paid leave is by using data to enhance our outreach program.
 - We're developing a process to review benefit utilization through demographic identifiers. This will help us assess benefits with an equity lens.
 - We'll examine factors like community age, geographic location, and income to understand who is using paid leave and identify specific groups that may be underutilizing it.
 - We want to find out if underutilization is related to rural vs. urban settings, priority populations, or economic and educational factors.
 - We need to reach out to employers who may not be aware of the program or who confuse Oregon sick leave with Oregon paid leave, particularly those with fewer than 10 employees.
 - We'll analyze unprocessed claims to identify where people are getting stuck in the process. This will help us understand why some may choose not to proceed and allow us to tailor our outreach materials accordingly.
 - We will look at trends since the program began—examining utilization rates in various groups to see if they are increasing or decreasing.
 - How do we know we're doing our job? We'll implement data tracking for social media engagement and gather feedback from attendees at events to understand their experiences with paid leave.
 - We'll conduct surveys to identify barriers, roadblocks, and opportunities for improvement, focusing on where people are getting stuck in the application process.
 - Track the number of website traffic
This could be through analytics and if using paid social, could track through google analytics
 - Capture number of attendees at live and in person events
 - Survey attendees of our events to determine how they heard of our event and gain insight around improvements.
Create and maintain survey of folx who have used Paid Leave to gain further insight of areas for opportunity. How did you learn about Paid Leave? What pain points if any did you experience?
 - Process to review benefits utilization by demographic identifiers (we would need to collect demographic data when we process applications) to assess benefits utilization through an equity lens. We could start this analysis after the first quarter of benefits, either September-November or October-December. Goals and
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metrics of the outreach team would then be adjusted to target communities who have underutilized benefits during our first analysis

- Adjust the outreach plan as needed.

Questions/Answers:

- Can you please make the videos/lives on the Outreach Facebook page shareable so we can share that content? Also, we would love to see multiple languages on top of Spanish and English, such as Russian for example.
 - The great thing is we have an in-house translating team so when we do the videos, we will have them in all the languages.
- Do you dub a live afterwards?
 - In the case of lives, we will have interpreters that we work with all the time.
- Also wondering if your team would be willing to do a longer live session on our Facebook page (SEIU), as we get a lot of engagement there and we like to have guest speakers to talk about different programs?
 - Definitely! We are always looking for opportunities like this and have done so for other partners like the school district and big and small employers. If we get a request from your office for an informational session, we can send reps like myself, (Alex) or other team members to support.
- Do you ever table at employers' places of business? For instance, like intel or Nike?
 - Yes we have tabled at businesses before, such as Nike. We have been able to do this through attending other events where we believe we will be able to make contacts and spread our information.
- Lastly would like to see an increase of Hospital outreach with frontline staff that interact with the folks who are trying to get FMLA paperwork. I think having them have a higher level of awareness to catch these folks and give them a Paid Leave flyer so they can get more information.

4.0

2025 Legislation

Inform

Shannon Ball

- The 2025 Legislation is almost here, and we will then know even more bills that may be introduced that impact Paid Leave Oregon. But, as of right now, we know about our four Legislative concepts that we have discussed over the last year and now we know their bill number.
- We are asking for an amendment to SB 858 – Technical changes - to remove the language in the current draft for what OED should do if the trust fund is low. We are asking for this to be removed as it isn't necessary and we hope we never get to the point where it is needed but if it is, conversations can occur in the future.

Questions/Answers:

- Be aware of Senate bill 881. There are some definitions conversations that will be discussed.
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