Oregon Department of Human Services

Presentation to the 2021 Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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April 8, 2021

# Presentation Outline

## Today

- **Celebrating significant milestones!**

- **Empowering and working with Oregonians with disabilities**
  - What is VR?
  - Mission and Vision
  - Who We Serve

- **Developing pathways to achieve well-being of clients**
  - Equity, inclusion and resiliency efforts
  - Partners with the communities we serve

- **Serving Oregonians with disabilities through four program areas**
  - VR Core Services
  - Employer Services
  - VR Youth Services
  - VR Supported Employment

- **Where We are Now**

- **Where We are Going**

# Celebrating a VR Legacy!

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) expands inclusion and equity, building community well-being by working alongside those with disabilities.

2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the first federally funded VR program.

2020 marked the 30th anniversary of the The Americans with Disabilities Act.

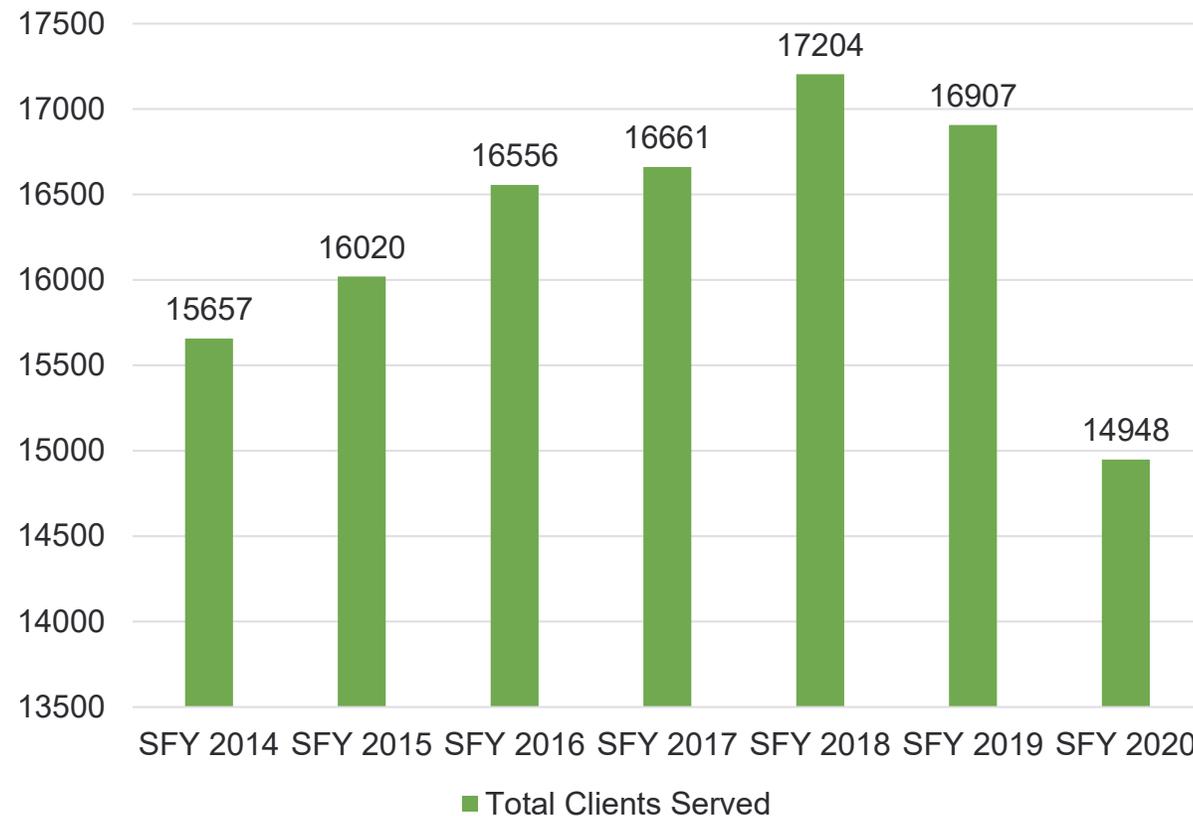2020 marked the 30th anniversary of The Oregon Youth Transition Program.

# What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

- **Our Mission:** Assist Oregonians with disabilities to achieve, maintain and advance in employment and independence.

- **Our Vision:** Every Oregonian with a disability who desires to work is given the means and opportunity.

- **VR is** a federal-state program that helps people who have physical or mental disability get or keep a job.

- **VR is** committed to helping clients achieve competitive integrated employment.

- **VR staff** provide a variety or supports to ensure successful outcomes for clients.

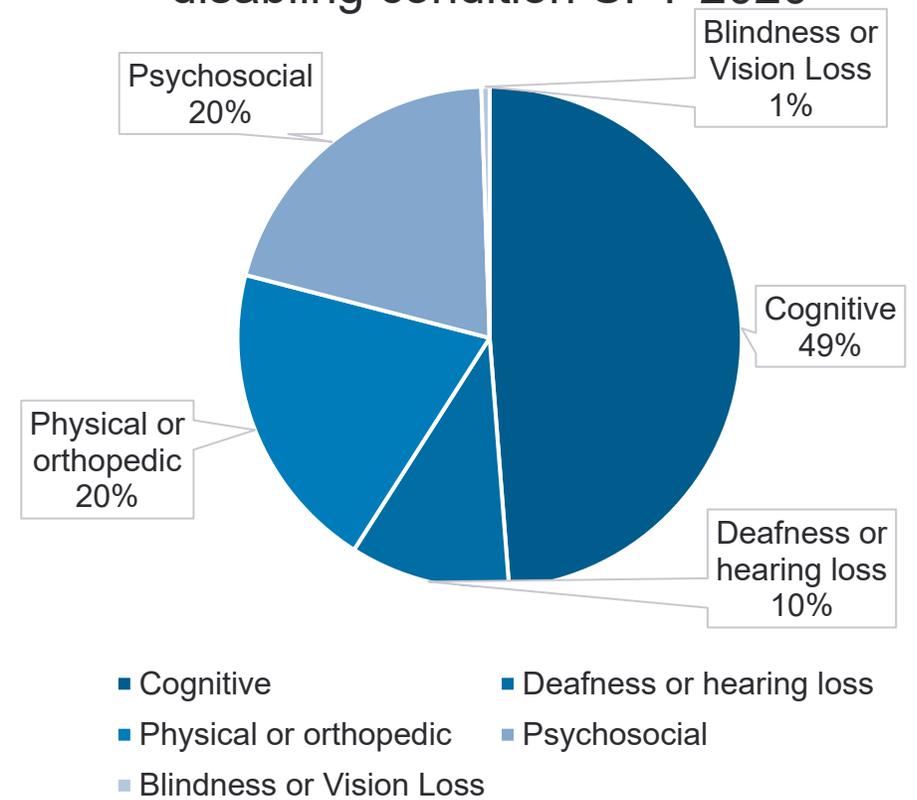- **Funds are supplied jointly by the federal and state governments with an 80/20 match.**
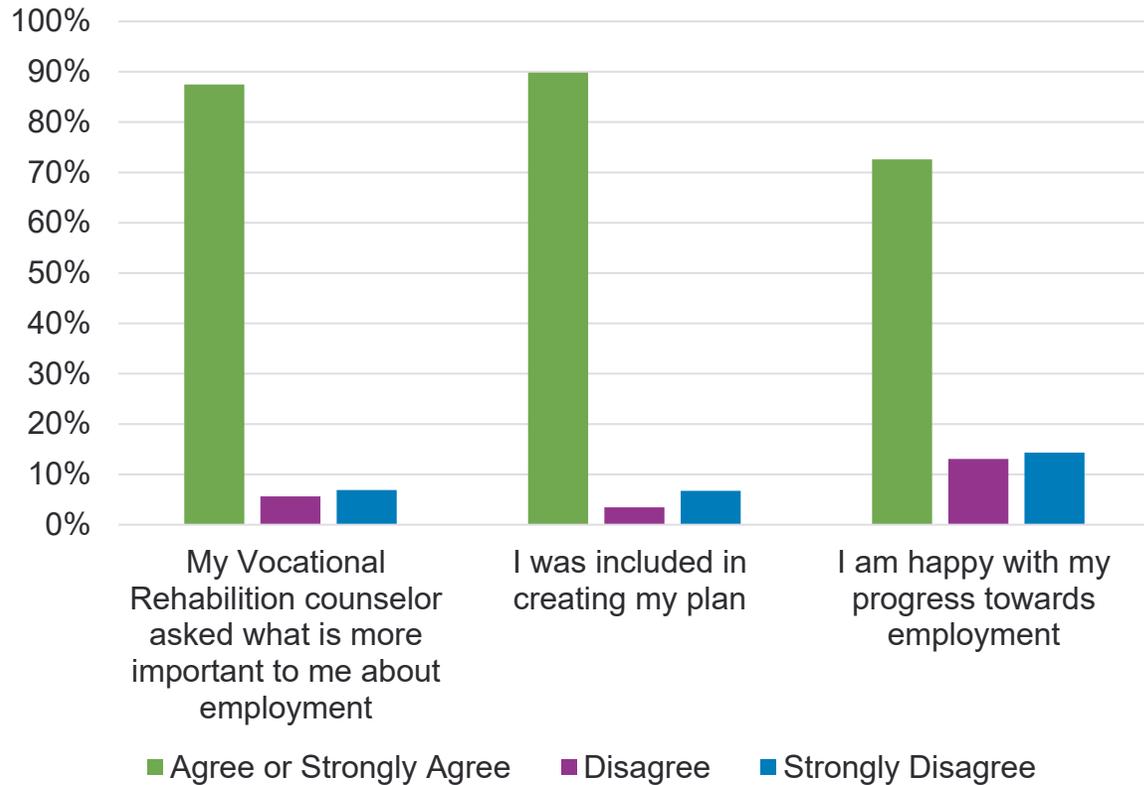
# Who We Serve

## Total Clients Served



| SFY | Total Clients Served |
|-----|---------------------|
| SFY 2014 | 15657 |
| SFY 2015 | 16020 |
| SFY 2016 | 16556 |
| SFY 2017 | 16661 |
| SFY 2018 | 17204 |
| SFY 2019 | 16907 |
| SFY 2020 | 14948 |

## Percent of clients served by primary disabling condition SFY 2020



- Cognitive 49%
- Deafness or hearing loss 10%
- Physical or orthopedic 20%
- Psychosocial 20%
- Blindness or Vision Loss 1%

Legend:
- ■ Cognitive
- ■ Deafness or hearing loss
- ■ Physical or orthopedic
- ■ Psychosocial
- ■ Blindness or Vision Loss

# Consumer Feedback



Person Centered Service

Client Partnerships

Oregon Department
of Human Services
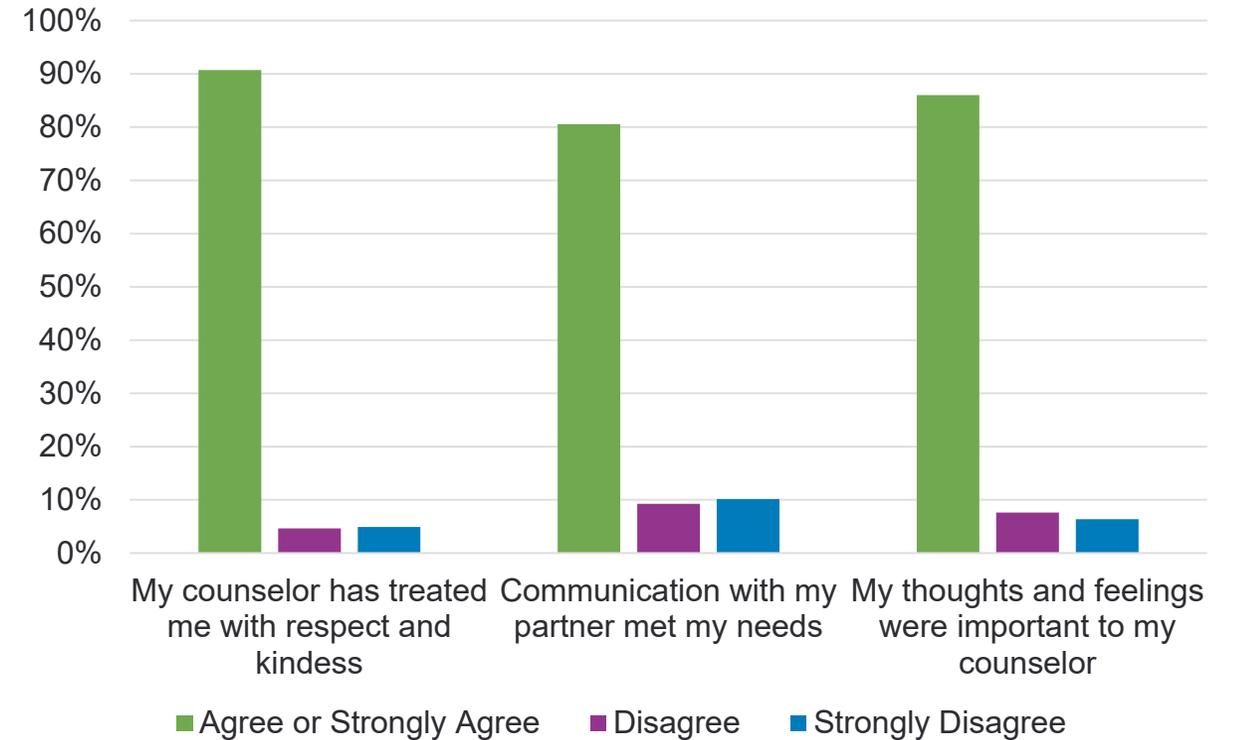
# Developing pathways to achieve the well-being of clients

1. Equity, Inclusion and Resiliency Efforts
2. Partners with the Communities we serve

# Promoting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The compounding impact of systemic racism and discriminatory behaviors presents additional barriers for people with disabilities

- We serve clients and employers with a dual customer model:
  - Help clients reach employment
  - Educate and support employers
- Provides clients better access when seeking services at WorkSource centers
- VR works with Tribal Nations to provide culturally responsive services
- VR is engaging in conversations with communities of color, who have traditionally been underserved

# VR Partners in the communities we serve

Community partners differ depending on needs, participating businesses, and client interests.
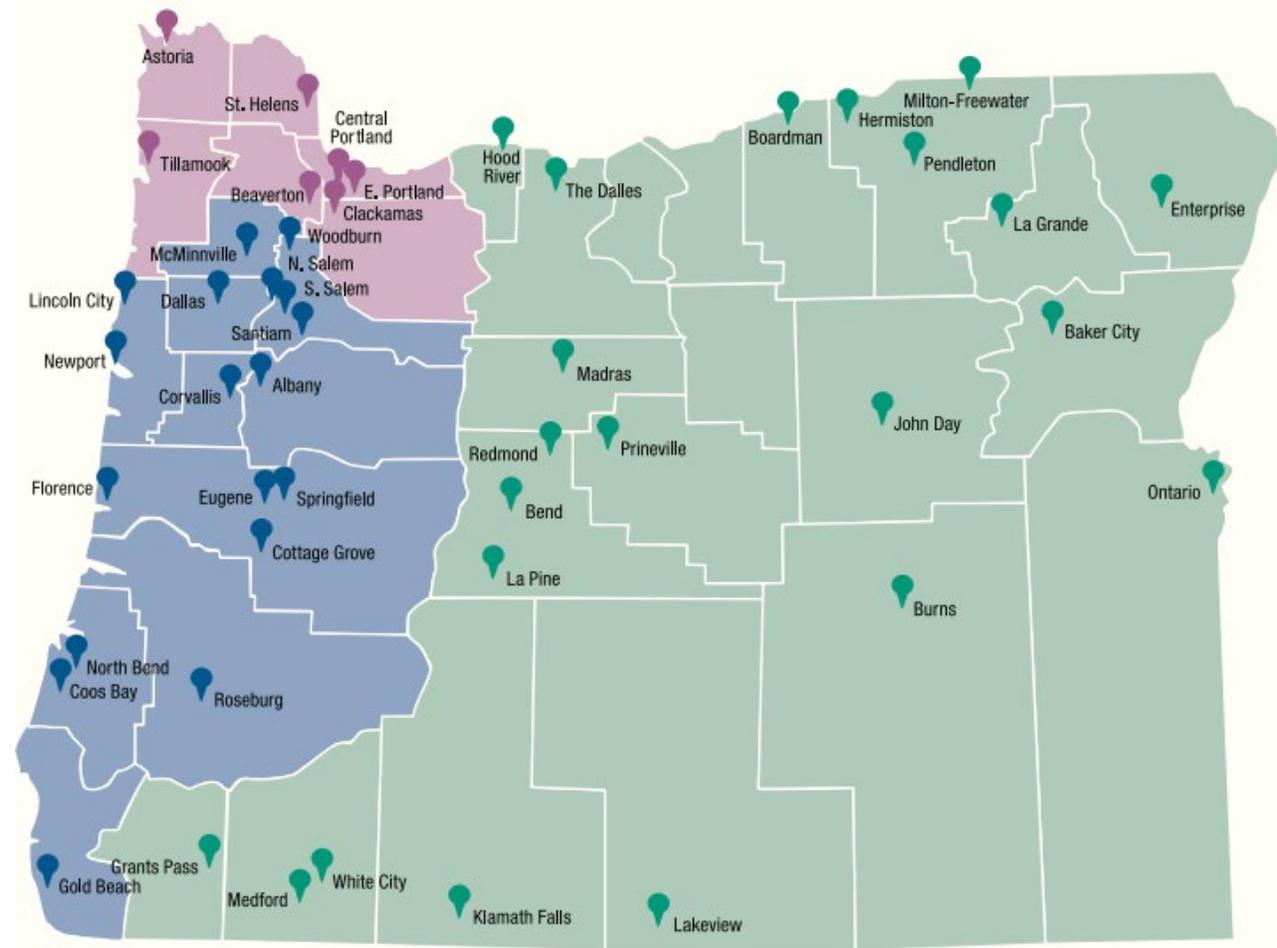
- **Partners include:**
  - Private Businesses
  - Non-profits
  - Community Based Organizations
  - Tribal Nations
  - WorkSource Oregon
  - Independent Living Center
  - Local Workforce Development Boards
  - Job Placement Contractors
  - Job Coaches

# We serve all 36 counties in Oregon

Region 1: includes ODHS Districts 1, 2, 15, 16

Region 3: Includes ODHS Districts 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Region 2: includes ODHS Districts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Oregon Department of Human Services – Vocational Rehabilitation

# Serving Oregonians with disabilities through four program areas

1. VR Core Services
2. VR Youth Services
3. Supported Employment
4. Employer Services

Oregon Department
of Human Services

# Meet Amy

- Was working as a Certified Prosthetist/Orthotist in a busy healthcare environment but her hearing loss was negatively impacting her job.

- VR helped her upgrade her cochlear implant processors and provide assistive technology.

- Amy's confidence grew as she was able to communicate more effectively on her job with better technology and equipment.

- She successfully obtained her dream job of Cranial Clinical Manager even during the pandemic.

# VR Process for Job Seekers

| Orientation or Referral from partner agency | Service Questionnaire | Intake and Eligibility Determination | Assessment of Vocational Needs | Development of an Individualized Plan | Job Search /Employment | Post-Employment Services |

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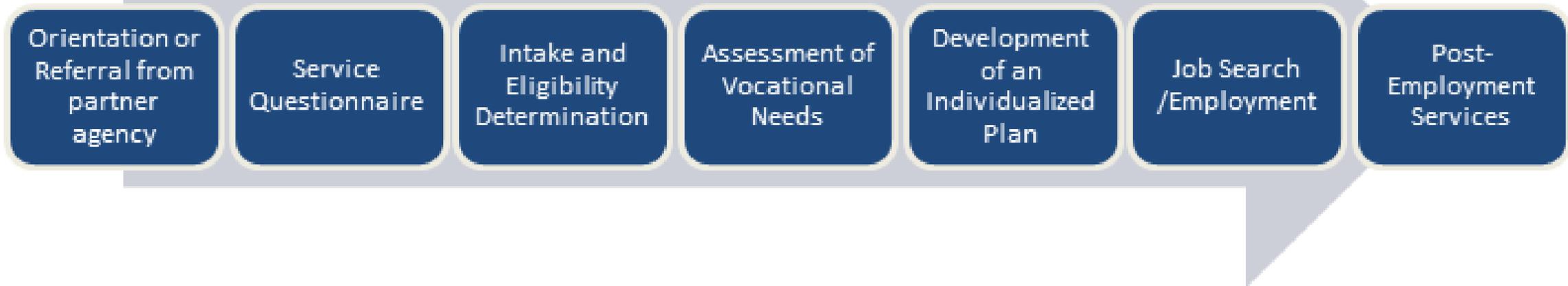
# VR Core Services

**Individualized Plans may include:**

- Counseling and Guidance
- Results of Disability Evaluation
- Defining Interests
- Additional Training
- Worksite Modifications
- Identifying Helpful Assistive Technology
- Transitional Services for Students
- Consultation to Employers
- Job Placement Assistance
- Job Coaching
- Other Individualized Services

# Meet Tabitha

- Partnered with vendor and Office of Developmental Disabilities to help client realize her dream of living independently.

- Worked with VR counselor on two-week work assessment and career exploration showing she could pursue a job in a retail setting with the long-term support of a job coach.

- Currently working at Ross Dress-for-Less

# Youth Transition Services (YTP)

- Transition services prepare students, from age 14 through 21 for work, with a focus on building skills, exploring interests and learning about community supports.

- In 2019, YTP served 1,284 students with disabilities in high schools throughout Oregon.

# Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

**The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act (require VR to spend 15% of federal grant on Pre-ETS)**

- Pre-ETS are services designed to develop transferable employment skills and expand opportunities for students with disabilities.

- Pre-ETS are:
  - Job Exploration and Counseling
  - Work-based learning experiences
  - Counseling on postsecondary education and transition programs
  - Workplace readiness training
  - Instruction in self-advocacy

- For current Oregon students in secondary or post-secondary education

# Pre-ETS

## 14,096 Individual Pre-Employment Transition Services Provided in 2020



Legend: —— Individual Pre-ETS Services Provided

Data points:
- Jan - March: 4335
- April - June: 2976
- July - Sept: 2756
- Oct - Dec: 4029
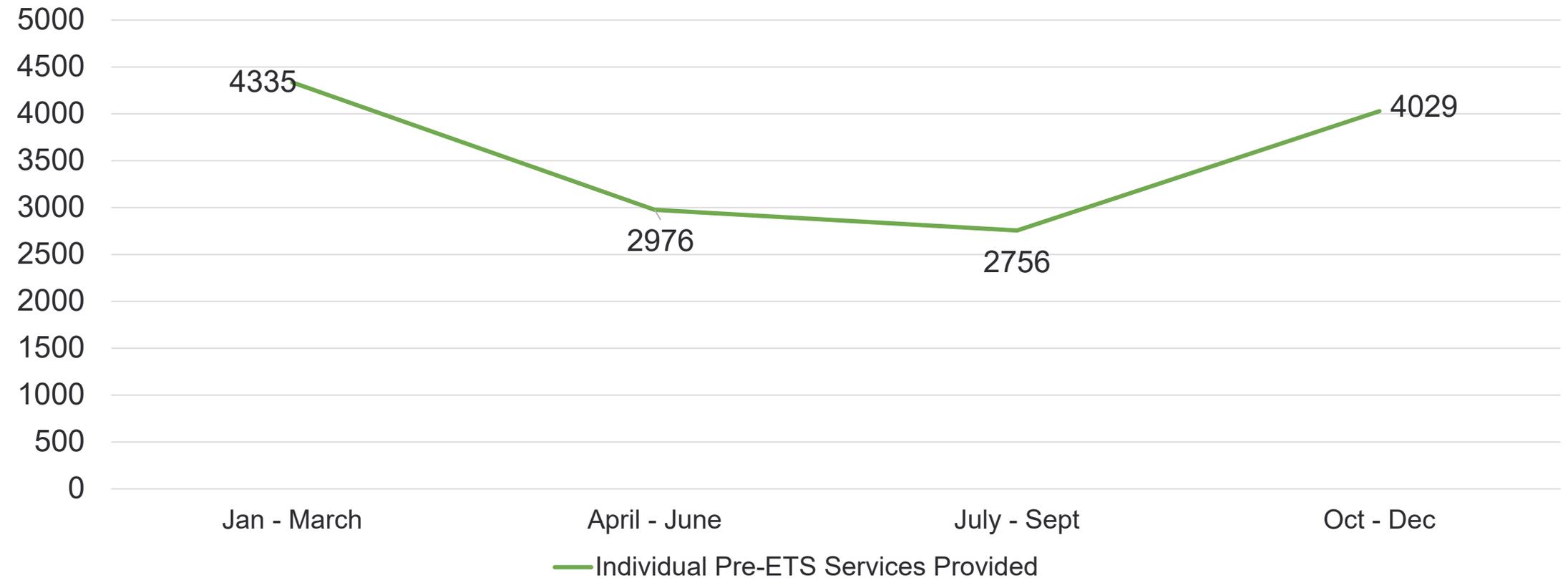
# Supported Employment

- Supported Employment is a strategy where agencies collaborate to provide employment services for participants with the most significant disabilities.

- Provides services for:
  - Individuals who experience serious mental illness
  - Individuals diagnosed with intellectual impairment or developmental disabilities.

# Testimony from Employment Specialist, Chris Poor

*"I have so many amazing stories about VR coming through for our clients. Every year they have played a crucial role in helping people get jobs and keep them."*

- Chris, his colleagues and community partners have helped clients:
  - Find assistive technology for client with dyslexia to read better online
  - Funding to get professional clothing for work interviews
  - Quickly transitioned to assisting people over the phone throughout the pandemic
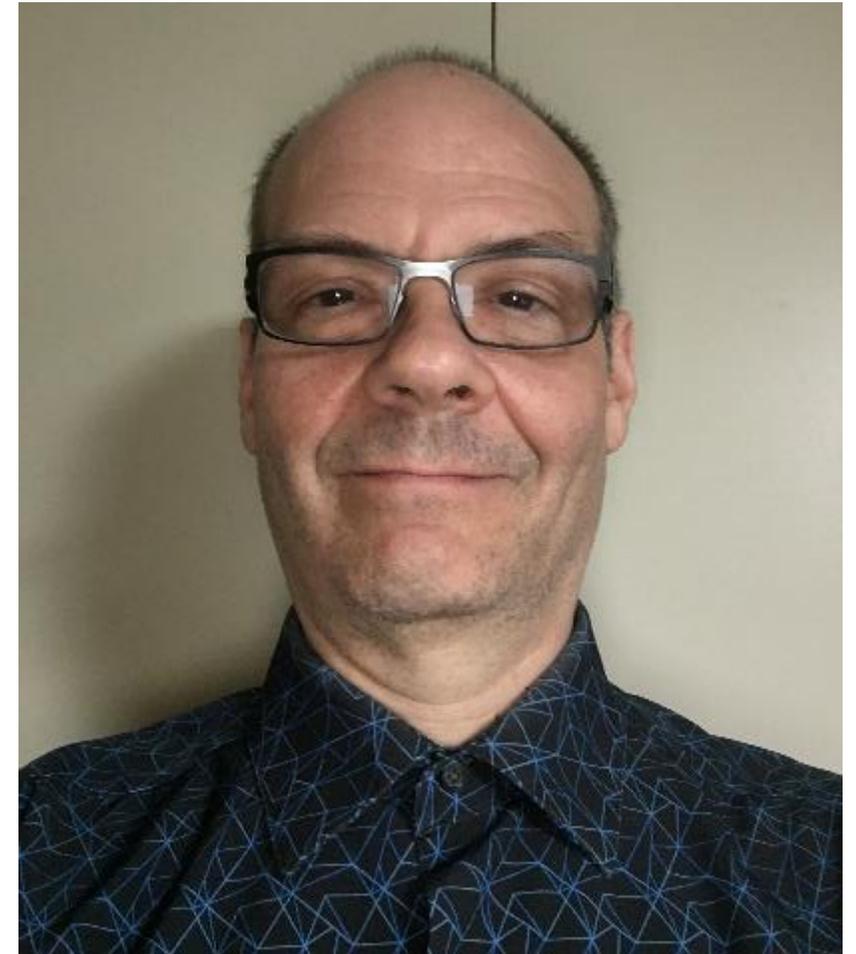
# Services to Employers – Dual Customer Model

Diversity and inclusion education information and resources

Recruit and refer qualified applicants to your business

Provide help with accommodation needs

Establish long-term business relations and supports

Training and technical assistance: Provide disability awareness, etiquette and tailored trainings

Assistive Technology

On the Job Training Agreements

# Successful VR Client Employment

Committed to meeting inclusive hiring goals

Regionally recruiting VR clients

# Where We Are Now

1. COVID-19 Pandemic and Wildfire Response
2. 2019-2021 Biennium Budget Actions
3. Key Performance Metrics (KPM)

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# COVID-19 Pandemic and Wildfire Response

- **During COVID-19:**
  - Online intake
  - Virtual operations to support clients
  - COVID-19 resources web page
  - Developed and implemented Zoom staff training
  - Created innovative at-home activities for youth to safely simulate work experiences

- **Wildfire response:**
  - Counselors reached out to impacted individuals to refer them to other services

- **Looking forward:**
  - VR anticipates being a vital resource for those who are ready to get back into the workforce
  - Centering equity in reemployment efforts
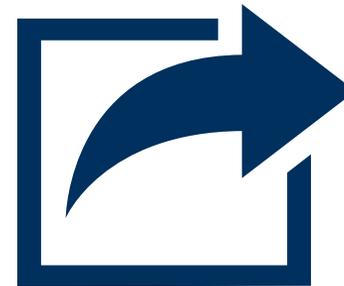
# 2019-2021 Biennium – Budget Actions

**Accomplishments:**

- Served more clients and more people are retaining jobs at a 57% retention rate – SRC Data

- Pivoted to virtual and remote service delivery

- Employer Tax Incentives:
  - Work opportunity Tax Credit
  - Disabled Access Credit

**77%**
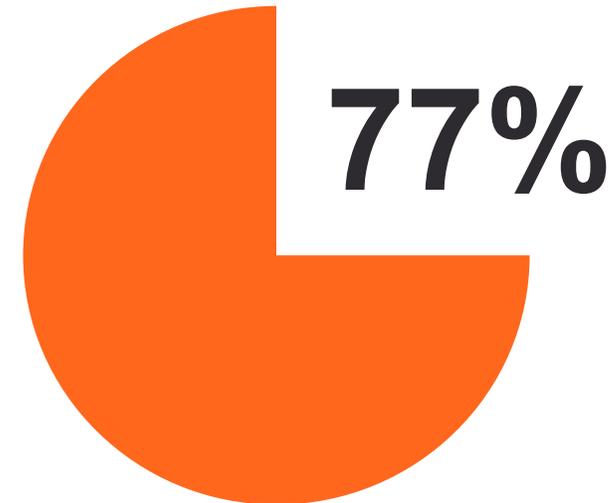
*Percent of clients who say their VR experience met their expectations.*

# Competitive employment for clients served - KPMs

- Increase in average hourly wage at exit of program over the years

- Decrease in average weekly hours at exit of program over the years

- Competitive integrated employment



Average hourly wage at exit
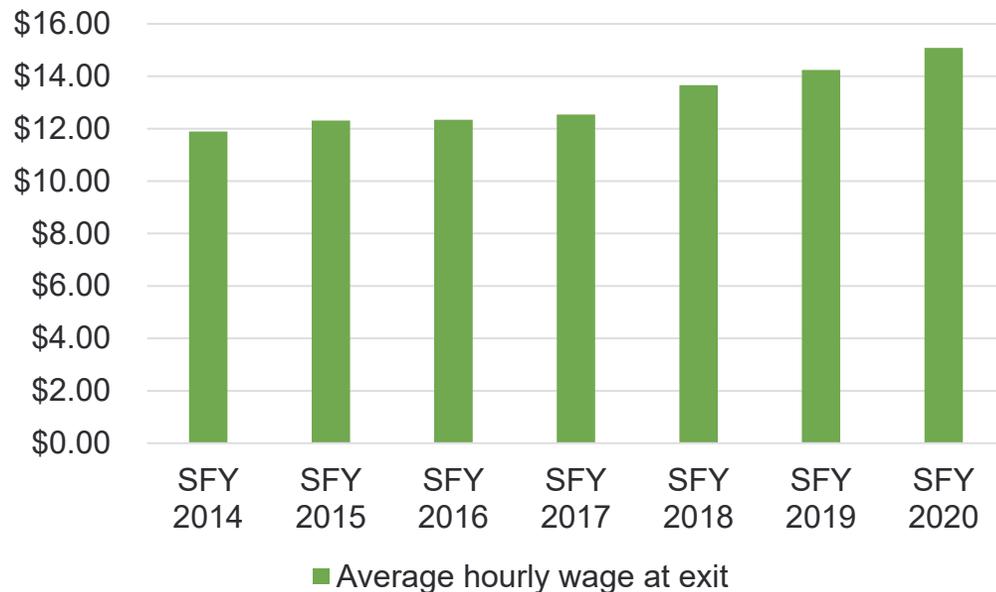


Average weekly hours at exit
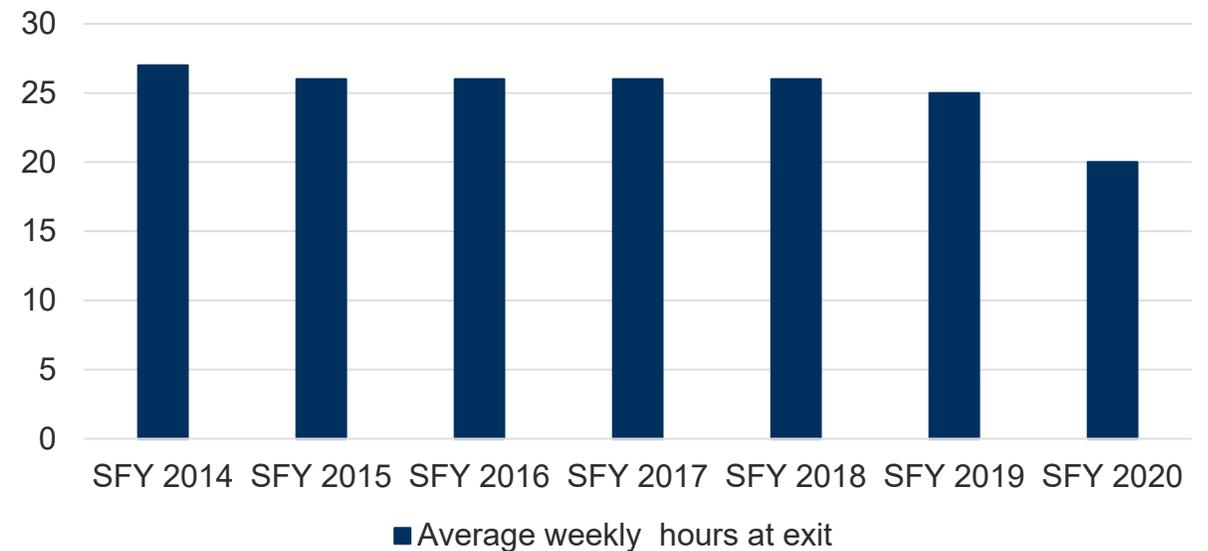
# KPM 17: Successful Employment

**VR helps thousands of Oregonians find employment each year.**

- The number of clients who have been employed at program exit has been increasing every year since 2016, except 2020.

- We anticipate a substantial demand for our services as the economy reopens and people begin seeking employment.

## KPM #17 OVRS Consumers who are Successfully Employed at Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation consumers with a goal of employment who are employed at program exit. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30

|  | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Actual | 62.34% | 60.20% | 57.00% | 56.50% | 55.60% |
| Target | 66% | 66.00% | 63.00% | 65.00% | 65.00% |
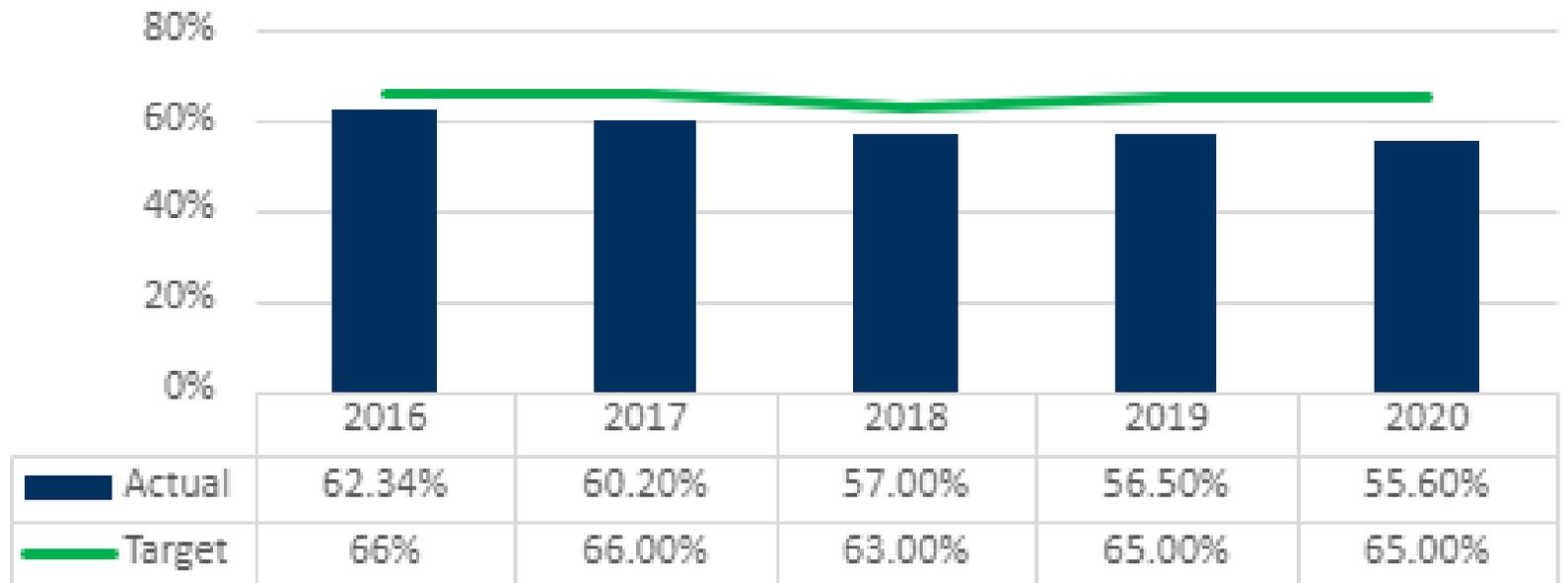
# KPM 18: Continued Employment - Second Quarter

**Our VR clients are a reliable part of the workforce.**

- Through informed choice counseling our clients want to go to work.

- We continue to meet this KPM and we foresee improvement in this area because of the forecasted demand for services.

## KPM #18 OVRS Consumers Employed in Second Quarter Following Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation clients closed from plan who are employed during second quarter following program exit. Data Period Oct 01 - Sep 30
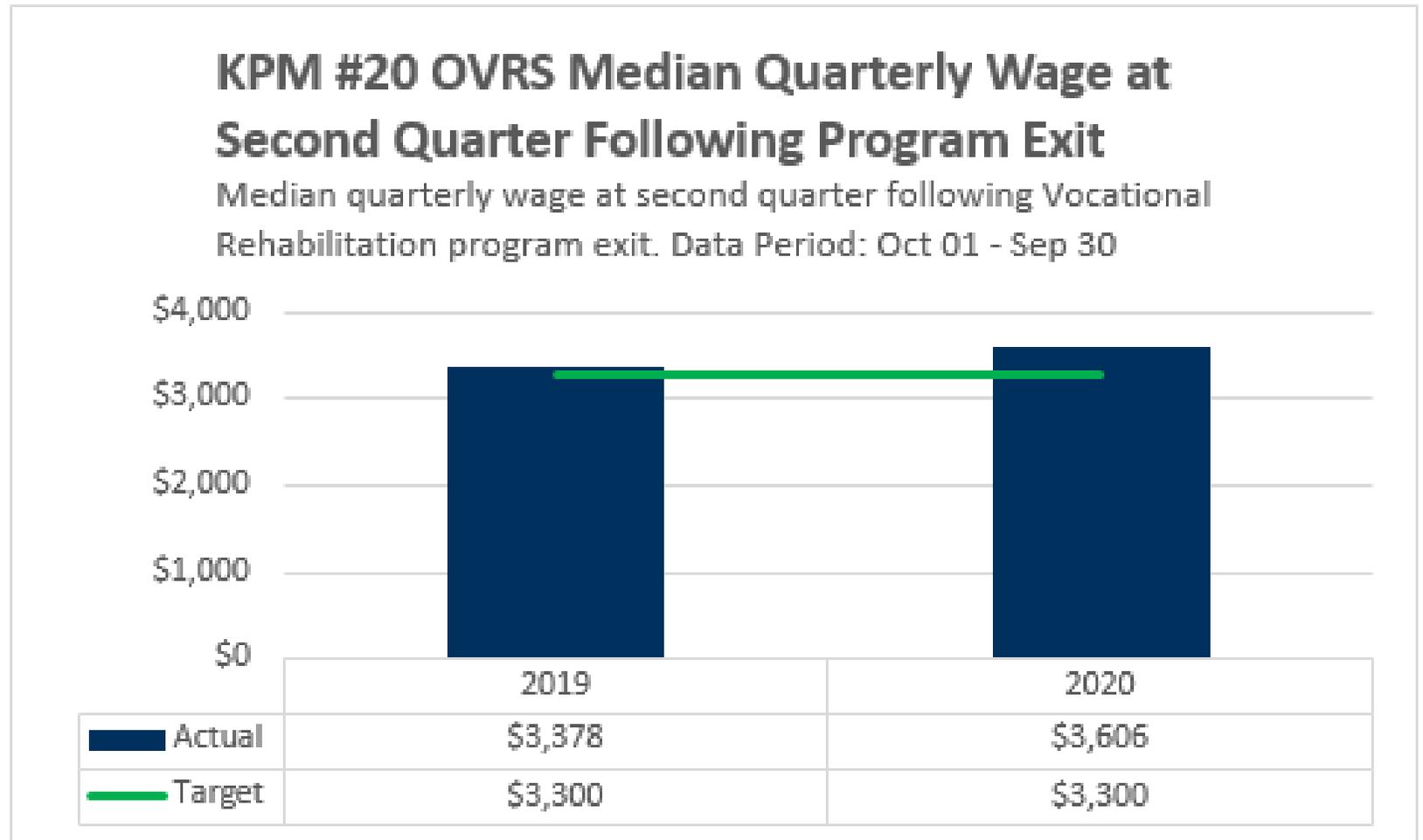
|  | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Actual | 57.50% | 57.80% |
| Target | 52.00% | 52.00% |
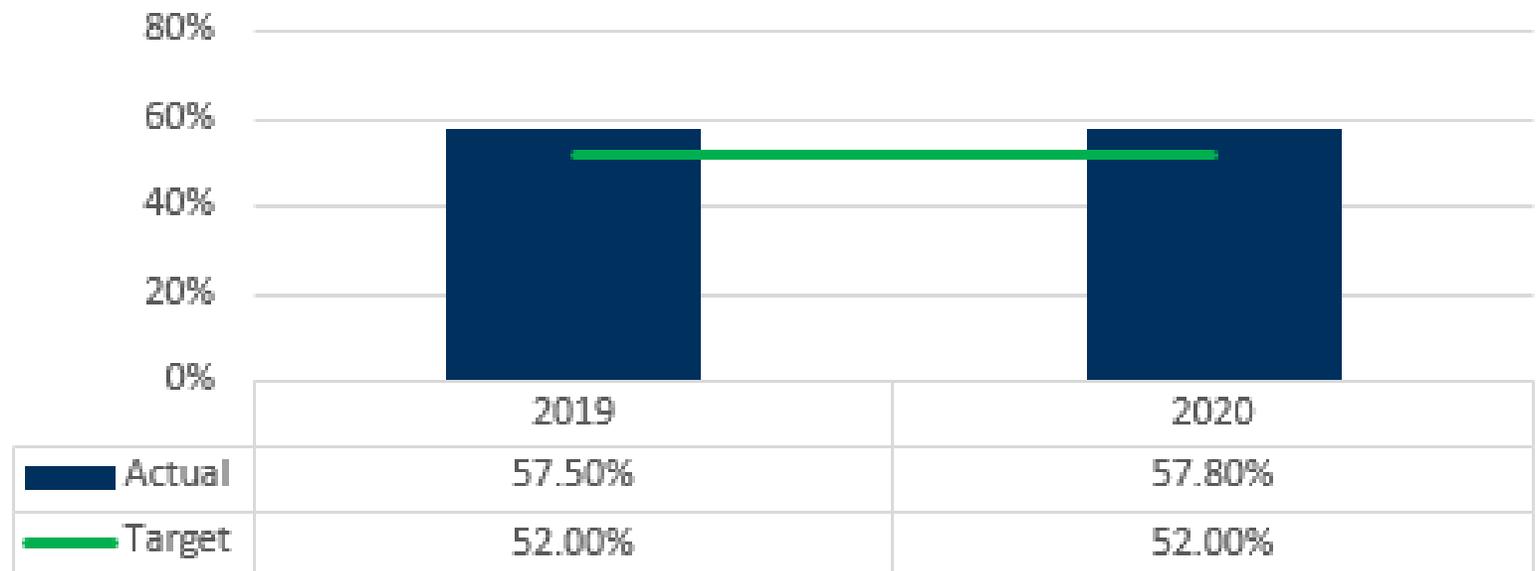
# KPM 19: Continued Employment - Fourth Quarter

**VR outcomes lead to long term success for our clients.**

- Through person centered planning with our clients the employment outcomes are long standing.

- Our clients are dependable and our employer partners can rely on their workforce.

- VR can provide interventions after our client exits the program to support them with Post Employment Services.

## KPM #19 OVRS Consumers Employed in Fourth Quarter Following Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation clients closed from plan who are employed during fourth quarter following program exit.
Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30

|  | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Actual | 54.30% | 53.80% |
| Target | 52.00% | 52.00% |
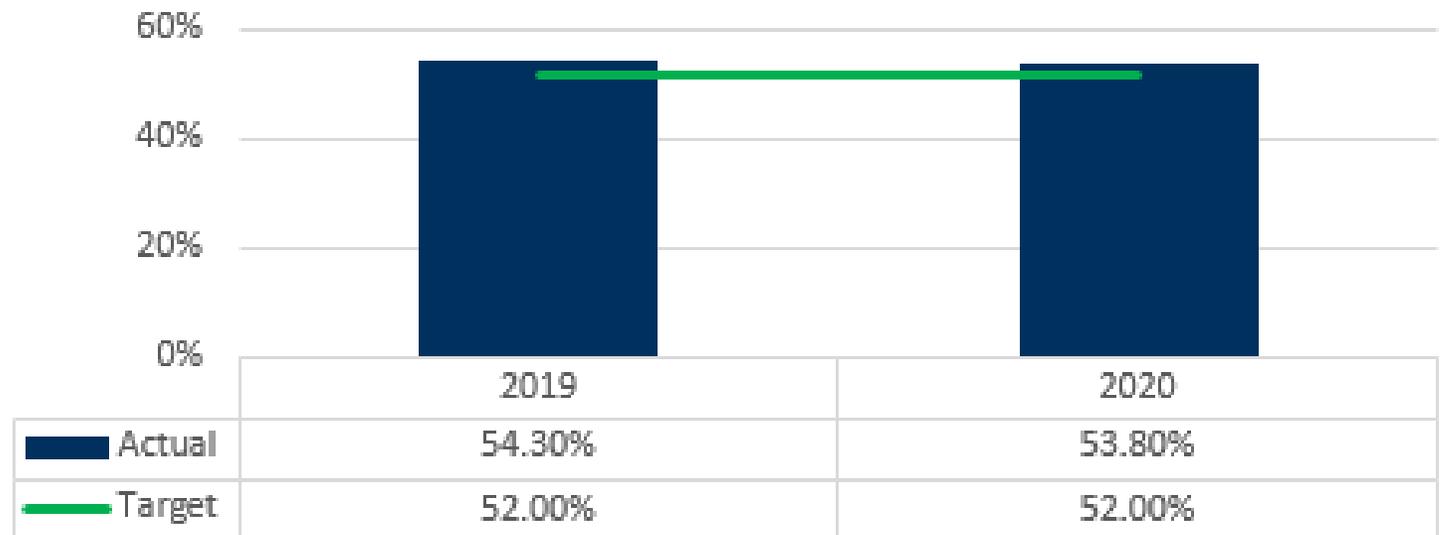
# KPM 20: Median Wage

**Competitive wages and appropriate placement are the hallmarks of VR success.**

- VR's highly qualified staff develop Individualized Plans for Employment that incorporate extensive Labor Market Research to match our clients preferences and skills to living wage jobs.

## KPM #20 OVRS Median Quarterly Wage at Second Quarter Following Program Exit

Median quarterly wage at second quarter following Vocational Rehabilitation program exit. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30

|  | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|
| Actual | $3,378 | $3,606 |
| Target | $3,300 | $3,300 |

# Where We Are Going

1. What's ahead for VR?
2. Strategic Goals for 21-23 Biennium
3. 2021-2023 Biennium Budget

Oregon Department
of Human Services

# What's ahead for VR?

- VR has a role in supporting people with disabilities who may have been disproportionally impacted by the pandemic.

- Post-Pandemic → increased need to place people in employment and don't want to leave people with disabilities behind.

- Need to do work with clients through equity lens as a core of what VR does.

- Support employers in adapting during the balance of the pandemic.

# Strategic Goals for 21-23 biennium

- **Maintain FTE and funds to be able to meet goals of 21-23 biennium**
  - Anticipate services will be more critical than ever post-pandemic

- **Strategic Goals:**
  - VR program supports communities with more placements
  - Continue delivering high quality services for employers and clients
  - VR staff are skilled and engaged
  - Quality Assurance in service delivery
  - Develop greater access to career pathways
  - Respond proactively to consumer feedback for programmatic improvements

# Budget 21-23 Biennium

## Key Priorities

- Maximize our impact statewide.

- Expand VR reach through more effective communication.

- Ensuring equitable reemployment of people with disabilities when jobs again become available.

- Leveraging WIOA Workforce Partners in Oregon

## Key Barriers

- Program cost increases.

- More people with higher support needs.

- Cost for assistive technology.

- Changing labor market.

- Having VR staff with specific skills to support people experiencing disabilities in the changing economic and jobs landscape that resulted from COVID-19 pandemic.

**10% Reduction Exercise outcomes**

- Eliminate positions vacant over 6 months (13 positions).

- Eliminate S&S Inflation.

- Increase Vacancy Savings to 3%.

- Reducing GF and offsetting that with OF

# Budget 21-23 Biennium

**VR BASIC REHABILITATIVE SERVICES**
**TOTAL BY FUND TYPE**
**$ 121.2 MILLION**
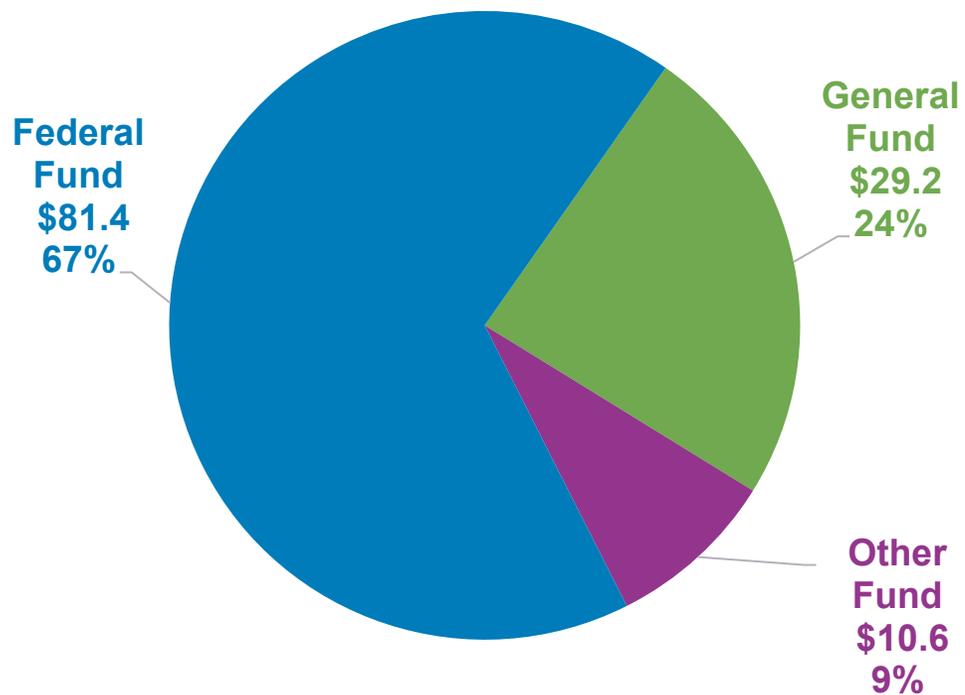
**VR BASIC REHABILITATIVE SERVICES**
**TOTAL BY PROGRAM**
**$ 121.2 MILLION**

Federal Fund $81.4 67%

General Fund $29.2 24%

Other Fund $10.6 9%

Program Delivery & Design $63.2 52%

VR Basic Rehabilitative Services $55.3 46%

State Independent Living Council (SILC) $2.7 2%
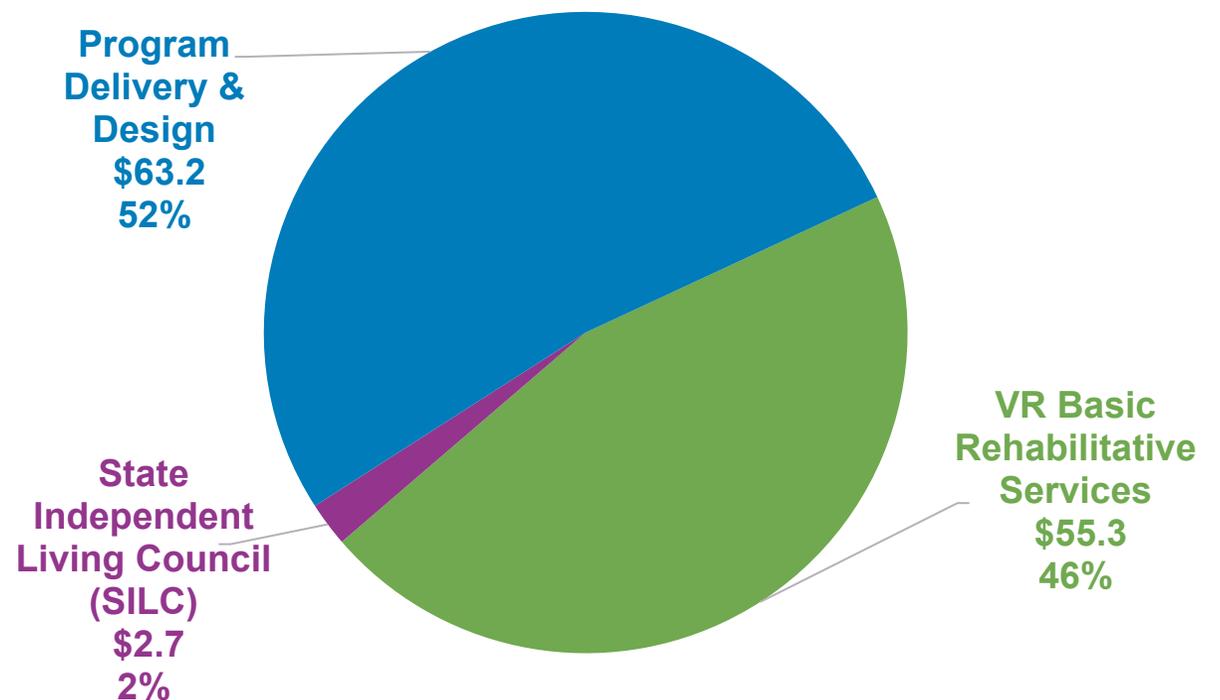
# Meet Michael and Jenny – ODHS employees!





*"People don't treat me like I'm autistic here. They treat me like I have skills and appreciate my value."*

*"I am so glad I got this job. What surprises me is how much information I have learned over the course of 9 months I've been here. I have come such a long way, but I also became much more, deep down."*

# ODHS Closing

Fariborz Pakseresht, Director, ODHS

# WHAT WILL OREGON HUMAN SERVICES LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?
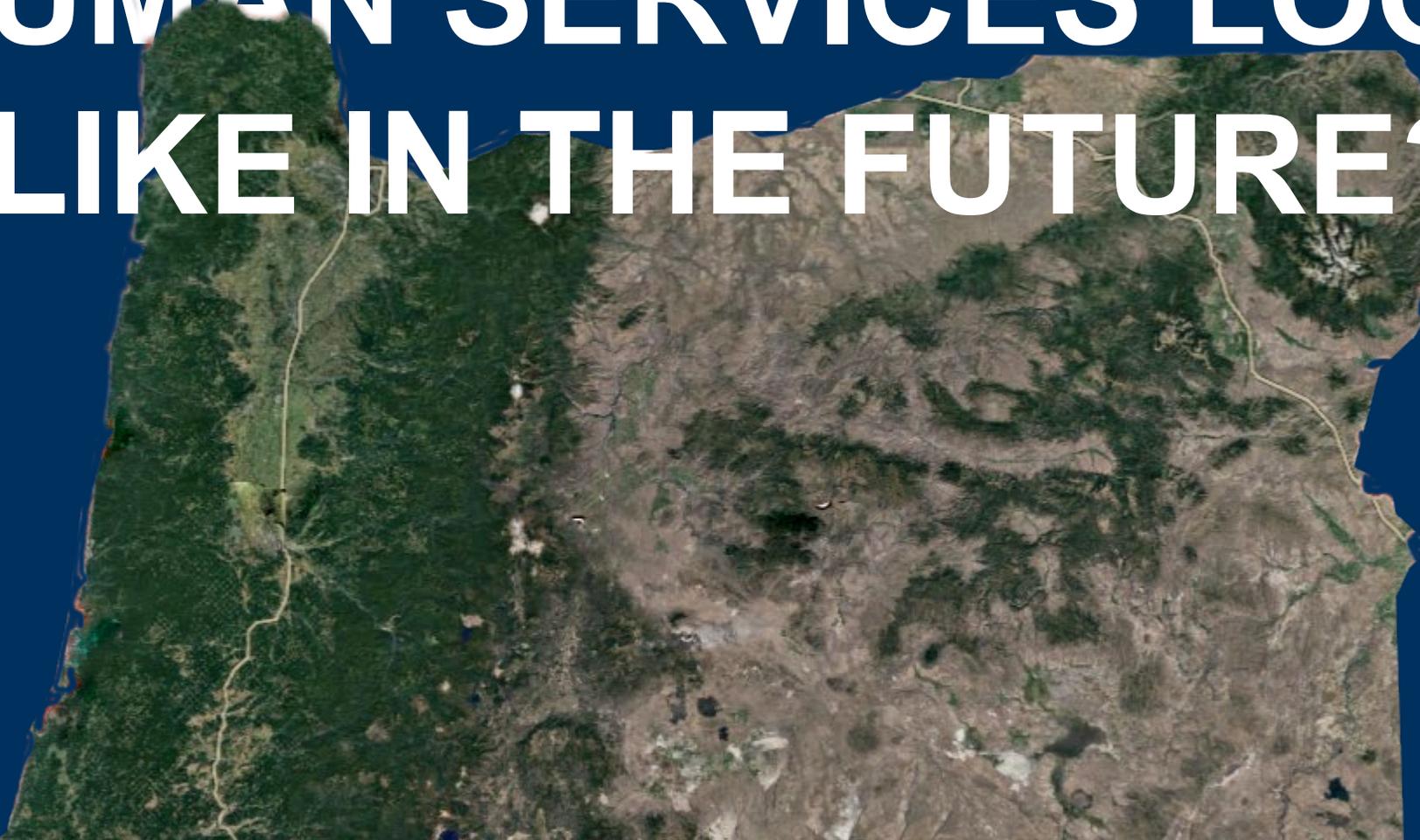
ELIGIBILITY

PROGRAM
SILOS

# Regulation Focused

FUNDING
STREAMS

RULES
ORIENTED

ODHS Closing

Veteran,
Disabled,
Fixed Income

Mobile home not
eligible for many
services or rights

Has to leave
mobile home with
no place to go

When a flower **doesn't bloom**,
you **fix the environment** in which it grows,
**not the flower**."
-Alexander Den Heije

# Human Services Value Curve
## Regulative
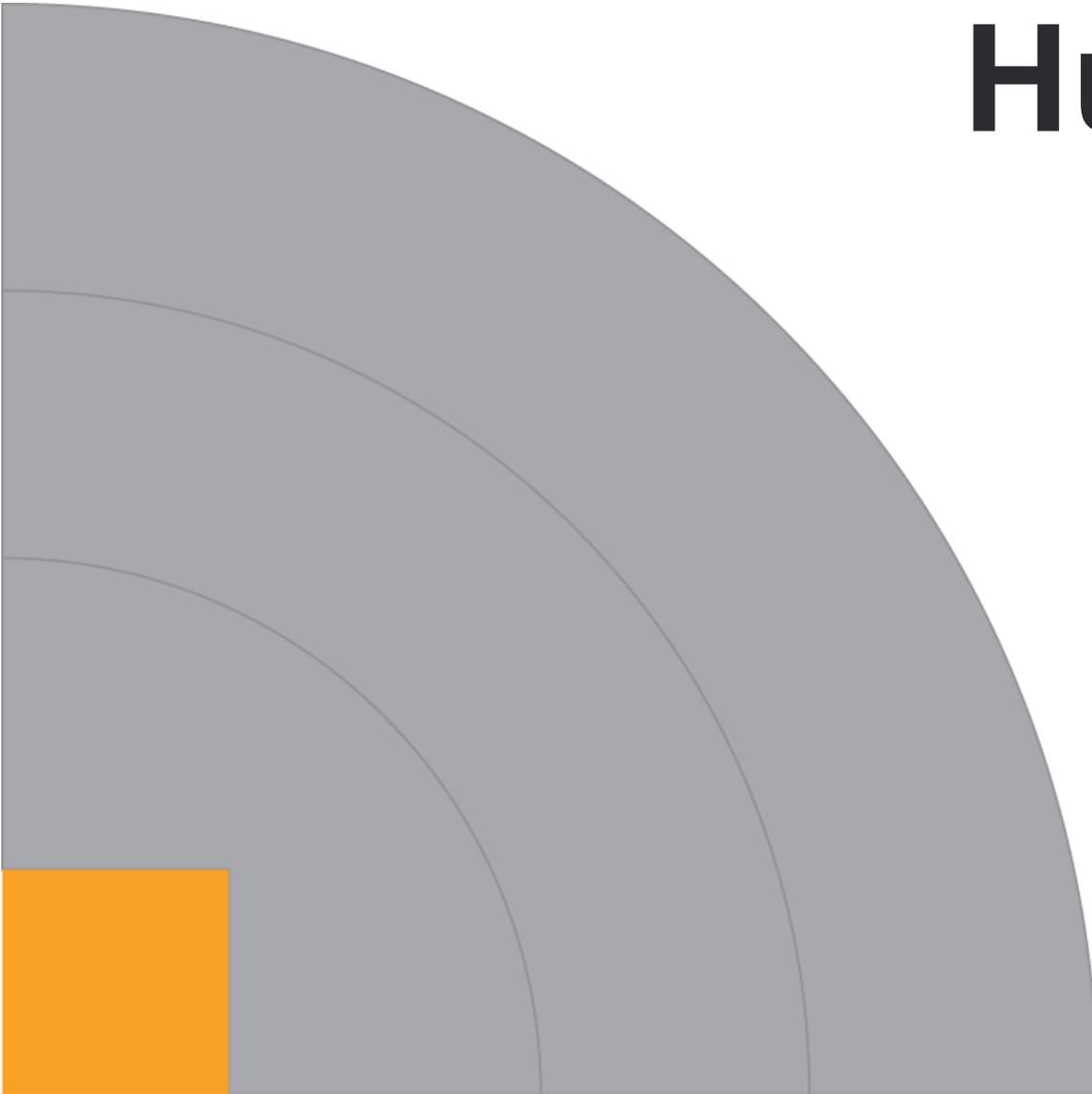
# Human Services Value Curve
## Collaborative

# Human Services Value Curve
## Integrative

# Human Services Value Curve
## Generative
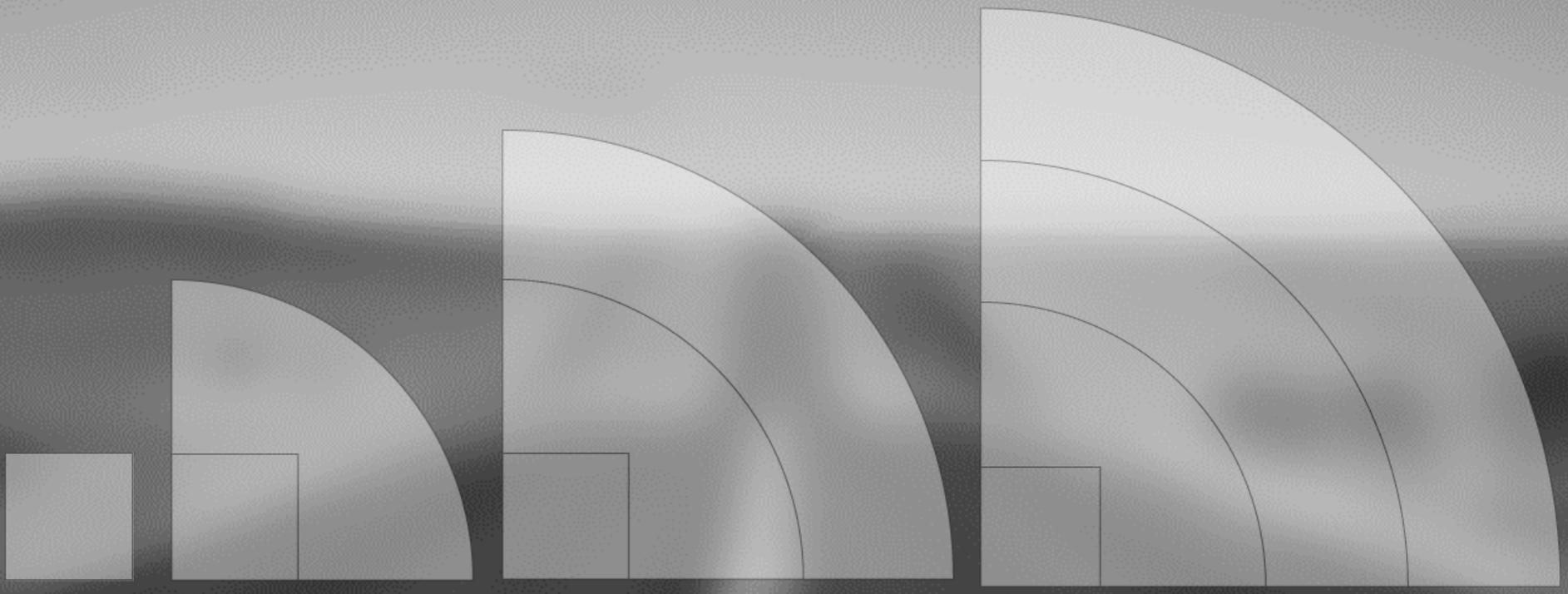
PRESENT

VISION
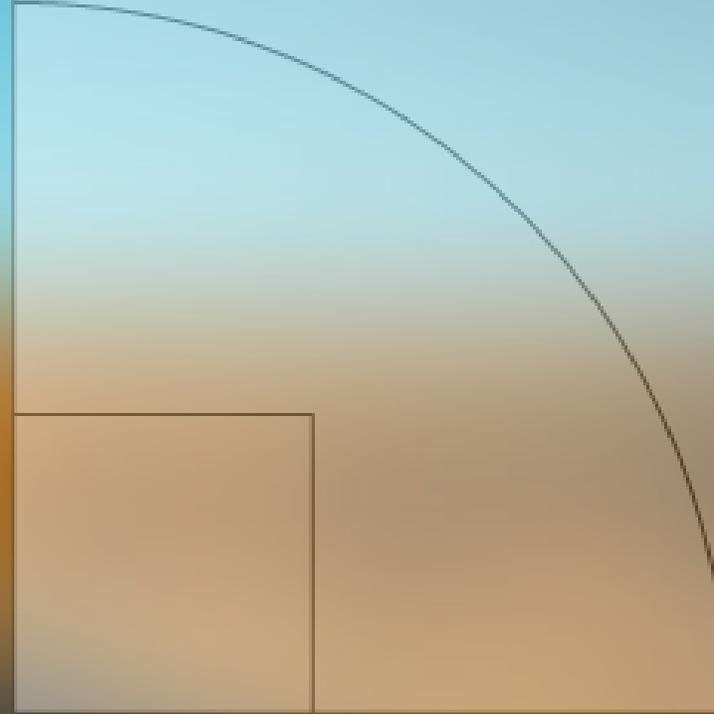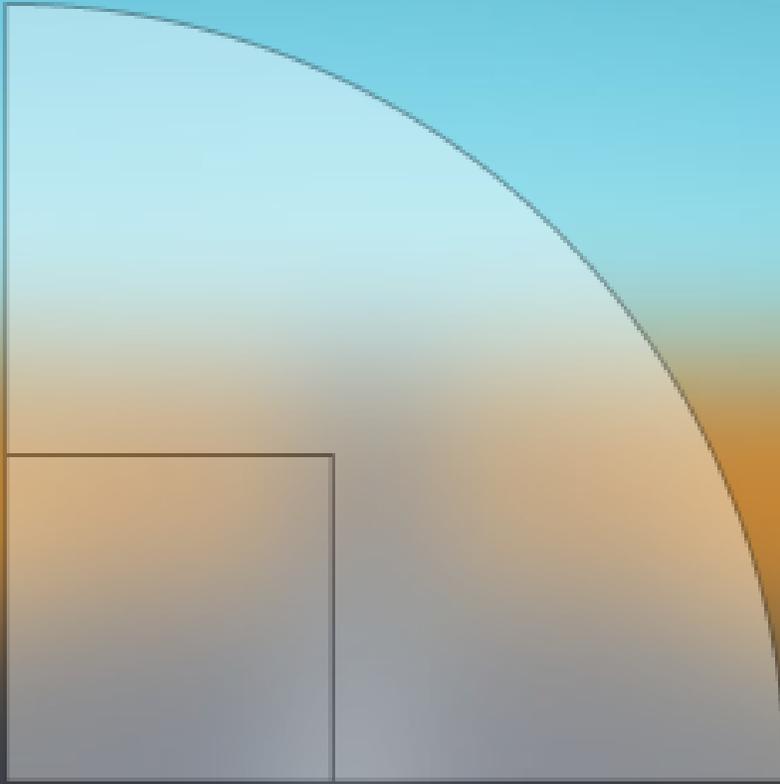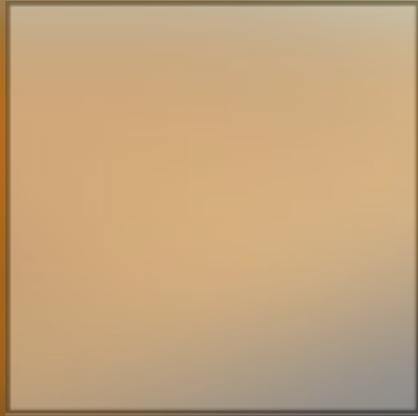
PRESENT

EQUITY, ALIGNMENT, ACCESS

EQUITY
Address disproportionate impact

ALIGNMENT
Reverse engineer our systems around Oregonians' lives

ACCESS
Meeting people where they are at

# Figure 4. Unemployment by race or ethnicity



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

DIFFERENCE FROM WHITE RATE
(PERCENTAGE POINTS)
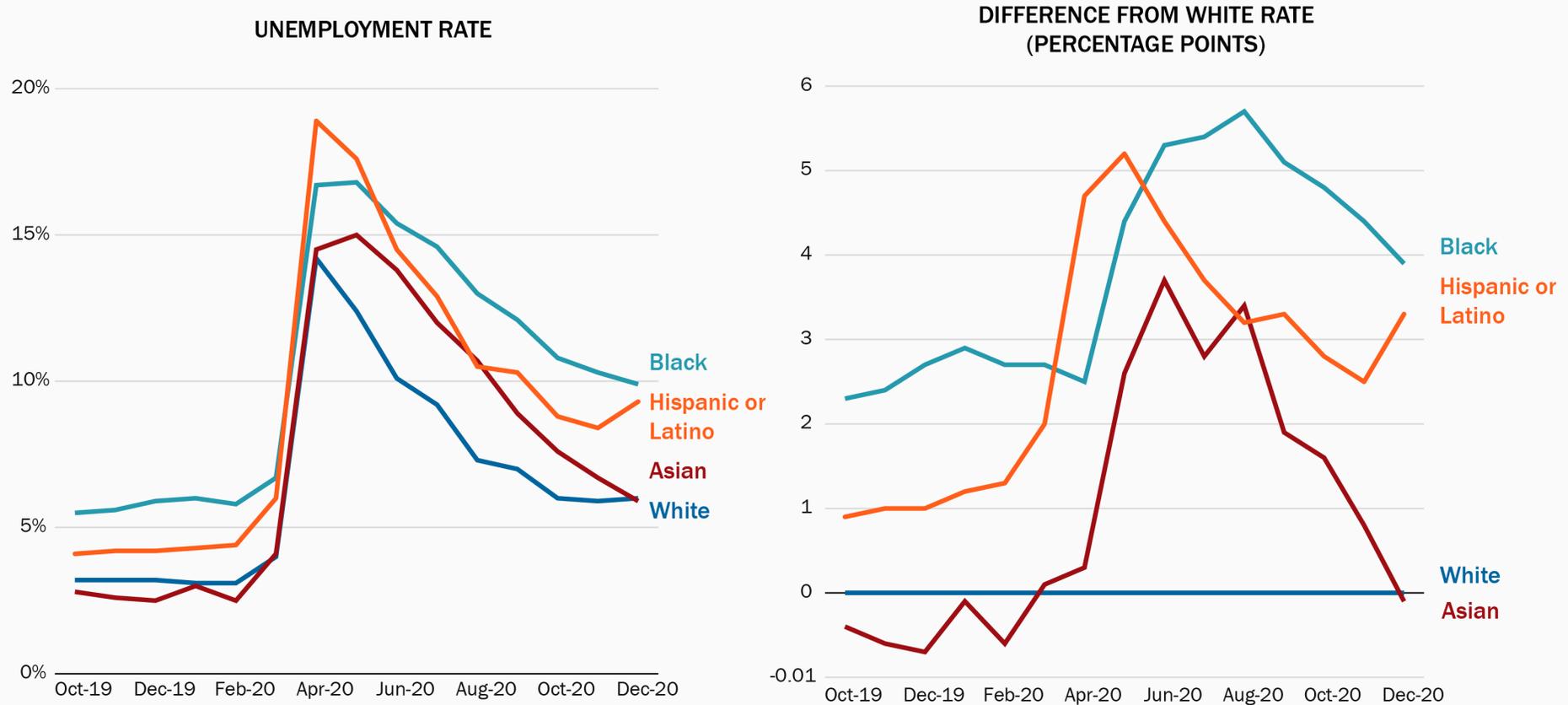
**Source:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey," December 2020.
**Note:** Unemployment rate based on seasonally adjusted employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population.

BROOKINGS

# Equity Investments
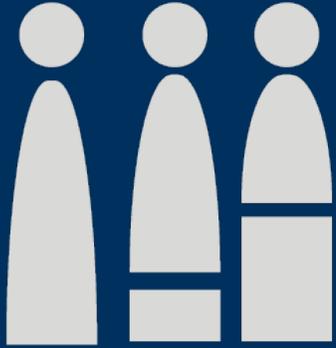
**POP 107**
$4.4 Million to promote diversity equity and inclusion

**POP 105**
Human Resources staff to promote workforce diversity, retention and promotion

**Implement the Child Welfare Vision for Transformation**
Training, Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act and Equity

1,480,330 Adults and Youth Served by ODHS and OHA in 2019. **About 60% of clients have some overlap with more than one program.**
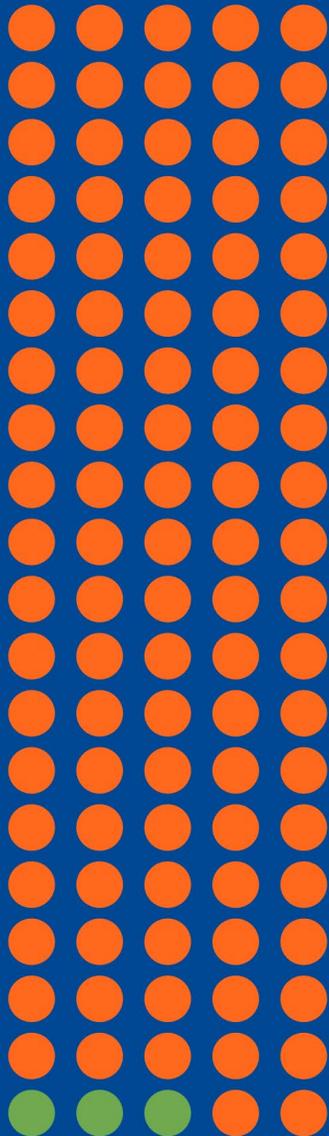
More than one service

Only one service
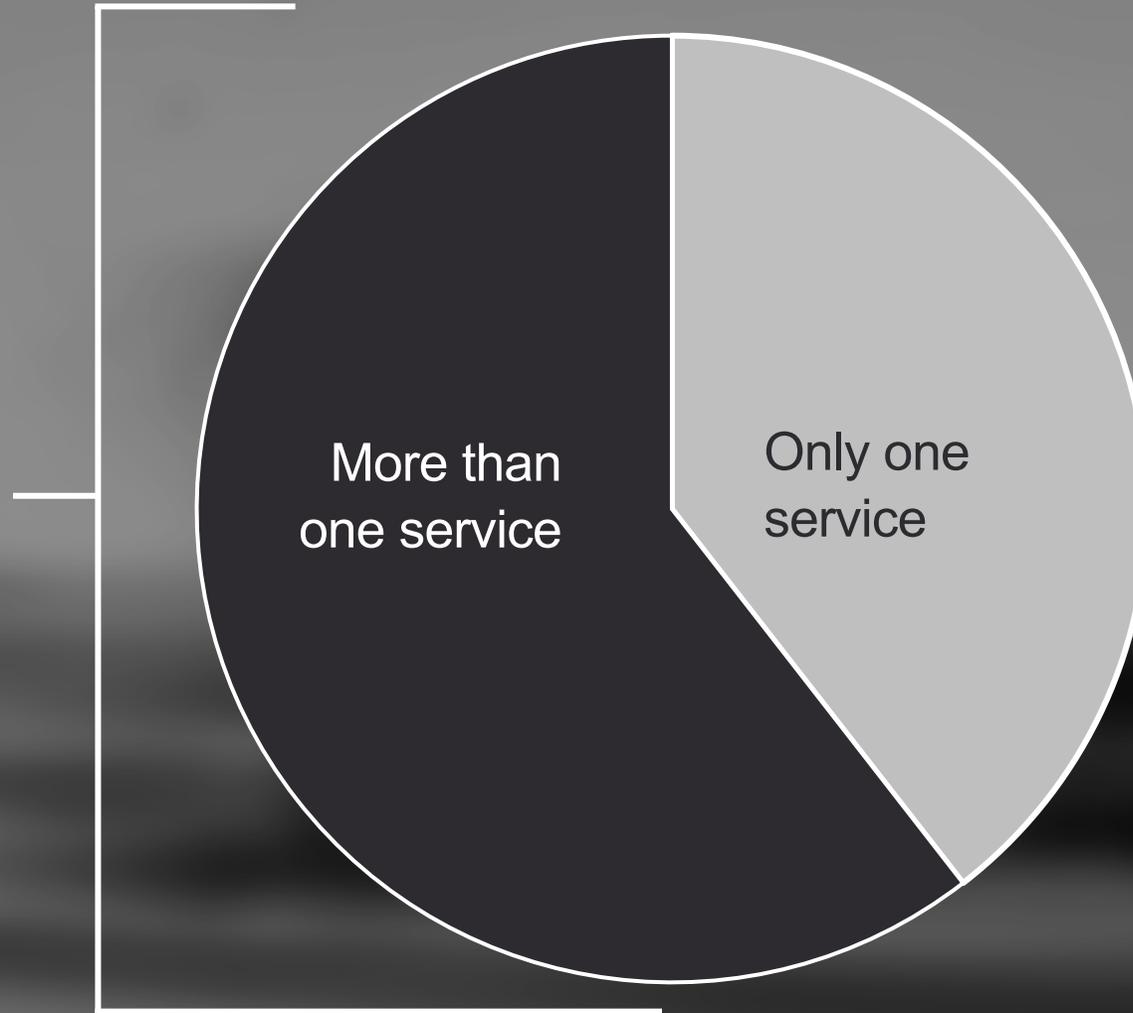
**Children Who Experienced OYA Involvement**

**Children Who Experienced No OYA Involvement**
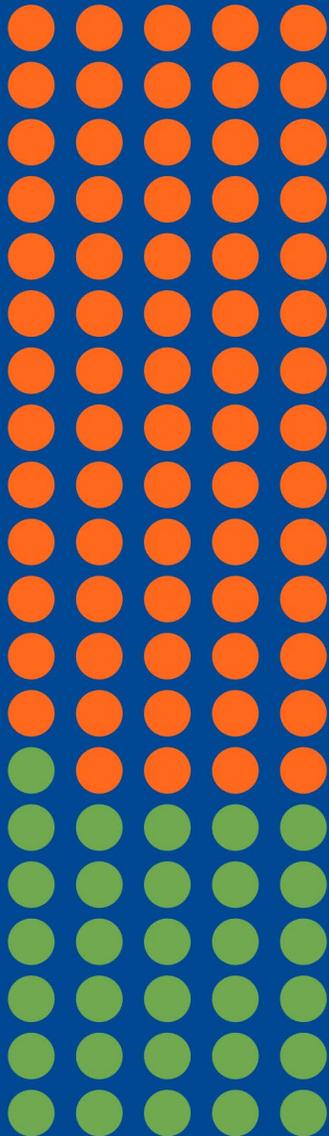
Not removed before age 5

removed before age 5

Children Involved with OYA Experience Removals at a Rate 10 Times Greater than Children with No OYA Involvement

# Alignment Efforts

**SNAP 50/50**
Through SNAP our Self Sufficiency and Vocational Rehabilitation program connect with community colleges to build skills for the new economy

**Compass Project**
Office of Developmental Disabilities Services focus on person-centered planning, instead of functional needs assessment and hours-centered planning

**A divide formed during the 2008 recession that left many workers and communities behind,** especially Black, Indigenous and Lantino/a/x and rural communities. It has only grown since COVID-19.

**ACCESS TO WEALTH & NEW SKILLS**

**BARRIERS TO QUALITY JOBS AND SKILLS**
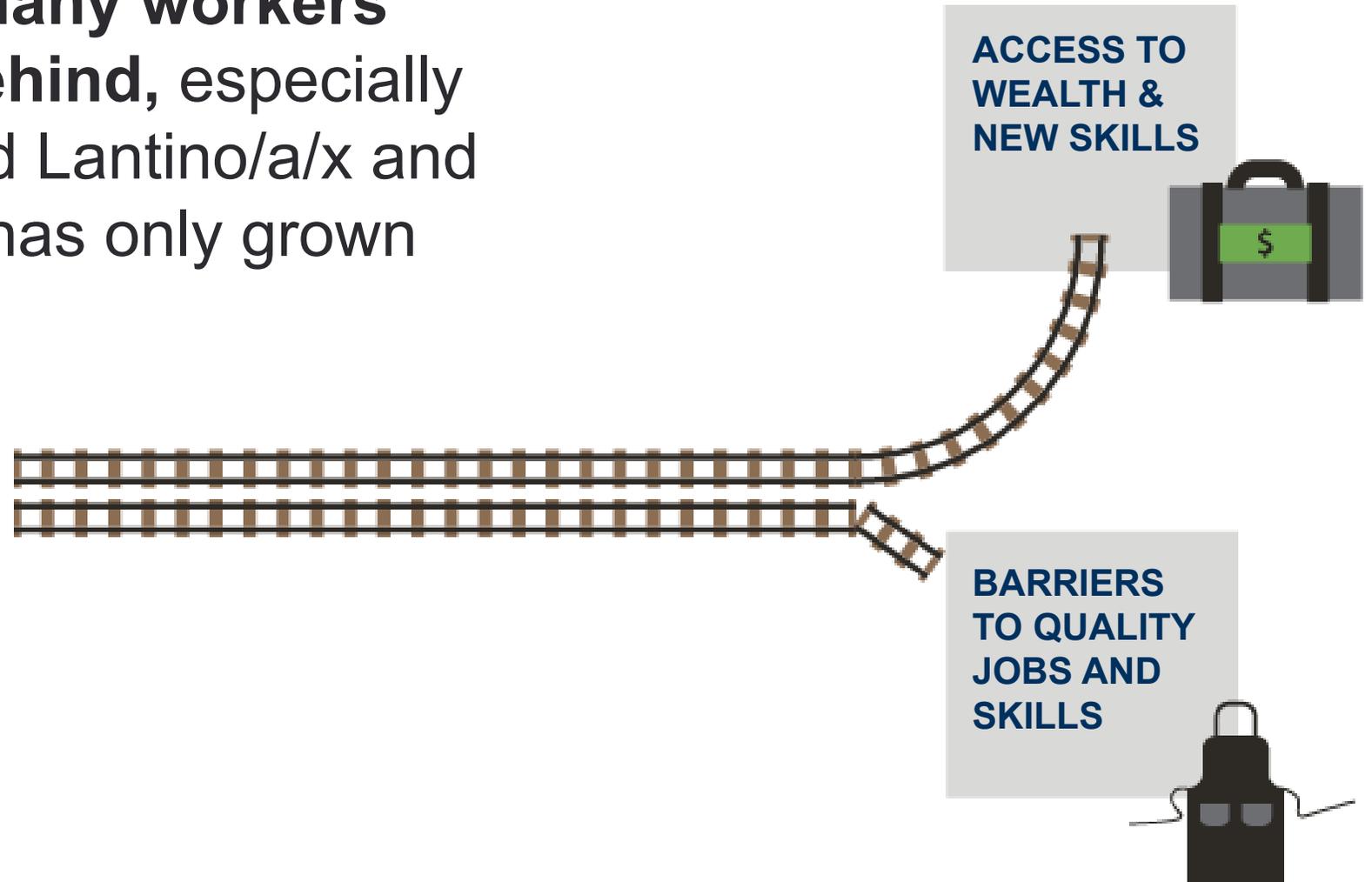
## Most workers who lost wages due to COVID-19 are still earning less

*Among employed adults who say they had to take a cut in pay because of the coronavirus outbreak, % saying they are now earning ____ money than before*
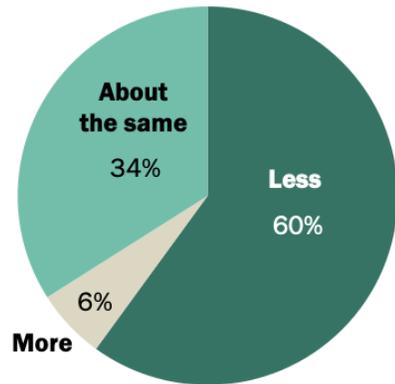


About the same 34%

Less 60%

More 6%

## Problems paying bills, rent or mortgage have impacted adults with lower incomes more than others since February

*% of adults in each group who say they have ____ since the coronavirus outbreak began in February*

| | Had trouble paying bills | Had problems paying rent/mortgage | Had trouble paying for medical care | Lost health insurance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All adults | 25 | 16 | 11 | 5 |
| Men | 22 | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| Women | 27 | 17 | 13 | 5 |
| White | 18 | 11 | 9 | 3 |
| Black | 43 | 28 | 18 | 9 |
| Hispanic | 37 | 26 | 17 | 8 |
| Asian* | 23 | 15 | 8 | 4 |
| Ages 18-29 | 35 | 25 | 12 | 7 |
| 30-49 | 30 | 21 | 14 | 6 |
| 50-64 | 22 | 15 | 13 | 5 |
| 65+ | 10 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| Bachelor's + | 12 | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| Some college | 27 | 18 | 11 | 5 |
| HS or less | 34 | 23 | 16 | 6 |
| Upper income | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Middle income | 19 | 11 | 10 | 5 |
| Lower income | 46 | 32 | 19 | 7 |

**Poverty causes humans to tunnel. Too many important, though not quite immediate, things inevitably get neglected.**

# ONE has helped make it easier to connect community with services – quotes from Rosa

" I was able to get her back to what she had originally as a medical [insurance]...I think that is one of the greatest feelings a worker can have being able to assist an Oregonian...

" I've been providing the applicant portal website to the [school-based] care coordinators [and] the school counselors. I've had really good feedback about how easy it is it is to help assist our Oregonians apply for benefits through the applicant portal or check where their benefits are [in the process].
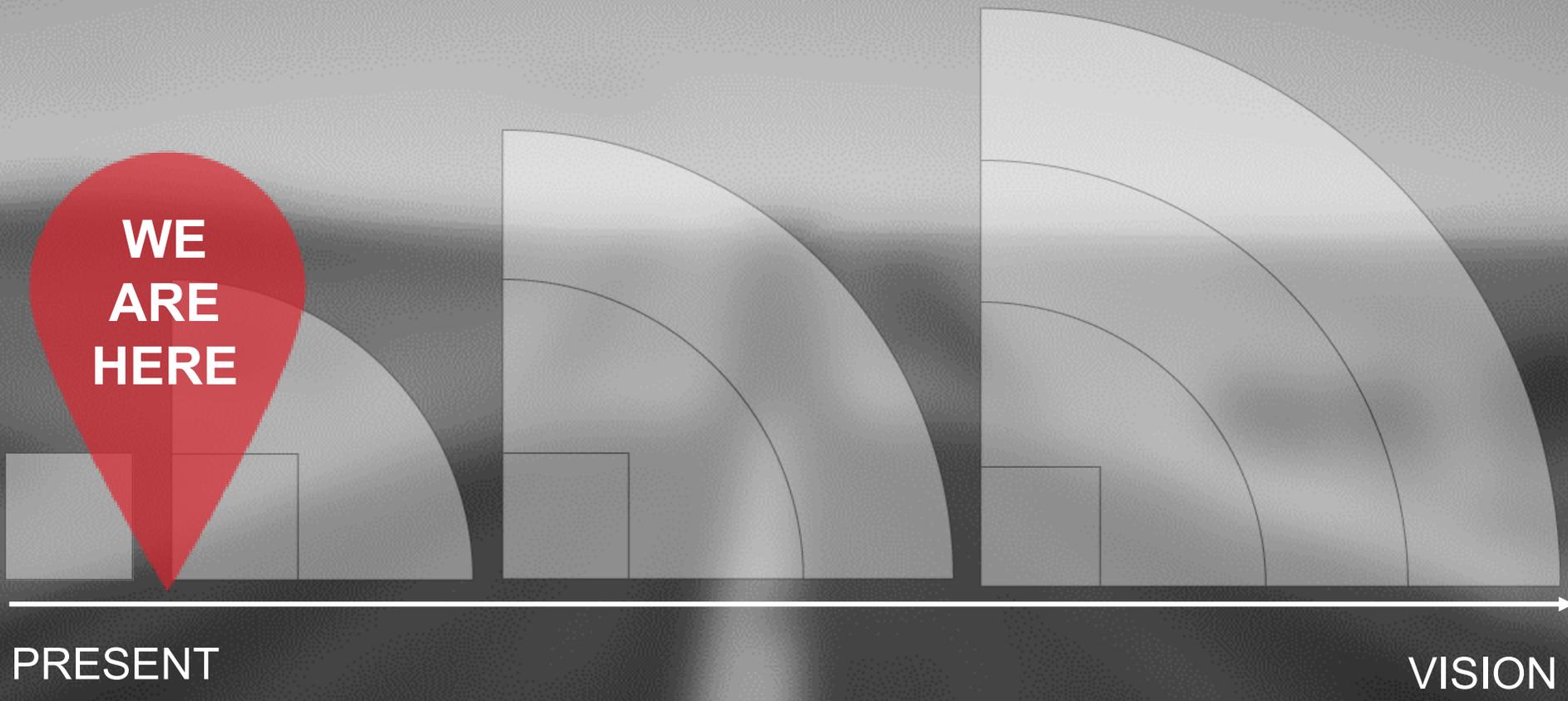
# Access Investments



**ONE Maintenance and Operations**
Integrated ONE Maintenance
investments



**Client Service Focus**
Continue the momentum of ONE rollout
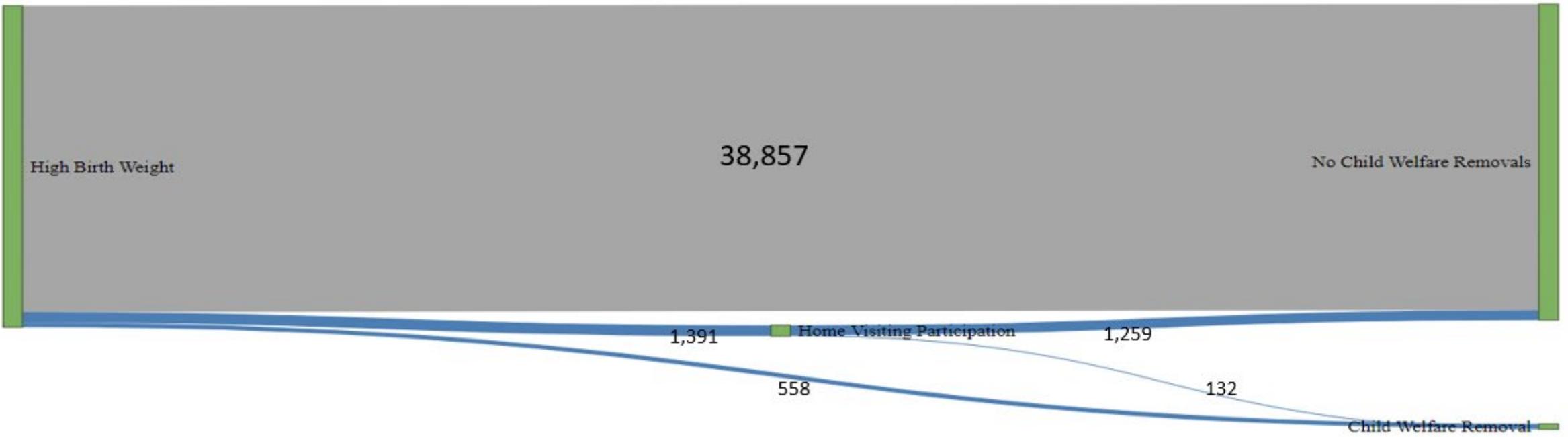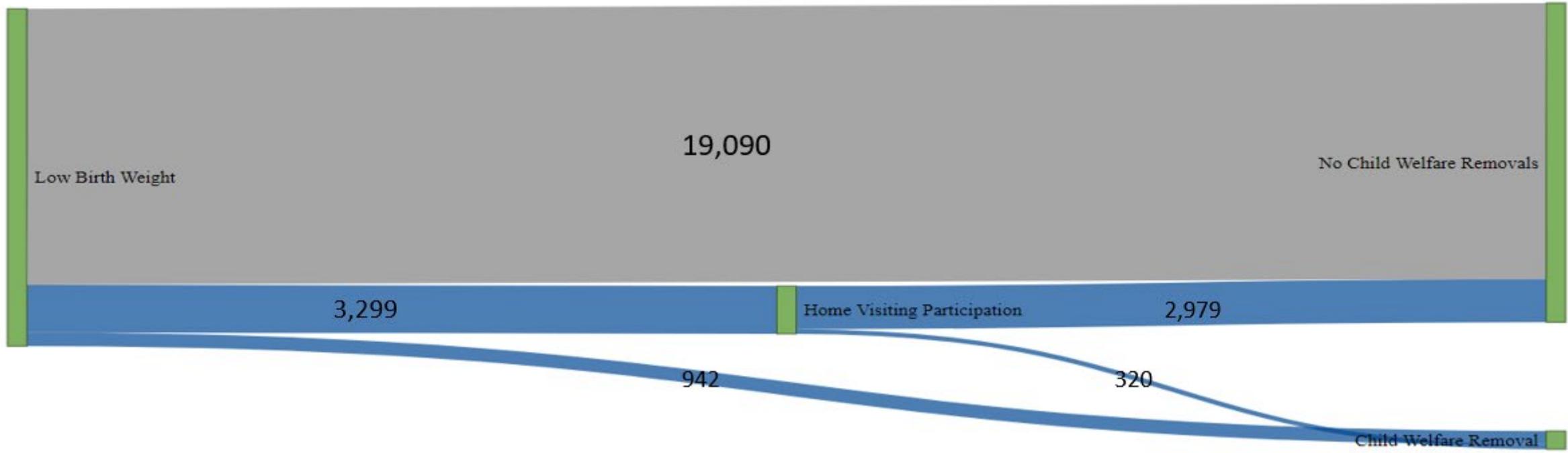to continuously improve how people
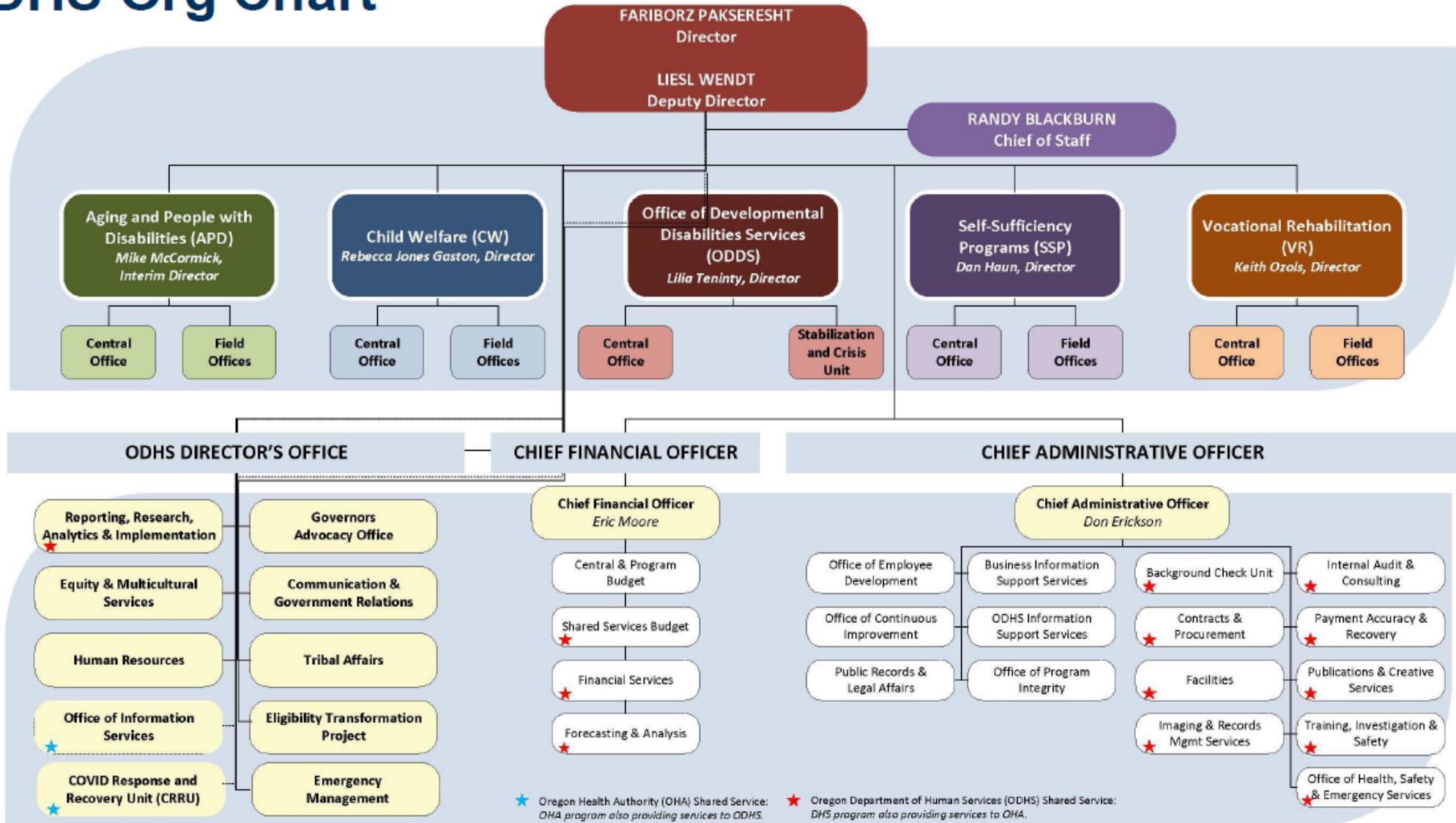access our services

WE ARE HERE

PRESENT

VISION

# Former foster child: 'It took a village' to be a success story

*Anthony Preston is among the 2% of foster children who graduated college*

Low Birth Weight     19,090     No Child Welfare Removals

3,299     Home Visiting Participation     2,979

942     320

Child Welfare Removal

High Birth Weight     38,857     No Child Welfare Removals

1,391     Home Visiting Participation     1,259

558     132

Child Welfare Removal

# ODHS Org Chart

ODHS Closing

# Tend Community Well-being

## Equity   Alignment   Access

Through data sharing, outcome tracking and transparency with you and the community

ODHS Closing