

Department of Consumer Business Services (DCBS)
Preferred Worker Program (PWP)
Workers' Compensation Division (WCD)
350 Winter St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-3879

Re: Successful Oregon Work Story

Dear Legislatures,

I'm writing this letter in support of this wonderful program the State of Oregon has for disabled workers like me. I was not asked to do this letter but I volunteered to do this letter as the PWP means so much to me. Without this program I do believe in my heart I would not be where I am today. My successful career in Oregon State Government is in part because PWP has always been there when I needed them and without them I wouldn't be at the top level of the State of Oregon's Procurement Profession.

I have had a few jobs in my lifetime but wanted more. I had a drive and passion within me to have a professional career. I worked part time for the State of Oregon as a Janitor for North Marion School District, Seasonal Worker during tax time for the Oregon IRS and I realized I wanted to help Oregonians in some way. I saw a job posting for an Accounting Technician with the Oregon Military Department (OMD) in the year 2000 and I was hired for that position. While in that position the Procurement Contract Specialist (PCS) 1 position was posted and I applied and was promoted. I then applied for the PCS 2 position that was posted and was promoted. I then applied for the PCS 3 position that was posted and was promoted.

This starts the story of how PWP came into my life and how they have assisted in my State of Oregon 20+ years career path so far as a public official, spending tax payer funds wisely!

1. "PCS 2 with OMD"

I had injured myself while at OMD unfortunately in the PCS 2 job position and became disabled. That was when I was provided information about the Preferred Worker Program. I was scared and thought I would lose my job because of my disabilities and that I wouldn't have a career any longer. I truly enjoyed working as a professional procurement contract specialist and knew I had so much more to give to the State of Oregon and its citizens (your constituents). I thought, without help, I could no longer do what I loved and what I was very good at. I reached out to PWP for assistance and Robert from PWP contacted me. After it was determined I was eligible, PWP started right away meeting with my supervisor and I to determine what I required to stay employed with the State of Oregon – OMD. PWP provided my agency, OMD, with the ergonomics set-up I required to do my job. PWP also allowed me to move up to the PCS 3 position when it became available. PWP allowed me to stay employed and work for OMD for 11 years.

2. "PCS 3 [Professional Services] with Department of Administrative Services, State Procurement Office (SPO)"

I became aware of a job posting for a PCS 3 position with DAS SPO. I knew many professional procurement folks within Oregon by this time and I knew I wanted to someday be a Designated Procurement Officer (DPO) for an agency in the State of Oregon. In order to move toward that career path I knew my next step would be to become a State Procurement Analyst (SPA) which is the highest level to achieve in Procurement before becoming a manager in State Government. SPO is the only agency to hold that type of position for the State of Oregon therefore I applied for the PCS 3 position and was hired. This enabled me to possibly move upward at DAS PS to a SPA position. I was scared to move since OMD had all my ergonomics set-up for me but I still had not met my career goal and in order to do so I decided to reach out to PWP again to determine what they could do for me at this new agency and position. I was extremely excited and grateful to hear that they still could assist me. Robert worked with my supervisor and I to determine what I required to ensure I could keep working in my professional procurement career path with SPO. PWP provided my agency, SPO, with the ergonomics set-up I required to do my job.

3. "State Procurement Analyst (SPA) [Construction] with DAS PS"

While at SPO a SPA position was posted and I applied and was hired for that job. I was slowly moving forward in my career path to becoming a DPO someday. This did mean I had to move my office space to another space and was scared that my ergonomics set-up would be lost and not setup correctly. By this time DAS SPO's department name changed to DAS Procurement Services. DAS PS worked with me to ensure the ergonomics was all set up correctly. I worry every time I have to move because if not set up correctly I'm in extreme pain and can't do my job well. I'm also in fear of not meeting my professional career path I set for myself. PWP's ergonomics they provided came in handy again to help me keep moving forward and maintaining my employment with the State of Oregon. I thrived in the Construction unit and became the first Oregon certified Design-Build procurement person for the State of Oregon to obtain the DBIA certification. I also had obtained Oregon Buyer of the Year award, an award for my Design-Build project with State Lands, and an award from OLCC for the two

Design-Build projects I had done for them, as well as many more awards and achievements. I believe without PWP I would not have been able to achieve so much. PWP paid for most of my training regarding Design-Build certification.

4. "SPA [Asset Management] with DAS PS"

While at DAS PS I was moved to another SPA position from the Construction Unit to the Asset Management unit before COVID pandemic started which meant I had to move again. DAS PS worked with me to ensure the ergonomics was all set up correctly. As usual I worried about ergonomics and job. PWP's ergonomics they had previously provided helped again.

During my time at DAS PS I, along with 2 other SPA's, volunteered to be on the DAS Emergency Preparedness Team. When the Governor declares an emergency DAS steps up and assists at the ESF-7 desk located at Office of Emergency Management (OEM) – Emergency Command Center (ECC) room to provide Logistics. There are managers at ESF-7 desk as well when DAS is called upon and the 3 of us Professional Procurement folks take turns manning the desk with the managers while others back at our PS office assist as well. We 3 had been in this role for many years but had no idea how important of a role it would become till COVID happened. I was activated March 11, 2020 in this role to start purchasing PPE and other requested/required products and services to help ensure the safety of our Oregon citizens that we serve. During this time we also had the wildfires and ice storm to assist with as well. I'm still currently assisting in this role.

I was working from the office in this role for many months but then as you I assume are aware State Employee's safety concern lead to State Employee's having to start working remotely from our homes. As usual I worried about ergonomics and my job. Especially as I was in an important role for the State of Oregon, DAS, and its citizens (your constituents). My worry was that my home office was not set up ergonomically for me. I tried to work with my little desk I had but since I rarely used it when I was off work at home I hadn't been in any pain. Unfortunately when I had to start using it on a fulltime weekly basis I started to feel the pain and it was becoming harder to work. I reached out to PWP again and Robert at PWP answered the call. PWP, my supervisor and I worked to get my home office set up ergonomically for me. PWP's ergonomics provided help to keep me moving forward working at my job and employed with the State of Oregon, DAS PS, and meeting the emergency needs of all Oregonians. The pain went away and I can keep doing my job that I truly love.

PWP is a lifesaver to not only me but I can only imagine many others as well. I could not imagine PWP not being there for me if I need them again or being there for other disabled workers. I absolutely truly believe that without PWP I would not have been with the State of Oregon for 20+ years now and in a wonderful professional career path which is procurement.

Being a disabled worker is a life changing event for not only me but my family. I come from a long line of Oregonians since moving here in 5th grade. I have 10 siblings, 4 children, and 11 grandchildren all Oregonians. Of course many cousins, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, etc. in Oregon as well. We used to have some big family gathers but as you are all aware not during these times but hopefully someday again.

I'm very proud of what I do for the State of Oregon and I hope you maintain the PWP for not only me but other Oregon constituents who do appreciate the work you do for us, thank you!

Respectfully,

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