

# Office of Small Business Assistance

**Trevor Leahy**, Small Business Ombudsman

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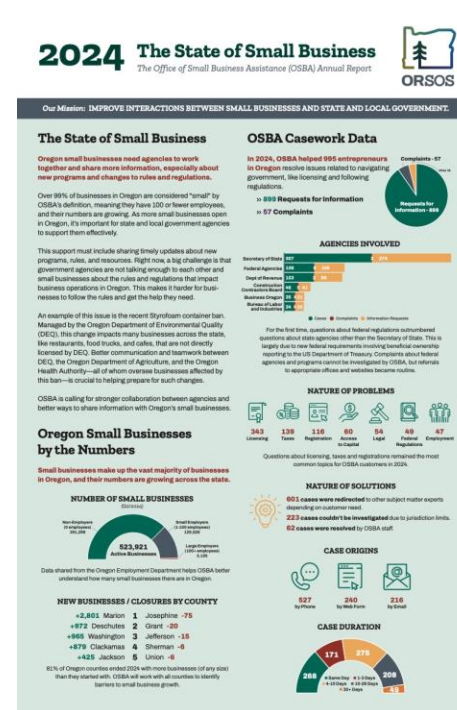
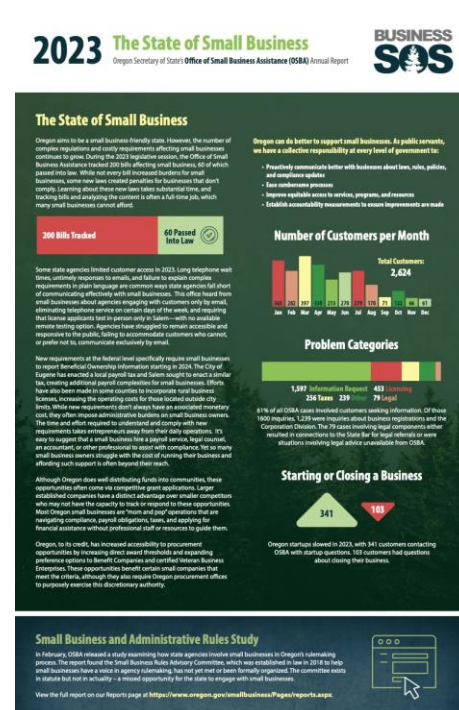
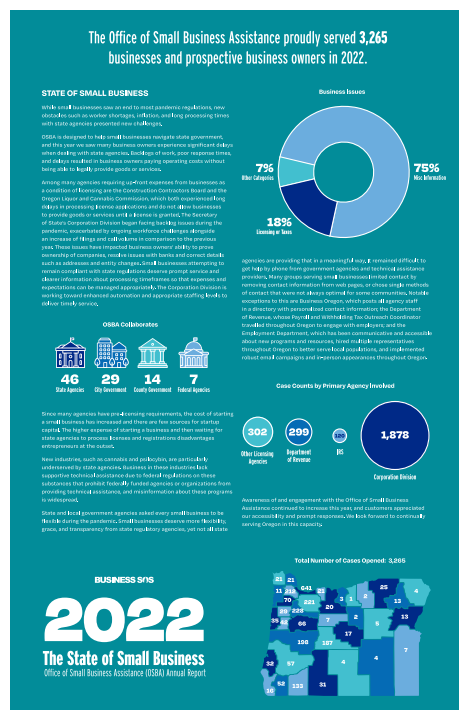


# About the Office of Small Business Assistance

We work collaboratively with small businesses, government agencies, and technical assistance providers to make navigating state and local government easier for Oregon entrepreneurs.

- Created by HB 3459 (2013), ORS 56.200-56.209
- Serve Oregon for- and non-profits with 100 employees or less
- 4 FTE

# The Office of Small Business Assistance (OSBA) Annual Report



Our Mission: IMPROVE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SMALL BUSINESSES AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

# The State of Small Business

2024 OSBA Annual Report

## The State of Small Business

**Oregon small businesses need agencies to work together and share more information, especially about new programs and changes to rules and regulations.**

Over 99% of businesses in Oregon are considered "small" by OSBA's definition, meaning they have 100 or fewer employees, and their numbers are growing. As more small businesses open in Oregon, it's important for state and local government agencies to support them effectively.

This support must include sharing timely updates about new programs, rules, and resources. Right now, a big challenge is that government agencies are not talking enough to each other and small businesses about the rules and regulations that impact business operations in Oregon. This makes it harder for businesses to follow the rules and get the help they need.

An example of this issue is the recent Styrofoam container ban. Managed by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), this change impacts many businesses across the state, like restaurants, food trucks, and cafes, that are not directly licensed by DEQ. Better communication and teamwork between DEQ, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and the Oregon Health Authority—all of whom oversee businesses affected by this ban—is crucial to helping prepare for such changes.

OSBA is calling for stronger collaboration between agencies and better ways to share information with Oregon's small businesses.

## Oregon Small Businesses by the Numbers

**Small businesses make up the vast majority of businesses in Oregon, and their numbers are growing across the state.**

### NUMBER OF SMALL BUSINESSES (Q2/2024)



## OSBA Casework Data

**In 2024, OSBA helped 995 entrepreneurs in Oregon** resolve issues related to navigating government, like licensing and following regulations.

» **899 Requests for Information**  
» **57 Complaints**



### AGENCIES INVOLVED



For the first time, questions about federal regulations outnumbered questions about state agencies other than the Secretary of State. This is largely due to new federal requirements involving beneficial ownership reporting to the US Department of Treasury. Complaints about federal agencies and programs cannot be investigated by OSBA, but referrals to appropriate offices and websites became routine.

### NATURE OF PROBLEMS



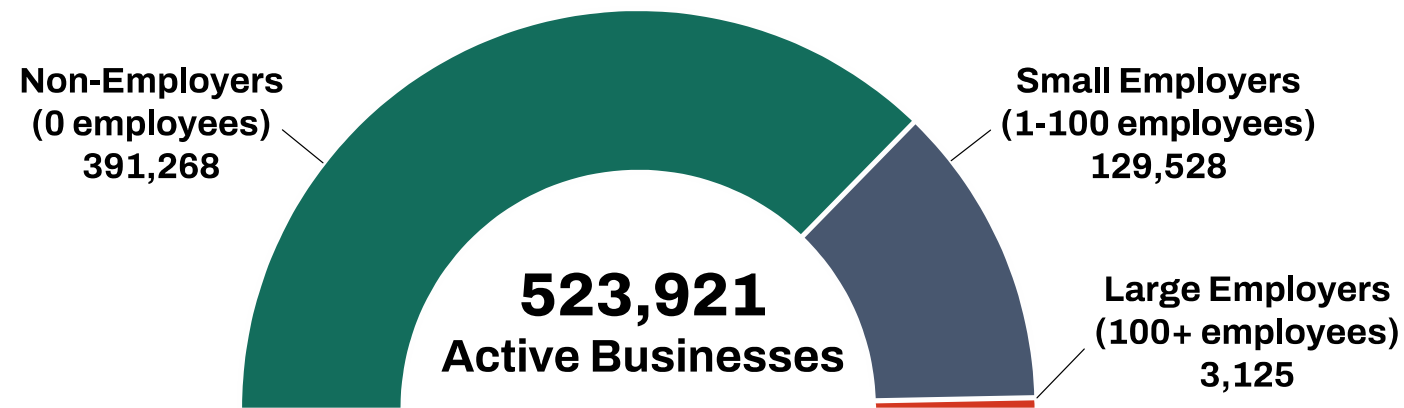
Questions about licensing, taxes and registrations remained the most common topics for OSBA customers in 2024.

### NATURE OF SOLUTIONS

**601 cases were redirected** to other subject matter experts depending on customer need.  
**223 cases couldn't be investigated** due to jurisdiction limits.  
**62 cases were resolved** by OSBA staff.



# Small Businesses by the Numbers



Data shared from the Oregon Employment Department helps OSBA better understand how many small businesses there are in Oregon.

# More Small Businesses Opened in 2024

## NEW BUSINESSES / CLOSURES BY COUNTY

<b>+2,801</b>	Marion	<b>1</b>	Josephine	<b>-75</b>
<b>+972</b>	Deschutes	<b>2</b>	Grant	<b>-20</b>
<b>+965</b>	Washington	<b>3</b>	Jefferson	<b>-15</b>
<b>+879</b>	Clackamas	<b>4</b>	Sherman	<b>-6</b>
<b>+425</b>	Jackson	<b>5</b>	Union	<b>-6</b>

81% of Oregon counties ended 2024 with more businesses (of any size) than they started with. OSBA will work with all counties to identify barriers to small business growth.

29 Counties experienced  
business growth in 2024.

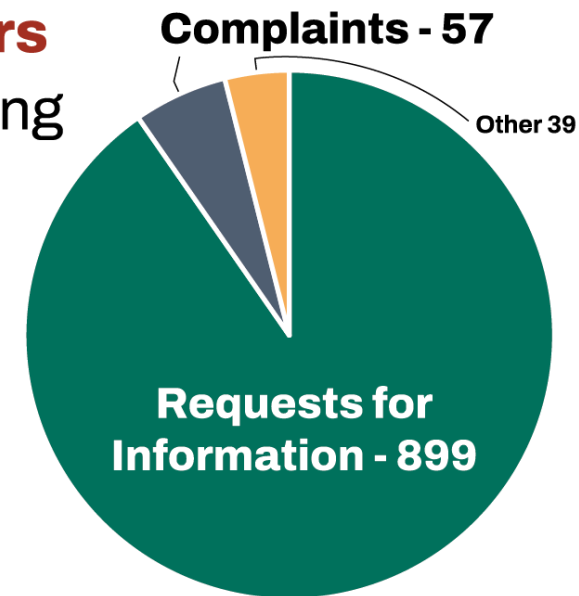


# OSBA Casework Data

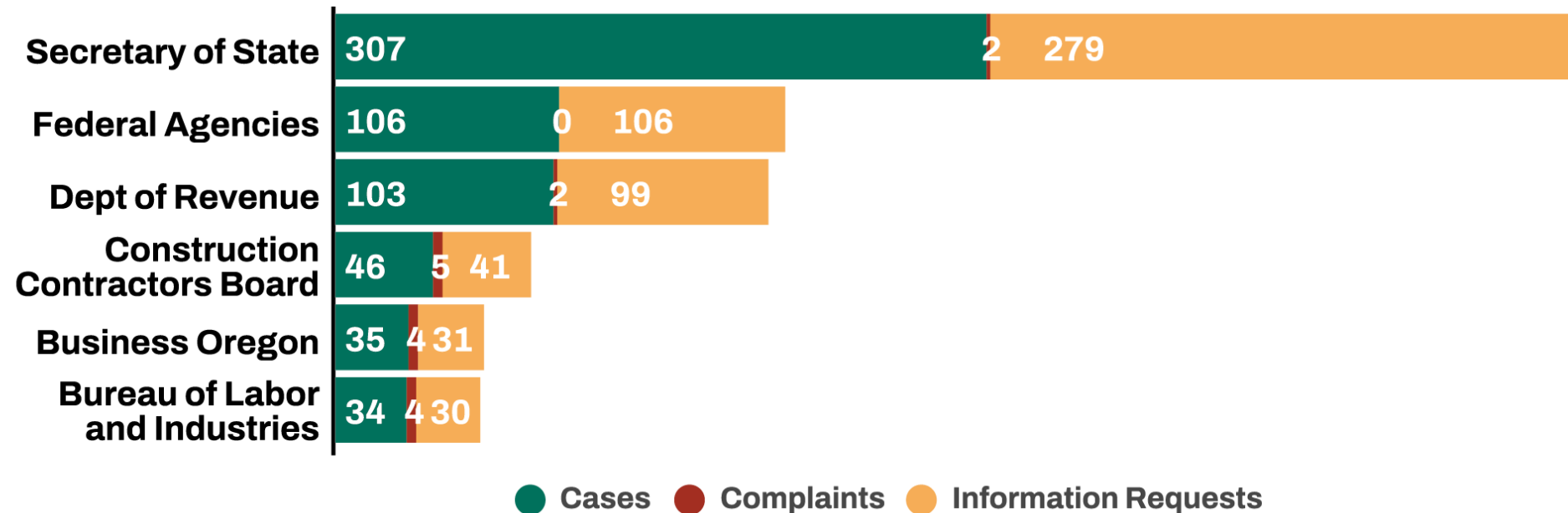
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» **899 Requests for Information**

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# Agencies Involved





# Nature of Problems



Questions about licensing, taxes and registrations remained the most common topics for OSBA customers in 2024.

# Nature of Solutions



**601 cases were redirected** to other subject matter experts depending on customer need.

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**62 cases were resolved** by OSBA staff.

# Case Origins

6,294 Phone calls



**527**  
by Phone

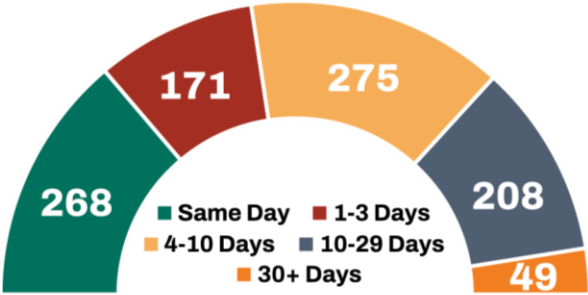


**240**  
by Web Form



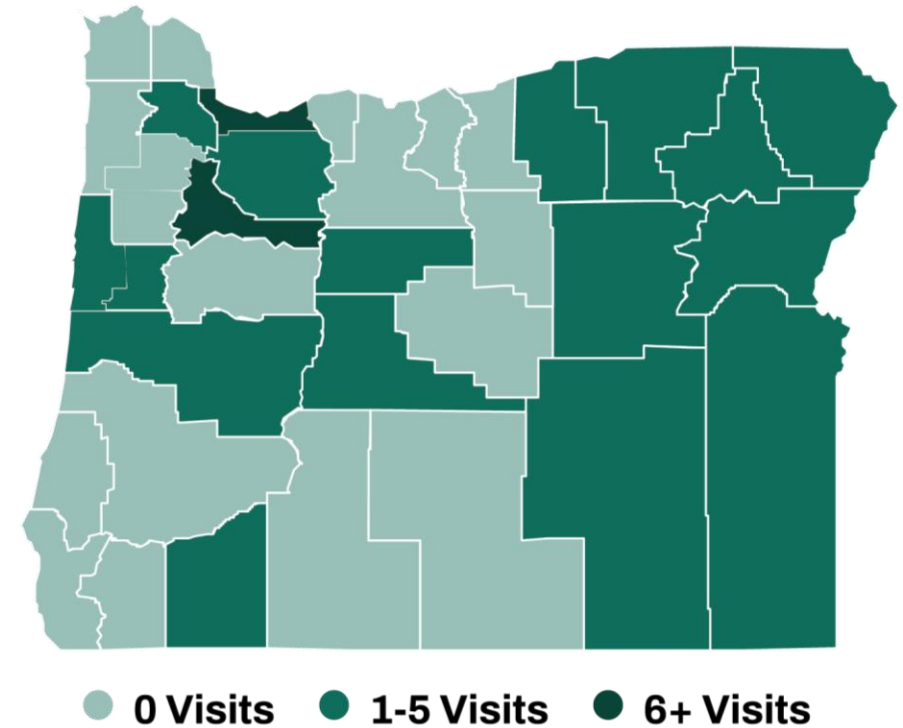
**216**  
by Email

74% of cases closed  
within 10 days



# OSBA Around the State

- 102 events in 18 counties
- Frequent collaboration with partners



# What We're Hearing

How state government can support Oregon small businesses.

- Timely updates about new programs, rules, and resources.
- Better coordination between agencies.



# More OSBA Resources

- Quarterly bilingual newsletters
  - 14,000 subscribers
- Legislative Tracker for Small Businesses
- Corporate Transparency Act
- What's Next for OSBA?





### **Contact Us**

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### **For Legislative Purposes**

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