

A FRAMEWORK FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

The Oregon Business Plan’s goal to reduce Oregon’s poverty rate to less than 10 percent depends on breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty through new investments and policy changes in education, health care, and social services delivery. Below is a framework for that effort.

The Opportunity Agenda A strategy to reduce our poverty rate to less than 10% by 2020 and even lower in the decade that follows			
1. Segment Populations in Poverty to Better Understand Specific Challenges and Needs			
Top Priority Young adults and their children. (This is the largest segment of people in poverty. Addressing their needs is critical for breaking the cycle of poverty.)	Other Key Segments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult males with little education Seniors People with disabilities Rural communities Communities of color 		
2. Pursue Three Broad Initiatives (Customized for each population segment)			
	Build Skills and Promote Lifelong Learning	Design a Social Safety Net for The Future	Foster Communities of Opportunity
The Challenge	Skill requirements are growing with automation and advances in the economy. Education and training matter more than ever.	The social safety net, built over many decades, is outdated and can discourage labor force attachment and upward mobility.	Economic segregation makes upward mobility far less likely.
Solutions	Develop better pathways to good jobs for young adults, and new models for adult training to connect Oregonians with good jobs.	Build an effective social safety net aimed at promoting upward mobility and family stability. (Requires working with federal partners for long-term overhaul.)	Adopt housing and transportation policies that integrate communities in urban areas. Improve conditions around the home, school, and work; boost social capital and focus on economic integration.
Recent Progress	Oregon has set aggressive goals for education (including STEM education) and has adopted many initiatives to meet them. Adjusted funding formulas promote college, completion, career pathways, and CTE/STEM investment, and target low-income Oregonians and communities of color.	Medicaid reform provides nearly universal health care and is focused on upstream health. Increased state-level EITC, specifically for families with young children, lifts working families out of poverty. Reformed TANF helps ease the transition from welfare to work.	Prosperity Initiative Pilot Projects address workforce needs in Malheur County and Jackson/Josephine counties. Oregon Healthiest State and the Blue Zones Project encourage physical health, social connection, and community vitality in Klamath Falls, The Dalles, Grants Pass, and the Umpqua region surrounding Roseburg.
What’s Next?	New investments in early learning. Investments to smooth pathways to guide young adults to education and training that lead to good jobs. Investments to support new models for adult training for non-degree credentials that lead to employment and improved wages. Investments to meet specific needs of historically underserved subpopulations.	A Child Integrated Database linking de-identified administrative data for children born in Oregon since 2000. Expanded EITC and IDAs to address benefit cliffs as Oregonians move up the economic ladder. A multi-year effort to rethink the social safety net from the client perspective to improve navigation and encourage upward mobility.	New focus based on the work of Raj Chetty and Opportunity Insights. Investigating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for acceleration of housing supply to keep costs down and foster integration. Application of equity lens to road and transit financing. Strategies to reduce social isolation in low-income communities, including promoting engagement of retirees.
3. Measure Progress and Adjust Strategy Based on Evidence			
Oregon has been a leader in providing and analyzing longitudinal data in useful ways to inform decision-making, especially pertaining to pathways from high school through postsecondary education.			
Soon, we will have detailed longitudinal data starting with babies at birth, showing how individuals navigate social services, Medicaid, and education systems. Oregon will be well-positioned to track progress and make data-driven budget and policy decisions relating to families and children in poverty.			

See additional background and materials at <https://orbusinesscouncil.org/our-work/poverty-reduction/>.