

S|D|A|O

SPECIAL DISTRICTS
ASSOCIATION OF OREGON

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Brent Stevenson, Santiam Water Control District

Next Board of Directors Meeting ---

November 16 | SDAO Office, Salem | 9am

Joint Work Session Meeting with Board of Trustees

November 16 | SDAO Office, Salem | 1pm

Executive Director ---

Frank Stratton

Services ---

Awards, Education and Training, Internship Grant, Legislative, Research and Technical Assistance, Scholarship and Grant Fund. and SDAO Advisory Services, LLC

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Call to Action:

PASS A LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY POLICY OR RESOLUTION

By: **Frank Stratton, Executive Director**



By now, I'm sure you are well aware of the failure of special districts to obtain a share of the American Rescue Plan funding for COVID relief, while Oregon cities and counties received \$1.5 billion. We have had a chance to reflect and investigate what we collectively could have done differently to achieve a

better result from the Oregon Legislature. One of the things we have heard from many legislators is that they didn't think about special districts or didn't believe special districts needed funds because they didn't hear from them. They heard directly from nearly every city and county, but less than 100 out of almost 1,000 special districts made contacts with their legislators.

When SDAO sent out our *Call to Action* legislative alerts, asking members to contact legislators, we were always under a short timeline. Things move very rapidly during the legislative session requiring swift action and an

ability to quickly adjust strategy. When we followed up with members that didn't reach out to their legislators, we heard one overarching common theme. Members felt they needed to get board action before they could take a position, and they were unable to respond under such a compressed timeline because their boards only meet once a month.

We believe we have a solution to this problem that has been successfully implemented by our fellow special district associations in other states. We have developed a customizable model resolution, reviewed by legal counsel, that will give either the district's general manager/fire chief or board chair the ability to take legislative positions on certain topics recommended by SDAO without full board approval. This sample policy/resolution can be found in the new SDAO Legislative Action Toolkit (www.sdao.com/legislative-action-toolkit) under the Taking Positions on Legislation heading.

Please consider passing such a resolution using this template!! It is extremely important that we get a better response when reaching out to legislators on issues of importance to special districts. Even if an issue doesn't directly impact your district, through collective action we can support each other for the benefit of all. Collectively we have more members and elected officials by far than any other type of local government. Together we can make an impact, but the legislature must hear from us on mass!

Please send SDAO a copy of your resolution once it is adopted to sdao@sdao.com.

NEW LEGISLATIVE ACTION TOOLKIT

This sample policy/resolution is part of our new Legislative Action Toolkit (www.sdao.com/legislative-action-toolkit) that we developed to assist Oregon's special districts in making their voices heard. We have put together several resources to help you promote and advocate for your district.

Our goal in designing this toolkit is to make it easy for all our members to reach out to create or further develop relationships with legislators. We understand that this may be intimidating at first. However, it is critical that our state's decisionmakers know who special districts are, what they do, and their value to Oregon communities.

I encourage you to look at all the available resources in this toolkit. Our team has created a variety of sample letters for you to use in your advocacy efforts with legislators, as well as tips and tricks for meeting with elected officials, state senate and representative directory links, and sample letters to send to your local paper.

Do you already have a relationship with your state representative and/or senator? Be sure to fill out our grassroots mobilization survey found under the Grassroots Mobilization heading in the toolkit.

Future Legislative Alerts

To ensure you receive future legislative alerts, make sure that SDAO has your correct email address on file by calling us at 800-285-5461 or emailing sdao@sdao.com. We also encourage you to whitelist the sdao.com domain through your email provider to avoid messages inadvertently going to your spam or junk folder.



SDAO Annual Conference

Mark your calendar for the 2023 SDAO Annual Conference! It will be three years since we have been able to meet in person at our annual event, and we couldn't be more excited! We will have over 20 training and education sessions, networking opportunities, our ever-popular exhibitor trade show, and more!

Dates

- February 9: Pre-Conference Sessions
- February 10-12: Annual Conference

Location

Sunriver Resort · 17600 Center Drive · Sunriver, Oregon

Registration Rates

Thank you to our sponsors who have helped us keep the conference affordable for members! Your gracious support has allowed us to keep the same registration rates for over ten years.

- **Pre-Conference Sessions:** \$85 full day, \$50 half day
- **In-Person One Day of Conference (Friday or Saturday Only):** \$140
- **In-Person Full Conference (Thursday evening to Sunday morning):** \$230
- **Virtual Attendee:** \$95

Guest rates for meals have not yet been determined but will be outlined in the conference brochure.

Attendance Options

- **In Person:** Attend in person for full access to all conference sessions, networking opportunities, receptions, Awards Banquet, evening entertainment and more.
- **Virtual:** Virtual attendees will have limited access to conference content including two livestream options per breakout session slot. We will not be livestreaming the pre-conference sessions, keynote speaker, caucus meetings, or Annual Business Meeting. Sessions that will be available virtually will be selected in January and posted on the conference website.

Hotel Information

- **Lodge Village Guestroom:** \$115/night + tax and resort fee
- **Lodge Village Suite:** \$199/night + tax and resort fee
- **River Lodge Guestroom:** \$189/night + tax and resort fee
- **2 Bedroom Loft Condominium:** \$199/night + tax and resort fee



Room block rates expire on December 10, 2022 for condominiums and January 18, 2023 for rooms and suites.

Rooms, suites, and condominiums can be reserved by utilizing our personalized booking link at: www.sunriverresort.com/group-stays/special-districts-association-of-oregon

Please take note of Sunriver Resort's cancellation policy. Condominiums and houses must be cancelled at least 60 days from the reservation date, or you will be responsible for the entire amount of the stay. Rooms must be cancelled at least 21 days from the reservation date, or you will be responsible for the entire amount of the stay.

Registration Information

Registration information will be sent to all members, agents, and affiliates on December 1st.

Questions

Please contact SDAO Membership Services at memberservices@sdao.com or 800-285-5461.

www.sdao.com/annual-conference

EMPLOYER INCENTIVE FUND (EIF)

UPDATE



As of July 1, 2022, PERS has matched just under \$14 million to 13 of the employers who were waitlisted during the first round of EIF in 2019. Approximately \$22 million in funding remains. If you are an EIF waitlisted employer and have not declared your intent to make a lump sum payment, please contact actuarial.services@pers.oregon.gov.

Planning your payment is essential because PERS does not have your funding readily available. PERS requests funding quarterly based on the employers who have declared they will be making payments during that period. If you are not sure if you are an EIF waitlisted employer or of the amount you are entitled to, visit the PERS EIF webpage at <https://www.oregon.gov/pers/EMP/Pages/Employer-Incentive-Fund.aspx>

Special districts are either eligible to apply directly, or able to partner with a qualifying entity to apply for any of the grants listed.

New Grant Opportunities

Department of Homeland Security

FY 2022 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

WHAT DOES IT FUND? The purpose of this program is to support communities for hazard mitigation activities that promote climate adaptation and resilience with respect to the growing hazards associated with climate change. Visit www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities for more information.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE? States, territories and tribal governments. Local governments and special districts may apply as a subapplicant through their state specific process.

WHEN'S IT DUE? January 27, 2023

Department of Agriculture

FY 2023 Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) Competitive Grant Program (Western)

WHAT DOES IT FUND? The purpose of this program is to support collaborative, science-based restoration projects that focus on priority landscapes in the western United States, and to encourage the use of innovative cross-boundary approaches to support landscape restoration. Visit www.thewflc.org/landscape-scale-restoration-competitive-grant-program/fy-2023-landscape-scale-restoration for more information.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE? Local and state governments, institutions of higher education, Native American tribal governments, non-profit organizations, and Alaska Native corporations.

WHEN'S IT DUE? October 27, 2022

Department of Health and Human Services

FY 2023 Rural Health Network Development (RHND) Program

WHAT DOES IT FUND? The purpose of this program is to support rural integrated health care networks that collaborate to achieve efficiencies; expand access to, coordinate, and improve the quality of basic healthcare services and associated health outcomes; and strengthen the rural healthcare system as a whole. Visit www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=340886 for more information.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE? Local and state governments, institutions of higher education, Native American tribal governments, public or private non-profit or for-profit entities with demonstrated experience serving, or the capacity to serve, underserved rural populations.

WHEN'S IT DUE? November 22, 2022

Department of Energy

FY 2022 Research, Development, and Demonstration Funding Opportunity

WHAT DOES IT FUND? The purpose of the program is to provide funding to advance cybersecurity tools and technologies specifically designed to reduce cyber risks to energy delivery infrastructure. The program will support multi-year research, development, and demonstration of tools and technologies to reduce cyber risks to energy delivery infrastructure. Visit <https://bit.ly/3AQ1WDX> for more information.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE?? States, local governments, tribal governments, education institutions, nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, federally funded research and development centers and national laboratories, and individuals

WHEN'S IT DUE? December 5, 2022

Institute of Museums and Library Services

FY 2023 Digital Humanities Advancement Grants

WHAT DOES IT FUND? The purpose of this program is to support innovative, experimental, and/or computationally challenging digital projects, leading to work that can scale to enhance scholarly research, teaching, and public programming in the humanities. Visit www.neh.gov/grants/odh/digital-humanities-advancement-grants for more information.

WHO'S ELIGIBLE? Local and state governments, Native American tribal government entities, special districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations.

WHEN'S IT DUE? January 12, 2023

For more grant opportunities, please visit our website at www.sdao.com/grant-resources.

Upcoming Trainings

Hot Topics Conversation & Networking

October 12 | 9am-11am

Cost: Free

Location: Oregon International Port of Coos Bay, 125 Central Avenue, Suite 300, Coos Bay, Oregon

Registration: <https://cvent.me/xwx7q3>

Join the SDAO Risk Management Team to discuss current risk management hot topics and get to know other SDAO members in your area. Each area of Oregon has unique geographical risk issues ranging from the coast to the valley to the mountains of the central and eastern parts of the state. This interactive session is designed to help our team target these issues and develop resources for you, specific to your area. We invite you to come prepared to discuss struggles that your district is facing and collaborate with others.

Cybersecurity Compliance & Frameworks Webinar

October 18 | 10:30am-12pm

Cost: Free

Registration: Information will be available on our website at www.sdao.com/cybersecurity-resources closer to the event date.

Building a Culture of Belonging

October 19 | 9am-12pm

Cost: Free

Location: Chemeketa Eola, 215 Doaks Ferry Rd, Salem, Oregon (Virtual option available!)

Join Deborah Jeffries of HR Answers at the beautiful Chemeketa Eola event center (in person or virtually) for a discussion on "building a culture of belonging".

Organizational culture refers to the system of values, beliefs, and behaviors that shapes how work gets done within an organization. In a culture of belonging, that means an environment that supports all three elements of comfort, connection, and contribution. This means creating a space where every person feels a sense of belonging, where everyone can thrive without compromising their identity or their values. It is the sense you get that you are a valued member of a community and in turn have a sense of purpose. Belonging has a strong correlation to commitment and motivation at the workplace, directly translating to employee retention, pride, and motivation. People who feel they belong perform better, become more willing to challenge themselves, and are more resilient. The implications are powerful and the approaches to success do not have to be complex.

This program will cover:

- Building the social bonds with staff,
- Using feedback loops as a communication tool,
- How to nurture inclusion and avoid exclusion,
- The reinforcing attributes of comfort, connection and contribution, and
- Ways to be intentional about inclusion.

Most all state and federal grant applications now require you to explain how you have considered the impact on diverse communities that you serve and how the funds will help advance diverse communities. This session will also help you understand how to respond and the things you should be considering when answering these questions.

Risk Management Back to Basics and Current Hot Topics

November 16 | 10am-12pm

Cost: \$15 In-Person Attendee (Includes Lunch), Free for Virtual

Location: Salem Special Districts Center, 727 Center St NE, Salem, Oregon

Registration: <https://cvent.me/n2q3Bg>

Join us in Salem or virtually from your location for an introductory session highlighting the importance of integrating basic risk management concepts into the normal operations of your district. We will briefly review how risk management is associated with district property, general liability, and workers' compensation exposures and some of the considerations you should make related to these topics. As we progress through the series, we will take a deeper dive into these subject areas. Each training will also include a review of current hot topics in risk management. We will conclude the series with a final session on how to implement what you have learned.

We invite you to attend as many sessions as you are able because each training will have a different focus. These trainings will be held in a hybrid format; this means that we will have both onsite and virtual attendees. All attendees, regardless of how they attend, will be able to interact and ask questions of our team.

Congratulations

to our recent Academy certificate recipients!

Board Leadership Academy

Certificate Recipient



Kelly Piper

*Multnomah County
Drainage District #1*

Fire District Directors Academy

Certificate Recipients



Cheryl Azavedo Johnson

Illinois Valley RFPD



Diana Bailey

*Mid-Columbia Fire
& Rescue*



What is a Legislative or Administrative Interest?

During a calendar year, a public official, or their relative or household member, may not solicit or receive any gift(s) valued in excess of \$50 from a source that could reasonably be known to have a legislative or administrative interest. [ORS 244.025(1)]

To know if you can accept a gift or offer, you will need to determine whether the source of the gift could have a **legislative or administrative interest** in your decisions or votes as a public official.

A legislative or administrative interest is an economic interest, distinct from that of the general public, in any matter subject to the public official's decisions or votes. [ORS 244.020(10)]. So if a public official is in a position to take action or make a decision that could have an economic effect on the source of the gift, and if that economic effect is distinct from the effect on the general public, then the source of the gift has a legislative or administrative interest in the public official's decisions or votes.

An economic interest distinct from that of the general public is when an action affects the source of the gift

in a different way or to a greater degree than it affects the general public. For example, a tuition increase will affect all registered students; however, a decision to award a scholarship to Becky has an economic effect on her that is distinct from the effect on the general public.

Remember:

- If the source of a gift or offer *could have* a legislative or administrative interest in your decisions or votes as a public official, you cannot accept the gift/offer if it exceeds \$50 from that source in a calendar year.
- If the source of a gift or offer *could not have* a legislative or administrative interest in your decisions or votes as a public official, you can accept the gift/offer, regardless of value.

This article was provided by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. Please visit www.oregon.gov/ogec for more information and resources.





The Most Valuable Person (MVP) at Your District

KEY CONTACT

By: SDAO Risk Management Department

Every SDAO member has a key contact, your MVP, that you assign to be the district's main point of contact for us. All contact from SDAO goes to this person whether it is general information, claims, or risk management related.

This person is your MVP because we send out essential information via email that may need to be distributed to numerous people within your district. The key contact's role is to determine where this information needs to go; if this information is not passed on it gets lost in cyber space.

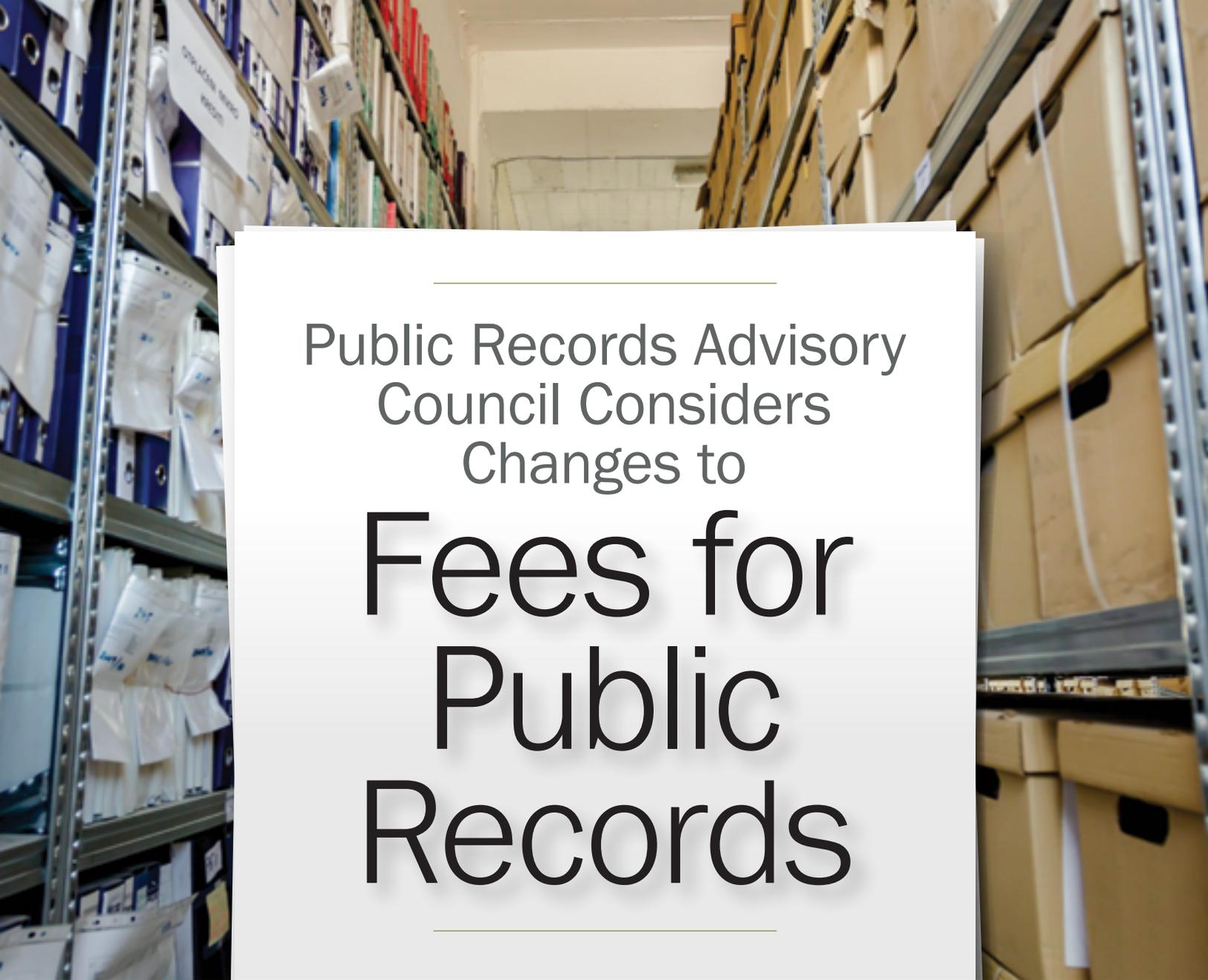
What kinds of things are sent to the key contact? Examples include insurance renewals, grant opportunities, upcoming trainings, key legislative issues, other events and opportunities, and severe weather events that may need timely responses. Nearly all contact with the member is done through the key contact position. If other district staff are working with SDAO, we try our best to make sure the key contact is informed and kept in the loop.

Choosing a key contact is a particularly crucial decision. Several of our small members choose a

part-time bookkeeper or board member as their key contact. This is not bad choice if these people regularly check their email and forward or respond to the information at hand. If this is not the case, you may miss opportunities or important decisions may be delayed; sometimes, this can cost you money. For instance, with the Safety and Security Grant (which is currently open), it requires timely application or you will miss the deadline and the chance to be awarded up to \$5,000 in matching funds.

It is also imperative that your key contact have an accurate email address on file with us. Because things happen so quickly in our world, we often need to communicate fast. Email is our first line of communication in order to get you the information fast.

To help your key contact understand what is available through SDAO and SDIS and their role as the key contact, we have developed a short 15-minute webinar. Don't know who your key contact is or think a change needs to be made? Please reach out to SDAO Membership Services at memberservices@sdao.com or call 800-285-5461.



Public Records Advisory Council Considers Changes to Fees for Public Records

By: Mark Landauer, SDAO Government Affairs

In 2017, in response to several efforts to modernize Oregon's Public Records Law that was established in 1973 in the aftermath of Watergate, the Legislative Assembly passed SB 106 creating Oregon's Public Records Advisory Council (PRAC) and the position of Public Records Advocate.

The PRAC consists of 12 voting members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. There are three members who represent the perspective of the media, three local government association members from the League of Oregon Cities, Association of Oregon Counties and SDAO, three state agency members, a member of the public, a member from the public workforce sector and the Public Records Advocate. There are also two ex-officio non-voting members — Senator Kim Thatcher and

Representative Karin Power.

The primary duties of the PRAC are to survey state agencies and other public body practices and procedures, examine practices like determining fee estimates and imposing or waiving fees, identifying inefficiencies and inconsistencies in the application of the public records law that impede transparency in public process and government, and make recommendations on changes in law, policy or practice that could enhance transparency in public process and government, among other duties.

After a somewhat tumultuous three years, a new Public Records Advocate was confirmed by the Senate in 2021. Since that time, the PRAC created two subcommittees. The first, the Non-Legislative

Subcommittee has wide latitude to discuss a variety of topics. For example, likely topics for discussion include surveying government bodies to gather data and timeliness of responses, reviewing best practices and inspecting local government public records policies, among others. The other is the Legislative Subcommittee. This committee was formed in October of 2021 for the purpose of discussing the statutes impacting what government can charge to produce public records with the intended outcome of trying to reach a consensus on reforms to promote transparency.

Over the last two decades, there have been multiple attempts to reform how fees can be charged. In fact, the most recent attempt was during the last long session with HB 2485 (<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Measures/Overview/HB2485>).

Since its formation, the subcommittee spent nearly nine months hearing from local and national experts in the field of public records, requested and received a comparative analysis produced by the Legislative Policy and Research Office of how other states across the country address fees. It has also received testimony and input from numerous members of the public, media, as well as state and local government representatives.

Since that time, the subcommittee has discussed their perspectives on how the laws can be improved and have attempted to identify some of the themes that we have heard. Furthermore, because Oregon's Public Records Advocate is considered a neutral party and an expert on the subject, the subcommittee directed him to craft a proposal that would make changes to the statute to promote transparency, thereby furthering the deliberations of the subcommittee. A copy of that document can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3PV8uVX>

The proposal's goals, as described by the Advocate, include reduction of costs for requestors, preserving the ability of public bodies to charge fees and determine when to offer fee waivers or reductions, improve and increase communication between records custodians and requestors as a normal part of public records request and disclosure processes, incentivize public body leadership to better fund public records systems/staff, and to clarify terms.

The proposal is crafted in a manner like the Federal Freedom of information Act (FOIA for short) in that it attempts to categorize the types of requestors. It also proposes to make free documents that are requested by individuals that pertain only to the requestor. Furthermore, a record that takes less than 30 minutes

of staff time would be produced free of charge.

Amongst the members of the subcommittee there appears to be a consensus that the ability to charge fees plays an important role in the ability of government to be able to help requesters narrow overly broad public records requests. There is also recognition that producing public records does come with a cost to government. We have also discovered that a significant number of jurisdictions oftentimes waive fees they are entitled to simply because it is their policy, there was minimal time involved in the production of the records, or because charging the fees creates its own administrative burden.

This committee was formed in October of 2021 for the purpose of discussing the statutes impacting what government can charge to produce public records with the intended outcome of trying to reach a consensus on reforms to promote transparency.

There will also be disagreements. For example, the League of Oregon Cities has testified before the Subcommittee that they oppose the Advocate's proposal on how to reduce fees. When pressed on what they would support, the city's representative suggested that a mediation process be created to resolve these types of fee disputes rather than reforming the statute.

As an association, SDAO will be closely monitoring this matter until a final proposal is put forward by the council — if they can reach an agreement. SDAO's representative on the PRAC will monitor the progress of the discussions and report back to SDAO's Board of Directors and Legislative Committee.

If you or your districts would like to share feedback on this proposal, please reach out to Mark Landauer at mark@mjlconsulting.com.

Mark Landauer is SDAO's representative on the PRAC, Chair of the Council, and he also serves on the Legislative Subcommittee.

PAID LEAVE OREGON: BENEFITS BEGIN 9/3/2023



Beginning January 1, 2023, employers with workers based in Oregon will be assessed a payroll tax called Paid Leave Oregon (formerly known as PFMLI) so the state can provide a family and medical leave benefit to all eligible workers. For most Oregon employers, participation is mandatory.

AS AN OREGON EMPLOYER, YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT DECISION TO MAKE.

1. Should I pay the payroll tax and let the State of Oregon administer their program for my employees?
2. Should I opt out of the state program and offer my employees an equivalent plan?

Before you decide, let The Partners Group (TPG) inform you what your options are and how the costs compare.

Complying with various leave laws can be confusing. TPG can provide the information you need to make the best choice for you and your employees. TPG is offering a proprietary analysis for our clients that will help you understand the financial impact of Paid Leave Oregon to your organization. This analysis will be available to you in Summer 2022.

We will also secure equivalent plan options at renewal, or earlier if requested, so you can make the best decision for you and your employees.

If you have questions, reach out to your TPG consultant.

IMPORTANT DATE(S)

- **Decision Deadline:** November 2022
- **Contributions Begin:** January 1, 2023
- **Benefits Begin:** September 3, 2023

COVERED EMPLOYERS

All public and private employers with at least one EE in the state of Oregon. Self-employed, federal government, and tribal government employers are not covered, but can opt in.

COVERED EMPLOYEES

Those who contributed to the Paid Leave Oregon fund and earned at least \$1,000 in wages in the qualifying period.

PLAN ADMINISTRATION OPTIONS

- State plan (Paid Leave Oregon)
- A state-approved private plan that fully meets or exceeds the state plan and is approved by the director of the employment department.



THE
**PARTNERS
GROUP**

FUNDING

- **Employee:** 1% of wages capped at annual Social Security maximum. Max contribution will be 60% of total rate.
- **Employer:** At least 40% of final rate. Employers may pay employee contributions. Employers with fewer than 25 employees are not required to pay the employer contribution.

LEAVE REASONS

- **PML:** Employee serious health condition, safe leave, or pregnancy.
- **PFL:** Serious health condition of family member, bond with newborn or newly adopted or foster child, or safe leave (minor child, or dependent needs leave for reasons covered under Oregon's domestic violence law).
 - » Covered Relationships: spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, parent-in-law, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, any individual related to the employee by blood, any individual who is the equivalent of a family member.

BENEFIT SUPPLEMENTATION RULES

An employee may be permitted to use paid sick time, vacation, or any other paid leave earned by the employee in addition to receiving family and medical leave insurance benefits to replace wages up to 100% of the employee's average weekly wage (AWW).

EMPLOYER NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

To be determined.

HOW TO REGISTER WITH THE STATE

To be determined.

WAITING PERIOD

None.

BENEFIT PERCENTAGE

Up to 100% of AWW on a sliding scale. Employees with an AWW up to 65% of the state's AWW will receive a 100% benefit. Employees with an AWW exceeding 65% of the state's AWW will receive 100% of their wages up to 65% of the state's AWW, plus 50% of wages that exceed this threshold.

WEEKLY MAXIMUM BENEFIT

Capped at 120% of the AWW, amount undetermined.

BENEFIT DURATION(S)

12 weeks of paid benefits, with an additional two weeks for pregnancy or childbirth complications; total paid and unpaid leave (combined Paid Leave Oregon and OFLA) capped at 18 weeks.

JOB PROTECTION

Yes, if employed by employer for 90 or more days.

RESOURCES

- [Paid Leave Oregon](#)



The information services provided by The Partners Group is for consultative and/or informational purposes only; they do not constitute and should not be construed as legal advice, since TPG is not a law firm and does not serve as your legal counsel. The services provided by TPG are not a substitute for the advice of legal counsel. TPG clients should contact an experienced employment and/or benefits attorney to obtain legal advice with respect to any particular issue or problem.

Special Districts Consulting Services

“Love the trees until their leaves fall off, then encourage them to try again next year.” —Chad Sugg



By: Shanta Carter

Happy Fall!

It took a bit for summer to begin, but how lucky are we to have had such amazing weather and to get back to in-person visits, meetings, conferences, and events?

In July, two of our Risk Management Consultants and I attended the Springfield Utility Board (SUB) Summer Wellness Fair. What a great event! We were on site to answer questions and give out some SDAO goodies to SUB staff members. We met some great people doing great work for their district.

I also had the privilege of traveling the state with Eileen Eakins, Attorney, and George Dunkel, SDAO Senior Consultant, for the SDAO Board of Directors and Management Staff Training Series in August. We met so many of our amazing members that work every day to ensure that our special districts are running efficiently and fulfilling the needs of their constituents.

If your board needs training, and you were unable to attend one of the regional trainings, please let us

know. We can come to your district and conduct a condensed board training tailored to your district or you can visit SDAO.com and watch some of the recorded trainings available to our members.

Thank you to all the districts that have participated in a Board Practices Assessment (BPA) this year. If you are still interested in scheduling one prior to the Best Practices survey deadline, please contact us to get one scheduled soon. When your board participates in a BPA your district will receive a 2% discount on your general liability, auto liability, and property insurance contributions in 2023.

We always hope to be your first call for any consulting assistance your district may need. Member districts are eligible for up to eight hours of free consulting services annually by one of our skilled Senior Consultants. After this time is exhausted, members will have the option of continuing at a nominal hourly rate. We assist with management recruitments, organizational assessments, district manager transition planning, board trainings, BPAs, and much more.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

For more information about the Consulting Services Program and the services we offer, please contact us at sdaoconsultingservices@sdao.com or 800-305-1736.



2023 SDAO AWARDS PROGRAM

Special districts and the individuals that support their efforts are consistently giving back to their communities in various ways including creating top-notch programs, offering incredible customer service, and volunteering time. The SDAO Awards Program gives recognition to these districts, board members, managers, employees and volunteers to celebrate their ingenuity, creativity, diversity, and commitment to excellence.

Within this program are two special awards: the **Outstanding Special District Program Award** and the **Outstanding Special District Service Award**. We are seeking nominations for special districts, board members, managers, employees and volunteers. Please submit your nomination(s) by Friday, October 7th, 2022.

How do I submit a nomination?

Complete the 2023 SDAO Awards Program nomination form available at www.sdao.com/sdao-awards-program. Please respond to each question, attaching additional pages if necessary. Submit completed nomination forms to SDAO, PO Box 12613, Salem, Oregon 97309-0613 or email them to sdao@sdao.com. **Nomination forms must be received by October 7th, 2022 to be considered.**

How are entries judged?

The Awards Committee will review nominations in late-October using standard evaluation features such as impact for other districts, positive results, special purpose, increased safety, cost savings, improved quality of service, innovation, and community need.

What happens if the district or individual I nominate wins?

Nominators and award winners will be notified in November 2022. SDAO will provide winner contact information to our videographer to schedule a date and time to do a video interview. Videos will be showcased at the 2023 SDAO Annual Conference, which will be held at Sunriver Resort in February 2023 and on our website. Winners will also be mailed their award and provided an electronic copy of their video.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions, please contact Director of Association Services Jennifer Quisenberry at 800-285-5461 or email jquisenberry@sdao.com.

SDAO Members *in the* news

Find additional news clippings online at www.sdao.com > Newsroom

Tangent Fire donates water tender to Gates

Albany Democrat-Herald
August 11, 2022

The Tangent Rural Fire District has donated a water tender to Gates Rural Fire Protection District. According to a news release from Tangent Fire, the agency donated Tender 72 to help the community of Gates, which was drastically impacted by the 2020 wildfires in the Santiam Canyon. "It is important for us to remember that these communities are still facing the challenges of rebuilding, and continually need our support..."

Read more at
<https://bit.ly/3ASOwas>

Health District receives welcome jump start to develop new health center/pharmacy

North Coast Citizen
August 3, 2022

Efforts by the Nehalem Bay Health District to improve primary health care delivery in north Tillamook County have received a major boost thanks to Oregon Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden. Earlier this year the health district asked to be considered for "congressionally directed funding" to finance a portion of a new primary health care center and pharmacy in Wheeler. Merkley and Wyden announced recently that the requests have been included in proposals approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee where Merkley is a member.

Read more at
<https://bit.ly/3AOom8G>

'Explore Our World': LTD releases new video series

KVAL
July 11, 2022

Lane Transit District (LTD) is showing visitors and community members alike the places they can experience by boarding an LTD bus in a new fast-paced video series called: "Explore Our World." Released in time for the World Athletic Championships Oregon22 (WCH Oregon22), each of the five short videos features iconic local places that many people from the area will take visiting family and friends to showcase our communities, including Saturday Market, exploring along the McKenzie River, shopping, and Skinner Butte.

Read more at
<https://bit.ly/3APU7hu>

*Providing reasonable, stable rates, and
broad coverage to Oregon's public entities*

SDIS Board of Trustees

- Chair:** Andrea Klaas, Port of The Dalles
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Services

- Background Checks
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- Drug-Free Workplace
- Management Consulting Services
- On-site Loss Control Consultations
- Pre-Loss Legal Services
- Public Safety EAP
- Safety and Security Grant Program
- SDIS Insurance Programs

Next SDIS Board of Trustees Meetings

November 15 | SDAO Office, Salem | 1pm

November 16 | SDAO Office, Salem | 9am

Joint Work Session Meeting with SDAO Board of Directors

Hiring Is a Big Deal

Use the Right Tools

By: *HR Answers*

According to a 2020 Harris Poll, 70% of employers check out applicants' profiles as part of their screening process, and 54% have rejected applicants because of what they found. Social media sites like Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram offer a free, easily accessed portrait of what a candidate may be like, potentially yielding a clearer idea of whether that person will succeed on the job—however, one should be asking if what is seen has anything to do with the job?

Very little of what you find is predictive of performance. What information is discovered is ethically discouraged or, in some cases, legally prohibited from being taken into account when used to evaluate candidates or make your hiring decisions. So extreme caution should be used when accessing this information.

There were three studies conducted offering employers' insight into recruiting concerns and flaws. In the first of the three studies, the researchers examined the Facebook pages of 266 U.S. job seekers to see what they revealed. Some of the information that job seekers had posted (education, work experience, and extracurricular activities) covered areas that organizations routinely and legitimately assess



during the hiring process. But a significant number of the profiles contained details that organizations will be legally prohibited from considering, including gender, race, and ethnicity (evident in 100% of profiles), disabilities (7%), pregnancy status (3%), sexual orientation (59%), political views (21%), and religious affiliation (41%). Many of the job seekers' profiles also included information of potential concern to prospective employers: 51% of them contained profanity, 11% gave indications of gambling, 26% showed or referenced alcohol consumption, and 7% referenced drug use.

This may give you a peek into why recruiters love social media—it allows them to discover all the information and details they aren't allowed to ask about during an interview. Remember, our interviews need to focus on behaviors within the work context.

In a second study, the researchers explored whether such information affects recruiters' evaluations. They asked 39 recruiters to review the Facebook profiles of 140 job seekers (obtained from a previous larger study) and rate each candidate. The researchers then mapped the recruiters' ratings against the content in each profile. Although the recruiters clearly took heed of legitimate criteria, they were also swayed by factors that are supposedly off-limits, such as relationship status (married and engaged candidates got higher marks, on average, than their single counterparts), age (older individuals were rated more highly), gender

(women had an advantage), and religion (candidates who indicated their beliefs got lower ratings). Factors such as profanity, alcohol or drug use, violence, and sexual behavior lowered ratings; extracurricular activities had no effect on scores.

In the final study, the overall outcome: neither group's assessments of the candidates accurately predicted job performance or turnover intentions, indicating that hiring representatives stand to gain little from probing applicants' online activity. Details on the third study can be found with the information below.

There are better options! Steps and actions within your control and job preview. Please consider your candidate experience from beginning to end. Think of the questions you are asking: focus on questions that provide insight to the applicant's emotional intelligence, to their soft skills that make them successful in the job, situational and behavioral questions focusing on their behaviors of the past, as well as cultural questions to confirm the applicant is in alignment with the values and mission of the organization. Ask about work related pet peeves, what motivates them, best work environments, greatest accomplishments, etc. Think about what they are bringing to the table today and what they bring that will benefit the organization in the future so that you are hiring for today and for tomorrow. Ask them what they want to learn. Seriously, you want to develop your employees over time. What do they want to learn? How do they want to learn it? How do they think they learn best? What can they teach others? Wrap this up with your onboarding process and training. **Please do not forget or rush this step.** This time sets the stage for the employment relationship which equals retention.

Side Note: participants in the studies willingly granted the researchers permission to view their Facebook pages—but as we know in many cases hiring managers don't need to ask, because profiles are often public. What's more, previous research found that a third of U.S. recruiters request access to candidates' Facebook pages, and the vast majority of job seekers comply. As we know, that is changing. More than 20 U.S. states now prohibit employers from asking applicants to pull up their social media pages during an interview or to share their usernames and passwords. EU regulators go a step further, forbidding hiring managers from viewing a candidate's social media unless that person explicitly consents.

About the research: "What's on Job Seekers' Social Media Sites? A Content Analysis and Effects of Structure on Recruiter Judgments and Predictive Validity," by Liwen Zhang et al. (Journal of Applied Psychology, 2020)





2022-23

Safety & Security Grant



Application Deadline: Noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Applications are now being accepted for the 2022-2023 SDIS Safety & Security Grant Program! SDIS members are eligible to apply for a matching grant to help fund expenses related to projects that mitigate exposures to security threats.

The SDIS Safety & Security Grant Program assists members with funding of safety and security projects that lead to reduced exposure in high-level claims categories. It is our goal to eliminate or lower risk to the SDIS insurance program by supporting members' proactive approaches to preventing loss.

What is the focus of this year's program?

Due to the success of last year's program focusing on security-related exposures, we will continue that same focus for this year. We received our highest number of requests in program history, and as a result, we quickly exhausted the available funding. In order to best serve our members and expand opportunity, the structure of the grant match has been slightly changed to allow us to fund a greater number of requests. The 2022-2023 matching grant program will focus on projects that mitigate exposure to security threats. Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Fencing
- Alarms
- Securing Valuables
- Lighting
- Window Film
- Cybersecurity Equipment
- Cameras

What does "matching grant" mean?

This is a 50/50 matching grant program, which means the cost of the project will be split equally between your district and SDIS, up to a maximum of \$5,000.

What do you mean by "a maximum of \$5,000"?

If your district is planning a \$10,000 project, you can apply to receive a maximum of \$5,000 from SDIS.

Who decides if our grant request is accepted or denied?

The SDIS Safety Grant Committee will review each application to determine which are eligible to receive funding. Matching grants will be awarded to applicants that meet the eligibility requirements by order of priority and on a first come, first served basis. After the first priority level has been funded, grants will be awarded to applicants in the second priority level.

The committee will use the following priority levels in determining grant recipients:

First Priority for Funding

Expenses incurred after July 1, 2022 related to safety and security projects designed to mitigate exposure to vandalism, burglary, and/or cyber-related claims.

Second Priority for Funding

New Safety and Security Projects

- Your district may apply for any new safety or security project you choose. Examples include, but are not limited to, video surveillance equipment, security systems, enhanced parking lot lighting, and safe shop equipment. Routine maintenance to existing facilities and normal business expenses **will not** be considered.

Other Priority Information for Funding

Grant applicants who have never received an SDIS Safety & Security Grant will be given priority over those who have received one in the past. We will then give priority to applicants who did not receive an SDIS Safety & Security Grant in the 2021/2022 fiscal year (July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022)

Other Important Information

The purpose of this program is to reduce risk exposures by assisting our members to complete safety and security related projects. Your district must have insurance coverage for the risk exposure you are trying to mitigate. For example, if you do not have workers' compensation coverage through SDIS, a project that improves work safety would not be eligible.

How Can We Apply?

Fill out and return the application for your district by mail to SDAO, PO Box 12613, Salem, Oregon 97309 or email to memberservices@sdao.com by **noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2022**. You can download a copy of the application on our website at www.sdao.com/safety-security-grant-program.

Applications received after noon on Wednesday, November 16, 2022 **will not be considered**. For more information about this program, please contact Christian Boyd at cboyd@sdao.com.



Contact Information

PO Box 12613 | Salem, OR | 97309-0613

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461 ext. 102

Email: cboyd@sdao.com



Expand Your District's Budget

LOWER YOUR INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

Complete your survey by November 4th

The deadline to submit your district's survey for the Best Practices Program and earn credits on your 2023 insurance contributions is right around the corner. Log in to the SDIS Insurance Site by November 4th to record your credits!

Steps to complete the survey:

1. Visit www.sdis.org and sign in
2. Click or tap on Insurance located on the left
3. Next, click or tap on Best Practices located on the left
4. Click or tap Take Survey
5. Once in the survey, check all of the applicable boxes.
6. After you are finished, click or tap Save at the top right of the screen.

After you select Save, our underwriters have your survey. The best part is, if you complete more credits, you can come back and edit the survey all the way until the **November 4th deadline**.

Don't procrastinate! Your district can't receive any credit unless the survey is filled out and submitted (saved) on the Insurance Site. For more information about the Best Practices Program, please visit www.sdao.com/best-practices-program.

If you have any questions, please contact Jaime Keeling at jkeeling@sdao.com or 800-285-5461.

STAY

VIGILANT



By: Jens Jensen, PC Claims Manager

We are still in active wildfire season for at least another month in Oregon. At the time of this writing, some 43 active fires are currently identified. Many of these were discovered in mid-August after a long string of hot and dry weather followed by lightning storms. It is never too late to prepare your property to sustain the threat of wildfire, until it is.

A big part of property hardening (making property more fire resistant) involves creating a fire defensible space surrounding it. This means reducing combustible fuel loads that surround the property like dead weeds or grasses. Also, look to trim back or eliminate trees or shrubs that touch or overhang the building. This helps keep embers from being able to take hold on your buildings. Keeping shrubs near trees trimmed and neat also helps reduce the chance for fire to jump from plant to plant. Creating these

defensive perimeters serves two purposes. First, it will help reduce the potential for damage in the event of a wildfire. Second, it may help firefighters by giving them an area to operate from.

While protection of property is important, even more important is the safety of you and your co-workers. It is important to always keep in mind that Oregon has air quality rules in place for employees. Since wildfires are unpredictable, your best bet is to take a bit of precaution now before it is too late. Throw a couple of safety masks in all district vehicles so you won't be caught off guard in a time of emergency. This is also a good time to consider including a couple of bottles of water for emergency purposes as well.

Stay safe out there and let's hope wildfire season goes out with a small puff of smoke and not a blaze of glory.

It's Time for an Insurance Review

By: Chris Hill, Underwriting Manager

Greetings! It's that time of year again, as we begin to gear up and get ready for another insurance renewal.

Every year during this time, we at SDAO are preparing for the upcoming SDIS Property and Casualty coverage renewal, which occurs on January 1st. On or around October 1st, we will release update packets and post them to the SDIS Insurance Site. These update packets include important memos and instructions for the renewal, as well as all your property, auto and equipment schedules. Now is a great time to schedule an annual insurance review with your insurance agent of record, who will be able to download your update packet and review your policy with you.

SDIS requires all members to utilize an insurance agent for obtaining/maintaining their coverage through us. The objective of this policy is to ensure you, the SDIS member, has an insurance professional that represents your district and can act as a communication bridge between your district and us. You chose your agent because they understand your operations, what makes

your district unique, and your insurance requirements. This also makes their services invaluable to helping us meet your coverage and risk needs.

When you schedule your annual insurance review, we suggest you make a 'punch list' of items to address with your agent:

- Discuss any new property, auto, or equipment sales or acquisitions.
- Review your property, auto, and equipment schedules for accuracy. This could save your district money if, for instance, your buildings have fire and security alarms, but that is not currently indicated on your schedule, or your buildings are in a different fire protection class than what is currently indicated on your schedule.
- Discuss any potential upcoming coverage or rate changes that SDIS may be implementing for the coming renewal.
- Discuss any potential new programs or services your district intends to provide. These could have coverage implications your agent can help you understand.



- Discuss any changes your district's operations, such as contracts for major services or tools used to carry out your operations such as drones, boats, or digital systems.
- Discuss accidents or claims your district may have had over the course of the year to make sure claims have been turned in.
- Discuss any other changes happening at your district that may affect your budget. This may affect your contribution.
- Discuss your progress with the SDIS Best Practices Program.
- Review your claims history to identify areas where your agent can coordinate with our Risk Management Department for suggestions or trainings.
- Discuss any upcoming contracts in which your district may be engaging. Your agent may be able to weigh in on the coverage implications and the contract's insurance requirements.
- Discuss cybersecurity within your district. This year, cybersecurity will be an area that SDIS is examining more closely, and there may be a cybersecurity

questionnaire in the update packet that will need to be completed and returned to SDIS to help us gather more information.

Ideally, most of these punch list items should be discussed with your agent throughout the year as the issues arise. However, this time of year leading up to renewal is a great time to make sure nothing was missed and that your district, your agent, and SDIS are all on the same page for the new year.

Also, be sure to visit the SDIS Insurance Site yourself so that you know what your agent is looking at when they are making changes. This is also the tool you can use to complete your Best Practices Survey, download important documents, and upload photos of your properties. If you have never used the Insurance Site, simply visit www.sdao.com, click the 'Insurance Site' tab, then follow the page to the Insurance Site where you can 'Request Access'. Once your login is completed and we have granted you access, you will then be able to log in.

For any other questions regarding SDIS coverage or services, please contact us at underwriting@sdao.com.

Free Money? Free Equipment?

Count Me In!

By: Katherine Taylor, Return-to-Work Consultant

Having an employee injured on the job with a resulting workers' compensation claim can place districts in a stressful situation. While the primary focus is on the recovery of the employee, districts must also address operational issues with an employee out of work. There is also the added pressure of finding light work activities once the employee is released to modified work.

What actions can districts take now to reduce future stress and delays in returning an injured employee to work?

The best way to be prepared is to develop a "job bank" now, before an employee is injured. A "job bank" is a list of tasks, and or projects, that could be completed in the event an employee is placed on work restrictions. SDAO strongly recommends that all our districts identify job duties that could be performed within common work restrictions.

For example, back injuries typically necessitate lift/carry/push/pull restrictions, and depending on the severity of the injury, may require sedentary tasks. This can feel overwhelming when the injured employee's regular job involves heavy activity. If at all possible, SDAO recommends modifying the job-at-injury to allow the employee to perform the lighter tasks of their job, with the heavier tasks being routed to other staff.

Districts who have already identified lighter tasks and projects are able to quickly return an injured employee back to meaningful work while avoiding increased claims costs. They also have the added benefit of accessing the state's Employer-at-Injury Program (EAIP) benefits which can provide equipment and wage subsidies, all at no cost to the district.

Since each district's operations vary greatly, there isn't one set of job bank ideas that will fit all scenarios. The following are examples that our districts have utilized for their injured employees:



Winning Examples:

1. Park & Recreation Districts

Restrictions: Limited to 10 lbs lift, push, pull, carry, and minimize loud machinery; unable to operate large equipment, such as chipper, and no use of large saws over 18"; 4-hour maximum shift.

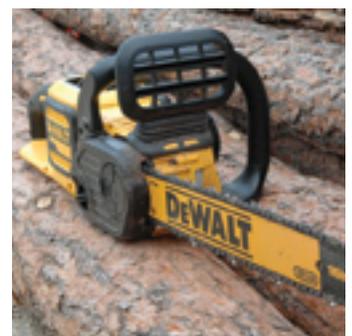
Modified Duty: Performing aspects of his regular duties with limited operation of loud machinery.

Equipment Purchase: We were able to purchase battery-operated equipment through EAIP, which had a lower dB and therefore met the loud noise restriction, **all at no cost to the district!**

Outcome: Win-Win!

The injured employee was able to return to work at his regular job, performing most of his normal duties, with modification of tasks with high dB, all while receiving full wages.

Additionally, the district received \$3,489.16 — 50% of the injured worker's light duty wages through EAIP!





2. Irrigation Districts

Restrictions: Limited to 10 lbs lift, push, pull, carry; limited walk and stand.

Modified Job: Creation of New Job — spraying noxious weeds around the district's irrigation ditches; using the line locator to determine if there is buried infrastructure and if so, marking the location.

Equipment Purchase: We were able to purchase a line locator and spray equipment through EAIP, to create a light duty job for the injured employee, **all at no cost to the district!**

Outcome: Win-Win!

The injured employee was able to return to work at a newly created modified job, receiving full wages, while the district was able to address a project.

Additionally, the district received \$7,228.30 — 50% of the light duty wages paid through EAIP!!

3. Fire Districts

Restrictions: Unable to respond to calls.

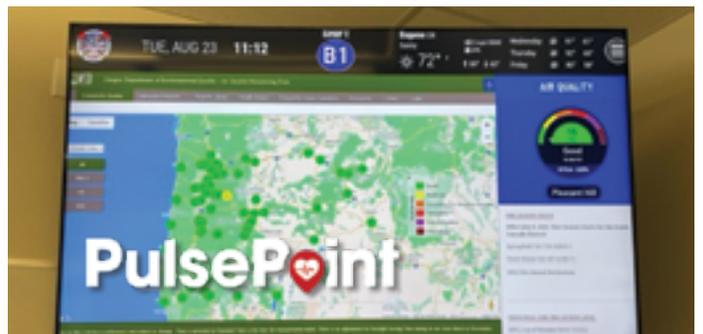
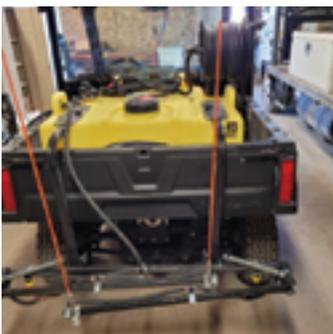
Modified Job: Creation of New Job — Implementation and set up of Pulse Point software system.

Equipment Purchase: We were able to purchase the PulsePoint software program and equipment to operate the program, such as televisions, through EAIP, to create a light duty job for the injured firefighter, **all at no cost to the district!**

Outcome: Win-Win!

The injured employee was able return to work at a newly created modified job, receiving full wages, while the district was able to implement a program to improve the district's services to their community.

Since this employee was a volunteer and the district didn't pay wages, wage subsidy did not apply. However, if this had been a career firefighter, the district would have received 50% of light duty wages.



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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RISK MANAGEMENT

Toll-Free: 800-285-5461
Email: riskmanagement@sdao.com
Fax: 503-371-4781

REPORT AN SDIS WC CLAIM

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736
Email: wc@sdao.com
Fax: 503-620-6217

REPORT AN SDIS P/C CLAIM

Toll-Free: 800-305-1736
Email: claims@sdao.com
Fax: 503-620-9817

MEMBER CALENDAR

<i>October 7</i>	Awards Program Nomination Deadline
<i>October 12</i>	Risk Management Hot Topics Conversation & Networking – <i>Coos Bay</i>
<i>October 18</i>	Cybersecurity Compliance & Frameworks Webinar
<i>October 19</i>	Building a Culture of Belonging – <i>Salem/Virtual</i>
<i>November 4</i>	SDIS Best Practices Survey Submission Deadline
<i>November 15</i>	SDIS Board of Trustees Meeting – <i>Salem</i>
<i>November 16</i>	SDIS Board of Trustees and SDAO Board of Directors Joint Meeting – <i>Salem</i>
<i>November 16</i>	SDAO Board of Directors Meeting – <i>Salem</i>
<i>November 16</i>	Risk Management Back to Basics and Current Hot Topics Training – <i>Salem/Virtual</i>
<i>December 1</i>	Registration for the SDAO Annual Conference opens

Download this newsletter online at <https://sdaoresourcelibrary.com/newsletters>