

# 2009 EMPLOYER



# RESOURCE GUIDE

PROVIDED BY  **Vision  
Action  
Network**  
*of Washington County*

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  **COMMUNITY ACTION**  
Helping people. Changing lives.

# 2008-2009 EMPLOYER RESOURCE GUIDE

*Provided by the Vision Action Network in partnership with Community Action*

The Vision Action Network recognizes that the cost of living in our communities has outpaced what many working families can reasonably afford. As a result, paychecks don't always stretch to cover basic needs, leaving families struggling to make ends meet. Personal economic hardships can impact job performance and overall well-being, as employees face challenges with child care, transportation, health care, or cope with housing and energy bills. We also know that many businesses are being impacted by current economic conditions and cutbacks may include a reduction in personnel. There are resources available that can help you and your employees during these challenging times.

**As an employer who values your workforce and cares about your employees, this guide is for you.**

*Note: Information can be accessed electronically at <http://www.visionactionnetwork.org>.*

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## ACCESSING IMPORTANT HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES INFORMATION

**It can be tough for your employees to get the help their families need.**

**211Info is here to help.**

Those who can benefit by calling 2-1-1 live and work all around us. Consider this:

- Do all of your employees have health insurance? Through **2-1-1**, uninsured low-income workers may find free and sliding scale clinics that can help them stay healthy and on the job.
- Is your company's productivity hindered by the poor reading skills of your employees? Are they able to read safety signs or written job instructions? Through **2-1-1**, employees can find adult literacy programs, GED classes, computer training, and more.
- Do challenges with child care disrupt your employees' work schedules? By calling **2-1-1**, employees can be connected to resources offering reliable and affordable child care so that they can be at work when scheduled.
- Is the cost of gas and car insurance making it tough for your employees to drive to work? Through **2-1-1**, employees can find information on alternative transportation and other creative solutions for commuting to work.
- Do you know if any of your employees are struggling with alcohol or drug use? How many may have anger management problems that could explode in the workplace? Reaching out is the first step to recovery, and the trained staff at **2-1-1** is ready to listen.

**By simply dialing three easy-to-remember numbers (2-1-1) your staff can make one call to speak with a trained, caring professional who can connect them with the resources to address a broad range of issues. Promote 2-1-1 to your employees so that they can seek information and support from a knowledgeable and confidential source.**

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The following resource guide provides quick access to a range of services that can help your employees deal with difficult issues and address barriers to success. Please share this information with your human resources department or distribute to your employees as appropriate.

**The Vision Action Network and Community Action are committed to the well-being of local families and the success of local businesses.**

## RESOURCES FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

### **ABUSE/ASSAULT**

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**\* IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 9-1-1 \***

#### **Washington County Center for Victims' Services**

The Center for Victims' Services offers assistance to survivors of crime and trauma.

**Contact: 503.846.3020**

**Web:** <http://www.co.washington.or.us/victims>

#### **Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS): Child Abuse Hotline**

Child welfare provides protective services assessment and investigation of suspected medical neglect.

**Contact: 503.681.6917**

**Web:** [http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/children/abuse/abuse\\_neglect.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/children/abuse/abuse_neglect.shtml)

#### **Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC)**

DVRC specifically serves survivors of domestic violence in Washington County. Free and bilingual services focus on prevention, intervention, and empowerment.

**Contact: 503.469.8620** (24-hour crisis line)

The Protective Orders Advocacy Program provides assistance and free legal advocacy to those seeking protective orders.

**Contact: 503.846.3080**

**Web:** <http://www.dvrc-or.org/>

#### **Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)**

SARC operates a 24 hours crisis line to provide immediate assistance with crisis counseling or information and referral. Volunteer advocates respond in person to calls from law enforcement and hospitals to provide crisis intervention and support to survivors during the forensic exam and law enforcement interviews.

**Contact: 503.640.5311** (24-hour crisis line)

**Web:** <http://www.dvrc-or.org/>

#### **Elder Abuse and Assault Protective Services (APS)**

Services are provided in response to the need for protection from harm or neglect to an aged, disabled, or blind person 18 years of age or older regardless of income. APS investigates allegations of abuse and/or neglect (including self neglect) and helps the client/victim arrange for appropriate services, and/or alternate living arrangements when necessary.

**Contact: 503.640.3489**

**Web:** <http://www.co.washington.or.us/deptmts/aging/eldabuse.htm>

### **ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

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#### **Washington County 24-Hour Crisis Line**

Washington County's Alcohol/Drug/Gambling Addiction program provides referrals to treatment, educational materials, presentations concerning addictions, and information on treatment options in the county. They also provide information on the County's contracted treatment providers.

**Contact: 503.291.9111** (24-hour crisis line)

**Web:** <http://www.co.washington.or.us/deptmts/hhs/human.htm#addiction>

#### **LifeWorks Northwest**

LifeWorks NW provides quality and culturally responsive prevention, mental health and addiction services. The Adult Mental Health Outpatient program provides counseling services tailored to meet a wide range of needs for individuals, couples and families.

**Contact: 503.640.5297** Appointments: **503.645.9010** or **888.645.1666**

**Web:** [www.lifeworksnw.org](http://www.lifeworksnw.org)

### **EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE TRAINING**

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#### **Prosperity Planner**

The Prosperity Planner is an on-line tool that helps identify what wages are needed to cover basic living expenses and what services are available to help increase earnings and achieve economic independence.

**Web:** <http://www.prosperityplanner.org/>

#### **WorkSource Oregon**

WorkSource Oregon is a statewide network that stimulates job growth by connecting businesses and workers with the resources they need to succeed. In Washington County there are WorkSource centers located in Hillsboro and Tualatin.

**Web:** <http://www.worksourceoregon.org/>

## FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES

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### Child Care

Community Action's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program helps parents and families with referrals, and provides information on how to choose quality child care in Washington County. Call Monday through Friday, 9 am-3 pm.

**Contact:** 971.223.6100 or toll free at 800.624.9516

**Web:** <http://www.communityaction4u.org/ccrr/>

### Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)

The Department of Human Services is the state's health and human services agency. DHS is the front door for food stamps, family and medical assistance. Call Monday through Friday, 8 am-5 pm.

**Web:** <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/index.shtml>

**Contact your local office:** Beaverton: 503.646.9952; Hillsboro: 503.693.4555; Tigard: 503.670.9711

## FOOD

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### Emergency Food Boxes & Supplemental Food

Information about obtaining emergency food boxes and accessing membership programs that provide supplemental food on a weekly or monthly basis is available through the Oregon Food Bank.

**Web:** [http://www.oregonfoodbank.org/ofb\\_services/metro\\_services/washington/](http://www.oregonfoodbank.org/ofb_services/metro_services/washington/)

**Contact:** 503.439.6510

### Food Stamps

Food Stamps help supplement food budgets for low-income working families and individuals, people on public assistance, seniors, and people with disabilities. Applications are available online, as well as at local DHS offices.

**Web:** <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/foodstamps/foodstamps.shtml>

**Contact your local DHS office:** Beaverton: 503.646.9952; Hillsboro: 503.693.4555; Tigard: 503.670.9711

## HEALTH CARE

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### Essential Health Clinic

The Essential Health Clinic provides medical care for urgent medical problems to people of all ages who are low-income, uninsured and have no other access to medical care. The clinic accepts walk-in patients three times a week at two locations (Hillsboro and Tigard) and provides medical services free of charge.

**Web:** <http://www.essentialhealthclinic.org>

**Contact:** 503.846.4919

### Oregon Health Plan (OHP)

The Oregon Health Plan offers health care to its members at little or no cost. Different eligibility rules and income levels apply.

**OHP web:** [http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/app\\_benefits/ohp4u.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/app_benefits/ohp4u.shtml)

### Oregon Prescription Drug Plan (OPDP)

**OPDP web:** <http://www.oregon.gov/OHPPR/OPDP/>

### Family Health Insurance Assistance Program (FHIAP) – **NOTE: FHIAP is not currently accepting applications.**

FHIAP assists Oregonians in affording private health insurance premiums.

**FHIAP web:** <http://www.oregon.gov/OPHP/FHIAP/index.shtml>

### State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

Share information about the State Children's Health Insurance Program with parents whose children aren't insured. Find out more about the SCHIP through the Oregon Health Plan.

**OHP web:** [http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/app\\_benefits/schip.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/app_benefits/schip.shtml).

### Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center

Virginia Garcia provides high quality, comprehensive and culturally appropriate primary healthcare with a special emphasis on migrant and seasonal farm workers and others with barriers to receiving health care.

**Web:** <http://www.virginiagarcia.org>

**Contact:** 503.352.8610

## HOUSING & HOMELESS SERVICES

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### Washington County Department of Housing Services

The Department of Housing Services offers rental assistance to low-income households and creates affordable housing opportunities in the community for low and moderate-income households.

**Web:** [http://www.co.washington.or.us/deptmts/hse\\_serv/serve.htm](http://www.co.washington.or.us/deptmts/hse_serv/serve.htm)

**Contact:** 503.846.4794; TTY 503.846.4793

### **Community Action Shelter Access**

Community Action operates a centralized access point that connects families seeking shelter to emergency and supportive services.

**Web:** <http://www.communityaction4u.org>

**Contact:** 503.640.3263

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## **TAX CREDITS & FINANCIAL LITERACY**

### **Tax Information for Parents**

Parents can get more information about available tax credits at the Internal Revenue website.

**Web:** <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/parents/index.html>

### **Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC)**

Promote the Federal and Oregon Earned Income Tax Credits. EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families.

**Web:** <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/parents/index.html>

### **Tax Assistance & Financial Literacy**

CASH Oregon is a community partnership that provides income-eligible individuals and families with assistance to claim valuable federal and state tax credits.

**Web:** <http://www.cashoregon.org>

**Contact:** 503.243.7765 or [CASHoregon@gmail.com](mailto:CASHoregon@gmail.com)

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## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Ways to Work**

Ways to Work provides qualified working parents, who are unable to get funds elsewhere, with loans to purchase, repair or refinance a car for work, child care and school-related transportation.

**Web:** <http://www.metfamily.org/waystowork.htm>

**Contact:** 503.232.0007, ext. 303 or [waystowork@metfamily.org](mailto:waystowork@metfamily.org)

### **Westside Transportation Alliance**

Get information about alternatives for your daily commute.

**Web:** <http://www.wta-tma.org>

**Contact:** 503.906.7691 or [wta@wta-tma.org](mailto:wta@wta-tma.org)

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## **CONNECTING WITH SERVICES**

### **211info**

2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember telephone number that helps connect people in need with the community resources available to help meet those needs.

**Web:** <http://www.211info.org>

**Contact:** Dial 2-1-1 or 503.222.5555

### **Oregon Helps**

Oregon Helps is an online eligibility estimator. Anyone is welcome to try the Oregon Helps website to find out if they qualify to get help from any of 28 different services. The service is anonymous and does not share personal information with anyone.

**Web:** <http://www.oregonhelps.org>

### **The Beehive**

The Beehive is an online resource that provides people with information and services in the areas of money, health, work, school, and housing.

**Web:** <http://www.beehivewacty.org>

### **Community Action FIND**

Community Action's Information & Referral provides a comprehensive online database of the services available to people in Washington County, and links to many useful online tools.

**Web:** [www.communityaction4u.org/FIND](http://www.communityaction4u.org/FIND)

### **Housing Connections**

Housing Connections provides an array of information to help renters find housing in the Portland region (Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties)

**Web:** [www.housingconnections.org](http://www.housingconnections.org)

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## RESOURCES AND IDEAS FOR EMPLOYERS

### **20 THINGS YOU CAN DO (PLUS 3 WAYS TO INVOLVE EMPLOYEES)**

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#### **2-1-1**

Promote 2-1-1 in your workplace. First make sure 2-1-1 works on your phone system by dialing 2-1-1 from an office phone. If it doesn't work from your location, contact your internal PBX administrator and ask that the number be unlocked on your system. It's usually a quick and simple change. Second, make 2-1-1 brochures available at your workplace, and display 2-1-1 posters in all break rooms and work areas.

**211 info website:** [www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org)

**Contact:** 503.226.3099

#### **Charitable Agencies**

Help the non-profit agencies that help your low-income workers. Consider making a financial contribution to a human service agency in your area. For a list of charitable agencies in Washington County, go to [www.igivewhereilive.net](http://www.igivewhereilive.net).

#### **Employee Emergency Fund**

For families living on the edge, one unexpected expense can be catastrophic. Consider establishing an employee emergency fund that your workers can access if a crisis should happen.

#### **Contribute to the Community Housing Fund**

Help increase the stock of affordable housing for low-income families, people with disabilities and seniors by contributing to the Washington County Community Housing Fund. The Fund is designed to become a long-term community asset that provides pre-development loans for non-profit housing development organizations.

**Web:** [www.thecommunityhousingfund.org](http://www.thecommunityhousingfund.org)

**Contact:** Kathy Andersen, 503.846.5794 or [kathy@thecommunityhousingfund.org](mailto:kathy@thecommunityhousingfund.org)

#### **Employer Assisted Housing**

Employer Assisted Housing is a benefit that can be provided by employers to their employees to assist them with their housing needs. It can be targeted to a large or small percentage of an employee population and can enhance employee performance and retention. Please call the Portland Housing Center for more information about employer assisted housing programs and services.

**Contact:** 503.282.7740 ext. 116

**Web:** [www.portlandhousingcenter.org](http://www.portlandhousingcenter.org)

#### **Family-Friendly Work Schedules & Flexibility**

Consider offering more family-friendly work schedules to allow time during the workday for health, school and social service appointments. Many social service agencies require families to wait for a call back when they request assistance. If you do not allow your employees to carry cell phones, allow flexibility for taking phone calls. It may be the only opportunity the employee has to access needed services or to receive an emergency call from their child.

#### **Financial Literacy**

Low-income people are often the target of unscrupulous financial institutions for payday and tax return loans. Consider offering pay advance programs and financial literacy classes in the workplace.

#### **Holiday Bonus and Recognitions**

Consider paying a holiday bonus or providing grocery gift certificates or script. Most major retailers accept gift cards or script that employers can purchase and issue to their employees as awards, prizes, recognitions, birthdays, or holiday bonuses, etc. Not only are the holidays an expensive time for families, but heating bills increase during the winter months placing additional stress on family budgets.

#### **Internet Access**

For employees who don't usually have access to a computer during the workday, offer free Internet access for employees during breaks or lunchtime so they can search for assistance when they need it.

#### **Prevent Hunger**

If your business is a restaurant, offer a free shift meal to all employees. Consider allowing staff to take food home. Many low-income working families are eligible for federal food assistance, such as food stamps, WIC, school meals and summer lunch programs. Provide a computer so employees can pre-screen their eligibility for food stamps and other programs through Oregon Helps. Provide a fax machine and blank food stamp applications for employee to fill out and fax directly to DHS.

**Food stamp applications:** [www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/foodstamps/foodstamps.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/foodstamps/foodstamps.shtml)

**Oregon Food Bank:** [www.oregonfoodbank.org](http://www.oregonfoodbank.org)

#### **Resource Fair**

Hold resource fairs in the workplace and invite non-profit organizations to educate employees about the services they offer. Keep information about helping agencies posted on a public bulletin board.

### **Transportation Incentive Programs**

EPA Best Workplaces for Commuters Recognition Program: [www.bwc.gov](http://www.bwc.gov)

Business Energy Tax Credits: <http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/CONS/BUS/BETC.shtml>

DEQ Employee Commute Options Program: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/NWR/ECO/eco.htm>

### **TriMet Employer Program**

Employers who pay monthly parking costs or have limited parking space at their location should consider monthly Tri-Met transit passes for their workers. Employer program information, online and telephone tools for individuals.

**Web:** <http://www.trimet.org/employers/index.htm>

**Contact:** 503.962.7670 or [employerprograms@trimet.org](mailto:employerprograms@trimet.org)

### **Zipcars**

Zipcar provides your business with 24/7 self-service access to a diverse fleet of cars.

**Zipcar:** <http://www.zipcar.com>

**Contact:** 503.328.3539 or [info@zipcar.com](mailto:info@zipcar.com)

### **Section 125 Pre-Tax Withholding**

Offer this program, which allows benefits such as medical and dental insurance co-pays, deductibles, and child care, to be paid for by withholding a specified amount from the worker's earnings before income taxes are withheld, increasing the amount of take home pay.

### **Tax Credit Incentives for Employers**

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit provides employers an incentive to hire certain target group members with barriers to employment. The Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit provides employers an incentive to hire long-term family assistance recipients. Complete information about these programs is available on the State of Oregon Employment Department web site.

**Web:** [www.oregontaxcredit.org](http://www.oregontaxcredit.org)

**Contact:** Pat Sanderlin, 503.947.1672

### **Dependent Care Tax Credits**

Oregon is one of 20 states that offer a state tax credit, up to \$2,500 per employee annually, for dependent care assistance provided to employees.

**Web:** [http://www.oregon.gov/EMPLOY/CCD/taxcredits.shtml#Dependent\\_Care\\_Tax\\_Credit](http://www.oregon.gov/EMPLOY/CCD/taxcredits.shtml#Dependent_Care_Tax_Credit)

**Web:** <http://www.worklifeoregon.org/>

**Contact:** 503.779.2546

### **Tuition Reimbursement**

Offer a tuition reimbursement plan for employees who are seeking to improve their skills or training through the Employer Workforce Training Fund (EWTF).

**Contact:** 503.478.7356 or [ndavis@worksystems.org](mailto:ndavis@worksystems.org)

**Web:** [www.worksystems.org](http://www.worksystems.org)

### **Safety Net Clinics**

Support our safety net clinics in Washington County. Your support can take many forms, either as a volunteer or through donations. For more information about how you can help, contact:

**Essential Health Clinic:** 503.846.4904 or [ehc@co.washington.or.us](mailto:ehc@co.washington.or.us).

**Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center:** 503.352.8608

### **Worksystems, Inc.**

Stay competitive through targeted training, access to qualified employees, and assistance during lay-offs and closures through Worksystems, Inc. Worksystems, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that connects job seekers with employers by funding providers of career placement and training services.

**Web:** [www.worksystems.org](http://www.worksystems.org)

**Contact:** 503.478.7300 or [info@worksystems.org](mailto:info@worksystems.org)

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## **EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT**

### **Community Volunteerism**

Offer your employees paid time to volunteer for one of the many outstanding non-profit organizations improving the quality of life in our community. Even one day a year makes a difference and instills a sense of civic involvement that can last a lifetime.

### **Community Support Drives**

Encourage employees to organize coin drives, food drives, coat drives, school supply drives, and other activities to help those in need. Connect with a local non-profit to determine where help is needed most. Many can assist in setting up a drive.

### **Employee Giving**

Arrange a brown bag lunch forum so that your employees can learn about local non-profits and the ways in which charitable giving can make good things happen in our community. Consider matching charitable contributions made by your employees. Participate in the United Way workplace giving campaign or direct employees to <http://www.igivewhereilive.net> for local giving options.

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### **Become a Catalyst for a More Collaborative Washington County**



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