

Oregon Housing and Community Services



Margaret S. Van Vliet, Director



725 Summer Street NE, Suite B, Salem OR 97301-1266
Phone: 503-986-2000 | Fax: 503-986-2020 | TTY: 503-986-2100
www.ohcs.oregon.gov

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Recently, I announced some important changes to the way Oregon Housing and Community Services Department is organized. The time has come for the agency to re-define its role in the stabilization of communities and families, and to consider new ways to prioritize its investments. We know we can't invest in every good housing development concept; nor can we realistically meet all the needs of those experiencing poverty. But we must do a better job identifying priorities in concert with local experts.

The new organizational structure is designed to help us meet today's challenge. Rather than having a large executive team, we will have a small, unified group of leaders with complementary skills and strengths in the areas of Policy/Community Engagement, Business Operations and Program Delivery. This more streamlined structure is built to add accountability and to provide staff development opportunities as we work towards new ways of doing business (more detailed charts available [here](#)).

As we all know, a strong organizational structure is not enough. A clear focus on where we want to go is critical to our success. At the very highest level, we need to work towards a vision where:

- Oregon's most vulnerable can access housing and services to be able to thrive
- OHCS is highly trusted by key business and community partners
- OHCS deploys scarce resources in a strategic fashion to maximize impact for people with limited means

We will accomplish this by:

- Setting and implementing policy in transparent ways, including stronger community engagement
- Becoming a lean, high-performing agency accountable for results
- Investing to complement the investments of others
- Having a clear risk tolerance approach that helps define rules and roles

The next important area of change is how we engage with you, our business and community partners who are vital to our work. We need to complement our understanding of trends and issues, with your on-the-ground expertise about what works best.

When I accepted the job as Director of Oregon Housing and Community Services in October, I committed to transforming the housing and anti-poverty delivery system to maximize impact on the ground, and to align the work of the agency towards statewide policy priorities. A new organizational structure is but the first step in meeting that commitment. Lasting transformation will require your engagement and collaboration. I ask for your assistance in the weeks and months ahead.

With best regards to our many wonderful and committed partners,

Margaret S. Van Vliet
Director