

II. KEY MEASURE ANALYSIS

Agency Mission: To serve and protect Oregon’s consumers and workers while supporting a positive business climate in the state.

KPM #2	WAGE RECOVERY FOR INJURED WORKERS Percentage difference in wage recovery for workers who use return-to-work programs versus workers who do not.	Measure since: 1999
Goal	DCBS Goal #1: Protect consumers and workers in Oregon.	
Oregon Context	Oregon Benchmark #9: Oregon’s national rank in the cost of doing business.	
Data source	Information Management Division, Research & Analysis Section using Employment Department and WCD data files.	
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1. OUR STRATEGY

Restore injured workers physically and economically to a self-sufficient status in an expeditious manner and to the greatest extent possible.

2. ABOUT THE TARGETS

This measure comprises data from three return-to-work programs: the Vocational Assistance Program, the Preferred Worker Program, and the Employer-at-Injury Program. The data represents wages attained by injured workers 13 quarters after the date of injury who were using these program benefits compared to those who do not use any of these benefits. A higher number is desired because that would indicate a better wage recovery for workers using the return-to-work programs compared with those who do not. To set targets, we consider current return-to-work activities and legislative and program activities during the years of injury and when the worker entered the return-to-work program because the data represents wages attained by eligible injured workers 13 quarters after the date of injury.

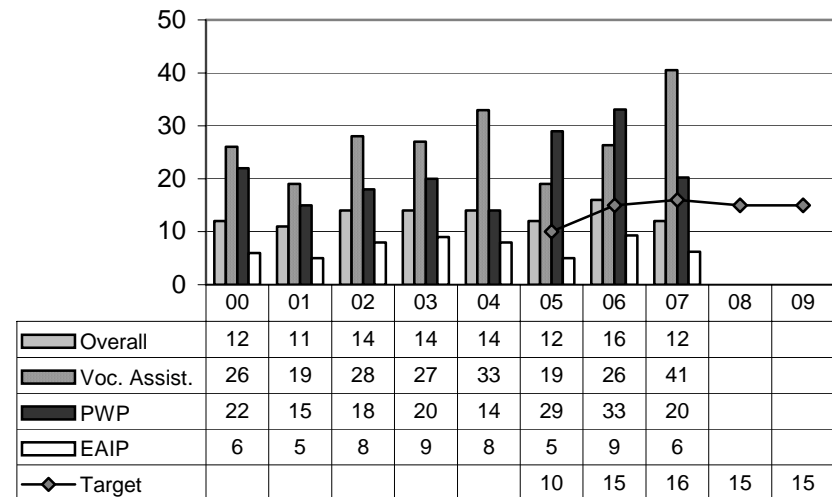
3. HOW WE ARE DOING

Data consistently shows that injured workers who use return-to-work programs maintain wages at a higher rate than workers who do not use these programs. In 2006, there was a 16 percentage-point difference in wage recovery for eligible workers using the return-to-work programs versus those who did not, the highest difference in 10 years. Much of that was driven by the high use of the Preferred Worker Program, which saw a record-high 33 percentage-point wage difference in 2006. The overall percentage point difference dropped back to 12 in 2007.

4. HOW WE COMPARE

Oregon’s return-to-work programs are nationally recognized and unique to Oregon. Many other jurisdictions have sought to introduce these programs in their jurisdictions due to the successes in Oregon.

Wage Recovery for Injured Workers



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5. FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS

Influences of the Oregon economy or changes in business practices may impact this measure by reducing or increasing opportunities for job openings. Another factor that affects results is changes in laws, rules, or WCD initiatives during the various times employees and employers trigger the use of these programs. Finally, the number of participants in these programs can skew the results of this measure. For example, participation in the Employer-At-Injury Program is much higher than the other two programs, so its low wage differential has a significant impact on the overall measure.

6. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

WCD will continue to provide education and outreach that promotes use of the reemployment assistance programs, and dispute resolution services for vocational assistance matters. In addition, WCD will continue efforts to better serve injured workers through increased partnerships with vocational providers.

7. ABOUT THE DATA

To establish credible return-to-work wage results, it is necessary to observe over time the injured workers' wage after they return to employment. The data represents wages attained by eligible injured workers 13 quarters after the date of injury who were using vocational assistance, Preferred Worker, or Employer-at-Injury program benefits compared to those who do not use any of these benefits. This data is an annual summary of the most recent Oregon fiscal year of employment statistics comparing workers who participated in the return-to-work programs to those who did not. Data for this measure is reported each fiscal year (July 1–June 30).