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News from the Secretary of State

May 19 Primary Election

On May 19th, Oregon held a primary election in the midst of a global pandemic. Over 1.3 million ballots were cast, which is a record number for any primary! We were glad to see so many Oregonians participating in democracy. Because Oregon has vote by mail, we were able to hold an election that looked much like any other.



While some voters chose to drop off their ballots at official drop boxes like usual, others found that the new prepaid return envelopes made it even easier to participate without leaving their homes. The results are now officially certified and posted on our website [here](#).

Audits Division

Government Waste Hotline

Did you know that Oregon has a Government Waste Hotline? First established by the legislature in

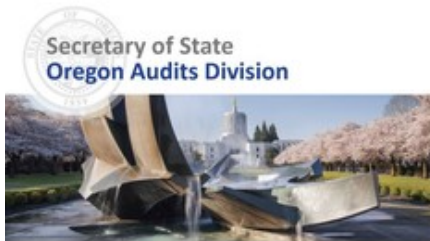


1995, the hotline provides a forum for Oregonians to report government fraud, waste, and



abuse. It's staffed 24 hours a day by operators who report complaints and tips to state auditors for further review. To date, the hotline has identified approximately \$16 million in questionable expenditures. On May 27, the Audits Division released its annual hotline summary report. In 2019, the hotline received 272 reports, 44 of which required further investigation, 27 of which pertained to the business practices and financial management of state agencies, and 9 of which alleged fraud or theft. The hotline can be reached at 800-336-8218, and concerns can be reported online at fraud.oregon.gov. Tips are still the most consistent way we detect fraud and I'm glad that Oregonians continue to use the hotline, thereby helping us to keep government accountable. You can read the full report [here](#).

Child Care Safety



The federal government recently adopted new background check requirements for state-approved child care providers and disqualified individuals with certain criminal backgrounds, such as registered sex offenders, from serving as providers.

In Oregon, the Department of Education and the Department of Human Services carry out these background checks. On June 3, the Audits Division released a report explaining that, because these agencies have different disqualification standards and don't share relevant information with each other, and because the systems they consult make it difficult to match applicants with individuals accused of child abuse and neglect, ODE and DHS had approved child care providers with histories of concerning criminal convictions and allegations, including for child abuse and neglect. The audit also found that the state's public [sex offender registry](#), which is maintained by the Oregon State Police, includes some inaccurate information, excludes some sex offenders and pertinent information, and faces alarming notification delays. While the vast majority of state-approved child care providers do not have criminal convictions, the audit made specific recommendations for how the agencies can address these concerns, including requiring such background checks to be performed by one agency, requiring

requiring such background checks to be performed by one agency, requiring more coordination between agencies, and requiring the agencies to standardize their qualifications and procedures. You can read the full report [here](#).

Small Business

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [Small Business Advocates](#) within the Secretary



of State's office continue to provide guidance and support for small businesses trying to understand new, fluctuating regulations. Here are just a few highlights for small businesses:

Phased Reopening – Businesses resuming operations can contact their county health authorities for specific health and safety requirements, which vary by industry. Information is available online [here](#).

New Operating Models – Need help developing a post-pandemic business model? Contact your local [Small Business Development Center](#) for help with SBA loan applications and to set you up for success.

Secure Communications and Scam Awareness – Scammers love the pandemic. Never send personal, confidential information by email. This includes social security numbers and credit card numbers. Check out our [Business Alerts](#) page for information on the latest scams.

Small Business Navigator – Business Oregon keeps updated information on federal, state, and local financial resources for small businesses, along with tips on getting PPE, online [here](#).

Your Small Business Advocates are here to provide free, confidential help with your questions and concerns about state and local government. Contact the team by email at business.sos@oregon.gov, by phone at 1-844-469-5512, or by filling out the online form [here](#).

Additionally, the Reopen Oregon Business Survey is ready for use! This voluntary survey is meant for businesses to identify that they are open, provide details about their hours of operation, customer and employee

requirements (such as use of facial coverings), and to describe what services they provide. The information entered will automatically appear in an interactive map that allows the public to search a business by name or address. You can access the survey [here](#). To search for information about other businesses, click [here](#).

Census Assistance Centers

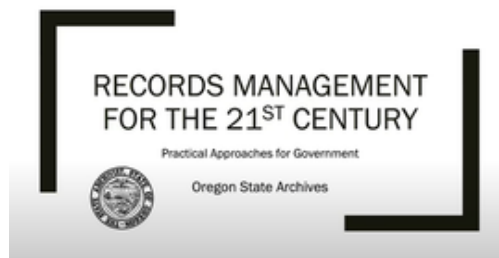
In previous newsletters, our office explained why participation in the 2020 Census is so important, from determining how much money Oregon will receive from



the federal government for schools and hospitals to determining how many congressional representatives Oregon will have and where their districts will be located. If you still haven't completed the census, I once again urge you to do so now. You should have received a paper copy in the mail but, if for some reason you did not, you can complete the census online [here](#). If for any reason you need help filling out the census, there is at least one Census Assistance Center in each county, where you can obtain culturally specific support and assistance in 44 different languages. You can find your local Census Assistance Center [here](#).

Going the Extra Mile

It's been a few months since we last highlighted the work of a particular employee, but that doesn't mean the Secretary of State's office has stopped going the extra mile for Oregonians. This month, I want to



acknowledge Kelsey Quinn from the Archives Division. Kelsey recently created a new training video for public records basics—the first of many new training modules that the Division plans on creating over the next year that will give public employees new options to complete various training courses at their convenience. Kelsey managed to do a great job recording her

video despite a less-than perfect recording studio, frequent interruptions from a friendly dog, noise from workers laying concrete outside, and having to pull a quilt over her head for a sound baffle. You can watch the video [here](#). Kelsey's dedication is representative of so many SOS employees, and it's one of the many reasons why it's such an honor to serve as your Secretary of State.

Sincerely



Bev Clarno

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