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Oregon News

[Washington governor lets eviction moratorium expire on Sunday](#)

OPB

After more than 18 months of pandemic-driven eviction limits, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said he will allow the latest version of Washington's eviction moratorium to expire on Sunday.

That move will open the door for an influx of new eviction cases and test key tenant protections for the first time since the pandemic upended the legal process last year. "We have to have some end to the moratorium. You can't have an economy ultimately where just nobody pays rent," Inslee said at a press conference, the Seattle Times reported. Soon after the coronavirus hit, Inslee used his emergency powers to halt most evictions. This fall, Inslee loosened the rules. He replaced the moratorium with a "bridge" proclamation that still stopped some evictions for nonpayment of rent in certain parts of the state but allowed evictions for other reasons.

Oregon's eviction moratorium ended June 30, 2021,

The expiration of that policy on Sunday will mean landlords can seek more evictions of tenants who fell behind on rent during the pandemic, provided owners go through newly required steps such as offering the tenant a payment plan.

Most evictions will still be halted in Seattle, Burien and Kenmore, where local lawmakers have passed their own eviction moratoriums to last through early 2022.

[Unions file complaints against Oregon after news outlets received vaccine info](#)

KOIN

Five state employee unions filed complaints Wednesday against Oregon's Department of Administrative Services Labor Relations Unit, saying the state violated the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act when it disclosed individuals' vaccination statuses to two news outlets.

The unions say the information was released to The Oregonian and The Statesman Journal on or around Oct. 18, 2021 and included private medical information of more than 43,000 executive branch employees, including more than 31,000 employees represented by the unions that filed the complaints.

The unions are asking the state to pay them each a civil penalty of \$1,000 for violating the agreement and say the state should provide employees with any financial assistance needed if their personal information is disclosed and results in identity theft.

They are also asking the state for a full apology for "its broken promises" and to ensure that no additional data breaches occurred or will occur in the future.

[Oregonians are quitting their jobs in droves, often with nothing new lined up](#)

The Oregonian

Take this job and...well, you know.

Approximately 58,000 Oregonians handed in their notice in August, according to federal data, up 18% in a single month and near an all-time high. Three times more Oregonians quit

their jobs that month than were fired or laid off, double the average ratio over the past decade.

A similar trend is playing out in national data, a phenomenon sometimes called “The Great Resignation,” although the nationwide increase in quitting didn’t happen as abruptly as in Oregon.

The wave of worker departures exacerbating the tight hiring market that has been squeezing employers across the state since spring. Businesses who were struggling to hire are now also contending with their current employees walking out the door.

Many of Oregon’s quitters are leaving for other jobs, but state data for September shows that more than 11,000 of them weren’t. They weren’t retiring, either, or taking time off to stay home with the kids.

[Newberg school leaders sue critics under Oregon ‘doxxing’ law](#)

KOIN

The four-person conservative majority on the Newberg school board is wading into a legal fight with four residents of the Chehalem Valley, seeking compensation for online incidents they claim involved the illegal sharing of private information.

Dave Brown, Brian Shannon, Trevor DeHart and Renee Powell filed a joint complaint in Yamhill County Circuit Court on Oct. 18, aimed at Yamhill County residents Debbie Tofte, Katherine Barnett, AJ Schwanz and Tamara Brookfield. The school board members are represented by Daniel Thenell of the Portland-based Thenell Law Group.

The four members are seeking a total of \$40,000 in financial relief and allege violations of Oregon House Bill 3047, which was passed in June and applies to the disclosing of private information in a practice commonly referred to as “doxxing.”

All the disclosures alleged to have violated the law were posted to Facebook, according to a copy of the complaint obtained by this newspaper.

Thenell cited various Facebook posts in the complaint: Schwanz shared that Brown is employed by the Canby School District; Barnett shared information about Powell’s art being removed from the tasting room at The Potter’s Vineyard in Newberg; Tofte shared information about DeHart’s job at Lam Research; and Brookfield posted contact information for Shannon’s employer, Selectron Technologies.

With the unique exception of the location of Powell’s art, all of the information shared by the defendants is publicly available on the social media pages or campaign websites of the board members or is easily searchable through public records. Whether the sharing of such information falls under the relatively new doxxing law remains to be seen, although the language of HB 3047 is broad.

[Timber and conservation groups reach deal to update forest management rules for 10 million acres of private land](#)

The Oregonian

After decades of controversy and a year of intensive negotiations, conservation and timber groups reached a deal early Saturday to update rules governing timber harvests and forest management on 10 million acres of private land throughout Oregon.

The Private Forest Accord, which was announced Saturday by Gov. Kate Brown, proposes a variety of new protections for sensitive and endangered species and would provide more regulatory and legal certainty for timber companies and small woodland owners regarding logging on their lands

LOGGING ON THEIR LANDS.

The deal still needs to be codified in new legislation, and the state plans to use it as the basis to propose a federally supervised habitat conservation plan. Such a plan, if approved by NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, would protect forestland owners from lawsuits under the Endangered Species Act in exchange for hard conservation commitments on their land.

Those commitments would include wider no-cut buffers for fish-bearing streams; new buffers for streams that were previously unprotected; new rules governing logging on steep slopes to minimize erosion and protect habitat, improvements to logging and forest roads; new minimum harvest standards for small forestland owners; compensation for small forest landowners who are impacted by the rules; and new protections for beavers, among other things.

[Deal sets course for overhaul of private forest management in Oregon](#)

OPB

Timber and environmental groups have reached an agreement that sets Oregon on a course to overhaul management of 10 million acres of private forestlands in the state. The deal, announced Saturday by Gov. Kate Brown's office, concludes more than a year of negotiations between often at-odds sides to develop a plan to boost protections for vulnerable fish and wildlife while shielding the timber industry's ability to log.

Friday was the deadline for both sides to either reach consensus, abandon the process or move the deadline. Negotiators worked through the day Friday and wrapped up business shortly after 1 a.m. Saturday. Brown and her staff helped push the negotiations to completion.

Representatives from the timber industry and environmental groups were charged with setting terms to pursue a statewide habitat conservation plan to safeguard fish, wildlife and water quality. A habitat conservation plan, or HCP, is a tool that allows practices like logging or irrigation to continue while minimizing damage to wildlife habitat.

Saturday's deal sets in motion what could be a lengthy, possibly yearslong process to craft, approve and adopt an HCP into law and begin implementation.

"There's no doubt that there's gonna be challenges ahead," said Sean Stevens, executive director of the conservation group Oregon Wild. "But I do think that this agreement provides a different sort of foundation than we've ever had before for tackling those challenges ahead."

The next step will be to introduce a bill in the Oregon Legislature to make significant changes to the Forest Practices Act to protect riverbanks and streamsides, improve forest roads and allow for adaptive management of private forests. The state will then pursue an HCP, which will require a rulemaking process overseen by the Oregon Board of Forestry (which just approved a new state forester). After that, state leaders can pitch the plan to federal regulators.

Speaking on behalf of the timber coalition, Adrian Miller with the Florida-based forest products company Rayonier said Saturday's agreement gives timber operators a sense of security going forward.

"I think we're all really proud to be part of a new era of forestry in Oregon," Miller said.

[Agreement overhauls private forest management in Oregon](#)

Register Guard (AP News)

An agreement has been reached between timber and environmental groups to overhaul management of 10 million acres of private forestlands in Oregon.

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"Today's historic agreement is a perfect example of the Oregon Way — coming together at the table to find common ground, to the mutual benefit of us all," Brown said in a statement. Jim James with the Oregon Small Woodlands Association similarly praised the compromise.

Environmental groups sought strict limits on spraying of aerial pesticides and improved protection for forest waters. Meanwhile, the timber industry sought compensation for private landowners when state regulations limited their ability to log.

Brown instead pushed for the two sides to negotiate.

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[Number of Oregon children in foster care drops steeply](#)

AP News

The number of Oregon children in foster care has fallen nearly 20% since January 2020, the biggest prolonged decline on record.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reports the state had the fewest children in state care at the end of September — just 5,552 — since at least 2006, the earliest year for which the state human services agency has data.

That is down from 9,745 at the start of 2006 and from a more recent 2018 peak of nearly 7,900.

Child abuse reports assigned to child protective services went up modestly in the spring and again in September as kids returned to in-person schooling, and some child advocates say they have noticed an uptick this fall in the state removing children from their homes. But Oregon's deputy director of child welfare practice and programming Lacey Andresen said the state did not dramatically reduce removals of children from their homes during the pandemic, nor accelerate family separations once in-person schooling and other reopenings occurred.

[Oregon's vaccine mandate? Some employers granted exemptions to every worker who asked](#)

La Grande Observer

Thousands of Oregon health care employees, K-12 educators and state workers who were told they must get fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Oct. 18 or risk losing their jobs found an easy way out: They applied for religious or medical exceptions.

While some employers rigorously scrutinized these requests and accepted only a smaller number they determined to be sincere, many other employers — especially in rural, vaccine-reluctant parts of the state — gave the nod to every employee who asked for one.

That includes school districts in Prineville, Roseburg, Medford, Grants Pass, Klamath County

that includes school districts in Prineville, Roseburg, Medford, Grants Pass, Multnomah County and Ontario, where 21% to 26% of staff applied for exceptions to the vaccine mandate and 100% of them were approved.

[Oregon Lawmakers Warn: Drought Has Cut the Salmon Haul in Half](#)

Willamette Week

Much of Oregon's congressional delegation is asking the federal government to declare the effects of three consecutive years of drought a disaster for Chinook salmon fishing.

The lawmakers, led by U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, asked Oct. 21 that the U.S. Department of Commerce approve Gov. Kate Brown's request that the feds greenlight a "catastrophic regional fishery disaster declaration" for commercial salmon fishers.

The letter, signed by U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden and U.S. Reps. Suzanne Bonamici, Peter DeFazio and Kurt Schrader, warns that drought in 2018, 2019 and 2020 has reduced the scale of salmon runs.

[OREGON DELEGATION URGES FISHERY DISASTER DECLARATION](#)

KQEN

Five members of Oregon's congressional delegation are urging the U.S. Department of Commerce to grant a catastrophic regional fishery disaster declaration for the State of Oregon, after three consecutive years of drought and changing ocean conditions that have severely harmed salmon populations in the Pacific Northwest.

The group includes Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, and Representatives Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader and Suzanne Bonamici.

A letter to Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo said, "The value of salmon to Oregon cannot be overstated. In addition to the economic activity generated by this industry, salmon are an important part of the cultural heritage of Pacific Northwest tribes, generate recreational activity, and are a treasured natural resource across the state". The letter said that the challenging impacts of climate change, increased drought, and changing ocean conditions complicate the recovery of salmon populations in the Pacific Northwest.

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