

Policy on Providing Services to Farmworkers
and
Policy Implementation Measures
Oregon Housing and Community Services Department

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The Oregon Housing and Community Services Department's intent in establishing this "Policy on Providing Services to Farmworkers" is to create an on-going, collaborative, culturally sensitive service delivery system that assists farmworkers to meet emergency needs, to stabilize their lives, and to move toward self-reliance. The policy is necessary because farmworkers have become a substantial, permanent component of Oregon's low-income population who often experience difficulty accessing services available for low-income people because of cultural barriers.

Background and Need for this Policy:

Implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and major shifts in Oregon's economy are primary factors in the dramatic growth of the State's farmworker population. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) resulted in substantial numbers of farmworkers and farmworker families applying for Specialized Agricultural Worker status so they could remain in Oregon. An additional major motivating factor to stay in Oregon was the concern that if farmworkers left the country the processing of their permanent resident status applications would be jeopardized. Deterioration of economic systems in Mexico and Central America and the resulting lack of work in those countries also caused farmworker families to remain in the State. Growth in Oregon's migrant and seasonal farmworker population has occurred at the same time that the State's economy has undergone major changes. While traditional timber, wood products, and fishing industries have slumped, the State's service industries have experienced rapid growth. Members of farmworker families are accepting the minimum wage positions associated with this area of expanding employment.

The 1980 census counted 14,276 farmworkers in the State. Data from the 1990 census on Oregon's farmworkers indicates that this population more than doubled and now stands at 32,420. Data from other sources indicates a much greater number of farmworkers in Oregon than were identified by the census. Portland State University's Center for Population Research and Census March 1989 study, "How Many Farmworkers in Oregon?", estimated a monthly farmworker population of 43,579. This and other population counts focus on farmworkers and do not include farmworker family members. According to data gathered by the Northwest Regional Primary Care Association in 1989, there are approximately 150,000 farmworkers and family members in Oregon, year around.

Barbara Roberts
Governor



The realization that farmworker population growth in Oregon has reached crisis proportions has motivated many of these studies. At the same time that the Portland State study was released (March, 1989), the crisis had impacted the State's emergency services network. During March, April, and May of 1989, farmworker in-migration added to populations who had remained in the state because of IRCA concerns and populations who were "settling out" (locating in Oregon and transitioning from migrant to seasonal farmworker status), forcing state and local governments to set up temporary camps, establish emergency shelters, and create emergency feeding operations for migrants.

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In the four years that have passed since the state and local entities recognized this dramatic farmworker population increase, strategies for meeting emergency needs of farmworkers have been the main focus of state and local activities. While emergency needs are being addressed, efforts to develop long-term solutions have been completed in a haphazard manner by individual agencies serving farmworkers. Formal interagency coordination to meet long-term farmworker needs must be improved.

Policy Statement:

The Oregon Housing and Community Services Department's Policy of Providing Services to Oregon Farmworkers is:

A portion of the department's anti-poverty program funds shall be used to meet the special needs of farmworkers and shall be distributed to the Department's Lead Agencies, based on the farmworker population in each lead agency's service area. Lead Agencies shall be responsible for developing coordinated service delivery networks to serve farmworkers in their areas. Lead Agencies shall receive training and technical assistance in carrying out that responsibility from an organization selected by the Department on the basis of its qualifications.

The guiding principles used in implementing this policy will include:

1. The resulting service delivery system must provide the most effective delivery of services to the low-income farmworker population on a state-wide basis given the level of resources available for financing.
2. Local service delivery systems will be designed using interagency linkages and collaborative efforts to ensure that limited resources are used to serve as many clients as possible.
3. Local planning processes used to develop services will involve farmworker populations and representatives of those populations from the respective service areas.

Barbara Roberts
Governor



4. Agencies receiving funds to operate programs serving farmworkers will account for how funds have been used and how populations have been served through regular reports on program operations. Long-term (3 to 5 year) strategic plans will be prepared on how the needs of the migrant and seasonal farmworker population are to be met in their service areas.

Policy Implementation Structure:

This model will continue to utilize Community Action Agencies (CAA) as local Lead Agencies in their respective geographic jurisdictions. Where no CAA exists, the Department shall designate a Lead Agency. Local Lead Agencies will be responsible for conducting a planning process to meet the needs of low-income farmworkers. That process shall fully integrate the Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC) into the anti-poverty delivery system.

Lead Agencies will use these plans to allocate farmworker anti-poverty resources and outline strategies designed to improve the living conditions of farmworkers. All plans must be approved by the Department prior to their implementation. The Department will be assisted by its Farmworker Advisory Committee in its review and evaluation of programs.

Our expectation is that Lead Agencies will use such mechanisms as community meetings, community surveys, and public hearings to actively involve farmworkers along with other low-income community members. Lead Agencies will be expected to capture information on levels of service provided to farmworkers and the outcomes resulting from services provided. That information will be used to evaluate program effectiveness in such areas as (but not limited to) improvements in housing, increases in employment income, access to health care, meeting nutritional needs, reducing language barriers, provision of child care, and access to legal services.

This policy recognizes the unique role that OHDC plays in both the planning and the delivery of services to farmworkers. In areas where OHDC provides services to farmworkers, OHDC will be expected to join local Lead Agencies in the development of farmworker plans. The Department expects that Lead Agencies will integrate OHDC into the planning process. The goal is an effective partnership between Lead Agencies and OHDC.

At its option, OHDC may participate in the development of farmworker plans in areas where it does not provide farmworker services.

Contracting and Reporting:

The Department will continue to contract with Lead Agencies for service administration. Lead Agencies will subcontract with other service providers as outlined in their respective local plans. When OHDC is designated to receive funds for provision of services to farmworkers, OHDC

will continue to contract directly with the Department for service delivery. Such contracts shall directly reflect the policy intent and other such directives including funding amounts contained in the local plans.

Lead Agencies should report their results and program findings to the Department as specified by contract. It is the Department's expectation that all such reports will be available to the public for purposes of accountability. All agencies, including OHDC, receiving funds from the Department shall coordinate services with and report through Lead Agencies. This information is vital to the Department's efforts to enhance the farmworker service delivery system.

Resource Allocation:

To ensure that resources are available to meet farmworker population needs, the Department is revising its allocation formulas. Ten percent of the Department's anti-poverty funds will be allocated based on the percentage of the farmworker population in each agency's service area. This change in allocation procedures will augment resources available to assist farmworkers in areas with concentrations of that population. Ten percent shall serve as a minimum level of services for farmworkers, not a maximum.

The Department will allocate these funds to Lead Agencies. Use of these funds will be determined by the local planning processes. Absent compelling justification, OHDC will continue to receive funding for service delivery for homeless and energy programs in those communities where it presently is providing such services to farmworkers. OHDC must participate in the local planning process to receive funding and will be expected to compete with other service providers to receive the benefits of the higher funding levels outlined in this policy.

Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funding will continue to be a minimum of \$100,000 while other funds will be subject to local plans. Lead Agency plans must be approved by the Department prior to the disbursement of any funds.

Technical Assistance:

The Department will allocate \$_____ to enhance the farmworker service delivery system on a regional and local level. Local Lead Agencies that identify weakness in service delivery through their plans can apply to the Department for technical assistance grants. The Department will ensure a fair distribution of these funds with the assistance to be contracted on a competitive basis.

The Department strongly believes that this Policy and proposed model for addressing the needs of Oregon's farmworkers and their families will result in a more effective delivery of services, a more cost-effective service delivery system, and a greater degree of accountability regarding levels of service provided for farmworkers as well as the results of those services. Department staff will closely monitor the new system's operation to evaluate the extent to which these expectations are realized. Monitoring will include review of client and program files, client interviews, and on-site reviews of program operations.

Farmworker Definition and Program Eligibility

For the purpose of Housing and Community Services Department (HCS) programs, farmworker or farm labor is defined as a person working in connection with cultivating the soil, raising or harvesting any agriculture or aquaculture commodity; or in catching, netting, handling, planting, drying, packing, grading, storing, or preserving in its unmanufactured state any agriculture or aquaculture commodity; or delivering to storage, market, or a carrier for transportation to market or to processing any agricultural or aquacultural commodity.

Funds allocated by HCS to assist farmworker populations are provided specifically for programs designed to benefit farmworker clients. Eligibility for services are dictated by specific program guidelines.

At a minimum, program beneficiaries (husband or wife, parent(s) with children, handicapped individual, or non-dependent individual over 18 years of age) must have earned at least 50% of their income or worked 50% of their time in agriculture.

DATE: November 3, 1993

TO: Bill Thomas, Director
Department of Social Services
Community Action Program Office

FROM: Gustavo Wilson, Administrator
Housing and Community Services Department

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**RE: Impact of Farmworker Policy Implementation in Current and Future
Anti-poverty Fund Allocations**

A. Current Allocations

When it became apparent that discussions regarding implementation of the Department's Farmworker Policy would not be completed by the time that the 1993-95 Omnibus Contracts became operative, CAA's were instructed by the Division to develop workplans for the Contract using the entire allocation available for their anti-poverty programs, including funds for farmworker services. The Division indicated that CAA's that would be impacted would be "held harmless" in the first year of the new contract from any reallocation of funds as a result of OHDC's services to farmworkers. The Division stated that it would provide FY 93-94 funding to OHDC when Farmworker Policy discussions were completed.

Those discussions now are complete and the Division is allocating FY 93-94 funds to OHDC as follows:

- CSBG - \$100,000 (\$50,000 from 90% pass-through and \$50,000 from 5% discretionary; contract period July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994; funds can be used for farmworker projects state-wide).
- Weatherization - \$104,721 (\$32,339 from LIEAP, \$33,382 from DOE, \$37,500 from PVE and \$1500 in T/TA funds; contract period July 1, 1993 through December 31, 1993 for LIEAP; July 1, 1993 through March 31, 1994 for DOE; and, July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994 for PVE; funds can be used for farmworker weatherization activities and energy education in Marion County)
- Homeless - \$58,874 (EHA Discretionary is the funding source; contract period July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994; funds can be used for homeless assistance to farmworkers in Multnomah, Jackson, Umatilla, Marion, Morrow, Klamath, Malheur and Washington Counties).

The Division also is providing \$35,000 in FY 93-94 5% CSBG Discretionary Funds to two CAAs that receive floor allocations and have substantial farmworker populations in their service areas.

Elaine Roberts
Governor



B. Future Anti-poverty Allocations: FY 94-95

The Division plans to allocate future funding to OHDC as follows:

- CSBG - OHDC will continue to receive \$100,000 in FY 94-95 and subsequent fiscal years. The Division will consider funding the entire amount out of 90% pass-through dollars at some point in time. This issue will be discussed with CADO before any action is taken. Funds will continue to be used for farmworker projects in any area of the state.

- Weatherization - Beginning in FY 94-95 OHDC will be expected to participate in Mid-Willamette's local planning process in order to receive farmworker weatherization funds for Marion County. OHDC may access farmworker weatherization funds in other areas of the State by participating in local planning processes coordinated by various lead agencies.

- Homeless - Through lead agency coordinated local planning processes, OHDC will be able to continue providing homeless assistance services in Multnomah, Jackson, Umatilla, Morrow, Marion, Klamath, Malheur and Washington Counties. The amount that OHDC expends in each area initially will be based on farmworker allocations for each service area. For 1994-95 HCS will assist with the General funds allocation, the Federal funds since they are allocated on a yearly basis will be reduced from the affected agencies.

The Division will continue to provide augmented CSBG allocations to the two floor-funded CAA's that have large farmworker populations in their service areas. The amount of those allocations will depend on the size of the population. The Division will consider, in future funding cycles, the possibility of some or all those allocations being funded out of 90% pass-through funds.