



# Director's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Earlier this afternoon the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety released its recommended 2011-13 budget for the Oregon Youth Authority. This budget calls for reducing OYA's close-custody bed capacity from the current 900 beds to 750 beds.

This is the next step in the process of finalizing OYA's 2011-13 budget. The full Ways and Means Committee, the Oregon Senate and House, and the Governor all will have to approve the budget before it is final.

We are immensely grateful during these difficult economic times that, over the course of the past few months, the Legislature has been able to find sufficient funding to restore 275 close-custody beds from the Governor's original budget. These beds, along with the addition of 103 community beds recommended by OYA and supported by the Governor and Legislature, will help OYA continue to provide reformation services to youth offenders while minimizing the potential negative impact on public safety.

Unfortunately, this budget brings with it the sad news that OYA must eliminate 119 positions and relocate seven other positions.

In anticipation of some level of close-custody capacity cut, OYA's Cabinet has been developing a range of reduction options. Now that we know the number of close-custody beds being closed, we can begin to move forward with specific actions. The following table shows where bed capacity and staffing levels at our facilities will be affected.

| Location         | Capacity as of July 1, 2011 | Capacity as of Oct. 1, 2011      | Positions as of July 1, 2011 | Positions as of Oct. 1, 2011* |
|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Hillcrest YCF    | 204                         | 154                              | 203                          | 164                           |
| MacLaren YCF     | 246                         | 186                              | 260                          | 204                           |
| Oak Creek YCF    | 75                          | 60                               | 81                           | 72                            |
| Young Women's TF | 25                          | Included in Oak Creek's capacity | 18                           | 3                             |

*\*This is the anticipated number of positions at these facilities, but the exact number of positions could shift slightly based on operational and organizational changes.*

As you can see, we will be downsizing and reorganizing operations at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility, MacLaren YCF, Oak Creek YCF, and the Young Women's Transition Facility. However, the layoff process is a statewide process. Although the focus of the reductions is in four facilities, it is important to remember that affected staff could choose to move into a position in another unit or facility. The layoff and bumping process has the potential to impact staff at all of our facilities.

In addition, although the budget released today reduces 150 beds from our current capacity of 900, that will not mean we will release 150 youth. OYA's close-custody population recently has been running below capacity, and currently is at about 800. This is part of the natural ebb and flow we see at our facilities. A few months ago, for example, we were over capacity.

## **Layoff process and timeline**

OYA's Human Resources and Payroll staff have begun holding informational sessions at each facility to provide general information about how a layoff process would work within the agency. For those of you who haven't yet had the opportunity to attend one of these meetings, here is a brief summary of what you can expect.

The process will begin with the distribution of official service credit lists June 27, 2011. Those lists will be frozen for 90 days while the layoff process takes place. The Human Resources Office will begin issuing written layoff notices shortly after the service credit lists are released.

The staffing reduction process will involve a cascading series of job changes statewide as those with more service credits 'bump' into positions held by less-senior staff or exercise other options. As those who are bumped then move into other positions, there will be a sequential process that will occur as a series of job-change 'waves.'

To help mitigate the impacts of these changes, everyone will have approximately 60 days from the date a layoff notice is received until the actual job change or layoff occurs. Rather than moving staff every few weeks, the layoff process will be a 'virtual,' paper-only process for each person until that individual's options have been exhausted.

## **Budget reduction principles**

OYA's Cabinet relied on four guiding principles in selecting the facilities that will be impacted:

1. Minimize the impact on public safety and reformation;
2. Minimize the impact on the youth and families we serve;
3. Where possible, minimize any disproportional impact on staff, communities and providers; and
4. Balance these guiding principles with the agency's fiduciary responsibility.

To **minimize the impact on public safety and reformation**, we believe it is important to retain the full complement of services for the youth we will continue to manage in close custody. Rather than "thinning the soup" by providing fewer treatment options in order to preserve a few beds, we believe OYA can better achieve its mission by continuing to provide all appropriate treatment and programming options needed by youth in close custody. We also are revising contracts to ensure contracted community providers offer the appropriate array of services based on the needs of the youth in community placements.

We will be working to **minimize the impact on the youth and families we serve** by actively communicating with them about the youth release process, and by ensuring youth and their families know where the youth will be placed, what treatment options will be available, and how the youth will be served. JPPOs will continue to function as case managers and will oversee the same youth regardless of placement location. We also believe youth and their families are best supported by maintaining a regional presence throughout the state. The regional model enables different facilities to focus on specific groups of youth, whether by age, crime

type, treatment needs, or other factors. Regional facilities also enable many youth to be served in settings closer to their families.

We evaluated many options for reducing close-custody capacity in terms of the potential **impacts on staff, communities and providers**. Closing smaller, regional facilities has a disproportional impact on the staff and communities in those areas. It is harder for laid-off employees in smaller communities to find new jobs, and in many cases the smaller facilities are major employers in those areas, so that closing those facilities could cause significant local economic harm. Focusing bed reductions on facilities near large population areas enables staff to have more re-employment options, and the larger communities are more able to absorb the employment loss.

## Access to resources

We know this will be a difficult transition period for all of you, as you and your co-workers change jobs and as some of you leave OYA at the end of this process. Please remember there are resources available to help. You may talk with HR staff at any time, and you have access to the counseling and support services offered through OYA's Employment Assistance Program.

You also can find links to many resources on the Human Resources Office's OYANet site at <http://oyanet.oya.state.or.us/BusinessServices/HumanResources/Pages/LayoffInfo.aspx>.

We will do all in our power to minimize the number of layoffs and to work with affected staff to identify the best options available. We ask that those of you who are affected not lose hope as this process unfolds. We know this will be a tremendously stressful time, and we ask everyone to remain supportive of each other as we go through this process, and to stay focused on serving the youth in our custody.

Please know that you continue to have our full support. We are deeply sorry to have to take these steps.

Thank you for all of the good work you continue to do every day.

Sincerely,



Colette S. Peters  
Director



Fariborz Pakseresht  
Deputy Director