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Forecasters Expect Long-term Job Growth in Oregon

The Oregon Employment Department has released its projections of employment for 2018. The projections point to modest job growth between 2008 and 2018, although many job openings are expected due to the need to replace workers who leave their current occupations.

The department's forecasters expect economic growth to add more than 160,000 jobs, a gain of 9 percent over the decade. This growth is slightly less than the 10 percent gain that occurred between 1998 and 2008 and much slower than in many prior 10-year periods. The manufacturing industry is the only broad sector expected to lose jobs between 2008 and 2018.

Education and health care services are expected to grow by 23 percent and add nearly 50,000 jobs to meet the needs of the state's growing and aging population. Professional and business services will grow by about 14 percent or almost 28,000 jobs. Leisure and hospitality will add 12 percent or 21,500 jobs. The slowest-growing sector is construction with 1 percent growth over the decade, followed by information with 2 percent growth. Manufacturing will likely decline by 3 percent and lose over 5,000 jobs between 2008 and 2018, the only broad sector not to gain jobs over the decade.

Despite slow job growth in the economy as a whole, many job openings should result from workers leaving their occupations to change careers or retire. In addition to the 163,000 job openings due to economic growth, department forecasters expect an additional 430,000 openings to replace current workers who leave their occupations.

Three occupational groups – office and administrative support; service occupations; and professional and related occupations – together represent almost half (48%) of all employment in 2008 and 52 percent of projected growth job openings.

The wide variety of high-paying, high-demand occupations include registered nurses, general managers, truck drivers, accountants, wholesale sales representatives, supervisors of retail and office workers, and postsecondary teachers, among others.

Projections for Oregon's 15 workforce regions show the fastest growth in Central and Southern Oregon. Metro areas are expected to grow at close to the statewide average and half of the state's job growth will be in the Portland area.

The projections are available on the Oregon Employment Department's economic and workforce information Web site at www.QualityInfo.org. Select a region from the map and look in the Publications tab for Regional Projections by Industry and Occupation 2008-2018.

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