Customer Service and Older Workers Around Oregon

Two major industries have a large customer service component: retail trade, and leisure and hospitality. In the Portland region, Leisure and hospitality represents about 10 percent of all jobs. These are mostly bars and restaurants, along with hotels and motels, and various arts and recreation businesses (museums, zoos, concert venues, sports teams, dance companies, etc). Retail trade represents another 10 percent of all jobs in the Portland region. Multnomah and Washington counties have the lowest share of these jobs in Oregon. In Central and Southern Oregon, these two industries represent 1 out of 3 jobs. In some coastal communities it’s as high as half of all jobs in just these two public facing sectors.

Older workers are more vulnerable to potential health issues. In Multnomah county, just 10 percent of all workers are over age 60. Across the state, that’s the lowest rate of seniors in the workforce. Many coastal communities have a workforce where 1 out of 5 workers is 60 or better. For a few small rural counties, about 1 out of 4 workers is older.