

# Oregon Voices News

*News from Oregon that you can use*

Oregon Voices is committed to justice and rationality in policies regarding sex offenses and will continue to work toward supporting legislation that will positively impact the lives of registered citizens and their families. We continue to support the efforts of other organizations that are also striving to make lives better for AICs and those reentering our communities.

Lately, it has been difficult not to feel the toll that political chaos and constant change have taken on our lives. Some of you are beginning to feel exhausted, hopeless, and fearful. You may need to take a pause, set personal boundaries and limit your connection to social media and news outlets. Instead, identify things in your lives that you can control. The focus of this newsletter is to provide some positive information about new legislation and other events that can perhaps help you navigate the challenges that you face on a daily basis.

## **OV Legislative Team Very Busy During the 2025 Legislative Session**

The legislative team followed 93 House and Senate Judiciary Committee bills. We didn't get everything we wanted, but a number of potentially harmful bills also did not become law. First, the "study" bills: A record number of 21 House and 20 Senate bills were submitted that would have required a committee, board or group to study the effect of X, Y or Z variables on recidivism, expungement or parole, but mostly recidivism. We value current, valid Oregon data on recidivism and any of its contributing factors to present solid information to legislators, when we argue for change. Unfortunately, we won't get that info soon. 19 of these House and 19 of these Senate study bills died in their first chamber. Of the 3 that passed:

HB 2632 directs the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to appoint an advisory committee to work on changing specialty courts to treatment courts, using a case management system.

HB 2935 directs CJC to study pre-trial release and include certain data.

SB 170 directs CJC to study workplace assault convictions and sentences.  
Good stuff but not giving us hoped-for facts on recidivism.

We were pleased that HB 2677 passed. This modifies the procedure for expunction of certain juvenile records, directing the juvenile department to initiate the process.

Also, SB 710 gives the Chief Justice the authority to establish continued study options for training judges in domestic and sexual violence cases.

Also, SB 816 modifies laws regarding juvenile diversion plans and plans for juvenile criminal prevention services.

There were a few bills that addressed the growing influence of today's available technology and 2 of these passed and are now law:

HB 2299 increases the penalty for unlawful dissemination of intimate images.

HB 3766 allows civil action against someone who transmits an intimate picture to another person's computer or device.

We had high hopes for Senate Bills 819, 820 and 821 to tackle the risk assessment backlog problems, but these bills did not pass. Then, surprisingly, a bill happening in the Public Safety Committee allocated an extra 3 million dollars to the Parole Board's budget to address that historical backlog of registrants who had never been assessed! That sure helps!

One bill we had opposed, SB 1122, did pass. This provides that risk assessment may exclusively consider the offender's risk at the time of release, sentencing or discharge. (And not factor in any desistance history for that individual!) OV firmly believes that desistance information needs to be understood and considered in so many decisions.

2 passed bills possibly might be of concern for where some registrants live:

HB 3560 expands areas where childcare facilities may be cited. This loosened a number of zoning laws that prevented much needed childcare in some areas of the state. SB 1099 requires cities and counties to allow pre-schools on church property.

Be aware that HB 3582 changes an existing law and now eliminates the statute of limitations for civil action in cases of sexual assault and child sexual abuse. Also, SB 180 relates to retaliatory actions for defamation in incidents of sexual assault.

There were a number of attempted bills to publicize Registrants' information. These did not make it out of their initial chambers. We were especially proud of our OV response to opposing HB 3839 (which would have given all 3 levels of Registrant information to schools and other agencies) This bill made it to a Public Hearing, but we were heartened by folks who took the time to submit testimony or call their legislators on this one and we think it made a difference. Thank you and we hope you'll consider responding again in the future.

Again, so many other bills, some good and some not (whew!), just died in committee. It was a very busy year in Salem, with so many issues to tackle. Next year is a shorter session; we'll see what it brings.

### **Legislative Advisory Group on Registry Formed**

In the wake of the 2025 legislative session, the **Parole Board** is forming an advisory group to consider changes to Oregon law in dealing with the registry. The group will bring together various constituencies that deal with the registry and persons on the registry—rather like the process that led to HB 2549 in 2013. Oregon Voices has been invited to participate again, and we will be there.

It is always difficult to predict what will come of efforts like this, but the hopeful sign is that the 2025 legislature showed little appetite for proposals that would expand notification beyond current practice.

We are hopeful that the group will take seriously the information we have that we did not have in 2013 which shows clearly that recidivism rates for new sex crimes are strikingly low, and which also shows that the risk of reoffending declines predictably with time spent offense-free in the community.

The group's first meeting is scheduled for the latter part of August, and there will undoubtedly be more meetings through the fall. We hope that the process will lead to legislative changes that will recognize the responsible lives that so many of you are building, even in the face of huge barriers. We will be there through these meetings and in the next legislative sessions pressing for changes that recognize the lives that most humans on the registry are already leading. And we will provide updates on the process in future meetings and newsletters.

## **Reclaim Your Future: Steps to Successfully Re-Enter Society After Incarceration**



Release from prison marks a pivotal moment – an opportunity to build a new life, reconnect with loved ones, and contribute positively to society. While the journey can be challenging, with the right steps and support, successful re-entry is not only possible but achievable.

At Oregon Voices, we believe in second chances and are dedicated to empowering individuals on their path to reintegration. Here are key areas to focus on as you navigate your return to society:

### **1. Plan Ahead: The Power of Pre-Release Preparation**

The transition begins even before you walk out the prison gates. If possible, utilize pre-release programs that offer:

- \* Life Skills Training: Brush up on budgeting, communication, and healthy living.
- \* Job Readiness: Participate in workshops on resume building, interview skills, and job searching.
- \* Stable Housing Assistance: Explore options – whether with family, friends, or transitional programs.
- \* Identification Documents: Gather essential documents like your birth certificate, social security card, and state ID, which are crucial for almost every aspect of re-entry.

### **2. Secure Basic Needs: Building a Stable Foundation**

Upon release, your immediate priority should be securing the essentials:

- \* **Housing:** A safe and stable place to live is paramount. Connect with support organizations, parole officers, or family members who can assist with housing options.
- \* **Food:** Ensure you have access to nutritious food. Local food banks and community programs can be valuable resources.
- \* **Clothing:** Having appropriate clothing for job interviews and daily life can boost confidence and aid in integration.

### 3. Prioritize Health and Well-being: A Holistic Approach

Your physical and mental health are crucial for sustainable re-entry.

- \* **Medical Care:** Schedule a general check-up. If you have pre-existing conditions, ensure continuity of care. Look into Medicaid or other health insurance options if eligible.
- \* **Mental Health Support:** The transition can be stressful. Seek out counseling or therapy if you're struggling with anxiety, depression, or past trauma. Many organizations offer free or low-cost mental health services.
- \* **Substance Abuse Support:** If addiction has been an issue, immediately connect with support groups (e.g., AA, NA) or treatment programs. Staying sober is vital for long-term success.

### 4. Seek Employment: Finding Your Purpose

Meaningful employment provides financial stability, structure, and a sense of purpose.

- \* **Job Search Assistance:** Utilize resources for ex-offenders that specialize in job placement. Many employers are open to hiring individuals with criminal records.
- \* **Skills Assessment:** Identify your strengths and skills. Consider vocational training or certifications to enhance your employability.
- \* **Networking:** Connect with people who can help you find job opportunities. Attend job fairs and community events.
- \* **Be Honest and Prepared:** When discussing your past with potential employers, be upfront, take responsibility, and emphasize what you've learned and how you've changed.

### 5. Rebuild Relationships and Establish a Positive Support System. Steer clear of situations or persons that could jeopardize your chances for success.

Connecting with positive influences is key to avoiding recidivism.

\* Family and Friends: Re-establish healthy relationships with supportive family members and friends. Communicate openly about your goals and challenges.

\* Mentorship: Seek out mentors who have successfully re-entered society or who can offer guidance and encouragement.

\* Support Groups: Join groups specifically for individuals re-entering society. Sharing experiences with others who understand your journey can be incredibly empowering.

## 6. Understand and Adhere to Parole/Probation Conditions

If you are on parole or probation, understanding and strictly adhering to all conditions is non-negotiable.

\* Communicate with Your Officer: Maintain open and honest communication with your parole or probation officer. They can be a valuable resource.

\* Appointments and Requirements: Attend all scheduled appointments and fulfill any requirements, such as drug testing or community service.

\* Travel Restrictions: Be aware of and abide by any travel restrictions.

## 7. Engage with Your Community: Giving Back and Growing

Becoming an active, positive member of your community can foster a sense of belonging and self-worth.

\* Volunteer Work: Volunteering is a great way to gain new skills, meet people, and contribute.

\* Educational Opportunities: Consider continuing your education, whether it's obtaining a GED, pursuing vocational training, or enrolling in college courses.

\* Civic Engagement: Learn your rights as a returning citizen and consider joining local advocacy efforts.

## A Message of Hope

Re-entry is about longevity, so remember to pace yourself. There will be challenges, setbacks, and moments of frustration, but with perseverance, a strong support system, and a commitment to positive change, you can successfully reclaim your life and build a brighter future.

At Oregon Voices, we are here to help you navigate the intricacies of the Oregon registry. We will connect you with appropriate community resources or services such as job placement assistance, housing referrals, mentorship programs, and support groups. Please don't hesitate to reach out. Your success is our goal.

*Oregon Voices, August 2025*

## Expungement of Your Criminal Record

The Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC) recently published information about expungement of records. In their article, “Motions to Set Aside Convictions, Dismissed Charges and the Records of Arrest (Expungement),” OJRC is calling attention to the fact that the Oregon Expungement Law changed in January 2022 and if you were not eligible at that time to expunge your record under ORS137.225, you should check to see if you are now eligible under [Senate Bill 397](#). If you go to the following link not only will you learn about eligibility for expungement but also what it is and the steps you can take to apply. <https://ojrc.info/expungement>

You can also visit the following websites to obtain information about which cases are eligible for expungement: [Oregon State Police](#), [Oregon State Bar](#).

In addition, The Clear Clinic is a free legal help clinic. It provides guidance for people representing themselves in court and limited legal help for specific parts of a case, making legal support more accessible to the community.). The Clear Clinic is located at 537 SE Ash St., Suite 202, Portland, OR 97214 or you can obtain information on line: [info@clear-clinic.org](mailto:info@clear-clinic.org) or <https://clear-clinic.org/record-relief>

April Cox, program Director of the Clear Clinic, announced that they are very excited to introduce the new monthly walk-in expungement clinic partnership with friends of the Public Defenders of Marion county. These clinics will be held monthly at the Public Defenders’ office. Please check out the flyer for details and share it with anyone who might benefit from the service. The only cost is \$33 for fingerprinting, a requirement for expungement. There is a fee assistance form for those unable to pay. Feel free to contact the clinic, with any questions, [971.332.5332](tel:971.332.5332) or [reentry...@mwvcaa.org](mailto:reentry...@mwvcaa.org).

**WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
CLEAR PATH**

## Expungement Clinic

Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup> 2-6 pm  
198 Commercial Street SE #100, Salem

What is it?	When?
<p>Expungement allows people to clear up their past criminal record. It can help secure jobs, housing, and other benefits.</p> <p><i>You may qualify if it has been:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 year after B Misdemeanor</li> <li>• 1 year after C Misdemeanor</li> <li>• 3 years after A Misdemeanor</li> <li>• 5 years after C Felony</li> <li>• 7 years after B Felony</li> </ul>	<p>First clinic on Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup> from 2-6 pm. Future clinics at the same time and location on the third Friday of each month.</p>

**Questions?**  
Call 971-332-5332

**Partners**

- PUBLIC DEFENDER OF MARION COUNTY
- WILLAMETTE LAW PUBLIC DEFENSE CLINIC
- OREGON DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
- COMMUNITY ACTION REENTRY SERVICES
- WORKSOURCE OREGON
- CHERRIOTS

## Oregon Supreme Court to Hear Amici Brief

On June 30, 2025, a team of lawyers at Tonkon Torp LLP filed a Motion and Amici Brief with the Oregon Supreme Court in the case of *State v. Ribas*. This is an ‘amici’ brief (friends of the court) instead of an ‘amicus’ brief (friend of the court) because it is filed jointly on behalf of Oregon Voices and the CLiF Project.

The goal in creating this brief was to give the Supreme Court justices an understanding of what registration in the real world is like. The Oregon registration statutes are written as if meeting registration requirements is a very simple thing to do and understand. What we do know is that failure to register has become a trap for many of those who are required to do so. They might be homeless, moving from place to place, couch surfing, or for some other reason can’t meet the requirement. The *Ribas* case is a perfect example: This individual tried to register three times and was turned away by those who thought they understood the law but didn’t. And, it is unfair to hold this person criminally liable for the slipups of law enforcement.

We are pleased that the Oregon Supreme Court has granted the Motion and will take the Brief into account as it sees fit. The hope is that the justices will gain a better understanding about the real live experiences of people on the registry.

Oral arguments are scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, most likely at the Supreme Court Building in Salem, although sometimes they are held at another place. Additional information will be forthcoming. Watch your emails as well as visit the Oregon Voices website ([www.oregonvoices.org](http://www.oregonvoices.org)) where information should be posted soon about the case of *State v. Ribas* and the Amici Brief.

## FOTO (Free on the Outside)

We have covered Mike Cross’ housing program, Free on the Outside, before. But here is a reminder and an update. Housing is, as you know, both crucial for reentry success and extremely hard to find for registrants. Mike’s constantly expanding program is an amazing resource.

Begun in 2008 with one house, since 2018 FOTO has continued to add more houses. At present they have 23 homes with 220 beds, in **five counties**. The new men’s houses are a duplex in Tigard with 12 beds and a 4-plex in Redmond with 14 beds. They cover a wide range of needs and have houses for men, women, couples and families, with over 30 children now housed with parents.

The website talks of prioritizing the least, the last and the lost. To quote Mike, their priority is always to provide safe housing for the hardest to house, registered citizens, people on local and federal supervision and those who have a hard time finding housing simply because they are still on the registry. He continues that FOTO is more than just a safe place to call home, it is a safe place to rebuild life and find acceptance, regardless of past.

Contact information can be found at: [freeontheoutside.org](http://freeontheoutside.org)

## **Sponsors Continues to Offer Exemplary Reentry Services**

Over the years, OV has watched Sponsors in Eugene, Oregon continue to grow in its ability to offer more and more reentry services for those returning to Lane County. A recently published newsletter thanked the community for its support and ultimately for its impact on the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals during 2024. The data is impressive: There were 6,937 visits to the reentry resource center, 2,057 in-kind donations received, 1,001 volunteer mentor hours, 770 individuals who lived in housing provided by Sponsors, and 757 visits for health and wellness support which included connections to medical care providers, recovery support and behavioral health services.

Annie Herz, the Director, announced that Sponsors recently received grant funds to "create a technical assistance program that will allow Sponsors to provide reentry services consulting to communities across the state, the region, and the country." Visit the Sponsors' website to learn more about its reentry services: [sponsorsinc.org](https://sponsorsinc.org)

## **Last, But Not Least**

*Oregon Voices is actively recruiting volunteers. Help is always needed to work on such issues as housing, employment, education, legal resources, the website, legislation, and the OV newsletter. If you would like more information about how you can volunteer, please call 971-317-6868, or email: [info@oregonvoices.org](mailto:info@oregonvoices.org)*

Please note that OV is very careful to guard the privacy of those who join the listserv and actively participate. You provide the board with new information and support, as we work together for the betterment of the lives of registered citizens and their loved ones.

The next OV General meeting is Saturday, August 16, 2025, 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars and watch emails for further information. It will be held via Zoom rather than in person at Oregon City because we are encouraging statewide participation.

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