

Leadership
in
Oklahoma's
Workforce System

OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION
Annual Performance Report 2014

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Mary Fallin
Governor

Richard McPherson
Executive Director

Representing the Public

Rachel Hutchings, Chair

Representing Employers

Douglas R. Major, Ed.D., Commissioner
Shannon Davies, Commissioner

Representing Employees

Rev. Mike Wester, Commissioner
Chris Tytanic, Commissioner

Oversight for the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission is provided by a five-member commission appointed by the Governor. Two commissioners represent the interests of employers, two represent the interests of employees, and the chair represents the interests of the public at large. Each member serves a six-year term and may be reappointed at the Governor's pleasure. Members convene publicly at regularly scheduled monthly meetings to receive agency reports and discuss agency business. This meeting schedule can be modified at the commissioners' discretion.

Cover photo: Courtesy of Tyler Smith

Opened in 2012, the Oklahoma City SkyDance Bridge is a combination 380-foot-long pedestrian bridge and sculpture that spans Interstate 40 near Robinson Avenue south of downtown Oklahoma City. The bridge's soaring architecture, which is illuminated nightly via LED lighting, was inspired by Oklahoma's state bird, the scissor-tailed flycatcher.

Leadership in Oklahoma's Workforce System

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission **Annual Performance Report 2014**

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January 2015

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities

2014 presented tremendous challenges and opportunities for the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC). New legislation passed at the state and national levels during the year has triggered new approaches to our processes and will greatly impact our programs. Through all of the change, OESC remains focused on its core mission of matching the unemployed with the right employment opportunities.

At the state level, Senate Bill 1808, which took effect November 1, 2014, redefined the term “discharge for misconduct” as it relates to Unemployment Insurance. A tremendous amount of resources were mobilized to prepare our staff and systems for the change.

At the national level, the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) was passed. This is the first legislative reform of the public workforce system in more than 15 years. WIOA is designed to provide job seekers with greater access to employment, education, training and support services and to better match employers with the skilled workers they need to stay competitive in a global economy.



**Richard McPherson,
OESC Executive Director**

In addition to impactful legislation, numerous other activities and events challenged our agency over the past year. As expected, OESC staff and management demonstrated what this agency is made of through their hard work, innovative problem solving and sheer determination. We met or exceeded most U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) performance measurements, achieved new records in a number of key areas and set our sights on even greater accomplishments for the upcoming year!

Putting Employers and Job Seekers First

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) is a **100% federally funded** state agency dedicated to providing quality service and assistance to Oklahoma's employers and job seekers.

Our mission is to enhance Oklahoma's economy by:

- **Matching jobs and workers** to increase efficiency of local labor markets.
- **Providing unemployment compensation** to support unemployed workers and their communities.
- **Preparing a skilled workforce** with enhanced skills to meet local labor market needs.
- **Gathering, analyzing and disseminating information** about the labor force to improve local economic decisions.

OESC Service Highlights for 2014

157,395 - Services provided to employers.

72,463 - Customers entering employment.

14,853 - Veterans served.

210,780 - Job openings listed on Oklahoma's electronic job bank.

97,330 - Active resumes on Oklahoma's electronic job bank.

6,615 - New employer accounts on Oklahoma's electronic job bank.

96,697 - Unemployment Insurance claims filed.

61,913 - Customers who received temporary state Unemployment Insurance benefits.

The State Workforce System

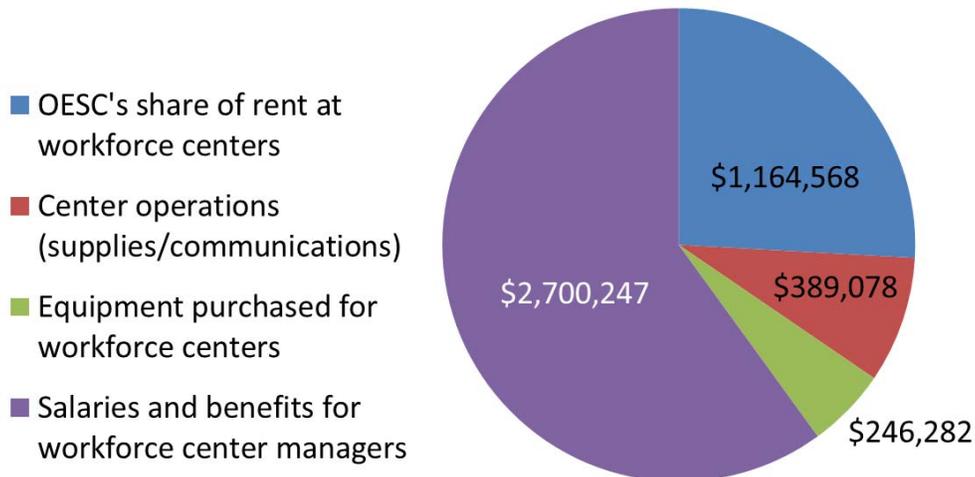
Oklahoma's workforce system is a collaboration of public and private entities, including industry, educational institutions, state agencies and Workforce Investment Boards. These partnerships provide a system to develop a knowledge-based workforce to compete in the 21st century.

The Role of OESC in the State Workforce System

As an anchor partner in the state workforce system, OESC provides programs and services that help customers throughout Oklahoma. This assistance is delivered primarily through our 35 Workforce Centers across the state, which requires OESC to invest in local communities. The chart below illustrates some of the financial contributions OESC made to support Oklahoma's workforce system in 2014.

Other stakeholders in Oklahoma's workforce system include local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), Oklahoma Department of Commerce, state and local chambers of commerce, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma Department of Labor, and Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services.

OESC's Financial Contributions



Putting Job Seekers to Work

OESC’s leading objective is helping job seekers find a suitable job. Whether we upgrade job seeker skills, develop a career plan or refer a qualified applicant to an open position, reemployment is at the heart of what we do. Job seekers can access our comprehensive services online and at our 35 Workforce Centers across the state.

Services for Job Seekers

OESC provides a variety of programs and services to those looking for jobs. This employment and educational assistance includes:

- Job referrals.
- Skills enhancement services.
- OKJobMatch.com, the largest electronic database of job listings in the state.
- Credentialing.
- Staff-assisted career guidance.
- Federal bonding.
- Temporary Unemployment Insurance benefits.

OESC Service Delivery Highlights for 2014

- 163,969** - Job seekers served.
- 31,956** - Job seekers provided with staff-assisted career guidance.
- 30,035** - Job seekers provided with staff-assisted job searches.
- 82%** - Percentage of customers who entered employment through OESC and remained employed six months after placement.
- 97,330** - Active job seeker accounts on Oklahoma’s electronic job bank.

Veterans

Veterans are a special focus for OESC. We provide enhanced reemployment-related services for veterans, transitioning active duty members and eligible caregivers of the U.S. Armed Forces, Guard and Reserve.

Refocusing Our Efforts

There were significant changes to the veterans' program in 2014 due to new guidelines from the U.S. Department of Labor. We reemphasized the importance of our frontline veteran services staff in our local offices, and a focus was placed on making them the main point-of-contact for all initial services regarding veterans.

- Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) provide intensive services through case management to veterans with significant barriers to employment.
- Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) primarily work with employers to locate and create employment opportunities for veterans.

Veterans Service Highlights for 2014

14,853 - Veterans served.

108,477 - Services provided to veterans.

65% - Percentage of veteran customers who entered employment.

85% - Percentage of veteran customers who entered employment and remained employed six months after placement.

Services Provided to Veterans

OESC is honored to be directly engaged with many state and local initiatives for veterans. These initiatives address a wide range of veteran needs, including preparation for job searches and help with locating jobs. They also touch on non-employment needs, such as clothing, food, shelter, medical care and many others.

Job Clubs: OESC Workforce Centers in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Muskogee and Lawton offer monthly mini-hiring events specifically designed for VA case Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) veterans. These job club meetings provide an opportunity for employers to meet in person with qualified, ready-to-hire veterans who are looking for work. In 2014, OESC job clubs served 339 veterans.

Hiring Events and Job Fairs: The Governor's Oklahoma Military Connection, a consortium of state agencies that includes OESC, the Oklahoma Military Department, the

Services for Job Seekers



OESC welcomed representatives from federal labor and veterans programs to the Statewide Managers Meeting held in October in Oklahoma City. (Left to right) Kenneth Allen, Director USDOL Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS); Keith Kelly, Assistant Secretary of USDOL VETS; Teresa Thomas Keller, OESC Deputy Director; Nickolas Lalpui, Regional Administrator of USDOL Employment & Training Administration (ETA); Jon Eller, OESC Director of Reemployment Services—Targeted Populations; Brian A. Hawthorne, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of USDOL VETS.

Services for Job Seekers

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, has developed a comprehensive process to match employers who have open jobs with qualified veterans and caregivers who possess specific transferrable military backgrounds and work preferences. Initial employment interviews for veterans are held at the hiring events. OESC also hosts many job fairs across the state to provide opportunities for veterans and their caregivers to find jobs.



DVOP Joe Davis (left) and DVOP TK Floyd-Patrick (middle) helping a participant at the Sooner Stand Down held in October in Oklahoma City.

Wounded Warrior Program: This program provides intensive services to wounded, ill or injured service members and their family caregivers at Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and Warrior Transition Units (WTU). Our DVOP at the Lawton Workforce Center goes above and beyond the call of duty to lead this effort at Fort Sill in Lawton, the only military facility in Oklahoma that has a Wounded Warrior Program.

Veteran Homeless Stand Downs: At our Stand Down events in Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Lawton, OESC and partner agencies provide additional

supportive services to meet the special needs of homeless veterans. In addition, Stand Downs partner with local businesses and service providers to furnish free services like health and dental checkups, VA and Social Security benefits counseling, and referrals to other necessary services, like health care, housing, employment and substance-abuse treatment, all in one place at one time.

Other Targeted Populations

In addition to veterans, OESC specifically targets other populations to address their particular reemployment needs. Additional targeted populations include younger workers, ex-offenders, victims of domestic abuse and job seekers with disabilities.

Programs offered by OESC that are designed to assist these targeted populations include:

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).
- Foreign Labor Certification.
- Federal bonding.
- Migrant/seasonal farmworker monitor advocate.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): OESC's Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program provides tax incentives to employers who hire from targeted groups that traditionally face significant barriers to employment. Groups targeted by WOTC include Temporary Assistance to Needy Family (TANF) recipients, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps recipients, Supplement Security Income (SSI) recipients, vocational rehabilitation recipients, summer youth employees, designated community residents, ex-felons, disabled veterans, veterans collecting SNAP benefits and unemployed veterans meeting certain conditions.

In 2014, WOTC programs for all states waited on Congress to reauthorize the program for all target groups. Even though only veteran target groups were authorized for 2014, states have

Services for Job Seekers

continued to process WOTC certification requests for all target groups, per federal mandate. Decisions on these requests will be withheld until WOTC is re-authorized. In 2014, OESC processed 48,269 WOTC certification requests, up 10 percent from 2013.

Foreign Labor Certification (FLC): The H-2A temporary agricultural program and H-2B temporary non-agricultural program allow U.S. employers who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring non-immigrant workers to the United States to fill temporary jobs when there is an anticipated shortage of available domestic workers. In 2014, OESC posted 616 FLC-related job orders, a gain of more than 22 percent from the previous year. Almost all of the additional job orders were interstate job orders, which increased by over 25 percent from 2013.

Federal Bonding: The Federal Bonding program helps difficult-to-place job applicants by providing individual fidelity bonds for the employers who hire them.

Bonds are available at no cost to both employers and job seekers. These bonds cover employee theft or dishonesty. By providing this service, OESC eliminates one barrier to employment for those affected and helps provide the workers that employers need. In 2014, OESC processed \$40,000 in bond stamps, double the amount processed in 2013.



UI Service Center staff assisting employers and UI claimants with issues related to unemployment benefits.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker State Monitor Advocate:

Monitor Advocates help ensure that the services provided to migrant seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) are the same as the services provided to other job seekers. This is meant to guarantee that MSFWs receive all workforce development services, benefits and protections on an equitable and non-discriminatory basis.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): OESC's Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides services to U.S. workers who have lost or may lose their jobs due to foreign trade. TAA-certified workers can access services such as income support, relocation and job search allowances, and health coverage tax credits. Those that need retraining for employment may receive occupational training. The goal is to quickly reconnect laid-off workers with suitable employment. Nineteen companies were certified for Trade Adjustment Assistance in 2014, and 290 workers received Trade Adjustment Assistance-related services.



(Left to right) Kelli Ingraham, DVOP at the Tulsa Eastgate Workforce Center; Lisa Mussett, LVER at the Idabel Workforce Center; and Kim Burney, DVOP at the Lawton Workforce Center, attended the 30th anniversary celebration for Oklahoma Women Veterans Recognition Day held in October in Norman.

Finding the Right Workers and Tools for Employers

OESC's customer-focused programs provide meaningful and innovative workforce solutions for employers in Oklahoma. These programs and services help employers fill open positions, gather information about local economic and workforce conditions, and keep updated on pertinent human resource issues. Focusing on the needs of individual employers allows OESC to address the actual issues and opportunities available in job markets across the state.

Services for Employers

OESC's primary mission is to connect employers and job seekers. To accomplish that mission, we partner with Oklahoma's employers to provide them with a variety of services to meet their workforce demands.

These **services for employers** include the following:

- Job listing and job matching.
- Skills and proficiency testing.
- OKJobMatch.com, the largest electronic database of job listings in the state.
- Federal bonding and tax credits.
- Job application processing.
- Career Readiness Certification - WorkKeys®.
- Available office space for employers to conduct interviews.
- Facilitation of industry specific job training.
- Foreign labor certification.

Employer Councils

Employer Councils are cooperative educational efforts of OESC and local business professionals. These employer-led groups meet regularly to provide cutting-edge information and presentations about issues affecting business conducted by leaders in human resources, labor and employment law, and business management. Guests are welcome at no charge.

The OKC Metro Employer Council and the Tulsa Area Employer Council continued to shine in 2014. For the year, each OKC Metro Employer Council meeting averaged 140 attendees, while the Tulsa Area Employer Council served around 74 participants per month. These numbers were both up from 2013. The success of these two groups led to the development of new Employer Councils in Lawton and McAlester. The Lawton Employer Council held its first meeting in June with 85 local employers. The McAlester Employer Council launched in October.

Leadership of the Employer Councils is comprised of local employers. Each Employer Council Board chooses its own chair from among the ranks of the council. The McAlester Employer Council will select a chair in early 2015.

OKC Metro Employer Council

Chair - Adam Childers, Crowe & Dunlevy

Tulsa Employer Council

Chair - Julie Via, Warehouse Specialties Inc. (WSI)

Lawton Employer Council

Chair - John Saville, Wichita National Life Insurance Company

Job Fairs

OESC hosted a multitude of job fairs in 2014. Whether it's one of our flagship job fairs, a local job fair or a mini job fair for an individual employer at one of our Workforce Centers, connecting employers with the qualified job seekers they're looking for is at the heart of these events. Our customer-centered approach to bringing together employers and job seekers has led to some of the most recognized and successful job fairs in the state.

OESC's flagship job fairs are held twice annually in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Oklahoma City's two job fairs welcomed a total of 185 employers and served 2,500 job seekers in 2014, 14 percent more



DVOP Bill Jobe (left) speaks with a job seeker at the Spring Oklahoma City Semi-annual Job Fair held in March.

than 2013. For the two Tulsa job fairs, 216 employers attended, an over-the-year increase of 28 percent, and 1,735 job seekers were served, a 16 percent gain from 2013.

In addition to job fairs, OESC Workforce Centers provide customized hiring events for local employers. These activities are specially designed for an individual employer and can include both job fairs and mass hiring events. A number of

services are also provided, including coordinating applicant submissions, pre-screening candidates, providing space in local Workforce Centers for employers to interview qualified candidates and focusing on specialized recruitment for hard-to-fill positions.

Labor Market Information

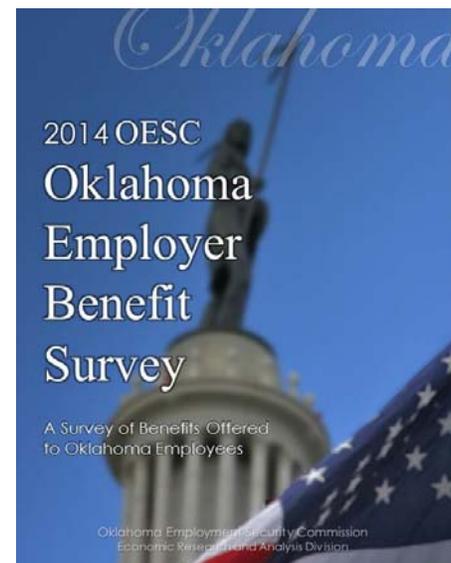
Labor market information plays a vital role in the state workforce system by providing insight into the economy and helping employers and job seekers make informed workforce decisions. OESC partners with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration to produce labor market information for the state, counties and metropolitan areas. This information is available at no cost to the public. OESC's labor market information can be accessed at http://www.ok.gov/oesc_web/Services/Find_Labor_Market_Statistics/index.html.



OESC labor market information products include employment and unemployment data, state and county unemployment rates, unemployment rate maps, industry employment, short- and long-term employment projections, and wages by industry and occupation.

One of OESC's most downloaded labor market information

publications is *OKLAHOMA Economic Indicators*, a monthly report focused on major factors that impact Oklahoma's economy. Other popular titles include the *Oklahoma Wage Report 2013*, which provides employment and wage data for over 800 occupations, and the *2014 Oklahoma Employer Benefit Survey*, a comprehensive survey of Oklahoma worker benefits, including leave, health benefits, retirement benefits and other fringe benefits.



Talent Acquisition Team

One of OESC's prime objectives is helping employers recruit qualified employees. To assist companies that have special recruitment needs, OESC developed a dedicated team of human resource professionals called the Talent Acquisition Team. In some cases, the Talent Acquisition Team undertakes special recruitment efforts for hard-to-fill vacancies. In others, the team provides large-scale hiring events for companies that are ramping up or expanding. Each solution is tailored to meet that employer's particular needs. Talent Acquisition Team staff are located in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. In 2014, the Talent Acquisition Team in Oklahoma City reported 2,250 employer contacts, and the Tulsa Talent Acquisition Team logged and listed 1,532 employer contacts.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program benefits employers by saving them money while helping them fill job openings. WOTC provides employers with tax credits for workers they hire from a number of designated groups that have significant barriers to employment (see page 8). Depending on the certified target group from which an employer hires, they can receive a tax credit of \$1,500, \$2,400, \$4,800 or \$9,000 for each WOTC-eligible worker hired. The result is a win-win situation for employers and those who have a more difficult time finding a job.

In October 2014, OESC launched a self-service WOTC resource that empowers employers. Using the new online tool, employers can apply for WOTC, check the status of their WOTC applications and certifications, and enter or update information about their companies. The new system will also benefit OESC by cutting costs for data entry and postage.

Workforce Centers

OESC Workforce Centers partner with Oklahoma employers to help them grow successful businesses. Thirty-five Workforce Centers are strategically located throughout the state to assist employers with a variety of services.

The following are a few of the services available to Oklahoma employers at OESC **Workforce Centers**.

- Provide space onsite to conduct interviews and meet with job seekers.
- Collect and organize an employer's job applications.
- Host onsite job fairs and pre-screen job seekers to meet specific needs.
- Refer qualified job seekers for open positions.
- Manage an employer's job orders.
- Evaluate job seeker skills using WorkKeys®, which measures real-world skills.
- Work closely with employers to hire veterans.



Heather D'Orvilliers (left) and Lilly Bell-Johnson of Weyerhaeuser used the Idabel Workforce Center facilities for a local job fair in September.

By providing these services and many others, OESC Workforce Centers are one-stop shops for solutions to the problems employers face. Their help allows employers to keep focused squarely on their businesses, while saving them time, effort and money.

Focus on Reemployment

Reemployment was the major focus during 2014. By reintegrating our Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Reemployment Services programs, OESC has eliminated silos within those divisions and created an environment where they work together seamlessly to move people from unemployment to new jobs as quickly as possible. Focusing on reemployment creates better outcomes in a number of ways. UI claimants spend less time collecting benefits, which saves money for employers and the state. Job seekers return to work more quickly, which empowers them to provide for their families and support their local economy. Employers fill open jobs faster, which allows them to concentrate on growing their businesses rather than finding employees. Quickly putting people back to work benefits all Oklahomans and helps strengthen Oklahoma's economy.

Making Reemployment A Top Priority

OESC's focus on reemployment required us to adjust the way we do business. These changes led to a more efficient and effective process that addresses the individual needs of our customers.

Unemployment Insurance Claimants Must Register for Work

Before Receiving Benefits: OESC changed the process to register for Unemployment Insurance in 2014. As part of the registration process to receive UI benefits, claimants now have to create an account on OKJobMatch.com, the state's electronic job bank and labor exchange. OKJobMatch.com uses a job seeker's resume and work history to match them with open jobs. The intent is to ensure that all UI claimants are ready and available for work and have access to open positions that fit their skills and experience.

Unemployment Insurance Claimants Must Participate in An OESC Job Search Workshop: Another added requirement to receive Unemployment Insurance was participation in Career Ready 101, OESC's job search workshop. The workshop provides information on topics like applying for jobs online and writing an effective resume. Soft skills such as work habits, communication, business etiquette and job searches are also covered. Career Ready 101 is available in-person at one of the OESC Workforce Centers or online for those with internet access. In 2014, Career Ready 101 was attended or viewed by 12,246 job seekers.

OESC Must Provide Reemployment Services Each Time An Unemployment Insurance Claimant Visits a Workforce Center: OESC is required to provide Unemployment Insurance claimants with at least one appropriate job referral at the time of the job search workshop. Each time the claimant enters a Workforce Center, OESC must offer them at least one appropriate reemployment service, such as interview workshops, resume help and keyboarding practice. Services vary with customer needs and activities available at a given Workforce Center.

OESC Staff Must Follow Up with Unemployment Insurance Claimants: OESC is also required to schedule a mandatory in-person follow-up session with the Unemployment Insurance claimant for 30 days after the job search workshop. This allows enough time for the claimant to address barriers to employment as well as apply, interview and follow up on the mandatory job referral provided with the job search workshop. Staff can review the claimant's progress and address any remaining issues. Future follow-up appointments are scheduled as necessary.

Unemployment Insurance (UI)

Unemployment Insurance (UI) is available to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and meet certain other eligibility requirements. This temporary lifeline provides basic needs for unemployed Oklahomans as they seek work.

Unemployment Insurance benefits are paid from Oklahoma's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund.

Unemployment Insurance Highlights for 2014

- 61,913** - Customers who received temporary state Unemployment Insurance.
- 16.5 weeks** - The average length of time that Unemployment Insurance claimants collected benefits out of a **maximum of 26 weeks**.
- \$313.63** - The average weekly benefit payment in 2014, well below the year's maximum weekly benefit of \$440.
- 69.8%** - Percentage of employers that paid the lowest tax rate.

Unemployment Insurance Service Centers

Our Unemployment Insurance Service Centers provide a point-of-contact for our Unemployment Insurance customers. Approximately 70 OESC staff are available to assist claimants and employers.

Through the dedicated staff at our UI Service Centers, customers can:

- File new UI claims and weekly certifications.
- Update UI claim information.
- Ask questions about all UI-related subjects.
- Receive assistance with employer-related claims issues.

Quality control at the UI Service Centers is an important part of the customer service process. Calls with customers are reviewed and graded each quarter using federal Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) measures.

UI Service Center Highlights for 2014

221,873 - Total customers assisted by UI Service Centers.

891 - Average number of calls received daily at UI Service Centers.

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund

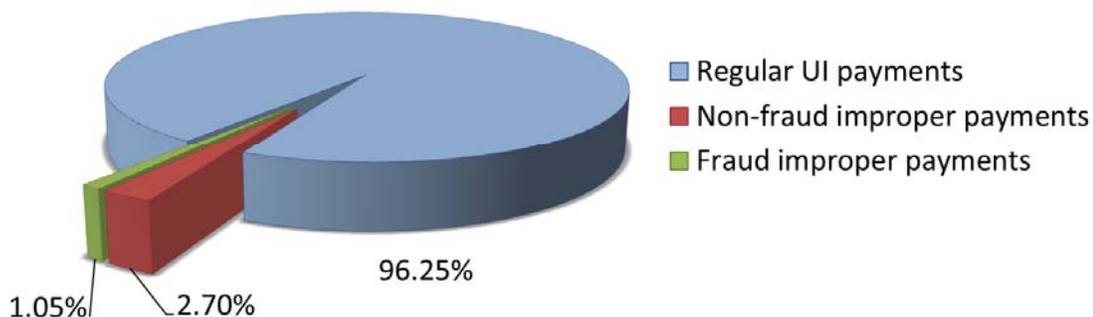
Oklahoma's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, the sole source of state Unemployment Insurance payments, is funded by contributions from state businesses. Employer contribution rates are determined each year using an experience-rated system, meaning an employer's rate is based in part on their history with the Unemployment Insurance system. Oklahoma's funding mechanism has helped the state build one of the most stable Unemployment Insurance Trust Funds in the nation. As a result, Oklahoma was one of only a few states during the recent recession that didn't need to borrow from the federal government to keep paying Unemployment Insurance benefits.

In 2015, employers will pay the lowest contribution rates for which they qualify as Oklahoma drops to the lowest tax rate schedule available due in part to the strength of the system and the UI Trust Fund. These lower tax rates are estimated to save Oklahoma businesses ***between \$120 million and \$130 million*** in 2015.

Reducing Improper Payments Through Technology

Protecting the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund is one of OESC’s top priorities. One way OESC accomplishes this is through our continued efforts to reduce and eliminate improper payments. Based on the most recent annual data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Oklahoma reported the eleventh lowest improper payment rate in the U.S., well below the national average of 8.53%. Despite that relative success, OESC continues to focus on driving that number even lower.

Regular and Improper Unemployment Insurance Payments, 2010-2014



Measures undertaken in 2014 by OESC to reduce improper payments include:

- Participating in the **State Data Exchange System (SIDES)**, a nationwide system that allows us to communicate with multi-state employers to better determine Unemployment Insurance eligibility, the leading cause of improper payments.
- Updating our **Benefit Payment Control** system to better monitor benefit payments.

- Enhancing our **New Hire Registry**, a program that eliminates improper payments by cross-matching new hires with Unemployment Insurance claimants.
- Implementing the **Inmate Cross-match** program, which cross-matches UI claims with municipal, county and state prison records to keep incarcerated individuals from collecting UI benefits.
- Launching the **Wage Cross-match** program that catches UI fraud by comparing UI payment records with quarterly employer wage records.

These efforts at reducing and stopping improper payments reflect OESC's continued dedication to protecting the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. By keeping the fund strong, OESC ensures that Oklahoma is ready to meet any and all economic challenges.

Recovering Improper Payments

If the improper payment is due to administrative error, it's recouped through an offset of UI benefits provided the claimant files a second claim within two years of the improper payment and is eligible for benefits. If the improper payment is due to fraud or claimant error, the claimant may enter into a repayment plan. Otherwise, formal collection actions are taken, which can include offsetting future UI benefits regardless of time frame, garnishing wages, intercepting tax refunds and levying lottery winnings.

In 2014, OESC established 1,544 fraud improper payments in the amount of \$3,120,420 and 7,250 non-fraud improper payments totaling \$3,354,231. All told, we recovered \$4,703,388 in total overpayments over the year, a 16 percent increase from 2013.

Garnishment Program

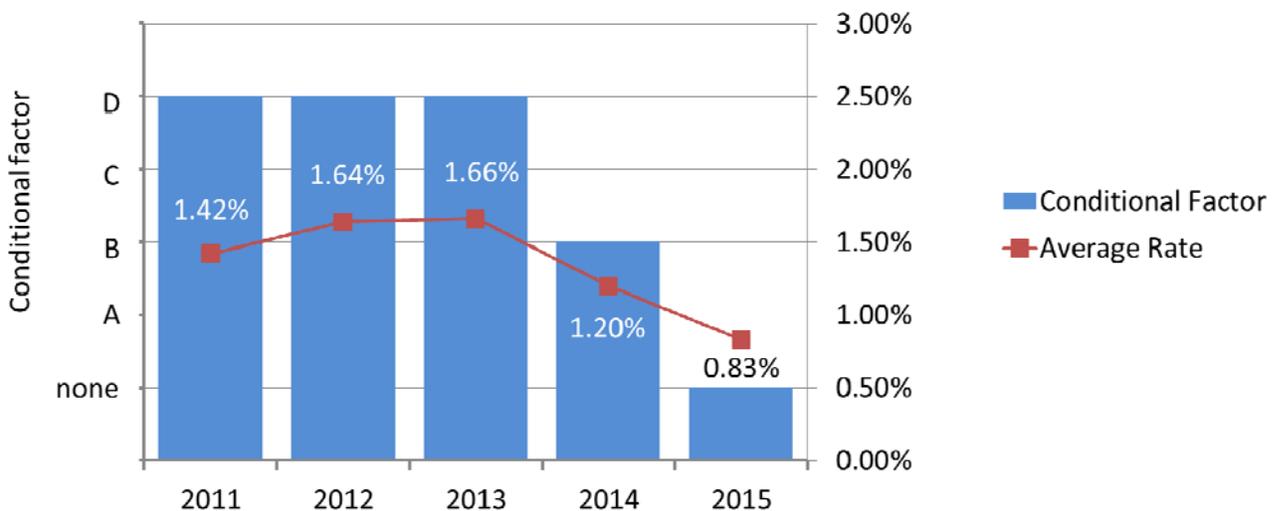
A major tool in recouping improper payments is OESC’s wage garnishment program. Money retrieved through the program is returned to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. In 2014, OESC recovered \$100,716 in Unemployment Insurance benefit payments made due to fraud or claimant error.

Oklahoma’s Experience-rated Contribution System

Under Oklahoma’s experience-rated contribution system, employers with few or no former employees claiming Unemployment Insurance have a contribution rate lower than employers with many former employees filing against the system. Contributions are deposited in the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund to pay benefits.

The conditional factor is a measure of the Unemployment Insurance system’s health used to determine the employer contribution rate schedule for a given year. Conditional factors range from none (lowest) to D (highest).

Conditional Factors and Average Employer Contribution Rates, 2011-2015



Adapting to Meet Changing Customer Needs

OESC constantly strives to enhance the customer experience to improve efficiency and create positive and lasting impacts on Oklahoma's workforce. By focusing on leveraging technology, implementing new methods to get UI claimants reemployed as quickly as possible and addressing the needs of those for whom English isn't a first language, OESC made the state workforce system more effective in 2014. Continued improvement is one of OESC's cornerstones in building a world-class workforce system that serves all customers while keeping up with their ever-changing needs.

OKJobMatch.com

OKJobMatch.com (OKJM), OESC's web-based labor exchange tool, revolutionizes how employers and job seekers connect. OKJM pulls together job vacancies from thousands of sources to provide one of the largest selections of job vacancies available.

OKJobMatch.com Highlights for 2014

- 97,330** - Resumes active on OKJobMatch.com.
- 563** - Average number of accounts created by Unemployment Insurance claimants each week.
- 20,708** - Websites from which OKJobMatch.com searches for and collects additional job openings.

There are three main components of OKJobMatch.com: the Career Explorer module for job seekers, the Focus Talent module for employers and the Focus Assist module for workforce staff.

Improving Customer Experience

Career Explorer is a comprehensive job search tool that matches job seeker skills with open jobs and helps with building a resume. With a few clicks, OKJM automatically matches skills and other qualifications to relevant jobs. The Career Explorer module also:

- Automatically finds real-time job postings that match the job seeker's skills and other qualifications.
- Searches real-time job postings by location, posting date, keywords, occupation, industry, education and salary. Search criteria can be saved to allow job seekers to update search results whenever desired.
- Uses saved searches to alert job seekers about highly relevant job leads as soon as they become available.
- Enables job seekers to compare themselves with others and identify any gaps by displaying the qualifications of real people hired for the kind of jobs the job seeker is pursuing.

Focus Talent is an easy way for employers to find qualified candidates with the right skills. It helps reduce the extraordinary costs of traditional recruitment by filling key openings more rapidly, identifying employee skill gaps relative to current needs and determining where qualified candidates are located within the state. Focus Talent also:

- Allows employers to upload, improve or create a job posting. Job postings are created by answering questions about typical work activities of similar jobs and adding related keywords or copying text from current job listings.
- Analyzes every resume received in minute detail to evaluate a candidate's qualifications, skill gaps and likely career path.
- Searches for relevant talent from the Oklahoma Talent Bank using automated pattern-based matching.

Focus Assist allows staff to identify job seekers with the right skills for employers, easily match qualified candidates to jobs and efficiently fill positions for employers. Focus Assist also:

- Manages all aspects of job orders for employers.
- Reviews job seeker resumes to find qualified matches.
- Contacts job seekers regarding job referrals or UI claimants regarding required service activities.

Intensive Reemployment Services

To put Unemployment Insurance claimants back to work quickly, OESC identifies the claimants unlikely to return to their previous jobs or occupations. These UI claimants receive intensive reemployment services designed to help them overcome any barriers.

Intensive Reemployment Services offered to UI claimants include:

- Introducing UI claimants to the OESC Workforce Center and all available reemployment services.
- Designing a Reemployment Needs Inventory, providing needed assessments and devising a work history/resume review.
- Registering with OKJobMatch.com.
- Determining employment goals and reviewing labor market information.
- Developing an Individual Service Plan for the UI claimant.
- Enrolling the UI claimant in a job search workshop.
- Referring the UI claimant to reemployment services, such as job referrals, resume assistance and job skills practice.
- Following up with the UI claimant to ensure that all their needs are met and all reemployment services have been provided.

Improving Customer Experience

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Although many of our customers read, write, speak and understand English, there are also a large number of individuals for whom English is not their primary language. For these Limited English Proficiency (LEP) customers, language can be a barrier to accessing OESC's services. OESC organized an LEP committee to eliminate this barrier by looking into and addressing LEP issues when they arise. The committee consists of OESC staff, bilingual employers and others who work closely with LEP populations. By sharing knowledge and best practices, the LEP committee can prepare for and prevent LEP issues that can impact our customers.



**ALL INDIVIDUALS
HAVE THE RIGHT TO FREE
LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE**

Individuals with a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English are entitled to language assistance. You have the right to request an interpreter in your language.

As a recipient of federal funds, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) must take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access for all clients of the programs, services and activities offered. OESC has bilingual resources available to help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) at no cost.

**LIMITED
ENGLISH
PROFICIENCY
ASSISTANCE
IT'S YOUR RIGHT!**



For more information please call 1.888.980.9675 or visit the nearest Workforce Oklahoma Office or call 405.557.7255.

Equal Opportunity Employer Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with a disability.



**TODAS LA PERSONAS
TIENEN DERECHO A AYUDA
LINGÜÍSTICA GRATIS**

Las personas con una capacidad limitada para leer, escribir, hablar o entender el inglés tienen derecho a recibir ayuda lingüística. Usted tiene derecho a pedir un intérprete en su idioma.

Como receptor de fondos federales, la Comisión para la Seguridad del Empleo de Oklahoma (OESC, por sus siglas en inglés) debe tomar medidas razonables para asegurar el acceso significativo de todos los clientes de los programas, servicios y actividades ofrecidas. La OESC cuenta con recursos bilingües disponibles para ayuda a las personas un conocimiento limitado del inglés (LEP, por sus siglas en inglés) sin costo alguno.

**¡AYUDA PARA
UN CONOCIMIENTO
LIMITADO
DEL INGLÉS
ES SU DERECHO!**



Para más información, por favor llame al 1.888.980.9675 o visite la Oficina de Workforce Oklahoma cercana o llame 405.557.7255.

Empleador/Programa de igualdad de oportunidades. Ayudas y servicios auxiliares están disponibles a pedido de personas con discapacidades.

Leveraging Partnerships for Efficiency

To maximize our resources, OESC works with a variety of partners throughout the state to ensure that services are not duplicated and resources are directed to their intended beneficiaries rather than administrative costs.

Key OESC Partnerships

The Governor’s Council for Workforce & Economic Development:

The Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development brings together leaders from business, government, education and non-profit organizations to jointly devise ways to coordinate workforce development with economic development. In addition to representation on the Council, OESC supports this important effort by providing a variety of data and expertise to the group.

Workforce Investment Boards: OESC is closely connected to Oklahoma’s nine Workforce Investment Boards. Workforce Investment Boards ensure that education and training systems align with employer demands and focus on expanding the skills of Oklahoma’s workforce. The goal is a skilled pipeline of workers available to meet the needs of Oklahoma employers. OESC shares staff and Workforce Center space with the Workforce Investment Boards and provides technical support for workforce programs.

Oklahoma State Legislature: OESC works hand-in-hand with the Oklahoma State Legislature on legislation that impacts the state workforce system. In addition to proposing amendments to state law and administrative rules to reflect changes in other state and federal laws, OESC consults with legislators and committees on exactly how proposed laws or adjustments to existing law could impact the state workforce system, UI claimants, employers and job seekers.

Partnering and Community Outreach

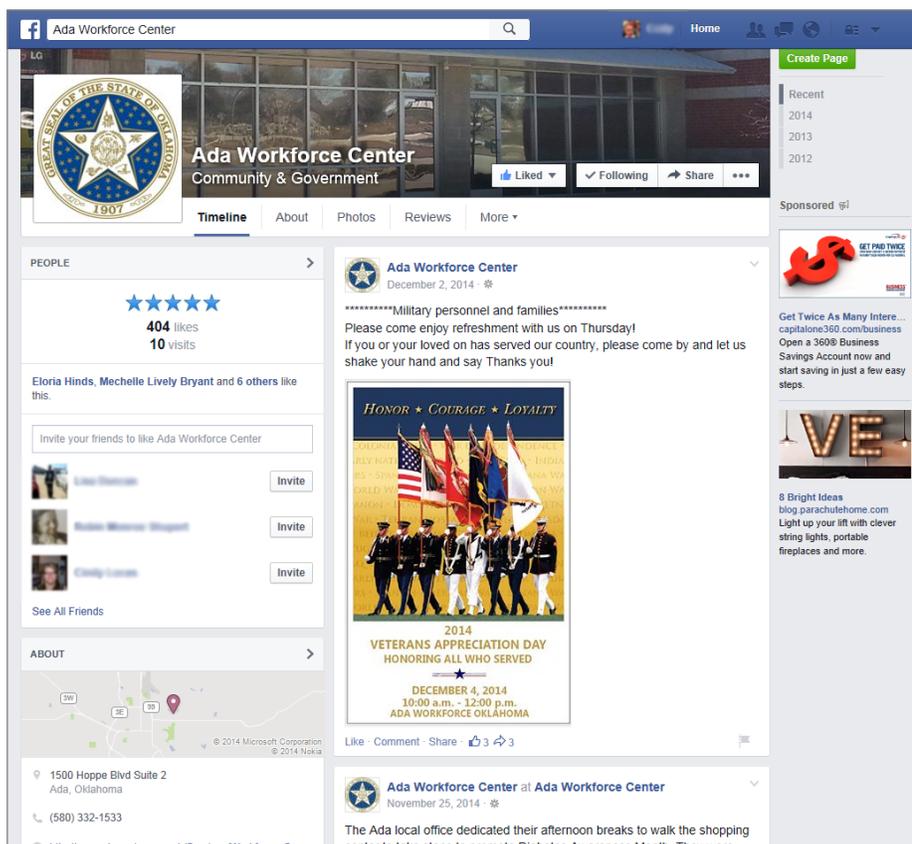
Outreach Through Social Media

In order to meet our customer demands and provide better and more efficient services, OESC is now accessible through Twitter and Facebook.

Twitter: OESC's official agency Twitter account, @OESCnews, keeps followers up-to-date on OESC-related events, services and news releases. Twitter provides a vast network to raise public awareness about issues important to OESC and the state workforce system. Twitter allows us to communicate instantly and interactively with our customers.

Facebook: Every OESC Workforce Center manages its own Facebook account. Giving each OESC Workforce Center control of its Facebook page allows the Center to customize how it utilizes

Facebook based on the preferences of its' local customers. Centers can post upcoming events, open jobs, photos of center happenings and anything else desired. The result is OESC Workforce Centers becoming more a part of and responsive to their local communities. Oklahoma is one of the only states to take this approach to using Facebook for agency business.



Accomplishments and Acknowledgements

The hard work and success of OESC staff was recognized during 2014. These acknowledgements reflect our dedication to our customers and mission and serve as a source of great pride for our agency.

Agency Awards

OESC staff members are honored within the agency each year in a number of ways.

Special Thanks and Recognition (STAR) Awards: OESC's Special Thanks And Recognition (STAR) Awards are given to agency employees who demonstrate quality service or extraordinary performance, professionalism, kindness or outreach to a customer, client or co-worker. STAR Award winners for 2014 were:

- **Shauna Russell**, Travel Coordinator.
- **Karen Davis**, Payroll Administrator/Retirement Coordinator.
- **Debbie Harrell**, Workforce Services Specialist IV in Sand Springs.
- **Patricia Mathews**, Workforce Service Specialist III in Sapulpa.
- **Lisa Tyre**, Administrative Programs Officer II at the Tulsa UI Adjudication Center.



2014 STAR winners: (Left to right) Shauna Russell, Lisa Tyre, Karen Davis, Patricia Mathews, Debbie Harrell.

Awards and Recognition

Certified Public Manager Program: The Certified Public Manager (CPM) program is a comprehensive management-training program for state government employees designed to improve service to the citizens of Oklahoma. The program helps agencies to identify and develop the skills of Oklahoma state government's future leaders. CPM participants become better resources for their agency through seminars, exams, job-related projects and management skill enhancement. In 2014, OESC's Certified Public Manager graduates were:

- **Danielle Dunnier**, Supervisor of Appeal Processing.
- **Michael Wohnoutka**, Administrative Programs Officer.
- **Harold Wright**, Claims Adjudicator.

Other Awards

In 2014, groups other than OESC also recognized our staff for their excellent work with the following awards.

Richard McPherson, Executive Director

- Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Alumni Celebration 2014 State Workforce Champion Award

Jon Eller, Director of Reemployment Services – Targeted Populations

- America's Job Link Alliance (AJLA) Award for Long-standing Leadership

Kim Burney, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) at the Lawton Workforce Center

- 2014 American Legion DVOP of the Year

**Ryan Davis, Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER)
at the Muskogee Workforce Center**

- 2014 Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) LVER of the Year

**Kelli Campbell, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist
(DVOP) at the Tulsa Eastgate Workforce Center**

- 2014 Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) DVOP of the Year

**Robert Phillips, Local Veterans Employment Representative
(LVER) at the Lawton Workforce Center**

- 2014 Disabled American Veterans (DAV) LVER of the Year
- 2014 American Legion LVER of the Year

Committees

By serving on committees for national organizations, OESC ensures that Oklahoma has a voice in the national conversation about workforce-related issues.

Richard McPherson, Executive Director

- Treasurer, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Executive Committee

Teresa Thomas Keller, Deputy Director

- Vice Chair, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Equal Opportunity Committee

**Pete Shipman, Assistant Director of Reemployment Services –
Customer Service**

- Chair, National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES) Operation Committee

Awards and Recognition

Karl Jahnke, Director of Appeals

- President, National Association of Unemployment Insurance Appeals Professionals (NAUIAP)

Chris Tyler, Chief Hearing Officer

- Chair, Web Site Committee for National Association of Unemployment Insurance Appeals Professionals (NAUIAP) Board of Governors

Agency Recognition

Quality Oklahoma Team Day

Each year, Quality Oklahoma Team Day recognizes successful projects completed by agency work teams that demonstrate employee initiative, collaboration and accomplishment. Two OESC-related projects were honored at the 2014 Quality Oklahoma Team Day celebration.

Supply Requisition Improvement

Governor's Commendation for Excellence

OESC's supply requisition improvement project was awarded a Governor's Commendation for Excellence at the 2014 Quality Oklahoma Team Day. The project was undertaken by the agency's Lean Government team. The supply requisitioning process has long been a problem for OESC Workforce Centers. Previously, the Centers had to order copy paper, toilet tissue and other supplies through the OESC state office requisition staff and wait up to six weeks to receive the supplies. A team examined the process and created a more responsive method to order needed supplies. The new supply requisition process saved time by improving wait times to about one week and saved money for the agency by eliminating many printed forms.

Adults Need Vaccines Too: OKHealth Wellness Statewide Immunization Clinics

Governor's Commendation for Excellence

OESC helped organize this initiative and was recognized as an integral part of its success. The OKHealth Wellness Program, in partnership with Passport Health Oklahoma and state insurance providers, designed and implemented a statewide immunization clinic initiative for approximately 60 state agencies. These clinics ultimately reached 57 Oklahoma counties, including the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metropolitan areas. Over 8,500 state employees and dependents were immunized with no out-of-pocket expense. In addition to the influenza vaccine, immunizations such as Tdap (tetanus and pertussis), pneumonia, shingles and hepatitis-B were provided. The goal was to promote healthier work environments for employees while realizing cost savings to the state.



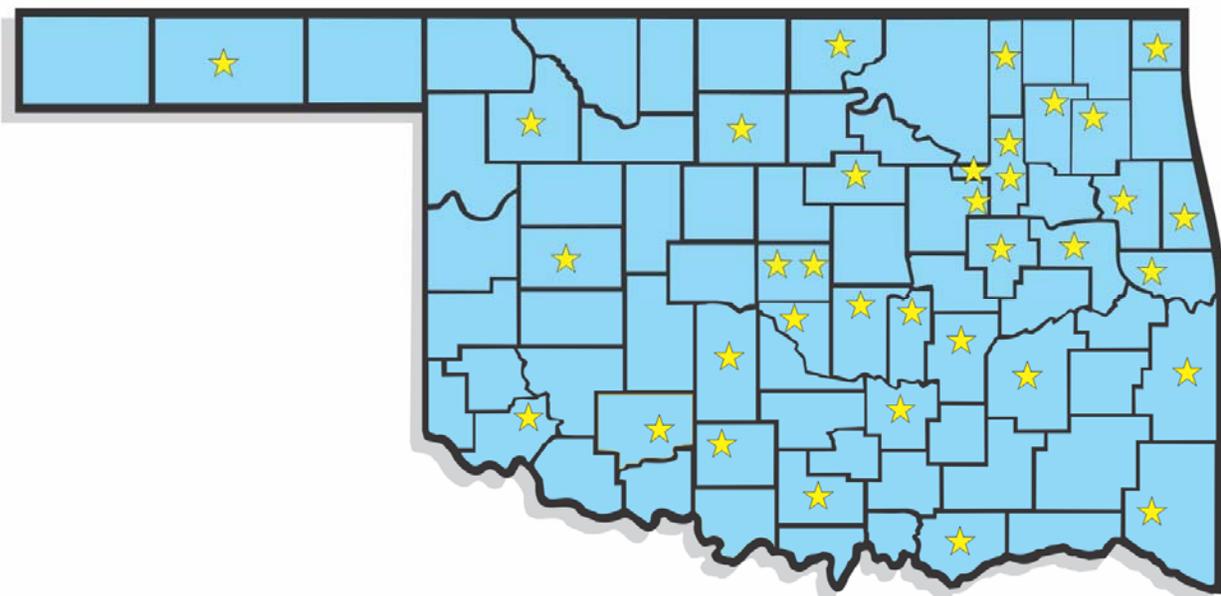
OESC Senior Staff at the OESC Staff Appreciation Luncheon held in December in Oklahoma City. (Front, left to right) Teresa Thomas Keller, Lisa Graven, Shalonda Sanders, Emma Woodford. (Back, left to right) Richard McPherson, Anna Johnson, John Miley, Jon Eller, Karl Jahnke, Mike Evans, Lynn Gray. Not pictured: Lisa Hoelscher, Susie Kosek.

Workforce Center Locations

Serving Customers Across Oklahoma

OESC Workforce Centers are strategically located throughout the state, ensuring access for every labor market. Contact information for all OESC Workforce Centers, including addresses, phone and fax numbers, and hours of operation, can be found at <http://oesc.ok.gov>.

Ada	Idabel	Sallisaw
Altus	Lawton	Sand Springs
Ardmore	McAlester	Sapulpa
Bartlesville	Miami	Seminole
Chickasha	Muskogee	Shawnee
Claremore	Norman	Stillwater
Clinton	OKC – Brookwood	Stilwell
Duncan	OKC – Eastside	Tahlequah
Durant	Okmulgee	Tulsa – Eastgate
Enid	Ponca City	Tulsa – Skyline
Guymon	Poteau	Woodward
Holdenville	Pryor	



OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION

**P. O. Box 52003
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Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405.557.7100
<http://oesc.ok.gov>**

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**Equal Opportunity Employer / Programs
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities**