

PREFERRED WORKER Adviser

Summer 2002

Information for Preferred Workers who haven't yet used their return-to-work incentives

Let us help you find a job! *by Barbara Smith*

Employers who know about the Preferred Worker Program and want Preferred Worker applicants sometimes call the Reemployment Assistance office to ask for help. At last — we're happy we now have a way to help them find you! And we're happy to announce that we also

Preferred Worker Job Match

Go to www.oregonwcd.org and click on the Preferred Worker Job Match button.

have a way to inform you about employers who are looking for

Preferred Workers! Welcome to the Job Match Program!

Here's how it works: We are advertising to employers that they can post job openings on the Workers' Compensation Division Web site if they want Preferred Workers to apply. They can call the Reemployment Assistance Unit with their job orders or submit information about themselves and the job on the Internet.

As a Preferred Worker, you can access Job Match through WCD's Web site, www.oregonwcd.org.

For each job, the employer may post the job title, description, location, how to apply, required skills, and the wage. It also lists a contact person's name and telephone number. You can contact employers directly using the methods they request in their job announcements. When you do, tell them you are a Preferred Worker who saw the job posting on the Preferred Worker Job Match Web site.

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Preparing for your interview *by Jerry Rutherford*

The 30 minutes to an hour you spend in a job interview can change your life. You don't want to be so nervous that it interferes with how you do. Nor do you want to appear unprepared or indifferent. The best remedy for these potential mistakes is to prepare for the interview.

Research the company. Know the company's products or services, where its plants, offices, or stores are located, what its growth has been, and what its growth potential is. If the company is large, you may find this information in the library or in brochures or annual reports from the company's human resources department.

Think of questions you will ask during the interview. An interview is a two-way process. Asking questions will show enthusiasm for the job and give you information about whether the job will meet *your* needs. Ask for details about the job. What are the company growth plans? What particular challenges does the company face? What's the next step in the hiring process?

Try to anticipate what questions the interviewer might ask you and prepare answers to those questions. If the job is technical, the interviewer may ask questions to determine whether your technical knowledge and skills match the job. You may be asked to demonstrate your skills.

The interviewer also will want to learn as much as possible about who you are and how you work. A list of questions you might expect is below. Add any questions you especially dread to the list. Prepare good answers for all the questions.

- Why did you choose this particular type of work?
- What do you think determines a person's progress in a company?
- What's the worst mistake you've ever made? What did you do about it?
- What are your special abilities?
- What type(s) of people rub you the wrong way?
- Give examples of how you've shown initiative and a willingness to work.

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Meet Shelly Culbertson *by Ursulla Bischoff*



If you have used any area of the Preferred Worker Program, you may have had an opportunity to talk to Shelly Culbertson, reimbursement

technician. Shelly is directly responsible for assigning incoming contracts to our reemployment specialists and consultants as well as processing wage subsidy reimbursement requests. At times, she assists with ordering replacements for lost Preferred Worker cards. She

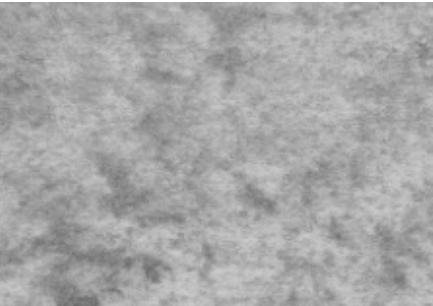
also processes approved contracts and payment vouchers for premium exemption, wage subsidy, obtained employment purchases, and worksite modifications.

Shelly began her career with the State of Oregon in 1997 at the Office of the State Fire Marshal. She began working as an office specialist 1 and later promoted into her position with the Preferred Worker Program. While working for the State Fire Marshal's office, she gained a broader knowledge of the state system by assisting with survey processing for the Hazardous Materials Survey Unit. She then transferred to the WCD's Preferred Worker Program, where she is today.

Shelly appreciates her job and enjoys the variety of work and the opportunity to communicate with her internal and external customers on a daily basis.

Shelly lives in Salem with her husband Josh and children Jillian and Gavin. She is expecting her third child in July. She has to schedule her free time carefully due to her busy family life, but she still finds time to read novels, watch movies, and spend time with friends.

Shelly's e-mail address is shelly.a.culbertson@state.or.us. ■



Lost cards

Call if you can't find your Preferred Worker card: (800) 445-3948, or (503) 947-7993 (TTY). We'll send you a replacement. ■

Administrator, Workers' Compensation Division

John Shilts

Reemployment assistance

Salem office (800) 445-3948

Medford office (800) 696-7161

Web site address www.oregonwcd.org

Contributors

Ursulla Bischoff ursulla.j.bischoff@state.or.us

Jerry Rutherford gerald.v.rutherford@state.or.us

Barbara Smith barbara.r.smith@state.or.us

Linda Strunk linda.k.strunk@state.or.us

Bob Williams robert.t.williams@state.or.us

Editor, WCD Administration, Communications Unit

Kara Null kara.r.null@state.or.us

Phone (503) 947-7523

Design and production, DCBS Communications

Karen Murray

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FAQs about obtained-employment purchases *by Linda Strunk*

Q I just started a new job. This will be my second employer since becoming a Preferred Worker. On my first job, I was required to purchase work clothes and several tools for my job under the obtained employment purchase agreement. My new employer also requires me to bring certain tools for the job. Can I request tools again under the obtained employment purchase agreement?

A Yes, as long as the tools requested are not a duplication of the previous purchase and are required and not provided by the employer. Maximum amount allowed for the tool category is \$2,000.

Q I received moving assistance from the Preferred Worker Program in July 2001. Am I still eligible to request moving assistance under the obtained employment purchase agreement for a second time?

A Unfortunately, since our rules changed in October of 2001, we can only authorize one use of moving assistance per eligibility period. This is true even if the original move came under the old rules. Because you have already received moving assistance during this eligibility period, we could not approve another use.

Q As a Preferred Worker, how many times can I use each category under obtained employment purchases, i.e., clothing, tools and equipment, training, and/or moving expenses?

A You may use each obtained employment purchase category except moving expenses twice during a period of eligibility: once with one employer and once with a different employer. You are allowed only one move within Oregon per eligibility period. ■

Job Match Program *continued from Page 1*

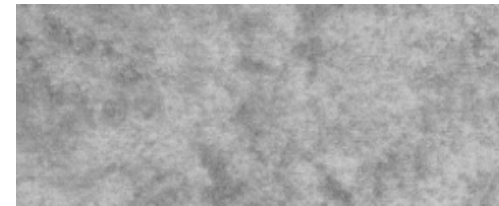
The WCD role in this process is to provide information to Preferred Workers about job openings for which Preferred Worker applicants are being sought. We don't screen employers for you, and we don't screen applicants for the employers. It's up to you to assess the employers you contact and determine whether you want to work for them.

If you don't have a computer at home, you can use them in most public libraries and at Employment Department field offices. You can

also call the Reemployment Assistance Unit at (800) 445-3948 or (503) 947-7588 and ask Preferred Worker Program staff members to check the Job Match site for the kind of job you are seeking.

Visit Job Match at the WCD Web site, www.oregonwcd.org.

Please let us know how it works for you. We are also interested in your ideas for improvement of this new program. ■



Preparing for your interview *continued from Page 1*

- Describe your role and contribution to a team effort. Why did the team succeed or fail?
- What's your strongest quality?
- Why did you leave your last job (or any job relevant to the position you're applying for)?
- Give an example of a pressure situation for you. How did you handle it?
- If you could change one thing about your personality, what would it be? Why?
- What's your ideal job and career path?
- What are your salary expectations?
- What accomplishment are you most proud of?
- Is there anything you'd like to say to close the interview?

Preparing for the interview is sure to give you more confidence. While it requires an investment in time and effort, who better to invest in than yourself? ■

Dolly lightens ladder work *by Bob Williams*

Worker disability:

A 41-year-old fire-extinguisher technician had a bad fall from a ladder while installing sprinklers. The fall ruptured his L5 vertebral disc and resulted in a 25-pound-maximum restriction on lifting and carrying.

Work setting:

The employer at injury brought the worker back into regular work, but the technician had problems lifting and carrying 24-foot extension ladders, which weigh more than 45 pounds. The technician, who generally worked alone, had no one to help him carry a ladder on the job. Compounding the problem was the necessity to use relatively heavy fiberglass extension ladders, which prevented possible electrical shock. The lighter aluminum ladders do not have shock-protection composition.

Obstacle:

When servicing overhead extinguisher nozzles, the technician had to lift the heavy ladder from his work van's ladder rack and carry it 100-300 feet to the worksite.

Modification:

To get the ladder off the van rack, the Preferred Worker Program purchased a ladder-lowering rack that moved the ladder from the top of the van, over the side, and down to shoulder height. This allowed the technician to lift one end at a time to set the ladder on the ground. Lifting only one end at a time meant that he had to lift only half the weight of the ladder, which was just within his lifting limitations. Once the ladder was on the ground, the technician attached a simple, light-



weight wheeled dolly that bore half the ladder weight to the worksite.

The technician changed the manner in which he handled heavy equipment and used tools to cut his lifting by half.

Cost of modification:

The ladder dolly cost \$35 plus shipping. The EZ-One EZ-Ladder Loader was retail priced at \$1,008. ■

440-3269 (7/02/COM)



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Workers' Compensation Division
350 Winter St. NE, Room 27
Salem, OR 97301-3879

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