

## Events & Announcements

# Portland & Seattle News Briefs

## Mayor Wheeler Hires New Deputy Chief of Staff

On May 30, the Office of Mayor Ted Wheeler announced the hire of Jamal Fox as the Mayor's new Deputy Chief of Staff.

Fox comes with a background in local government, most recently serving as the Property & Business Development Manager for Portland Parks & Recreation. Fox was elected to the Greensboro City Council in North Carolina at the age of 25. He was later re-elected, serving until 2017.

Fox takes over the role left vacant after the Mayor promoted his then Deputy Chief of Staff, Kristin Dennis, to Chief of Staff earlier this year.

Prior to being elected Greensboro City Council, Fox worked for the City of Greensboro in the City Manager's Office and the Department of Planning and Community Development and is also a former North Carolina A&T State University Political Science Adjunct Professor.

## Proposed Washington State Rule Would Restore Labor Protections for Thousands of Overtime-Exempt Workers

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) has formally filed a proposed rule that would restore overtime protections for thousands of Washington workers. The proposed changes would significantly increase the minimum amount employees must earn before they can be exempt from receiving overtime pay.

The proposal also updates the test used to determine who qualifies for the overtime exemption, and more closely aligns the state rule with federal standards.

The agency will hold public hearings around the state throughout the summer and offer other opportunities for people to provide input.

Washington's overtime rules, last updated in 1976, haven't changed in more than 40 years. During that time, the percentage of "white collar" workers who are considered exempt from overtime and other worker protections has grown substantially. Meanwhile, the minimum amount exempt workers must earn in the state has remained unchanged. As a result, some salaried workers can be paid less than minimum wage, don't receive overtime, and are not entitled to paid sick leave.

The formal proposed rule is the next step in a multi-year process that has involved two pre-draft rules, multiple public feedback sessions, and several meetings with business, labor, and nonprofit representatives to exchange ideas.

## Steady increases proposed to restore eroding worker protections

Washington employers are currently using the federal threshold, which allows salaried workers to be "exempt" from overtime if they perform certain types of work and are paid at least \$455 per week, or about \$24,000 per year.

The current state threshold, which was last updated 43 years ago, sets a level that's even lower, at \$13,000. Washington's proposed rule calls for restoring the protections by setting higher salary thresholds set as a percentage of the state minimum wage. Increases would be phased in over several years depending on the size of the employer.

To meet the requirements, employers with 50 or fewer employees would have to pay exempt workers approximately \$675 a week, or about \$35,000 per year, beginning July 1, 2020. Larger companies would



## Melanie Stevens Exhibit Wa Na Wari House

Portland artist Melanie Stevens talks about her work titled "If You're Watching This, It's Too Late" June 2 at the Wa Na Wari House in Seattle's Central District. The Wa Na Wari House is dedicated to presenting the art and culture of Black people. Since its opening two months ago, it has shown the work of several artists, screened films, held workshops, poetry readings and musical performances. Stevens' work will remain on display through Aug. 1.

have to pay exempt workers approximately \$945 a week, or about \$49,000 per year.

Those amounts would increase yearly based on a formula that uses the state's minimum wage. The changes could impact more than 250,000 workers by 2026. At that time, exempt salaried workers would have to be paid at least 2.5 times minimum wage and meet the job-duties test.

## Simplifying test to determine if an employee can be considered exempt

Along with updating the required salary threshold, the proposed rule would change the method used in Washington to determine if an employee is doing work that allows them to be classified as exempt. The state currently uses two "duties tests" to make this determination. Under the proposal, they'd be combined into one test that would align more closely with the method used at the federal level. The change would make the process simpler for employers, and increase the likelihood that workers are correctly classified.

## EPA Selects Nine Pacific Northwest and Alaska Projects to Receive \$4.59 Million for Cleanup and assessment

This week the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is announcing that nine Northwest and Alaska communities have been selected to receive a total of \$4.59 million to assess and clean up contaminated properties under the agency's brownfields program. They include the following sites:

### Beaverton, Oregon

*Assessment Grant: \$200,000 hazardous substances, \$100,000 petroleum*

EPA has selected the City of Beaverton for a Brownfields Assessment Grant. Community-wide hazardous substances and petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct 10 Phase I and five Phase II environmental site assessments. Grant funds also will be used to develop a Public Involvement Plan and conduct community engagement and cleanup planning activities. The target area for this grant is the Creekside District located in Beaverton's downtown.

### Prosper Portland, Oregon

*Cleanup Grant/OPPORTUNITY ZONE: \$500,000 hazardous substances*

Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to clean up the former USPS Portland Processing and Distribution Center located at 715 NW Hoyt Street in the City of Portland. The 14-acre site is located in an area known as the Broadway Corridor, which is near Portland's Central Business District. The site is contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, ethylbenzene and metals. Grant funds also will be used to conduct community outreach activities, such as convening public meetings and developing fact sheets and webpages.

### City of Olympia, Washington

*Assessment Grant: \$500,000 hazardous substances, \$100,000 petroleum*

Community-wide hazardous substances grant funds will be used to conduct ten Phase I and eight Phase II environmental site assessments and develop four cleanup plans. Coalition partners are the Port of Olympia and the Olympia Metropolitan Park District.

# Community Calendar 2019

## Portland Metro

**THURSDAY, JUNE 6 - SATURDAY, JUNE 29**

**'SMOKE SCREEN' EXHIBITION:** Portland artist Bonnie Halfpenny created 'Smoke Screen' to commemorate the victims of gun violence in the United States. In total, 283 victims of gun violence are represented in this mixed media art installation. Free, North Portland Library, 512 N Killingsworth St. Hours: Monday - Tuesday: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m., Wednesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sunday 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 11**

**ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE:** (AFA) will host the National Alzheimer's and Caregiver Educational Conference in Portland to empower the public through information, connecting attendees with resources about Alzheimer's Disease, neurological health, and caregiving tips. Attendees will be able to participate in confidential memory screenings free of charge. Free, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), 1945 SE Water Avenue.

**PCCEP STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:** Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing for (PCCEP) strives to achieve equitable policing and community engagement by working with members of the local community, the Portland Police Bureau, the Police Commissioner and others. Event organizers will provide snacks and refreshments. Free, 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m., The PCCEP Office, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 250.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 15**

**FREE SWIMMING LESSONS REGISTRATION:** Portland Parks & Recreation outdoor pools open for the summer on June 18. Walk-in registration for free swimming lessons will begin June 15 at neighborhood pools around the city. Contact Portland Parks via phone at (503)823-PLAY or online at [www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/78739](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/78739) for more information. Free, 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Neighborhood Portland Parks & Recreation pools.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19**

**2019 TALK 'N TASTE:** Speaker Lisa Barnes, Ph.D. a Professor of Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine will explain African American cognitive aging risk factors and discuss results from the recent Minority Aging Research Study. Attendees will also learn helpful exercises and lifestyle habits to promote healthy aging. Healthy snacks from Joyce Smith-McGee of Pans, Pots & Skillet Catering will be provided. Free, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m., Cerimon House, 5131 NE 23rd Avenue.

**OREGON'S ENIGMATIC BLACK HISTORY:** The Oregon Historical Society is hosting this lecture to analyze Oregon's racial history including the pro-Union Civil War era leadership and Oregon's Constitution originally banning freed African Americans. Portland Community College history professor James Stanley Harrison will lead the lecture. Free, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Oregon Historical Society, 1200 SW Park Avenue.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 22**

**'TOGETHER WE RISE' JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION:** The Vancouver NAACP is hosting the annual Vancouver and Clark County Juneteenth Celebration. A live panel discussion with Vancouver Mayor, Anne McEnerny, community educators and law enforcement officials is scheduled for 4 p.m. The event also includes a diversity career fair and a racial justice awards ceremony. Free, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Clark College, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way in Vancouver.

## Seattle Metro

**FRIDAY, JUNE 7**

**'DAMMED TO EXTINCTION' FILM SCREENING:** 'Dammed to Extinction' focuses on orcas and salmon populations, exploring the social, political, and ecological conversations surrounding dams and hydroelectric power in the Pacific Northwest. \$10 minimum donation, 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. (Pre-reception at 5:30 p.m.), The Mountaineers, 7700 Sand Point Way Northeast.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 15**

**A DAY OF PLAY WITH DAD:** The South Bellevue Community Center is hosting a pancake breakfast and a morning of family adventures to celebrate Father's Day weekend. Indoor and outdoor entertainment includes a scavenger hunt, disc golf, a rock-climbing wall and more. \$8 per person (Children 3 and under: Free), 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., South Bellevue Community Center, 14509 SE Newport Way.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 20**

**SEATTLE JOB FAIR:** Explore career opportunities including sales, customer service, financial planning, human resources, retail and more. Interested attendees should dress in business professional attire and bring 10 to 15 printed resumes to distribute to prospective employers. Free, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., SeaTac Airport Embassy Suites Hotel, 15920 W Valley Hwy.