
OREGON STATE CAPITOL VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



Visitor Services

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www.oregonlegislature.gov

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Visitor Services Department

Visitor Services is the non-partisan, welcoming arm of the Oregon State Legislature. We work under Legislative Administration, which provides many different kinds of support to the legislature and building. Our mission is to **support the legislative process by providing solutions, services and facilities for the public good.**

We are:

- Accommodating – We provide a welcoming environment for all who work in and visit the Capitol.
- Efficient – We use processes that create a streamlined experience for visitors, partners, and staff, while supporting Legislators and the legislative process.
- Accessible – We support access to the building and the legislative process.
- Customer Service Oriented – We provide excellent customer service while engaging with the public and delivering inspirational learning opportunities and experiences.

Across the agency, Legislative Administration uses behavioral anchors to root the way we work, engage with one another, and support each department's mission.

These are:

- **Accountable** – We are responsible for our actions and decisions. We accept the consequences for mistakes, and we take pride in doing the right thing
- **Clear thinking** – We filter out the noise and the unimportant to focus on the relevant and essential. We remain calm, composed, and professional in the face of stressful situations.

- **Curious** – We are not satisfied with the status quo if there are improvements to be made. We seek to find better ways to fulfill our mission and vision.
- **Driven** – We are relentless in fulfilling our mission and constantly striving to achieve our vision. We resolve problems and challenges to clear obstacles in our way.
- **Flexible** – We understand change is a constant. We know that priorities can change with little to no notice, and we can pivot to meet emergent needs.
- **Genuine** – We are not disingenuous. We offer our best advice and knowledge to our teammates, partners, and customers always.
- **Giving** – We encourage everyone to embrace opportunities to give back in as many aspects of their lives as possible. We are a service-based organization supporting the public good.
- **Celebrating and Connecting** – We recognize differences and acknowledge team and personal wins by seeking to bring people together: teammates, partners, and customers. We take advantage of opportunities to tear down information barriers and provide solutions and services to connect the public to the legislative branch.

As a volunteer, you are an integral part of Visitor Services, Legislative Administration, and Oregon’s democracy. We strive to serve you with these behavioral anchors, and support you as you employ them in your work with guests, staff, and fellow volunteers.

[Volunteer Program Introduction](#)

Oregon State Capitol Volunteers

The Oregon State Capitol volunteer program has been in existence since 1985. We currently have a strong volunteer base who provide interpretive tours and non-partisan assistance. Volunteers interact with many diverse people including school children, government leaders, and guests from all walks of life from throughout the world. Positions include:

- **Tour Guide** *Lead groups of visitors from 4th graders to foreign dignitaries, interpreting the history of the Capitol and the legislative process. *Lead the seasonally offered, 121-step climb to the Oregon Pioneer (*optional)*
- **Information Kiosk** *Greet and provide information to Legislators, Capitol staff, and visitors*
- **Capitol Store** *Assist in the retail shop, displaying and selling souvenirs and gifts*
- **Legislative Gallery Ushers** *Assist visitors viewing the legislative session in the 3rd floor galleries above the House and Senate Chambers*
- **Special Events** *Assist with Special Events that include:*

February: Oregon's Birthday and Celebration of Statehood

March: Cherry Blossom Day at the Capitol

April: Asian and Pacific Islander Day

July: Concert at the Capitol

August: Multicultural Day

September: Hispanic Heritage Day

October: Oregon's Bounty, A Celebration of the Harvest

November: A Tribute to Veteran's (may be in conjunction with ODVA)

December: "Holidays at the Capitol"

Volunteers may assist with a single special event or serve on an on-going basis. Those who serve on-going are asked to commit to a shift each week; the typical shift is 3.5 hours. Support and training are provided along with an opportunity to participate in educational outings and dine-outs.

Volunteer Extras!

- Free Parking (as space allows)
- Volunteers receive a 10% discount in the Capitol Store
- Volunteer outings and dine-outs
 - *Occasional historic and/or cultural educational outings are offered. No-host gatherings are held several times each year at local restaurants*
- Monthly newsletter
- Annual volunteer recognition event
- Annual holiday party
- Professional Certification for Guides (National Association for Interpretation Certified Interpretive Guide Course for tour)

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Tour Guides

- Greet and assist visitors
- Lead interpretive historical tours and guide visitors through the legislative process

- Direct people to Capitol offices and other state agencies
- Assist with special events

Information Kiosk

- Answer the Visitor Services phone and refer calls appropriately
- Direct people to Capitol offices and other state agencies
- Provide minimal clerical support to Visitor Services staff
- Occasionally assist in other Capitol offices
- Assist with special events

Capitol Store

- Provide retail clerk services for the Capitol Store
- Process transactions using cash register and credit card machines
- Stock and organize merchandise
- Assist with receiving and pricing merchandise
- Clean merchandise and displays
- Provide minimal assistance to the Information Kiosk
- Assist with special events

Legislative Gallery Ushers

- Serve as ushers in the House and the Senate Galleries
- Assist diverse groups of visitors and school tours with seating
- Carry clipboard with daily agenda and building information
- Assist with special events

Special Events

- Serve as greeters and distribute programs at the entrances to the Capitol
- Assist with event set-up
- Survey event attendees
- Assist with displays and activities during the event

[Volunteer Requirements](#)

- Positions may require standing or walking on marble floors

- Ability to work independently on an assigned shift
- Ability to relate harmoniously with diverse visitors and staff
- Ability to communicate information and interpretive messaging to visitors
- Ability to remain non-partisan while on-shift

Volunteer Policies

As members of Visitor Services, we are mindful that we are in the public eye. Our goal is to politely serve all guests, legislators, and others who conduct business at the Capitol. We greatly appreciate *all* our volunteers and want to support and encourage each of you. While we each have our own unique style, it is important that we adhere to strict professional standards.

Volunteers are held to the same standards and policies as all employees of the Oregon State Capitol Legislative Administration.

Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

When in doubt of any policies or procedures, please consult visitor services.

Respectful Workplace

All branch employees, lobbyists, vendors and volunteers must follow the *Respectful Workplace Policy* found here: [link](#). This policy outlines specific behaviors, reporting, and process if a violation is reported. Additionally, everyone covered by this policy must attend a Rule 27 training yearly. Visitor Services will schedule this training with the Legislative Equity Office when needed and work with volunteers to assure completion.

Political Speech and Activity

Follow the Legislative Administrative Policy on Engaging in Political Activity:

No Public Employee Shall Solicit Any Money, Influence, Service or other thing of value...” or otherwise promote, oppose any political committee or promote, oppose the nomination or election of a candidate, gather signatures on an initiative, referendum or recall petition, the adoption of a measure, or the recall of a public office holder while on the job during work hours.

This includes political discussions with fellow volunteers, employees, or members of the public while on-shift. We have a duty to remain non-partisan while helping the public access The People’s Building and participate in Oregon’s democracy.

Safety

Your safety is our number one priority. If at any time a situation feels unsafe, please seek assistance from a staff member, or leave the area. State Police and the Capitol Security Office are on site to assist you if needed.

Panic Buttons:

Panic buttons that summon the State Police are available at the Capitol Store and Information Desk. Press and hold the button for two seconds for it to register.

Non-Emergency Police Services :

To reach the non-emergency OSP line, dial **7-1-503-373-3555**. The +71 is required to dial out on the building phones. On your cell phone, dial ***OSP** or **503-375-3555**.

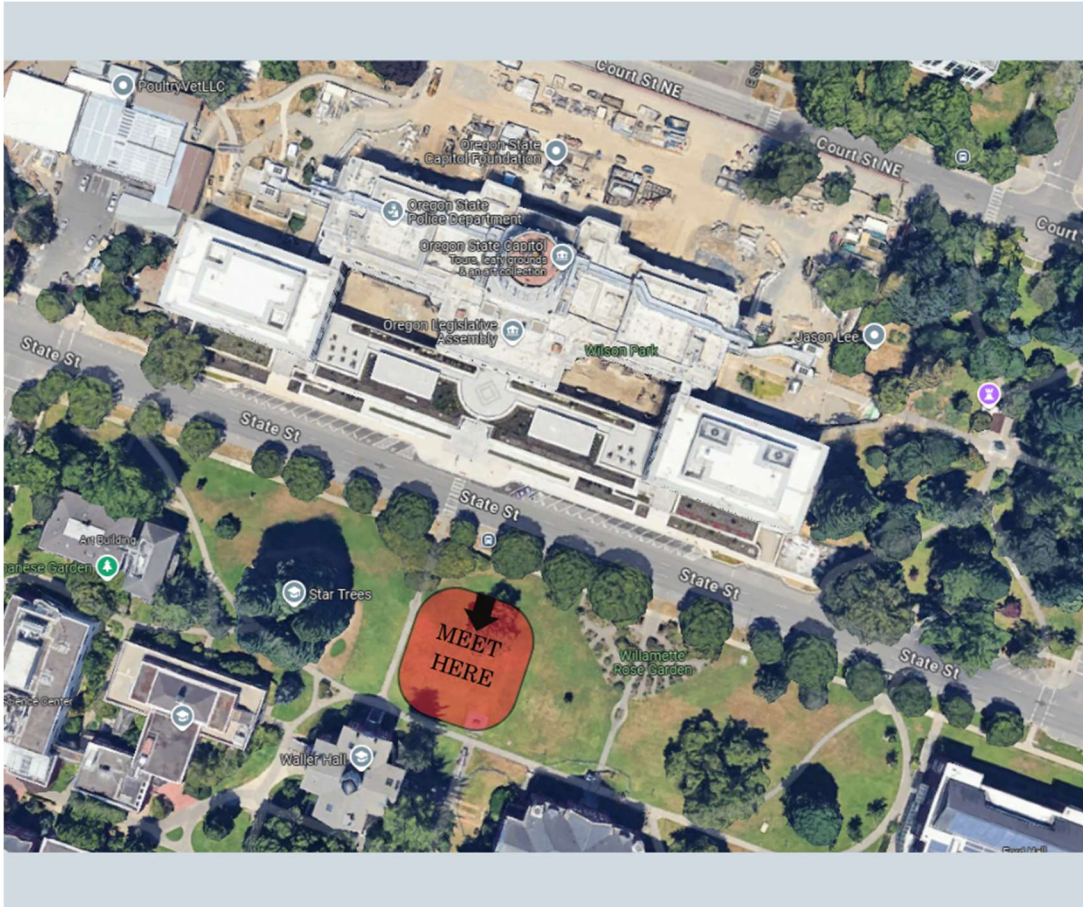
For administrative questions or other business needs, please contact the Capitol Mall Patrol Office. **You must dial 7+1+ the entire phone number, which is 7-1-503-986-1122** (If the State Police office in the Capitol is unoccupied (such as after hours), the phone will be forwarded to dispatch)

Evacuation

The fire alarm will ring to signify an evacuation of the Capitol. All building occupants must exit the building immediately and proceed to their designated assembly area.

Evacuate through the nearest exit, including your entire group if on a tour, and proceed to the nearest check-in area. If this is not the Visitor Services assembly

area described below, inform the safety monitor staff in that location. If we are evacuated, Visitor Services meets in the field at Willamette University in front of Waller Hall, across the street from the Capitol's State St exit. (See below map)



If you are on the tower during an evacuation, stay there until the evacuation is over. Do not use elevators to evacuate the building. Do not exist through the underground parking area. Do not re-enter the building for any reason until instructed to do so. There are blue Emergency Quick Cards available at the Kiosk for reference in case of an emergency.

Dress Code

Attire should reflect the Capitol's professional environment. Dress in the manner you would for an interview or important meeting. No perfumes or strongly scented lotions due to fragrance sensitivities.

All volunteers must also display their:

- Visible ID Badge + Lanyard
- Volunteer vest

Personal Belongings

While on shift we can provide a limited amount of storage for personal belongings. This may include a coat rack and drawer in the kiosk or break area. Belongings are reasonably secured from the public, but volunteers are responsible for the safety of their own belongings. Please do not bring precious or valuable items to store away from your person.

You will have access to:

- Fridge
- Microwave
- Coffee Maker (Keurig)
- Snack cupboard [TBD]

We advise bringing:

- Any medications you may need while on shift
- A sweater/jacket as interior temperatures can fluctuate

Please do not bring:

- Pocketknives
- Mace
- Any other weapons

ID Badge

ID Badges are obtained from Facility Services (location TBD after building reopens), after Visitor Services submits your authorization form and photo.

Your ID badge allows you access to the building through any entrance with a key card reader (excluding the garage) during normal business hours.

If your ID badge is lost or misplaced, please **contact Facility Services immediately (503-986-1360)**. They will deactivate your badge until it is found. If you need a replacement badge, contact Visitor Services to obtain the replacement form. Replacement badges are \$25.

Scheduling and Hours

Absences

Please give notice of planned absences in writing, or email:

volunteers@oregonlegislature.gov

For last minute, unplanned absences, call the **main Visitor Services phone at 503-986-1388**. *Same-day email messages may be missed, please be sure to call in the event you cannot make your shift.*

Hours

Please track your hours at the end of your shift in the Volunteer Binder – Hours Sheet. Round up to the nearest half hour.

Hours will be reported out to you at the end of the month and year. If you need a certificate of hours completed, please email volunteers@oregonlegislature.gov to request one. Please allow 10 working days for receipt of your hours certificate.

Parking

Volunteers may park on State St. in spaces #51-58 with a valid permit. These numbers may change after building reopens.

A valid parking permit must be displayed.

Volunteers are responsible for any citations received.

Parking in designated spaces is available only during your shift as a volunteer.

Media

We ask that volunteers refrain from posting private, sensitive, or otherwise not public information on social media. This includes not taking photos of individuals

working in or visiting the Capitol without express permission. If asked to comment by a member of the media (television, radio, etc.), volunteers should direct the inquiry to staff.

Disciplinary Procedures

In the event of a policy breach, a gradual escalating process will be followed.

- 1st significant infraction: Verbal discussion with Volunteer Coordinator and/or VS Manager
- 2nd significant infraction: Written warning
- 3rd significant infraction: Possible dismissal from Volunteer Program

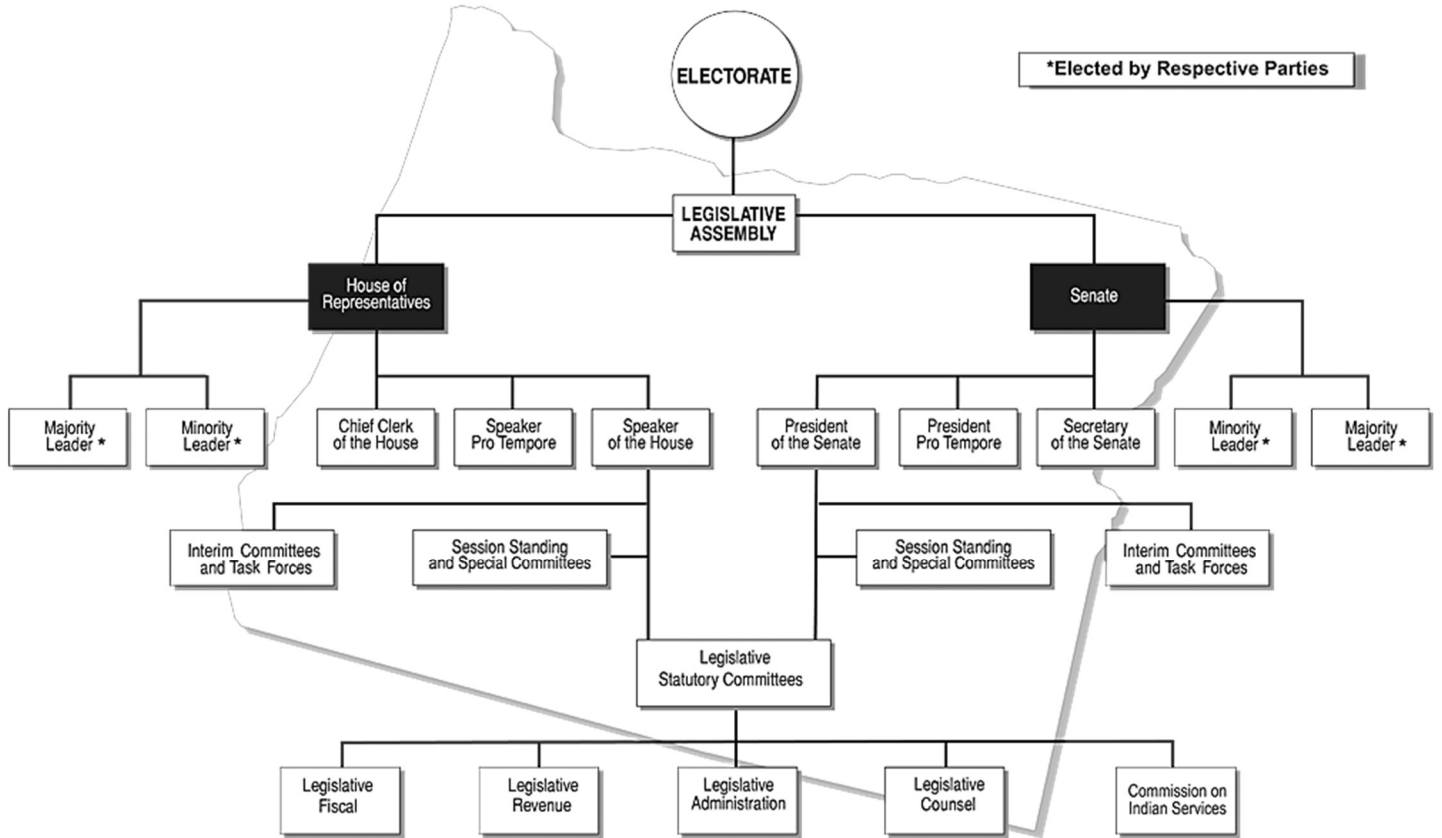
Invitation to Discussion

If you have any questions or concerns about a policy, we invite you to discuss it with us. We want the volunteer program to work for you, and the best way to continue to develop is through collaboration. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable sharing with the team directly, anonymous feedback can be submitted: [Volunteer Feedback - Visit the Oregon Capitol](#)

Helpful Information

Guide to the Legislature

Legislature Organization:



HOW DOES A **BILL** BECOME A **LAW**?

1 EVERY LAW STARTS WITH AN IDEA



That idea can come from anyone, even you! Contact your Legislator to share your idea. If they want to try to make it a law, they will write a bill. Legislators or legislative committees can sponsor a bill.

2 THE BILL IS INTRODUCED

A bill can start in either the Senate or House. The bill is then assigned to a committee.

3 THE BILL GOES TO COMMITTEE

Representatives or Senators meet in a small group to talk about, and make changes to the bill. This is also the time when the public can voice their opinion, like by testifying before committee or writing their legislator. The committee votes to accept or reject the bill and its changes before sending it to: the House or Senate floor for debate.



4 LEGISLATORS DEBATE AND VOTE

Members of the House or Senate can now debate the bill. If the majority vote for and pass the bill, it moves to the other chamber to go through a similar process of committees, debate, and voting. Both chambers have to agree on the same version of the final bill before it goes to the Governor.

DID YOU KNOW?

The House usually votes using an electronic voting system while the Senate only votes by voice, saying "yay" or "nay."



5 GOVERNOR ACTION

When the bill reaches the Governor, they can:

✓ APPROVE and PASS
The Governor signs the bill. The bill is law.



The Governor can also:

Veto

When the Governor plans to veto a bill, they send a letter to the Secretary of State. The legislature can override the veto with 2/3 vote of those present in both the House and the Senate and the bill will become law.

Choose no action

The Governor can decide to do nothing. The bill then automatically becomes law on January 1 of the year after the passage or the prescribed effective date on the bill.

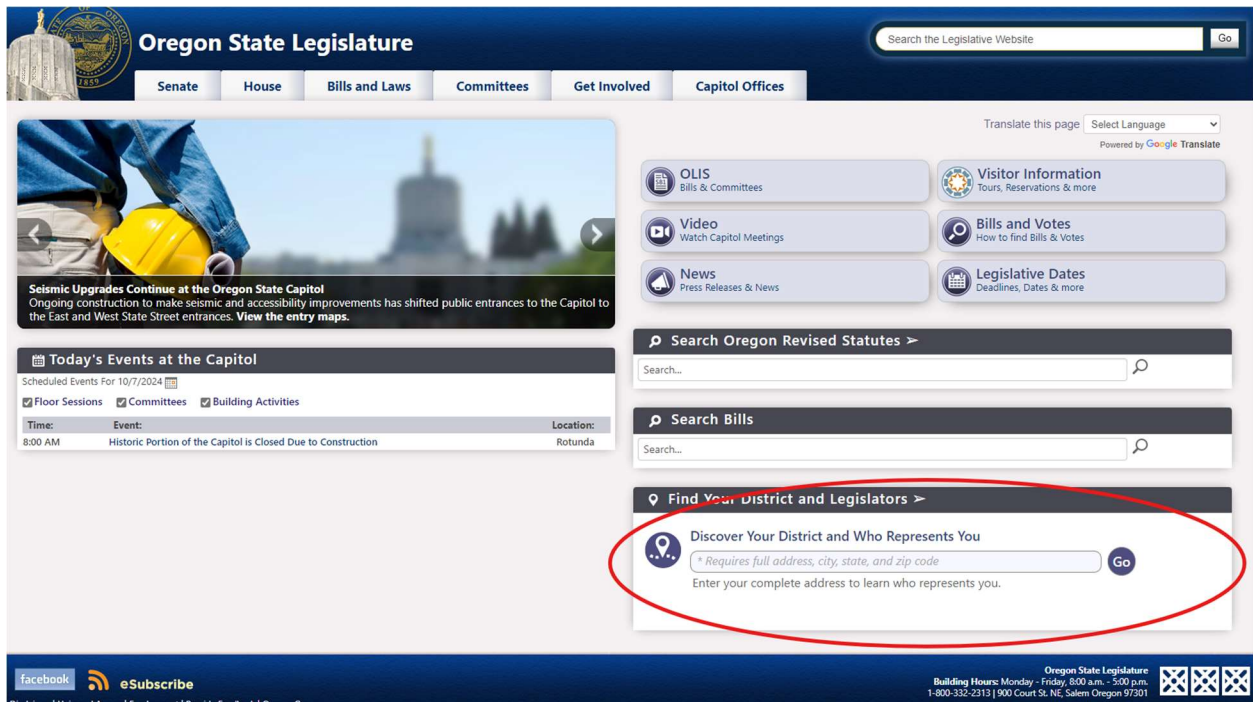
Resource:



Find Your Legislator

The Oregon Legislature website has a tool to look up legislators by address or map.

It can be found here on oregonlegislature.gov:



Simply type the address in the bar and hit "Go" to find out who represents a certain location both in Oregon and Federally.

A direct link to the tool can be found here: [Find Your Legislator \(arcgis.com\)](http://arcgis.com)

Building Facts

The Oregon State Capitol is a historic building that links our state's past, present, and future. Below you will find a collection of links to use for reference and that can be shared with other building employees and visitors. The documents found at these links will also be printed and stored in the **resource binder** at the kiosk.

A quick-reference collection of building facts can be found at this link: [Capitol Building Fact Sheet FINAL.docx](#)

A collection of facts about the Oregon Pioneer can be found here: [Pioneer Talking Points Final 2024.docx](#)

A quick reference for the Oregon State Seal can be found here: [Seal Fact Sheet.docx](#)

Nearby Resources

Parking

The numbered parking spots on State St. are reserved for different departments, the public should not use these spots unless they have specific arrangements to do so.

Street parking is managed by the City of Salem, meters can be paid with cash or card.

The Capitol Mall parking structure (entrance on Chemeketa St) has designated visitor parking at the meters. These can be paid with card or cash.

Downtown Salem has several free parking garages visitors can use and walk to the Capitol. These can be found at Pringle and High Street, Liberty and Ferry Street, Chemeketa and Commercial Street, and Marion and High Street.

Food and Beverage

Water bottles can be filled at the water fountain on the ground floor of the House side.

There is currently no café in the Capitol. On premise, there are vending machines in the House Second Floor break room, and Senate Third Floor breakroom. Staff/Volunteers and the public have access to these machines.

There is a food truck in Wilson Park (to the west of the Capitol in Willson Park). They are typically open for breakfast and lunch.

The next closest food/coffee location is Willamette University. The Bistro (just across Mill Stream and across from Smith Auditorium) which has coffee and snacks, and Goudy Commons (slightly to the northwest of The Bistro), which offers more substantial food for a flat price. These are open during the Willamette Academic year – check Willamette U’s website for more info.

Other nearby food options are:

- Sassy Onion (American Diner Style) – 1224 State St (0.3 Miles)
- Adam’s Rib BBQ – 1210 State St (0.3 miles)
- Al Aqsa (Mediterranean) – 1326 State St (0.4 miles)
- IKE Box Café – 299 Cottage St (0.3 miles)
- Happy Bibimbop House (Korean) – 635 Chemeketa (0.3 miles)
- La Margarita Express (Mexican) – 515 Chemeketa (0.4 miles)

The rest of downtown Salem has many different food options and is less than one mile away.

Nearby Attractions

If visitors are looking for more sites to visit, there are several nearby options:

- Willamette Heritage Center – historical site featuring a mill, early mid-valley buildings, and interpretation about the history of Salem, the Willamette Valley, and the people who have called it home
- Hallie Ford Museum of Art – Willamette University’s art museum featuring a varied permanent collection and different temporary exhibitions
- Deepwood Museum and Gardens – Historic house and grounds
- Bush House Museum – Historic house and grounds situated inside Bush Park
- Gaiety Hollow, Lord and Schryver Conservancy – House and gardens owned by pioneering 1920s female landscape architects
- Gilbert House – Children’s museum and play area