

COVID-19 Announcement



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Dear Michigan employees and employers,

Governor Whitmer, in an effort to protect all Michiganders, today signed [Executive Order 2020-21](#) that directs residents to remain at home or in their place of residence to the maximum extent feasible. A [summary of her, "Stay Home, Stay Safe," Executive Order](#) is available online.

For purposes of this order, [critical infrastructure workers are those workers described by the Director of the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency in his guidance of March 19, 2020 on the COVID-19 response.](#)

Below you will find available resources for workers and employees affected by COVID-19. If you have questions related to the governor's order or the resources below, contact: LEO-Coronavirus@michigan.gov.

We will continue to do everything we can to provide economic relief to employees and businesses affected by COVID-19.

Jeff Donofrio,
Director

For Workers

Fling for Unemployment Benefits

Eligible employees are strongly encouraged to apply for unemployment benefits online at Michigan.gov/UIA or by calling 866-500-0017. A [fact sheet on how to apply for benefits](#) can also be found online.

Governor Whitmer's [Executive Order 2020-10](#) expands unemployment benefits to:

- **Sick Workers:** Workers who are sick, quarantined, or immunocompromised and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off.
- **Workers Caring for Loved Ones:** Workers who have an unanticipated family care responsibility, including those who have childcare responsibilities due to school closures, or those who are forced to care for loved ones who become ill and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off
- **First responders:** Individuals working in the public health community who become ill or are quarantined due to exposure to COVID-19 and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off.

The [governor's order](#) also extends access to benefits for unemployed workers:

- **Increased Weeks:** Benefits will be increased from 20 to 26 weeks.
- **Longer Application Time:** The application eligibility period will be increased from 14 to 28 days.
- **Fewer Requirements:** The in-person registration and work search requirements will be suspended.

Visit the Unemployment Insurance Agency website for:

[Unemployment Resources for Employees](#)

[Employee Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Self-Employed Workers

The State is also seeking solutions for self-employed workers and independent contractors who traditionally do not have access to unemployment insurance. The governor has requested that President Trump issue a Major Disaster Declaration so that Individual Assistance and Disaster Unemployment Assistance through FEMA may be made available to additional Michiganders affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employers

Work Share

Employers are encouraged to implement the State's Work Share program that permits employers who may be facing maintain business operations during declines in regular activity instead of laying off workers. The program allows employers to keep their employees working with reduced hours, while employees collect partial unemployment benefits to make up a portion of the lost wages. More information about Work Share is available online at www.michigan.gov/WorkShare.

Visit the Unemployment Insurance Agency website for:

[Unemployment Resources for Employers](#)

[Employer Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Unpaid Leave vs. Termination

Due to the uncertainty regarding potential congressional action regarding whether furloughed workers will be able to access federal resources, employers are urged to place employees on temporary leave as opposed to termination. [View the State's guidance for employers contemplating potential layoffs.](#)

Capital Resources for Employers

Business Call Centers

The MEDC's call center stands ready to support businesses with questions about assistance available to small business through existing state programs by calling 888.522.0103. The Michigan Small Business Development Center can also provide resources at <https://sbdcmichigan.org/small-business-covid19/>.

Small Business Association Loans

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) approved the governor's request for a statewide Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) declaration, opening the opportunity to small businesses to access low-interest loans from the SBA.

Michigan small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, and nonprofits that have suffered substantial economic losses as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak can now apply for low-interest loans as part of \$1 billion in funding. The application for disaster loan assistance is available at: disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/.

Michigan Small Business Relief Program The Michigan Strategic Fund approved the [Michigan Small Business Relief Program](#) which authorizes the MEDC provide up to \$20 million in support for small businesses. The funding is divided between \$10 million in small business grants and \$10 million in small business loans to support businesses facing drastic reductions in cash flow and the continued support of their workforce. [The \\$10 million in grant funding](#) will be provided to local or nonprofit economic development organizations throughout the state to provide grants up to \$10,000 each to support certain small businesses that have realized a significant financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 virus. For more information visit, michiganbusiness.org/covid19

Tax Assistance for Small Businesses The Michigan Treasury Department is providing small businesses that have experienced disrupted operations due to the COVID-19 additional time to make their sales, use and withholding tax monthly payment. Small businesses scheduled to make these payments on March 20 can postpone filing and payment requirements until April 20. Penalties and interest penalties will be waived for 30 days. [Learn more about penalties and interest online](#) or by calling the Treasury Business Tax Call Center at 517-636-6925.

Ongoing Updates

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

The above resources and more can be found on the Michigan Coronavirus website, under [Employer and Employee resources](#).