



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
LANSING

SUSAN CORBIN
ACTING DIRECTOR

Memorandum

DATE: February 01, 2021

TO: Case Parties and Representatives, Attorneys and Constituents

FROM: Sidney McBride, Director, Bureau of Employment Relations

SUBJECT: Recent Updates re: MERC Staffing and Case Processing due to COVID-19

Effective Immediately

This communication is a follow-up to my memorandum of October 13, 2020. Please note the following information items as to the agency's processes as we continue to minimize the transmission of the coronavirus in our workplaces, homes, and communities--

1. **MERC Office Access:** All "in person" visits to MERC offices in Lansing and Detroit continue to be suspended through May 1, 2021, and possibly longer. Contact staff for general information using (313) 456-3510 or berinfo@michigan.gov. As necessary, video conferencing functionality is available to interact with staff as an "in-person alternative". (Also refer to items #2, #3, #4 and #5 below.)
2. **Case Initiations and Case Filings:** Submit electronically using MERC e-File or by email to one of the designated email addresses listed below in #5. *You must include an email address for the filing party's representative. If available, include an email address for the other party's representative.* Filings submitted by mail or fax will be accepted; however, processing will be delayed due to the limited staff assigned to office during this emergency period. Once filings are submitted using any method, regularly monitor the MERC e-File system for confirmation of the completed processing of your filed materials.
3. **General Case Information:** Case details can be viewed using the MERC e-File system accessible from the agency's homepage at www.michigan.gov/merc. Instructions on using MERC e-File is available on the webpage. Case specific questions not available by viewing MERC e-File, use the appropriate designated email address listed in #6 below.
4. **Case Hearings and Mediation:** MERC case hearings and mediation sessions continue using videoconferencing methods such as ZOOM, Microsoft Teams and others similar programs.

MICHIGAN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION

Cadillac Place (Detroit Office)
3026 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. 2-750
P.O. Box 02988
Detroit, Michigan 48202-2988
(313) 456-3510-phone (313) 456-3511-fax

Mason Building (Lansing Office)
503 W. Allegan, Garden Level
P.O. Box 30015
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 373-3580-phone (517) 335-9181-fax

www.michigan.gov/merc

Several MERC Labor Mediators, Panel Members and MOAHR ALJs have successfully reached case dispositions using remote sessions due to the difficulty with managing safety protections with in-person sessions at this time. Feel free to reach out to the assigned MERC mediator, 312 Arbitrator or Fact Finder, as well as the assigned MOAHR Administrative Law Judge for more details.

5. **MERC Monthly Commission Meetings:** The regular monthly meetings of the Commission will continue to be conducted virtually using ZOOM through April 30, 2021. Details for public access to the remote meetings will be posted at least 72 hours prior to each meeting date under the "MERC Meeting Dates" section of the agency's webpage located at www.michigan.gov/merc. Once the meetings return to in-person sessions, the information will also be posted at that same location on the MERC website.
6. **Case Filing Email Addresses:**
 - a. ULP: merc-ulps@michigan.gov
 - b. Elections: merc-elections@michigan.gov
 - c. Mediation (contract and grievance): merc-mediation@michigan.gov
 - d. Grievance Arb Appointments: merc-grievancearb@michigan.gov
 - e. General Information: berinfo@michigan.gov
7. **Virtual Training Programs:**

Notwithstanding the continued limitations on in-person assemblies, MERC staff offers various training opportunities using remote tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Send your training requests to any of the email addresses identified under item #6 above. Tutorials in the use of the MERC e-File system are also available and would be beneficial to those users that regularly file or responds to cases with the agency. Please email berinfo@michigan.gov for more information or to arrange a virtual training session comprised of employer, union, or joint representatives.
8. **Agency Changes:**
 - Effective January 20, 2021, Commission Chair Samuel Bagenstos received a Presidential appointment in the Biden Administration as GC to the Office of Management and Budget. We wish Sam continued success in this new assignment and will miss him here at MERC.
 - Effective January 24, 2021, I was promoted to the Director of the Bureau of Employment Relations. I truly appreciate all of the support and encouragement I have received from many staff and constituents.

Thank you for your understanding and patience during these unparalleled times.



Sidney McBride, Director
Bureau of Employment Relations

cc: MERC Commissioners