



STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

GARLIN GILCHRIST II
LT. GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE

No. 2021-2

To: State Department Directors and Autonomous Agency Heads
From: Governor Gretchen Whitmer
Date: June 2, 2021
Re: Creating the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office

As the past year has only confirmed, high-speed internet access has become a necessity in our professional, personal, and social lives. But many Michiganders struggle to secure the access they need, and that lack of connectivity hampers their ability to engage in online learning, to use telemedicine to seek needed healthcare, to work remotely or search for a new job, to advertise their small business's services, to virtually attend a family event, or to take advantage of the myriad resources, services, and tools available online.

This "digital divide" matters, both to the individual lives of Michiganders and to the overall economic future of our state. In an increasingly global, increasingly digital economy, high-speed internet is an essential way that businesses connect to the market. According to the Michigan Consortium of Advanced Networks' 2018 "Michigan Broadband Roadmap," just over \$2.5 billion in potential economic benefit is left unrealized each year due to the digital divide.

We must work to bridge this divide and ensure that every home and business in Michigan can access high-speed internet services that meet their needs. Achieving this goal requires a multi-faceted approach, including developing the necessary infrastructure to bring service to each home and business in our state, assisting those who otherwise could not afford service, and ensuring that resources to increase digital literacy are available to all.

This work is underway in numerous places, both within state government and beyond. A dedicated office within state government will help ensure these efforts are as coordinated, focused, and effective as possible. The Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity ("Department"), with its focus on aligning and strengthening this state's economic and workforce development activities, is well positioned to facilitate this critical work.

Acting under sections 1 and 8 of article 5 of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, I direct the following:

1. Under MCL 16.107, the Department must create the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (“Office”). The Office must be responsible for convening and coordinating departments and agencies in the advancement, implementation, and funding of the State’s current and future efforts to ensure that every home and business in Michigan can access high-speed internet services that meet their needs. The Office must report regularly on its work to me and to the director of the Department.
2. The Department must designate a Chief Connectivity Officer to serve as head of the Office.
3. All departments, agencies, committees, commissioners, and officers of this state must give to the Office, or to any member or representative of the Office, any necessary assistance required by the Office, or any member or representative of the Office, in the performance of the duties of the Office so far as is compatible with their duties and consistent with this directive and applicable law. Free access also must be given to any books, records, or documents in their custody relating to matters within the scope of inquiry, study, or review of the Office, consistent with applicable law.

This directive is effective immediately.

Thank you for your cooperation in implementing this directive.



Gretchen Whitmer
Governor