



GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

EMPOWERING SMALL BUSINESSES



Governor Whitmer is committed to supporting small businesses as Michigan continues growing its economy. Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, the state implemented 23 economic relief programs for businesses, supporting more than 25,000 companies and retaining more than 200,000 jobs. Recently, the governor laid out a \$2.1 billion proposal to grow Michigan's middle class, support small businesses, and invest in communities. As Michigan's economy grows, bolstered by a multi-billion-dollar surplus, and increasing momentum, Governor Whitmer's proposals will tackle underlying issues faced by small businesses and make bold investments to create economic prosperity for all.

“Our incredible small businesses create jobs and uplift their communities. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, they have been resilient and innovative, continuing to put their employees and customers first. They are a key part of our economic comeback, and I am focused on providing them the resources they need to thrive.”

- Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Putting small businesses first

- Laid out [MI New Economy](#), a \$2.1 billion plan to grow Michigan's middle class, support small businesses, and invest in communities.
 - \$500 million to build on the Michigan Mainstreet Initiative, which offers grants to restaurants, place-based businesses, and microenterprises with further dollars to attract more start-ups.
 - \$200 million to create a more conducive business environment for high-tech, high-growth start-ups and create jobs of the future in Michigan.
- Added [220,000 jobs](#) in 2021, drove down unemployment and took Michigan from a projected \$3 billion deficit to a \$7 billion surplus.
- Signed [bipartisan economic development legislation](#) and a billion-dollar budget to empower Michigan to win huge manufacturing projects and create tens of thousands of good-paying jobs.
- Delivered more than [\\$400 million in support to businesses](#) impacted by COVID-19.
- Enacted a [bipartisan tax cut for small businesses](#), enabling them to grow and create jobs.
- Signed an executive directive to increase [state procurement and contracts](#) with small and geographically disadvantaged businesses.

Supporting small businesses through COVID-19

- [Launched 23 economic relief programs](#) providing over \$240 million in vital economic support to small businesses across all 83 Michigan counties. The programs supported over 25,000 companies and retained over 200,000 jobs with nearly 75% of support going to restaurants, bars, retailers, and other service industry small businesses.
- Saved [52,500 jobs](#) by providing grants to 6,000 small businesses.
- Provided \$100 million through the [Small Business Restart Program](#) to help restaurants and other place-based businesses cover costs by providing grants up to \$20,000 for mortgage, rent, taxes, payroll and other operating expenses.
- Set aside [\\$25 million for small businesses](#) with less than nine employees, over half of Michigan businesses and a high proportion of women and minority-owned businesses.
- Created the [Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program](#) which led to over 1,300 high-tech companies being formed in Michigan, and over 20,000 new full time equivalent jobs.
- Helped communities [revitalize commercial districts](#), awarding 30 grants, supporting 307 main street businesses.

- Proposed the \$125 million [Microenterprise Support Initiative](#) to provide grants for rural and micro-businesses that did not qualify or apply for other incentives, like the federal Paycheck Protection Program.
- Pitched the \$75 million [Small Business SmartZones and Business Accelerator and Resiliency Initiative](#) to provide grants to startups that can help our communities thrive.

Protecting employees and customers and helping Michiganders get back to work during COVID-19

- Issued over [\\$8 million in safety grants](#) to over 1,500 businesses helping them invest in equipment and training to create safe workplaces.
- Set up the [Ambassadors program](#) offering free consultation to over 5,400 employers on how to set up safer workplaces to get people back to work.
- [Expanded Work Share](#) to offer employers greater flexibility as they brought employees back from unemployment. Work Share provided over \$550 million, preserved over 110,000 jobs and helped nearly 2,600 employers retain workers and bring them back to the workforce.

Connecting small businesses with talent

- Proposed [historic investments](#) in workforce development with a focus on talent retention and expansion in key industries, removing barriers and providing employment supports for marginalized communities, and public-private partnerships with union and business partners.
- Proposed [bonuses, raises, and retention payments](#) for Michigan workers including first responders, frontline workers, healthcare professionals, and educators.
- Set up [free virtual job fairs](#) connecting over 2,600 employers and 9,900 job seekers.
- Won federal funding to create [1,417 apprenticeships](#) in new sectors with an emphasis on recruiting Michiganders from historically underrepresented groups.
- Established and funded programs to provide thousands of Michiganders access to tuition-free higher education or skills training, leading to a high-skill, good-paying job.
 - [Michigan Reconnect](#), a program that pays tuition of Michiganders 25 and up to pursue an associate degree or earn a skills certificate in high-demand careers.
 - [Futures for Frontliners](#), a program that provides a tuition-free path to postsecondary education or skills training for Michiganders who served on the frontlines of the pandemic.

Helping families get back to work

- Signed a [\\$1.4 billion investment in childcare](#) to expand access to high-quality childcare, support childcare businesses, and invest in childcare professionals.
- Expanded access to free preschool for [22,000 more four-year-olds](#) through the high-quality, homegrown Great Start Readiness Program.
- Created access to affordable childcare for [112,000 more children](#) and their families.
- Launched [MI Tri-Share Childcare Program](#), an innovative childcare program that divides cost equally between the employer, employees, and the state.

Focusing on small businesses

- Declared [Small Business Saturday](#) and urged Michiganders to buy locally on Saturdays throughout the year to support Michigan's small businesses.
- Went on [MI Small Business Summer](#) tour to visit, recognize, and listen to Michigan's small businesses that have shown resiliency through COVID-19.