



GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

EXPANDED ACCESS TO QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE



Governor Whitmer is prioritizing the health and well-being of every Michigander by ensuring access to equitable, affordable health care. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, her decisive, data-driven early action and focus on vulnerable communities saved thousands of lives. The Governor's steady leadership helped millions of Michiganders get vaccinated and helped Michigan's economy recover quickly. Beyond her leadership through the pandemic, Governor Whitmer has expanded access to telemedicine, signed bipartisan legislation to protect people against surprise medical billing, and created a task force to tackle the high cost of prescription drugs. Governor Whitmer has led the way on healthcare by prioritizing access to care, driving down costs, and pursuing equity.

"Every Michigander deserves access to quality, affordable healthcare and no one should have to choose between buying prescription drugs or paying for groceries. The health of our people is inextricably linked to every challenge we face and opportunity we have. It is essential for us to take actions to make care easier to access, lower out of pocket costs, and pursue equity."

- Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Expanding healthcare access and affordability

- Proposed [MI Healthy Communities](#), \$1.4 billion to expand care for families, build facilities, and bolster local public health. The proposal will address many of the deficiencies in Michigan's health infrastructure revealed during the pandemic and provided resources to meet Michigan families' mental health needs, expand access to behavioral care and telemedicine, upgrade nursing homes, and bolster local public health departments.
- Proposed [historic investments](#) in behavioral health facilities and to expand [access to mental and behavioral health](#) by retaining or recruiting hundreds of mental health workers. Expanded access to [mental health professionals in schools](#), including 560+ nurses, social workers, and school counselors to support students.
- Proposed [expanding dental care](#) for 3 million Michiganders covered by Medicaid or Healthy Michigan plans.
- [Invested \\$300 million](#) in healthcare worker training, recruitment, and retention and proposed [bonuses, raises, and retention payments](#) for Michigan workers including first responders and healthcare professionals.
- Signed bills to increase [loan forgiveness](#) for health professionals who work in medically underserved communities.
- Extended [Healthy Michigan](#) to [nearly 900,000 people](#). Medicaid work requirements were lifted on her watch.
- Worked with stakeholders to increase enrollment in both public and private health insurance programs, resulting in [over 1 million more Michiganders](#) with coverage.
- Expanded access to [telemedicine](#) and signed bipartisan legislation requiring all insurers to [cover telehealth](#).
- Supported Attorney General Nessel's work to [sue major opioid distributors](#) as drug dealers, leading to an \$800 million settlement that will be used to [fight opioid addiction](#) through prevention, treatment, and an increased focus on education, training, and research.

Lowering the cost of prescription drugs

- Established [Prescription Drugs Task Force](#) and is working to implement their recommendations to drive down costs, promote transparency, and improve health outcomes.
- Signed a bill to [lower the cost of prescription drugs](#) and increase pharmacy oversight.
- Signed a bill to protect Michiganders against [surprise medical billing](#).
- Supported Attorney General Nessel's work to [hold drug companies accountable](#) for skyrocketing insulin prices and called on the legislature to pass legislation capping insulin costs.

Addressing health inequities

- Invested in [Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies](#), an initiative to address disproportionate racial impacts of maternal and infant mortality and ensure moms have the support they need for healthy pregnancies, deliveries, and postpartum care. Proposed additional funds to expand this initiative.
- Signed [a budget](#) that included community navigators to improve access to healthcare coverage; funding for Sickle Cell Disease treatment; and to establish a Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office in the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Required all medical professionals to undergo [unconscious bias training](#) to reduce healthcare disparities.
- Filed a lawsuit to [protect abortion access](#) for 2.2 million women in Michigan if Roe v. Wade is overturned.
- Called on the legislature to [repeal the state's 1931 law](#) banning abortions, which hasn't been enforced since the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade.
- Joined 16 governors to call on the United States Congress to pass the Women's Health Protection Act, which would [codify access to safe, legal abortion](#) offered by Roe v Wade into federal law.

Bolstered programs to support families

- Proposed funding for the Food Bank Council of Michigan to more efficiently [distribute food to families in need of assistance.](#)
- Increased funding and launched innovative programs, including programs to expand access to high-speed internet and assist with food, housing, energy, and water costs like the Water Utility Assistance Program and the Online EBT program.
- Modified [asset test requirements](#) to allow people to receive food aid and other public assistance while they plan for a stable future.
- Removed red tape for benefit programs through proactive referrals, cross-enrollment processes, simplified requirements, increased online access, and expanded partnerships to increase access to services.

Tackling COVID-19

- Facilitated free COVID-19 vaccines and free [testing and treatment](#) for all Michiganders.
- Signed legislation to establish a [stockpile of medical supplies](#) so that we are ready and able to act quickly to assist our healthcare system address future emergencies.
- [Signed a bill](#) to boost lab capacity and speed up the processing of COVID-19 tests.
- Established the [Racial Disparities Task Force](#) and made ["lasting structural change."](#)
- Enacted a [\\$2 per hour raise](#) to direct care workers who support people with disabilities, older Michiganders, and those with chronic care needs.