



# 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

- 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.
- Signed a [bipartisan tax cut](#) and [reduced tax burden](#) for small businesses, enabling them to grow and create jobs.
- Proposed [MI New Economy](#), a \$2.1 billion plan to grow Michigan's middle class, support small businesses, and invest in communities.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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

- Proclaimed [Small Business Week](#) and 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.