

MARCH 5, 2021

WEEKLY UPDATE

*Official newsletter of Khoury Johnson
Leavitt*



Khoury
Johnson
Leavitt

KJL LAUNCHES PODCAST

KJL is thrilled to announce the launch of our firm's podcast ***A Key to the Inside***. The goal of our podcast is to bring conversations with Michigan's key leaders and stakeholders directly to our clients. We are excited to share this new communication platform. Our first guest was newly appointed DHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel, discussing the priorities of the department, vaccine plans and budget priorities.

You can access this podcast by clicking [HERE!](#)

New MDHHS Director Hertel's Appointment in Question

The Senate Advice and Consent committee has questioned Governor Whitmer's appointment to Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, Elizabeth Hertel for a second day this week.

Members of the committee extensively questioned Ms. Hertel regarding the settlement agreement and the \$155,000 payment made to Director Gordon upon exiting the Department. Hertel shared she was not involved in the agreement and has no opinion regarding the outcome of the agreement.

The other issue the committee has focused on centers around the MDHHS COVID-19 orders and implementation, as well as accuracy of Michigan's COVID caseload numbers. Members have questioned what data MDHHS uses to determine what orders are necessary. They have also brought into question the accuracy of caseload and death reporting.

Sen. Tom Barrett (R-Charlotte) submitted a letter signed by 5 Republican Senate members and 25 House Republican members, to Chairman Aric Nesbitt (R-Lawton) urging the committee to oppose Ms. Hertel's appointment. In the letter he states, "We believe that Director Hertel may be a capable and effective administrator during normal times, but these times are anything but normal. The imminent anniversary of the first confirmed COVID-19 cases in our state completes a full year of emergency executive power by the administration of Governor Gretchen Whitmer, with no end in sight. Parents, students, athletes, small businesses, nursing home residents, and Michiganders of every level of "social vulnerability" have been affected by this virus and the resultant orders issued by this administration."

The letter ends with a call to the committee to hold a vote on Director Hertel's appointment and report it unfavorably, and advise Governor Whitmer to appoint a director who will uphold the separation of powers and collaborate with the Legislature to address public health issues.

State loosens restrictions on public gatherings; MAC gets detailed response on effects for county board meetings

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced further loosening of state restrictions on public and economic activity due to the COVID pandemic during a Tuesday afternoon press conference.

The changes, which take effect today and run through April 19, include:

- Indoor gatherings involving people from different households are allowed to have up to 25 people. (*See note below.)
- Restaurants and bars may have 50% indoor dining capacity, up to 100 people. Tables must still be six feet apart, with a max of six people at a table. A curfew on indoor dining is still in effect, but this order bumps it back from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.
- Retail shops are allowed to operate at 50% indoor capacity, up from 30%.
- Indoor private residential gatherings are capped at 15 people from three separate households. Outdoor residential gatherings are allowed to have up to 50 people.
- Outdoor gatherings can resume with up to 300 people.

Legislature adopts \$2.3B COVID aid plan; governor's response unclear

The Senate and House agreed this week on a plan to spend \$2.3 billion to support businesses and help cover their costs incurred over the last year, including a property tax relief program. Additionally, the bill that now moves to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer supports an increase direct care worker hazard pay, vaccine distribution and continued COVID testing funds.

In fact, the direct care worker hazard pay adjustment would increase from the current \$2 per hour to \$2.25 per hour beginning March 1 and running through Sept. 30, 2021.

Another \$347.3 million for epidemiology and laboratory capacity contingent funds cannot be spent or distributed unless the governor also signs Senate Bill 1, which limits the effectiveness of an emergency public health order issued by the director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to 28 days, unless the Legislature approves an extension.

And the Legislature approved spending of \$2 billion of federal education money under House Bill 4048. However, \$800 million of that mount is tied to House Bill 4049, which passed 60-50 in the House. That bill stipulates local health departments could close schools for in-person instruction or halt school sports based on specific criteria in the bill. The bill passed without support from the state or local health departments.

It is unclear what the governor's options are with the language in the legislation that ties funding to limits on the state's pandemic powers. Gov. Whitmer has also been clear that she wants the full \$5 billion of federal money from 2020 allocated, a result that is not reflected in the bills heading to her desk.

DETROIT PASSES ON J&J VACCINATION

The city of Detroit turned away 6,200 doses of Johnson & Johnson's new one-shot COVID-19 vaccine in favor of the more effective two-shot vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna. The Johnson & Johnson version is about 72% effective compared to 95% for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

The doses that Mayor Mike Duggan didn't want for his citizens were distributed to other Michigan health departments that have vaccinated smaller portions of their 65 and older population. Detroit still received its normal allotment of the other two vaccines. Detroit expects to receive another 25,000-30,000 Moderna and Pfizer vaccines next week.

COVID Vaccine Eligibility Expands

This week Governor Granholm announced that the state is expanding the eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine. Starting March 8, individuals 50 and over with medical conditions or disabilities and caregivers of family members and guardians who care for children with special health care needs will be eligible to receive the vaccine. Beginning March 22, all residents 50 and over will be eligible to receive the vaccine.

KJL COVID RESOURCE TAB

A COVID 19 resource tab has been added to our website www.kjlteam.com. We will continue to update that tab with information relevant to our clients. Also, if you haven't already, please follow us on Facebook and Instagram for daily information.



Khoury
Johnson
Leavitt

kjlteam.com
124 W. Allegan, Suite 1700
Lansing, MI 48933

KJL Virtual Event Management

A convenient, cost and time effective way to bring your virtual event to life.

Looking to move your in-person event to a VIRTUAL platform? Not sure where to start? **KJL IS NOW OFFERING PROFESSIONAL VIRTUAL EVENT PRODUCTION.** We are well versed in virtual event planning, production, and presentation. Our services are currently being used by groups of up to 400. No matter the size, we are here to help!

Services Provided Include:

- Detailed meeting agendas and content development
- Facilitate practice sessions prior to event
- Deliver technical assistance during event
- Manage post event wrap up
- Encourage attendee engagement with polls, surveys, and more
- Assist with sponsorship highlights
- Detailed guides for effective and professional virtual presentations
- Techniques to perfect presentation

Virtual Event Production Service Includes:



Event Management:

Invitations
Registration
Event Reminders
Post Event Communication
Social Media Promotion

Event Data Collection:

Attendee List
Question/Answer Data
Polling/Survey Data
Attendee Engagement Report

Seminars Conventions Educational Events Town Halls

Contact us today for a consultation & quote for your event. **517.485.4044** | marcy@kjlteam.com
Pricing will be based on complexity of meeting. Initial meeting plan and proposal will be provided upon request.

KJL SOCIAL MEDIA



LINKEDIN: KHOURY JOHNSON LEAVITT

INSTAGRAM: @KJLFIRM

FACEBOOK: @KJLPAGE

TWITTER: @FIRMKJL

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.michigan.gov/coronavirus.com

www.michigan.gov/ag

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.com

www.congress.gov.com

www.michiganbusiness.org

KJL TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION



Ron Khoury - ron@kjlteam.com, (517) 881-6356

Stephanie Johnson - stephanie@kjlteam.com, (517) 648-1602

Andy Leavitt - andy@kjlteam.com, (810) 625-0861

Marcy Lay - marcy@kjlteam.com, (517) 282-3295

Ryan Burtka - ryan@kjlteam.com, (313) 605-3878

Karen Currie - karen@kjlteam.com, (616) 706-2282

Mike Zimmer - mike@kjlteam.com, (517) 285-4126

Brian Clark - brian@kjlteam.com, (517) 410-3430

Lauren Bunn - lauren@kjlteam.com, (616) 826-1262

KJL Communications Director, Karen Currie

Karen@KJLteam.com