

AUGUST 14, 2020

SPECIAL ALERT

Official newsletter of Khoury Johnson Leavitt



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KJL SPECIAL ALERT

The Khoury Johnson and Leavitt team remain informed and engaged during these times of uncertainty. We are in communication with leadership in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches of state government, in addition to locals on a regular basis. Updates will continue every Friday as a mechanism to recap relevant activity from the past week.

Four Million Free Masks Distributed in Michigan

Michiganders will be provided with 4 million free masks under a new partnership with the state, Ford Motor Company and Federal Emergency Management Agency, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced at a press conference Friday. The “MI Mask Aid” partnership will provide masks to low-income residents, seniors, schools and homeless shelters. Donations include 2.5 million masks from FEMA and 1.5 million from Ford.

The state has already distributed 1.4 million masks statewide, according to Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon. The new deliveries under the free mask program will be targeted at schools.

Michigan Senate To Hold Session Saturday To Vote On Education Bill

A bipartisan legislative package is in the works to provide the framework for how schools can safely educate students this year. The bills include pupil counts, daily attendance and structure of local health and safety. Senate Republicans are working together with the House and the Governor’s office to reach consensus on the legislation. The legislation is set for a vote during Saturdays upcoming Senate session, with expectations for the House to adopt the proposal on Monday during their session.

Analysis of executive actions taken by president

On Aug. 8, President Trump released a series of administrative actions – an executive order and three memorandums – to address the expiration of federal unemployment benefits and provide other assistance for U.S. residents hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following is a breakdown of these benefits.

Unemployment Insurance (UI): Extra federal UI benefit on top of states’ regular UI benefit would be reduced from \$600 to \$400 per week

- Of the \$400 total,
 - WH proposes that \$300 would be funded through FEMA’s existing Disaster Relief Funds (DRF)
 - WH proposes to earmark up to \$44 billion of \$70 billion in existing DRF dollars - which would last for about 5 weeks at current UI levels
 - States would be responsible for the 25% FEMA DRF state match, or \$100 per UI recipient each week
 - Governor must submit a federal request to FEMA to receive the extra federal UI payments; It is not automatic!
 - WH notes that states may use their Treasury Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) dollars for the \$100 state match; U.S. Dept of Labor issued a memo indicating that administration might also waive the \$100 / 25% match for states
 - However, the National Governors Association notes that states have already obligated more than 75% of CRF dollars so unlikely that states have enough money for the state match from Treasury CARES Act

Payroll taxes for Social Security and Medicare:

- WH memo only applies to employee share that is normally collected and submitted by employers (and employee side of self employed)
 - Earlier COVID19 supplemental law already allowed postponement for employer share of payroll taxes
 - Explain that payroll taxes consist of:
 - Social Security at 12.4% (6.2% by employee and 6.2% by employer) (NOTE - believe self employed pay the full 12.4%)
 - Medicare at 2.9% (1.45% by employee and 1.45% by employer)
 - WH action would only delay/postpone collection of employee share of payroll taxes, similar to earlier congressional action for employers. Money would still be owed to the federal government!

Clients in the News

Comcast

[Comcast Ramps Up Broadband Access Program For Low-Income K-12 Students](#)

EXECUTIVE ORDERS:

- [EO 2020-164](#) -
 - Requiring masks at child-care centers and camps
- [EO 2020-165](#) -
 - Declaration of state of emergency and state of disaster related to the COVID-19 pandemic - Rescission of Executive Order 2020-151
- [EO 2020-166](#) -
 - Protecting workers who stay home, stay safe when they or their close contacts are sick - Rescission of Executive Order 2020-36
- [EO 2020-167](#) -
 - Food Security Council Department of Health and Human Services
- [EO 2020-168](#) -
 - Temporary safety measures for food-selling establishments and pharmacies and temporary relief from requirements applicable to the renewal of licenses for the food-service industry - Rescission of Executive Order 2020-149
- [EO 2020-169](#) -
 - Enhanced protections for residents and staff of long-term care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic Rescission of Executive Order 2020-148



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.michigan.gov/coronavirus.com

www.michigan.gov/ag

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.com

www.congress.gov.com

www.michiganbusiness.org

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