



**Office of Governor Walz  
& Lt. Governor Flanagan**



**Office of Governor Tim Walz & Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan**

## **COVID-19 Response and Preparation**

Minnesotans are working together to combat COVID-19, and we need to give them the resources they need to succeed. Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan unveiled a package of legislative proposals to better prepare our health care system and provide relief to Minnesotans affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **PROVIDE COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUNDING**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend the legislature provide COVID-19 emergency funding to ensure state resources are in place to address COVID-19 emergencies and continue the functions of all branches of government, even if the legislature is not in session.

### **REMOVE FINANCIAL BARRIERS FOR MINNESOTANS WHO NEED TO BE TESTED FOR COVID-19**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend the removal of financial and administrative barriers that may keep Minnesotans from being tested for COVID-19. This proposal brings private, public, and state health insurance into alignment and provides additional flexibilities, including:

- Authority to waive co-payments for testing, lab, office visits and urgent care related to diagnosis of potential cases of COVID-19;
- Ability to address cost barriers to treatment, particularly for Minnesotans with high deductibles; and
- Flexibility to require network and cost-sharing changes.

### **PROVIDE NEEDED RESOURCES TO HEALTH CARE AND LONG- TERM CARE FACILITIES**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend creating a grant and loan program to respond to the needs of health care facilities for training, equipment, transportation, and expansion of systems. In addition, this proposal would provide access to emergency short-term grants, long-term grants, and aid with cash flow for systems and facilities.

## **ACCELERATE AND MODIFY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend allowing benefits to kick in immediately for employees who qualify for unemployment insurance because of COVID-19. The Governor and Lt. Governor also recommend relieving employers of the cost of unemployment benefits paid to their workers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **EXPAND USE OF PAID SICK TIME**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend allowing private-sector employees to use paid sick time benefits when taking time off work related to COVID-19.

## **EXTEND TAX FILING DEADLINE**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend adjusting the state tax filing deadline to conform to federal extensions.

## **COMPENSATE HOURLY SCHOOL WORKERS FOR CLOSURES DUE TO COVID19**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend ensuring hourly workers employed by school districts are compensated during a school closure because of COVID-19.

## **RATIFY STATE CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommend taking legislative action to ratify state employee contracts and compensation plans to provide current insurance benefits and negotiated terms and conditions of employment to state employees, including those protecting the health and safety of Minnesotans.

## **EXTEND GOVERNOR'S PEACETIME EMERGENCY POWERS**

The Governor and Lt. Governor recommended extending the Governor's peacetime emergency powers for a longer duration for ease in implementation of rules and regulations necessary to help affected Minnesotans.

## **CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY NEEDS AS THEY ARISE**

The Governor and Lt. Governor direct state agencies to examine emergent and ongoing needs of Minnesotans and bring ideas forward for further legislation or rulemaking.