

2020

# COVID-19 TASK FORCE

**SMALL BUSINESS**  
Association of MICHIGAN

[www.SBAM.org](http://www.SBAM.org)

---

**Milan Gandhi**

Chair, COVID-19 Task Force  
Vice President, Med-Share Inc.

**Micah Babcock**

Staff Contact  
Director, Government Operations  
[micah.babcock@sbam.org](mailto:micah.babcock@sbam.org)



## PRELUDE

With the uncertainty COVID-19 has brought to Michigan's small business community, SBAM has organized a specific COVID-19 Policy Task Force to develop and drive a small business agenda on what steps need to be taken at a State and Federal level beyond the reopening schedule. While we begin discussing reopening our economy safely, we need to make sure legislators and regulators are mindful of the myriad of issues that need to be addressed in near and intermediate time frames.

We intend for this task force to remain active through at least the end of the year so expect this document to continue to be updated as changes arise.

### Meet the Task Force Chairman

Milan currently serves as the Vice President for Med-Share Inc. Med-Share is a family-owned Mobile Diagnostic Imaging business that has been located in Southfield, MI for over 30 years.

This year, Milan represented small business owners on the Michigan Economic Recovery Council, the advisory board Gov. Whitmer put in place to provide recommendations on the process to getting Michigan back to work post COVID-19.



Milan Gandhi  
Owner  
Med-Share Inc.



# LIABILITY PROTECTION

The understanding of and the regulations surrounding COVID-19 are constantly changing. Businesses that put forth a good faith effort to comply with COVID-19 rules and regulations should not be subject to adverse legal actions by employees, customers or local, state and federal governments. These protections should include:

- Protections against adverse employee actions for employers making a good faith effort to comply to workplace safety rules. Business liability should be limited to situations involving intentional noncompliance or reckless disregard for regulatory requirements.
- Prevention of lawsuits for those who allege no more than exposure to COVID-19 and situations that involve diagnosis without illness, or situations involving only common flu-like symptoms.
- Assurances that employers will not be held liable for employees who are untruthful in answering health screening questions.



# REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

With continuous changes to business regulations at all government levels it is important to make sure that specific COVID-19 related regulations are mindful of their impact on the smallest of companies and are written in a way that can be understood and used by the public.

- State agencies should be prepared to provide clarity of requirements, including providing timely, written answers to questions from business owners.
- Local regulations should be no stricter than and not conflict with state regulations.
- If a business owner is showing good faith in administering and promoting the necessary COVID-19 safety guidelines, the goal of the enforcement agencies should be remediation before administering penalties.

# TAXES

- Summer Property Tax bills should be deferred until the winter tax due date without penalties or interest.
- The federal government should allow for full deductibility of expenses originating from Pay Check Protection Program proceeds and those deductions should flow through to corporate and passthrough entity state tax bases.

# UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COSTS

- There should be no new associated costs for small businesses related to unemployment insurance changes or usage during the COVID-19 crisis.
- The state Unemployment Insurance policies should achieve sustainable, long-term solvency of the trust fund and provide for competitive rates as compared to other states.
- The state Unemployment insurance policies should provide for more effective prevention of fraud abuses.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Business owners are following numerous requirements from all levels of government to ensure their employees and customers are safe. When a citizen tests positive for COVID-19, there should be no presumption that the person was infected at work. Contact tracing should be conducted to determine the likely origin of the infection, not preconceived presumptions in the law. Further, while businesses will actively participate in contact tracing, there should be no expectation that employers will have knowledge of or be responsible for the activities or conduct of employees outside the workplace.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With the detrimental impact the COVID-19 crisis has had on small businesses across Michigan it is important that our next steps in economic development are geared toward assisting those same businesses with the most need.

- Rural Broadband expansion
- Michigan Reconnect/Opportunity Scholarship and Futures for Frontliners
- Explicit and aggressive small business state procurement policies
- Infrastructure development
- Continued support for Pure Michigan
- Small Business Relief Grant appropriations should be robust but only available and targeted to small businesses

