

RELIEF & RECOVERY

AGENDA

GET KANSANS BACK TO WORK

Kansas needs to quickly move from having criteria for **“essential businesses”** to a plan for **“safe businesses”** that allows all businesses to perform their functions in a manner completely safe for their employees, customers and society. The health status of geographic regions should be taken into consideration. There also should be specific protections for those most vulnerable based on age and/or health status.

Set Health Metrics The Kansas Department of Health Environment should set health metrics to ensure the state and our health care system are prepared and properly equipped. These metrics could include:

- ▶ Kansas hospitals can safely treat all patients requiring hospitalization, without resorting to crisis standards of care.
- ▶ Kansas can at least test everyone who has symptoms.
- ▶ Kansas can conduct monitoring of confirmed cases and contacts.
- ▶ Kansas experiences sustained reduction in cases for at least 14 days.

Get employees back to work safely Kansas should explore a program to safely certify people to return to work and to protect lives while not crippling our economy. One possibility is to allow employers and employees to be tested for COVID-19 antibodies. If a person tests positive for the antibody and is not in the middle

of an ongoing infection, the person is possibly immune and thus could return to work safely.

Allow “Non-Essential” Businesses to Open

Kansas businesses who meet “Safe Workplace Guidelines” should be allowed to reopen if they are able to operate safely. These guidelines could include asking businesses to:

- ▶ **Develop a response plan** Businesses with draft response plans will be prepared to react to changing federal and state recommendations, to educate employees and to respond if there is a positive test at the workplace.
- ▶ **Establish optional workplace protocols** Businesses with optional workplace protocols will be prepared to have employees work remotely if possible, to provide flexible shifts for onsite employees and to revise existing policies for the comfort and safety of employees.
- ▶ **Implement work zones** Businesses with work zones will be prepared to reduce an employee’s footprint when onsite and to keep teams separate to minimize possible spread of virus.
- ▶ **Establish Health Safety Protocols** Businesses with health safety protocols will be prepared to ensure common and workplace areas are cleaned and set up properly, to provide sick employees time off flexibility, to set up employee self-temperature monitoring and to communicate with employees about social distancing and health safety.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

 **Waive the One-Week Waiting Period for Unemployment Benefits**

 **Extend Unemployment Benefits to 26 weeks**

Ensure Policies Incentivize Employment Make sure policies help workers who lose their jobs by no

fault of their own during tough economic times and incentivize them to become reemployed.

Medical Expense Tax Credit Create a 2020 tax credit to defray costs of out-of-pocket medical expenses associated with treatment for COVID-19 illness.

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ECONOMIC RECOVERY

 **Ensure Critical Business Operations May Continue**

 **Temporarily Defer Paying 2020 State Income Taxes**

Defer Sales Tax Payments Allow Kansas businesses who collect sales tax to defer sales tax payments without penalty to the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR).

Pause State Tax Audits Require the KDOR to pause all tax audits.

Extend Property Tax Payment Provide a 90-day extension to business and residential property owners on their next property tax payment installments on properties that do not have escrow accounts set up for payments.

Refund tax overpayments Provide a quick refund request option for businesses that have overpaid state taxes.

Exempt federal COVID-19 stimulus funding Exempt COVID-19 forgivable loans and grants from state taxes, like the federal government does.

Property Tax Transparency Establish property tax accountability for local governments and provide transparency and accountability to taxpayers.

Decoupling and Itemization Allow for individual and small business taxpayers to itemize when not itemizing at the federal level. Decouple from federal tax on foreign income.

Business Licensing fees Waive or delay any state or local imposed business licensing fees.

Expand Kansas' Linked-deposit loan program Expand the state's linked-deposit loan program by enabling Kansas banks and other lenders to utilize our state's idle tax funds to make low-cost loans to Kansas businesses.

Expand Research & Development Tax Credit Make Kansas' Research Tax Credit fully refundable and available to all businesses.

Create COVID-19 Employee Pay Tax Credit Create a 2020 refundable tax credit for businesses who choose to continue paying employees who must self-isolate or care for family members who self-isolate as a result of COVID-19 illness, or who opt to pay employees even after shutting down.

Unemployment Insurance Reform Prohibit unemployment benefit withdrawals made during the COVID-19 crisis from counting against an employer's experience rating for unemployment tax calculations.

Tax Credit for Remote Work Costs Provide a corporate tax credit for business costs incurred for working remotely, including for purchases of laptops, high-speed internet, phone line, office equipment, etc.

Allow flexibility in economic development incentive agreements Allow Kansas Department of Commerce the flexibility to help companies through the crisis and recovery phases, including granting flexibility of existing incentive agreements where appropriate.

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REGULATORY AND LIABILITY RELIEF



Extend Licensing Renewal Deadlines



Temporarily Waive Continuing Education Requirements

Temporarily suspend state or local inspections

Temporarily suspend state or local inspections required before a business that was temporarily closed because of COVID-19 can reopen.

Make Regulations Waived During the Emergency Permanent Review and repeal regulations that proved not needed during the COVID-19 crisis.

Remove Regulatory Obstacles to Production of Personal Protective Equipment As manufacturers look to ramp up production or to switch production to producing PPE, state regulations and approvals should be relaxed.

Limit Liability for PPE Manufacturers Enact liability protections for manufacturers of all types of Personal Protection Equipment.

Limit Liability for Business Owners From COVID-19 Infection Claims Enact liability protections for business owners from allegations by patrons who claim they contracted COVID-19 at a place of business.

Protect Employers from Liability for Keeping Their Workers & Workplaces Safe

Enact liability protections which allow a business to screen its employees and other visitors for illness prior to entrance into a facility and for employers who require employees to engage in proper hygiene procedures.

Limit Liability for Frontline and Essential Businesses Enact liability protections for frontline and essential businesses.

Clarify Remote Worker Hours Clarify for employees working remotely that small amounts of time spent performing tasks such as checking email, voicemail, or texting is not compensable work time.

Allow Employee Health Inquiry Allow employers to legally inquire about an employee's health before COVID-19 symptoms are exhibited and/or prior to an employee returning to the workplace.

Reinstate caps on non-economic damages Reinstate caps on non-economic damages to restore certainty in insurance markets and avoids insurance cost increases among businesses and individuals.

TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS



Increase Highway Weight Limits

Federal and State Infrastructure Plans Continue to efficiently utilize Kansas infrastructure resources based on needs of our state when and if the time comes for a federal infrastructure program.

Temporarily Reallocate Roadway Use

Encourage local governments to temporarily reallocate a portion of street parking for loading and unloading zones for deliveries as well as for local businesses without loading docks.

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HEALTH CARE PRIORITIES



Grant Flexible Licensing for Health Care Workers



Expand Telehealth and Telemedicine

Waive the collaboration agreement requirement for APRN Waive the collaboration agreement requirement for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses so APRNs may respond directly to patient health care needs because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prioritize COVID-19 Testing As the capacity to test increases, employees working in essential industries should be a priority for testing to ensure COVID-19 doesn't spread throughout a vital workforce.

Use Single-use Containers and Bags Stop the potential spread of COVID-19 by having Kansans use disposable plastic or paper bags, instead of reusable bags.

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Prioritize Budget Resources Prioritize budget resources on essential needs and utilize cost-benefit analysis.

Implement Performance-Based Budgeting

Fully implement the performance-based budgeting process.

Implement Government Reforms Implement reforms recommended in the 2016 Alvarez and Marshall study.

Incentivize Cost-Savings Reward public employees who identify cost saving measures

and operations efficiencies.

Address IT Needs Identify and prioritize IT infrastructure needs to make government more efficient.

Reward Gov't Merging Develop a plan for counties and cities to merge duties of local units of government.

Utilize Federal Relief Utilize federal relief resources in most effective manner and with as much transparency as possible.

WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION

Expand Apprenticeship Program Expand the Kansas Registered Apprenticeship Program with additional short-term transition support services for high-demand occupations.

Provide Scholarships for High-Demand Jobs

Enact the Kansas Promise Scholarship Program for graduating Kansas high school seniors enrolled in community colleges and technical schools for high demand occupations.

Develop Targeted Training Programs

Create incentives for community colleges to develop short term certificate programs to retrain displaced employees.

Limit Apprenticeship Liability Allow school district insurance to cover students participating in off campus, work-based learning, internships and apprenticeship programs.