

# Michigan's Work Share Program Saves State Trust Fund Millions and Leads the Nation as Employers Bring Back Workers from Unemployment

August 19, 2020

Contact: [Jason Moon](#), 517-282-0041

The state's Work Share program has played an important role in jump-starting Michigan's economy and preserving the State's unemployment trust fund as businesses continue to reopen and adjust to changes in customer demand due to COVID-19. According to data reported by the U.S. Dept. of Labor, Michigan leads the nation in Work Share participation with more than 18% of all national Work Share participants as of the most recent data released for week-ending July 18.

The federally funded program has provided \$450 million in benefits and seen tremendous growth helping more than 2,500 Michigan employers keep their workforce on the job and bringing back individuals from unemployment. With almost 97,000 employees participating at the peak of enrollment during the pandemic, Michigan's Work Share program has led the nation and far outpaced even the combined totals of larger states like New York, Ohio and Texas.

Work Share allows employers who are still experiencing decreases in customer demand to bring back laid-off workers with reduced hours while employees collect partial unemployment benefits to make up for the lost wages. Job providers have also utilized the flexible program to retain their skilled workforce and avoid layoffs. The program has also saved the employer funded trust fund hundreds of millions of dollars. Had workshare participants been laid off or continued to draw down unemployment benefits, the state trust fund would have paid more than \$212 million.

"Work Share has been a win-win for employers and employees as the economy continues to struggle from the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses of all sizes have taken advantage of the program to reopen or keep operations going while saving thousands of dollars on payroll," said Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Jeff Donofrio. "More importantly, Michigan workers have been able to return to work with partial unemployment benefits making up for lost wages. Work Share can continue to be a creative solution for Michigan businesses during this crisis."

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's [Executive Order](#) offered employers greater flexibility as they restarted their business and brought employees back from unemployment by allowing most employers to qualify for the program. Work Share offers many options for

employers, allowing multiple plans and the option to choose which employees participate in each plan. Employers can create a plan or plans that fit their specific needs. Prior to the pandemic, just 40 Michigan employers and 437 workers participated in the program.

Since the passage of the CARES Act, the Work Share program has been 100% federally funded. The program allows employees to earn both a percentage of state unemployment benefits and the additional \$600 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation. Although the \$600 federal payment ended on July 25, the program remains an attractive alternative to layoffs. Congress may still act to extend the federal payment or add additional resources to the program.

“The Chamber has been a strong proponent of Michigan’s Work Share program to help businesses navigate the ongoing challenges of the constantly changing COVID-19 crisis. As businesses adjust to changing demand and staffing needs during this uncharted pandemic, we encourage them to utilize proven tools to help alleviate some of their economic burden during an already difficult time,” said Sandy K. Baruah, president and CEO of the Detroit Regional Chamber.

Employers can visit [Michigan.gov/WorkShare](https://Michigan.gov/WorkShare) for a tutorial on how to sign up, FAQs and other resources to participate in the program. Two-week average of total employees certified, weeks ending July 11 and July 18 Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor ETA 539:

<b>State</b>	<b>Two-Week Average</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>MI</b>	<b>75,820</b>	<b>18.06%</b>
<b>WA</b>	<b>65,314</b>	<b>15.56%</b>
<b>OR</b>	<b>48,647</b>	<b>11.59%</b>
<b>TX</b>	<b>38,613</b>	<b>9.20%</b>
<b>NY</b>	<b>37,803</b>	<b>9.00%</b>
<b>OH</b>	<b>22,190</b>	<b>5.29%</b>
<b>MN</b>	<b>16,428</b>	<b>3.91%</b>
<b>CA</b>	<b>16,328</b>	<b>3.89%</b>
<b>MO</b>	<b>15,332</b>	<b>3.65%</b>
<b>AR</b>	<b>11,713</b>	<b>2.79%</b>
<b>WI</b>	<b>11,128</b>	<b>2.65%</b>
<b>MA</b>	<b>10,611</b>	<b>2.53%</b>
<b>CT</b>	<b>8,910</b>	<b>2.12%</b>
<b>KS</b>	<b>8,045</b>	<b>1.92%</b>
<b>RI</b>	<b>5,197</b>	<b>1.24%</b>
<b>AZ</b>	<b>4,315</b>	<b>1.03%</b>
<b>CO</b>	<b>4,094</b>	<b>0.98%</b>
<b>IA</b>	<b>3,696</b>	<b>0.88%</b>
<b>PA</b>	<b>3,005</b>	<b>0.72%</b>
<b>NH</b>	<b>2,716</b>	<b>0.65%</b>
<b>ME</b>	<b>2,469</b>	<b>0.59%</b>
<b>NE</b>	<b>2,434</b>	<b>0.58%</b>
<b>FL</b>	<b>2,425</b>	<b>0.58%</b>
<b>MD</b>	<b>1,616</b>	<b>0.38%</b>
<b>NJ</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>0.23%</b>

\* 25 states currently do not have Work Share programs