COVID-19 Vaccine (https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/locations/index.jsp) – Find out when, where, and how to get your shot.

Vaccine Rewards (https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine-rewards/index.jsp) – Your shot to a safe summer. Claim your reward by June 30.

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Governor Walz Convenes Special Session of Minnesota Legislature to Pass COVID-19 Relief for Small Businesses, Workers, Families

December 9, 2020

[ST. PAUL, MN] – Governor Tim Walz today announced that he will convene a special session of the Minnesota Legislature beginning on Monday, December 14, 2020 in order to provide much-needed relief to small businesses, workers, and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, amid climbing COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths, Governor Walz intends to extend the COVID-19 peacetime emergency by 30 days to ensure that the state can continue to quickly respond to the pandemic.

"Minnesota's small businesses and workers are bearing a large burden of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to protect their entire community amid restrictions that are saving lives," said Governor Walz. **"I call upon our state legislature to come together and ensure our businesses stay afloat, our workers are supported, and our families can put food on the table."**

"COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges to all Minnesotans, but we know that those impacts have disproportionately affected our small business community, working families, and children," said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **"As we continue to battle a surge in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths due to this virus, this pandemic is at its most serious. With the holiday season around the corner, we must come together to provide relief to those who need it most."**

On November 23, Governor Walz sent a letter (https://mn.gov/governor/news/#/detail/appId/1/id/455284) to legislative leaders emphasizing the need for immediate action to provide relief to small businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and on November 24, Governor Walz outlined the specifics of his COVID-19 economic relief package (https://mn.gov/governor/news/#/detail/appId/1/id/456315) , focused on providing direct aid to small businesses, supporting workers, and helping Minnesota families keep food on the table.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Governor Walz has invested $100 million dollars to support more than 8,000 Minnesota businesses. The state has also given nearly $840 million in support to local governments, much of which has been distributed to small businesses across the state. Also last month, the Governor wrote a letter (https://mn.gov/governor/news/#/detail/appId/1/id/455264) urging House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer to act quickly to provide assistance for workers, families, businesses, and states.

The special session comes during a period of record-setting highs in new cases, hospitalizations, and deaths due to COVID-19. Minnesota's neighboring states are among the highest infection rates in the nation. Minnesota's case positivity rate is above 10 percent, twice the level at which COVID-19 spread is considered controllable.

The extension of Minnesota's peacetime emergency is consistent with the ongoing national emergency declared by the President and the emergencies currently in effect in 48 other states. These states of emergency allow governors and other officials to quickly respond to rapidly evolving threats stemming from COVID-19.

As the COVID-19 vaccine begins to provide a light at the end of the pandemic, powers from the peacetime emergency are critical in state preparations for quick, equitable and safe distribution of the vaccine to Minnesotans in every corner of the state. Emergency powers remain essential for the timely acquisition of supplies and technology to support the vaccination effort.

Since the Governor declared a peacetime emergency, Minnesota has taken strong steps to respond to and provide relief for COVID-19, including enhancing protections for veterans in our veterans homes, activating the National Guard to assist in relief efforts, partnering with Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota to launch a statewide testing strategy to test all symptomatic people, and providing economic relief and stability to those impacted by the pandemic.

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