



2021 Policy Positions COVID-19 Response and Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has killed thousands of Minnesotans and infected hundreds of thousands more. Meanwhile, the pandemic and public health measures taken to slow its spread have ravaged our state's economy, leading to a significant state budget deficit and major budgetary uncertainty for local governments leading to impacts that will be felt for many years.

The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) supports the following policies related to COVID-19 response and recovery:

Executive Actions to Combat COVID-19

In effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, Governor Walz and his administration have taken a number of executive actions including ordering temporary business closures, capacity restrictions on businesses and events, and others. Many of these actions have been modified or loosened as understanding of the virus and how it transmits has advanced. That said, infection rates across the state may lead policymakers to impose new restrictions or re-impose restrictions that have been lifted.

CGMC requests that if the administration chooses to implement new or more stringent COVID-19 restrictions, those restrictions be imposed on a basis that recognizes geographical differences in infection rates rather than a statewide one-size-fits-all approach. COVID-19 has surged in different regions of the state at different times. While the CGMC understands the need to take precautions, we urge that they be targeted as narrowly as possible to avoid unnecessary harm to local economies.

Distribution of Federal COVID-19 Aid

CGMC supports the passage of additional federal legislation to provide direct support to states and local governments dealing with the budgetary impacts of the pandemic. We urge Minnesota's congressional delegation to insist that support for local governments be included in any aid package that passes in the U.S. Congress.

To the extent that determinations about how to distribute such funds are left to the state, the CGMC insists that the Governor's administration and the Legislature distribute resources in a geographically equitable manner, as well as equitably distributing funding between cities and other local units of government.

Economic Recovery

CGMC supports the creation and funding of policies and programs to support local businesses and workers in Greater Minnesota that have been deeply impacted by the pandemic. This includes emergency, short-term measures such as grants (preferably) or loans to business, as well as significant investments in existing economic development programs to ensure they are equipped to fuel recovery in Greater Minnesota.



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Childcare

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the childcare crisis already facing Greater Minnesota. The full impact that the pandemic will have on childcare in Greater Minnesota is not yet quantifiable, as numerous providers have shut down or exited the marketplace without clarity on how many will ever return.

As the state continues to address the ongoing impacts of the virus, it will be essential to invest significant resources to ensure that Greater Minnesota has the childcare resources to support working families and their employers now and into the future.