



NEWS RELEASE

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Pure Michigan Business Connect Grants Support Retooling Efforts of 12 Small Businesses and Nonprofits in Response to COVID-19

- ***A total of \$1 million in grants awarded through PMBC COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grants program***
- ***Immediate funding of up to \$150,000 being granted to qualified manufacturers looking to produce supplies needed in response to COVID-19***

LANSING, MICH. Twelve small businesses and nonprofits around Michigan have been awarded a total of \$1 million through the [Pure Michigan Business Connect COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grants program](#), the Michigan Economic Development Corporation announced today. The program is providing the funds to small manufacturers looking to retool and produce critical health and human service supplies in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

“Today’s Emergency Access and Retooling grants are providing immediate capital to these small businesses and nonprofits stepping up to retool and support recovery efforts in this time of need,” said MEDC CEO Mark A. Burton. “Michigan’s Arsenal of Innovation is helping drive the fight against COVID-19, and these grants represent part of a larger coordinated effort among, local, state and national organizations to support recovery efforts.”

The [PMBC COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grants program](#) was announced on April 1, with grants of \$25,000 to \$150,000 being awarded to companies who were retooling quickly to manufacture critical health and human service supplies. Michigan small businesses (per [SBA size standards](#)) and established nonprofits were eligible to apply. The funds could be used to support the purchase of equipment necessary to manufacture critical supplies, logistics and shipping costs of procuring necessary equipment, technology upgrades and other costs related to operationalizing new product lines.

A total of 313 companies requesting more than \$30 million applied for the grants. In order to be considered, applicants needed to demonstrate an ability to execute project; need for financial

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assistance; timeliness; product need in market; and economic impact. All of the available funds have been disbursed with today's grants.

"TentCraft, before this crisis, had never manufactured products for the healthcare or medical industry. This MEDC PMBC COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grant is a crucial piece of our pivot toward these new products," said TentCraft President Matt Bulloch. "This grant allows us to keep our people employed AND helps us to produce products that are sorely needed by the frontline healthcare workers. We are proud of the orders that we have produced in Michigan and welcome the opportunity to support in any way we can in the fight against COVID-19."

PMBC COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grant recipients:

Company	Amount granted	Product producing	City	County
York Project	\$25,000	Surgical masks	Detroit	Wayne
Outerwears	\$31,000	Gowns and masks	Schoolcraft	Kalamazoo
Commonwealth Sewing Co.	\$48,000	Masks and gowns	Detroit	Wayne
Detroit Sewn, Inc.	\$50,000	Face masks	Pontiac	Oakland
Vandergen LLC	\$67,000	Face masks	Holland	Ottawa
TentCraft, Inc.	\$75,000	Medical tents	Traverse City	Grand Traverse
Freeman Manufacturing	\$100,000	Isolation gowns	Sturgis	Saint Joseph
Oxus America, Inc.	\$100,000	Oxygen concentrators for ventilators	Auburn Hills	Oakland
TD Industrial Coverings, Inc.	\$100,000	Isolation gowns	Sterling Heights	Macomb
Genemarkers	\$104,000	COVID testing products	Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo
ISAIC	\$150,000	Gowns	Detroit	Wayne
Trims Unlimited	\$150,000	Face masks	Almont	Lapeer
TOTAL	\$1,000,000			

In making the decisions to award these funds, a six-person panel reviewed all applications. Selections were made based ability to execute, need for financial assistance, timeliness, overall economic and public health impact, and demand in the market. Final recipients were selected from the highest scoring submissions, using the guiding principles of available overall funding and product prioritization developed in consultation with medical facilities across the state, the State Emergency Operations Center and the Department of Technology, Management and Budget.

"MEDC and PMBC have been champions of ISAIC and great partners from the beginning," said Jen Guarino, CEO of ISAIC. "This current support will not only help us continue our mission of developing the talent force for domestic apparel manufacturing in Detroit, but also will allow us to support local businesses and help keep their workers employed as we get these critical protective equipment to healthcare workers."

While the program does not guarantee sales channels, the Pure Michigan Business Connect team will assist grantees by connecting them with demand identified through the [COVID-19](#)

[Virtual Procurement and Donation Assistance portal](#). The portal, an effort of PMBC in collaboration with the State Emergency Operation Center, is a free, virtual procurement and donation platform that provides health and human service providers direct access to businesses within the state providing and donating supplies including personal protection equipment, food, medical devices, paper products, cleaning equipment and more.

The platform is also offering a place for companies with manufacturing capabilities for personal protection equipment to indicate which items (i.e. masks, gowns, ventilators) they are able to produce, along with quantity and timing detail. To learn more, visit here: www.michiganbusiness.org/virtual-procurement/.

Today's grants announcement is just one example of the type of support that is available through the MEDC and the state's small business support organizations for small businesses, startups, entrepreneurs and communities throughout the state.

MEDC's [Access to Capital](#) programs can provide greater availability of working capital during times of growth, change or economic uncertainty. As small and medium-sized businesses across the state are negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, existing programs with Capital Access provide opportunities to access financing that may not otherwise be available.

For example, collateral support through Access to Capital is allowing National Filters, Inc. in Harbor Beach to purchase equipment necessary to increase surgical mask production from 250 per day to 7,200 masks per hour, and begin producing N95 respirators at the rate of 2,000 per hour. The company will also rehire 16 employees who had been previously laid off due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Other resources for businesses across Michigan to assist them in recovering from economic losses as a result of the COVID-19 virus can be found online at michiganbusiness.org/covid19. This site includes resources offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration including emergency and Personal Paycheck Protection loans, the [Pure Michigan Business Connect virtual procurement and donation platform](#), support services offered through the Small Business Development Center and more. The MEDC has also developed a FAQ for Michigan businesses and communities at michiganbusiness.org/covid19-faq.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

For those who have questions about the state's actions to mitigate the spread of coronavirus, please call the COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-535-6136 between 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily.

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About Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is the state's marketing arm and lead advocate for business development, job awareness and community development with the focus on growing Michigan's economy. For more information on the MEDC and our initiatives, visit www.MichiganBusiness.org. For Pure Michigan® tourism information, your trip begins at www.michigan.org. Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).