

Reopening Chicagoland Business

Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force Report

The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Task Force comprised of a group of 25 local business and civic leaders convened to discuss the logistics and practical challenges of reopening Chicago's economy. This group collectively identified the policies and conditions necessary, including a series of "must haves" and action items, to expedite our economic recovery, while simultaneously prioritizing safety, trust, and equity.

- 1 | Rebuild trust among employees:** Business leaders should clearly communicate what steps they have taken to protect the health and safety of their employees with honesty, transparency, and a two-way dialogue.
- 2 | Provide flexibility:** As more businesses reopen, business leaders and managers should make good-faith efforts to offer greater flexibility for workers during a very uncertain time.
- 3 | Safeguard public spaces and invest in critical infrastructure:** Community assets like public transportation, schools, and childcare centers are key enablers to fully reopening our economy and should be safeguarded.
- 4 | Provide clear guidelines and consistent communication:** Businesses need clear direction about reopening procedures, protocols for handling positive tests, and information about where to go for help.
- 5 | Support small and disadvantaged businesses:** Supporting minority- and women-owned businesses, and disadvantaged business enterprises (M/W/DBEs), especially within the small business community, is critical to the region's economic recovery.

★ MUST HAVES ★



Clear Guidance
for Testing &
Accessing PPE



Schools &
Childcare
Centers



Transportation



Liability
Protection



Talent &
Workforce



Small Business
Support



Regulatory
Relief



Mental Health
& Wellness



Investing in Our
Infrastructure

★ ACTION ITEMS ★

- ▶ Press city and state leaders to provide concise and digestible information so business owners know where to send employees for testing and what to do in the case of a positive result.
- ▶ Work with other business groups and the region's transit agencies to survey the business community's ridership demand and support related planning efforts.
- ▶ Facilitate business community support to help schools acquire laptops, tablets, and other remote-learning devices for all students, particularly vulnerable or at-risk students who need to self-isolate.
- ▶ Work with our members, the business community, and policymakers to address gaps in existing state and local statutes.
- ▶ Refocus the Chamber's existing job training programs to provide employers with new, in-depth training on new safety policies and protocols.
- ▶ Launch new small business support programs to increase SBDC advising, training, professional business coaching, and education with a specific emphasis on minority, women, veteran, and disability-owned businesses (among other certified business types).
- ▶ Push back against costly mandates like universal testing.
- ▶ Promote wellness and mental health programs to our members and the business community.
- ▶ Push for the full \$8.5 billion investment in O'Hare Airport modernization.

★ CHICAGO PLEDGE ★

Recognizing the profound impact that COVID-19 has had on Chicagoland's economy, as well as the pandemic's disproportionate impact on communities of color, we take the Chicago Pledge and encourage the business community to:

★ BUY LOCALLY

Buy from Chicago-area companies, particularly minority, women, and disadvantaged business enterprises (MWDBEs) and small businesses, which make up the backbone of our regional supply chain.

★ INVEST LOCALLY

Invest in disadvantaged communities by partnering with community organizations to deliver volunteers and other resources.

★ HIRE LOCALLY

Hire and recruit locally and forge new partnerships to diversify talent pipelines.

★ LISTEN & LEARN

Facilitate and promote conversations within our companies and our communities about structural inequalities related to economic opportunity, health care, education, and transportation.

★ [CLICK HERE TO TAKE THE CHICAGO PLEDGE](#) ★