



UPDATES FROM THE CAPITOL

November 11 - 21, 2023

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES NEW HIRES, PROMOTIONS

Governor Whitmer recently announced multiple people that were hired and promoted within the office.

Recently Hired

- Jenita Moore, Director of the Office of Community Engagement
- Eric Keller, Community Engagement Advisor
- Jamil Poonja, Senior Advisor
- Mikhail Perkins, Legislative Affairs Specialist
- Aaron Sepulveda, Policy Advisor
- Kristin Brady, Technical Assistance Center Director
- Harnoor Kaur, Appointment Specialist
- Madilyn Meredith, Issue Specialist
- Ian Earle, Issue Specialist
- Joshua Szewczul, Issue Specialist

Promotions

- Zack Pohl, Principal Deputy Chief of Staff
- Maria Martinez, Deputy Chief of Staff

'DOLLY PARDON' WINS GOVERNOR'S TURKEY PARDON NAMING CONTEST

Governor Whitmer announced her second winner of the turkey pardon naming contest since taking office.

Dolly Pardon, submitted by Jay Kozlowski of West Bloomfield, was the selected name out of almost 4000 entries this year.

U.S. REP DAN KILDEE NOT SEEKING REELECTION

U.S. Representative Dan Kildee (D-Flint) will not be seeking reelection, citing that he is going to focus on his health after being diagnosed with cancer this year. Although Kildee is cancer-free now after surgery, he plans to stay engaged in public service through other means.

Currently, two republicans have announced their candidacy. Martin Blank, trauma surgeon and police officer in Saginaw, announced in October that he would be running for the 8th district. Last Friday, Paul Junge, a former Trump administration adviser and Lansing TV anchor who ran against Kildee in 2022, announced his candidacy. There are no democrats who have officially announced yet.

CANDIDATES ON MICHIGAN'S 2024 PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson released the candidates that will appear on the 2024 presidential primary ballot. Under state law, anyone who was advocated by the national news media to be a candidate qualifies to be on the ballot.

For the Democratic Party, President Joe Biden, Dean Phillips, and Marianne Williamson will be represented. The Republican Party will have Doug Burgum, Chris Christie, Ron DeSantis, Nikki Haley, Asa Hutchinson, Vivek Ramaswamy, and Donald Trump listed. Candidates have until December 8 at 4 p.m. to withdraw their name or file a nominating petition if they would like to be added to the ballot.

The Michigan presidential primary will be on February 27, 2024. Voters can vote for their desired candidate or may choose "uncommitted" as an option. Ballots will be sent by January 13, 2024 for those who are military or overseas. Absent voter ballots are to be printed by January 18, 2024.

MDHHS INTERNAL CHANGES AND PROMOTIONS

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced internal changes. The Children's Services Administration will report directly to Elizabeth Hertel, director of MDHHS, instead of Lewis Roubal. Roubal is retiring from his position as the chief deputy director for opportunity for the MDHHS.

The department also announced promotions that are listed below.

- David Knezek, Chief Operating Officer
- Emily Skrzypczak, Chief of Staff
- Laura Blodgett, Senior Deputy Director of Communications

MDHHS LOOKING FOR SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH HUB ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) announced that they are looking for advisory council members for the five hubs of the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). These hubs were established to improve the health resources and equity of food, housing, transportation, and other social factors. The 5 hubs hope to work with all types of members including social workers, housing providers, government departments, and businesses to achieve their goals.

If you are interested in becoming an advisory council member, please apply [here](#).