

Manitoba Election 2019:

Party Leaders' Survey on Small Business Priorities

Deliver needed small business tax relief:

Over the last few years, Manitoba's small businesses have been hit with a barrage of cost increases by all levels of government. In fact, 97 per cent of the province's small business owners believe their business is facing greater cost pressures than it did three years ago.

- 1. If elected, what is your government's plan to deliver needed tax relief to Manitoba's small business owners?**

Manitoba's Basic Personal Exemption currently ranks the lowest west of Prince Edward Island.

- 2. If elected, will your government raise Manitoba's Basic Personal Exemption amount to the national average (\$12,026 in 2019) before 2021?**

Manitoba businesses currently pay much more in school property taxes than residents on the same value of property. For example, businesses in Winnipeg pay 3.9 times what residents do in school property taxes on properties both valued at \$300,000.

- 3. If elected, will your government commit to reduce the education property tax gap between businesses (including farms) and residents?**

Manitoba's payroll tax burden is the fourth highest in Canada, lead by the Health and Post Secondary Education Tax Levy (HE Levy).

- 4. If elected, will your government commit to raising the HE Levy's lower exemption threshold (currently \$1.25 million) and indexing it to inflation going forward?**
- 5. If elected, will your government commit to not raise taxes or introduce any new taxation, or provide new taxation powers to municipalities?**

Spend like a small business

Small business owners work hard to operate within their means and they expect their governments to do the same. The majority (58%) of Manitoba’s small business owners want the province to return to balanced budgets by no later than 2022.

6. **If elected, what is your government’s plan to return to balanced budgets?**

7. **If elected, what is your government’s plan to curb the province’s spending growth and limit long-term spending growth to sustainable levels (inflation + population growth)?**

Reduce red tape for small businesses

Red tape is a huge cost to small businesses. CFIB estimates that in 2017, red tape at all levels of government cost Manitoba’s businesses about \$360 million.

8. **If elected, what is your government’s plan to reduce red tape for small businesses?**

9. **If elected, will your government maintain the *Regulatory Accountability Act and Amendments to the Statutes and Regulations Act* in order to measure, track, report and reduce red tape?**

10. **If elected, will your government work with stakeholders of every size and trade in the construction industry to pass prompt payment legislation or make other legislative changes to improve the speed and reliability of payments to all contractors doing construction in the province?**

11. **If elected, will your government work with the City of Winnipeg and other Manitoba municipalities to cut red tape with permits and mitigate the impacts of roadwork at the municipal and provincial levels?**

Balance labour laws and enhance training programs

The shortages of skilled and semi- or unskilled labour have increased over the last two years in Manitoba. This becomes especially problematic for small businesses, which have higher job vacancy rates than larger businesses.

12. If elected, what is your government’s plan to better prepare graduates to meet the needs of small businesses?

13. If elected, will your government allow businesses the choice to remain open on all statutory holidays, regardless of size or business type?

Manitoba’s small business owners support helping low-income earners, but know there are better ways to do so than simply increasing the minimum wage.

14. If elected, what is your government’s plan to help the province’s low-income earners?

15. If elected, will your government commit to not increasing Manitoba’s minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour?

16. If elected, what is your government’s plan to better balance Manitoba’s labour laws to help the province’s small business owners?