

# News Release

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## Comptroller's Office Suspending Enforcement of Craft Alcohol Carryout Purchase Limits

*Temporary move puts manufacturers on level playing  
field with liquor stores and aims to help them survive  
business downturn*

**ANNAPOLIS, Md. (March 18, 2020)** - In an effort to help Maryland's craft alcohol manufacturers keep their businesses afloat through the COVID-19 pandemic, Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that his office is temporarily suspending its enforcement of limits imposed on customers purchasing beer and distilled spirits.

Current state law restricts how much product a Maryland-based craft brewery and craft distillery can sell to its customers for carryout and off-premise consumption. For breweries that possess a Class 5 production license, that limit is 288 ounces - the volume equivalent of one case. For Class 1 distilleries, the maximum is 2,225 milliliters (2.25 liters) of spirits - the volume equivalent of three regular-sized bottles of vodka, gin, whiskey or rum.

"In light of the public health and economic crisis that our state is experiencing as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, and the severe financial losses that are being incurred by our local, independent businesses that can no longer serve customers on their premises, our agency is suspending its enforcement of these laws for the duration of Governor Hogan's state of emergency," Comptroller Franchot said. "Like restaurants, our state's flourishing breweries and distilleries greatly depend on customers visiting their taprooms and tasting rooms to make ends meet. Given the necessary shutdown of these establishments, we're lifting these arbitrary limits to generate more dollars so they can persevere during these tough times."

This action, which takes effect immediately, puts local manufacturers on a level playing field with Maryland's package stores, which are not bound by the same sales limits. It also could preserve jobs for brewery and distillery employees who may otherwise have been laid off during the state of emergency.

“It's my hope, and that of my team, that this will provide at least a small measure of relief and opportunity for local businesses that have done so much to create jobs, investment and revitalization in communities across Maryland,” Franchot said. “If these manufacturers are forced to close as a result of the pandemic’s impact, the economic effect – in terms of lost jobs, lost revenue and lost community investment - would be devastating.”

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