

News Release

MEDIA CONTACTS: [SUSAN O'BRIEN](#): MOBILE - 443-875-8540
[ALAN BRODY](#): MOBILE - 443-924-1473

Comptroller's New Tax Processing System on Track to Launch July 6

First phase of Compass system focuses on alcohol tax collection and license renewals, will be more user friendly

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (June 8, 2020) - Despite challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that the first phase of the agency's new tax processing system, called Compass, will launch on time on July 6.

The \$160 million Compass will upgrade the state's tax processing system and integrate with the data warehouse to create a state-of-the-art program that will expand revenue-generating projects, provide enhanced reporting functionality and make it easier for taxpayers to view and manage their accounts online.

"At a time when most businesses are facing extraordinary challenges, our agency is launching a much improved, easier-to-use reporting and payment system that will help business owners better navigate and manage this end of their accounting," said Comptroller Franchot. "We have been building, preparing and training for this day over the past several years and I am proud of our team for staying on schedule despite the past few months' disruption to our normal working conditions. Compass will improve the user experience and enable us to process tax returns more quickly, while also enhancing our efforts to protect taxpayers from fraud."

The first phase of the system upgrade focuses on alcohol tax collection and license renewals. The process will be more automated and many forms have been condensed and streamlined to save taxpayers time and allow for quicker customer service.

The Compass integrated tax system will continue to be implemented over the next several years, with corporate taxes launching in the first quarter of 2021, followed

by business taxes and individual income taxes in 2022.

When fully implemented, some of the benefits will be improved fraud detection and prevention programs, increased ability for taxpayers to manage their accounts via an online portal, maximized compliance with best-practice security standards and maximized audit, collection, reporting and estimating functionality.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Compass team quickly transitioned to working remotely while preparing a major system overhaul. Despite this unforeseen challenge, all the testing, training and implementation milestones are on target for the original July 6 launch.

MEDIA CONTACTS: Susan O'Brien - sobrien@marylandtaxes.gov
443-875-8540 (mobile)

Alan Brody - abrody@marylandtaxes.gov
443-924-1473 (mobile)

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