

News Release

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Shop Maryland Tax-Free Week is August 9-15

Maryland Retailers Association offers scholarships to students who have helped small businesses keep the lights on

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (July 23, 2020) - In a year that has been anything but normal, Comptroller Peter Franchot reminds Marylanders that one thing remains the same: Shop Maryland Tax-Free Week begins Sunday, August 9th with big savings for customers, scholarship opportunities for college and trade school students and a catalyst to spur sales for retailers.

"This is one of my favorite weeks of the year because it's a win for shoppers and businesses, while jolting Maryland's economy during the slow summer months," said Comptroller Franchot. "This year more than ever, it's critical to shop local to support the small retailers who are going above and beyond to continue paying employees, creating a safe environment for customers and finding new ways to sell their products during a global pandemic."

From August 9-15, any single qualifying article of clothing or footwear priced \$100 or less – regardless of how many items are purchased at the same time – will be exempt from the state's six percent sales tax. The first \$40 of any backpack purchase is also tax free.

Although commonly associated with back-to-school shopping, Comptroller Franchot reminds Marylanders that the tax-free savings apply to shoppers of all ages.

Additionally, the Maryland Retailers Association (MRA) is once again offering scholarships to two students attending a Maryland university, college or trade school (\$1,000 for first place and \$500 for second place) by explaining how they helped a Maryland business keep the lights on during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Examples might include helping to build or improve a company website, creating unique content for a social media account or going above and beyond as a store employee to fulfill online orders.

Entries may be submitted via email to shopmdtaxfree@marylandtaxes.gov or they can be posted on the tax-free week's social media pages: [Shop Maryland Tax Free on Facebook](#) and @shopmdtaxfree on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Business owners, parents, colleagues and friends are encouraged to submit a nomination. Students may also self-nominate.

"Small businesses depend on their community to survive unexpected and long-lasting economic downturns," said Cailey Locklair, president of the Maryland Retailers Association. "We want to hear about the young people who have stepped up during this global pandemic to support their local retailers. They deserve our appreciation and we're happy to provide these scholarships to two worthy recipients."

The University System of Maryland has agreed to match the \$1,000 scholarship award if a student attending one of their universities is selected as the first place winner. Administrators at Stevenson University, Hood College and the Maryland Institute for College Art (MICA) have also agreed to match the \$1,000 first place prize if one of their students is selected.

MRA, which is providing the scholarship money, will select the two entries that best exhibit a young Marylander supporting a small business during these challenging times.

For more information about Shop Maryland Tax-Free Week, visit www.marylandtaxes.gov, hover over the "News" tab and click on Comptroller Initiatives. There, you can find a list of [tax-exempt items](#), a list of [frequently asked questions](#) and some [helpful facts for shoppers and merchants](#).

(**Media can use [this graphic illustration](#) to accompany their Shop Maryland Tax-Free Week stories. It can also be found at the above web page.)

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