



THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

WANADA Bulletin #11-20

April 29, 2020

Seeking Feedback About WANADA COVID-19 Resources

Virginia, D.C. Extend DMV Closures

Local Jurisdictions Plot out Re-Opening Plans

Virginia Delays Minimum Wage Increase to May 2021

Maryland New-Vehicle Tags Must Be Ordered from the State, MVA Says

Seeking Feedback About WANADA COVID-19 Resources

We at WANADA are working diligently to ensure our dealers, Kindred-Line members, and other supporters are staying up-to-date about COVID-19 and the myriad effects it has had on nearly every aspect of society.

[WANADA's COVID-19 Information Library](#) is designed to be a one-stop-shop for business owners and employees seeking guidance on the region's various safety and employment mandates, along with information about financial resources available to workers and employers alike. You may also view the full [library of email updates](#) that WANADA has sent its members during the pandemic.

Our library also includes a host of resources from the National Automobile Dealers Association, and we encourage all auto dealers to take advantage of their [Coronavirus resource page](#). We also appreciate the great work that our partners at VADA and MADA are doing to keep dealers across the Mid-Atlantic informed.

In addition, the CDC has also consolidated their [COVID-19 resource page for businesses](#), which features details about how businesses can prepare their facilities, whether they are currently open for business or hope to re-open in the near future. The WANADA Information Library also contains links to state and local health and business resources.

We are grateful for the positive feedback we have received regarding our communications during the COVID-19 pandemic, and would like to hear your view on how we can improve them. If you have any feedback, please feel free to contact Mike Bushnell, WANADA's communications director, at mb@wanada.org.

Virginia, D.C. Extend DMV Closures

[The Virginia DMV](#) announced last week that they have extended the suspension of all in-person services through at least May 11. The state has also extended all vehicles registrations that had been set to expire between March 15 and June 1 for at least 90 days past their initial expiration date.

Among other provisions, the Virginia DMV is also "automatically extending until May 31, 2020 the validity period of every license, permit, and certificate issued to businesses involved in the transportation of people or property for hire." Please visit the [Virginia DMV's COVID-19 information page](#) for more details.

Last week, the DC DMV also [extended their suspension of in-person services](#) "through the duration of the public health emergency." As part of this announcement, the District is extending the expiration dates for all vehicle inspections, registrations, licenses, and other related documents through at least June 29.

The District Department of Public Works is suspending ticket adjudication procedures through at least that date as well, though parking, red light, and speed camera enforcement will continue.

Maryland's MVA announced an indefinite closure of their in-person branches on March 20, and that closure continues. The MVA is offering very limited in-person dealer services at their Glen Burnie branch on select weekdays, as outlined in this [MDOT Dealer Bulletin](#).

Local Jurisdictions Plot out Re-Opening Plans

Government leaders in [D.C.](#), [Maryland](#), and [Virginia](#) have all announced frameworks for gradually returning their jurisdictions back to somewhat normal operations, but even the beginning phases are likely several weeks away. And even then, business owners and patrons can expect face masks and social distancing to be major components of society for months to come.

While some states, like Georgia, Oklahoma, and Texas, have all re-opened (to varying degrees) certain retail businesses that had been shuttered, the three major jurisdictions in the Washington region are taking a slower approach. Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's "Forward Virginia" plan is contingent on the commonwealth hitting several key benchmarks, including administering at least 10,000 COVID-19 tests per day, while sustaining a two-week decrease in new cases.

In a way that mirrors the [federal government's three-phase reopening plan](#), "phase one" in Governor Northam's plan would still encourage teleworking where feasible, but would allow some previously-shuttered businesses to reopen. The plan also projects that phase one would "recommend" face coverings in public, but lacks any additional details on enforcement.

Currently, auto sales and service departments in Virginia [are able to continue operating](#), so long as they limit patron capacity to no more than 10 at any time, while ensuring all employees can maintain a six-foot distance from others at all times.

In Maryland, Gov. Larry Hogan announced last week that the state had secured [500,000 additional COVID-19 test kits](#), an integral component in Maryland's re-opening plan. [Maryland's recovery plan](#) features three additional benchmarks beyond rapidly expanding COVID testing: increasing hospital surge capacity, producing much more personal protective equipment, and developing a "robust contact tracing operation." You may view Maryland's [Roadmap to Recovery plan here](#).

Governor Hogan said last week that he is hopeful that the state could begin implementing the first step of the recovery plan by mid-May. Maryland's plan envisions a reopening plan that

covers low, medium, and high risk categories, with a potential for additional regulations in each of the three phases.

According to [the Roadmap](#), some of the earliest changes would likely be allowing small shops to open, implementing a retail-to-go model where certain stores could open by appointment for small groups, with transactions occurring outside, and a re-opening of the state's golf courses, hiking trails, and other similar spaces for low-capacity outdoor activities.

Maryland auto dealerships and service facilities are also currently allowed to remain open, under [interpretive guidance issued in late March](#). That said, businesses in Maryland must be compliant with both the [statewide face mask ordinance](#), and in some counties, [far more restrictive local guidances](#) requiring all employees to wear masks at their worksites. The governor's public statements over the past week or two give the impression that those requirements will remain in effect even as more businesses are allowed to re-open.

On Monday, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser announced that she had formed the [ReOpen DC Advisory Group](#). The group, [which features former federal Cabinet officials and city government leaders](#), will be tasked with developing a re-opening plan that must take into account the city's much higher population density relative to its neighboring states, and the hundreds of thousands of workers who, in happier times, travel into the city every day for work.

The District's stay-at-home order is currently in effect through at least May 15. There are no new automobile dealerships in the city.

Virginia Delays Minimum Wage Increase to May 2021

Last week during their veto session, the Virginia General Assembly agreed to [delay an increase](#) in the state minimum wage by four months, in response to a recommendation from Gov. Ralph Northam. The minimum hourly wage in Virginia will now increase from \$7.25 to \$9.50 on May 1, 2021, as opposed to January 1, 2021.

Beginning on January 1, 2022, the wage will rise to \$11 an hour, and then increase incrementally in three steps over the following four years until it reaches \$15 an hour on January 1, 2026. The first of those three steps will be on January 1, 2023, when the minimum wage is set to increase to \$12 per hour.

Md. New-Vehicle Tags Must Be Ordered from the State, MVA Says

According to a [Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration Bulletin](#) issued earlier this week, temporary license plate paper can no longer be ordered from Maryland Correctional Enterprises, and instead must be ordered from the MVA.

To order temporary tag paper, [please complete this form](#) and email it to mvawarehouse@mdot.maryland.gov. It can also be faxed to 410-766-3827.

Please note that, while the form itself says that new car dealers can request up to 400 pieces of paper per month, the latest MVA Bulletin notes that the current monthly limit is just 200. If you have any questions about this rule, or the paper limits, please email mvablcsd@mva.maryland.gov.