



THE WANADA BULLETIN

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

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WANADA's Webinar on May 14 Covers PPP Loan Forgiveness and More

Through the [CARES Act](#), the Treasury Department has [made nearly \\$1 trillion available](#) for small- and medium-sized employers, via programs including the [Employee Retention Tax Credit](#), the [Economic Injury Disaster Loan](#) advance program, and the much talked-about [Paycheck Protection Program](#). With this unprecedented amount of relief going out the door in such a quick time, federal regulators have had to write the rules on the fly, leaving business owners with many questions about how to maximize the amount of loan forgiveness they can receive from these programs.

With that in mind, WANADA is partnering with the advisors at [Councilor, Buchanan & Mitchell](#), P.C. on a [special webinar](#) for area dealers and suppliers, focused on making sense of the CARES Act, namely the PPP and its loan-forgiveness provisions. **The webinar will be held at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 14**, and will be moderated by CBM advisors [John Comunale](#), [Richard Morris](#), and Thomas Hudson, who combined have more than six decades of experience dealing with business tax issues in the Washington area.

[To register for the webinar, please click here.](#)

We at WANADA have long relied on their expertise and guidance for a host of dealership finance-related matters, and we greatly appreciate them sharing their wisdom with our dealers during this very important time.

The National Automobile Dealers Association has also produced several very helpful guides addressing the federal resources available to small businesses. Among them are [a top-line review of all the national programs](#) authorized by the CARES Act and the [supplemental funding bill](#), plus additional resources for medium-sized businesses, including the Federal Reserve's [Main Street Lending Program](#).

NADA has also produced a robust [FAQ page on the CARES Act](#), a [supplemental guide](#) to the PPP's employee limits for dealers, and detailed guidance on the [ways that small businesses can maximize their loan forgiveness](#) amount under the program. These resources, and many more, can be found on [WANADA's COVID-19 Information Library](#), which is being updated regularly with the latest guidance from our association partners, government agencies at all levels, and much more.

Regional Re-Open Plan Remains Slow as COVID Rates Stay High

While states with both Republican and Democratic leadership have begun re-opening businesses like restaurants and even bowling alleys, elected officials and health authorities in our area have taken a slower approach. Across the D.C. area, there has been, at best, a [stagnation in the decline](#) of new COVID-19 cases, and as such, the region likely remains at least a couple weeks away from entering something that resembles the “phase one” outlined in the [federal re-opening guidance](#).

Currently, new franchised auto dealerships are allowed to remain open under the parameters of Virginia’s [Executive Order 53](#), issued in March, and [Maryland legal guidance](#) that expressly authorized sales and service operations to continue. In both states, there are significant regulations around these continued operations, including a 10-person capacity limit and social distancing requirement in Virginia, and [statewide and local workplace PPE ordinances](#) in Maryland.

In the District of Columbia, where there are no new auto dealerships, [Mayor Muriel Bowser announced Wednesday](#) that she will extend the city’s stay-at-home order until at least June 8. She said that the city continues to experience [widespread community transmission](#) of COVID-19, and that the rate of positive tests in the city remains over 20 percent.

Last week, Gov. Ralph Northam of Virginia issued [Executive Order 61](#), which, when implemented, would be the largest loosening of restrictions in the region by far. The ordinance will allow businesses to operate at 50 percent of their lowest published patron capacity; hair salons will be able to accept clients again on a by-appointment basis, and restaurants can offer dine-in services outdoors.

The ordinance was supposed to go into effect statewide on Friday; however, local leaders and health officials in Northern Virginia [asked Gov. Northam](#) to delay the implementation of EO 61 in their region. On Tuesday, Northam issued [Executive Order 62](#), officially delaying the region’s entrance into phase one until at least May 29. In essence, the parameters around EO 53 will remain in effect [in the region](#).

Even as the “phase one” of the Forward Virginia [re-open plan](#) gets delayed in Northern Virginia, businesses statewide will be required to have all employees wear masks in public-facing areas. That order will be enforced by the state Department of Health, and non-compliant businesses can be closed. Virginia has [issued guidelines for all businesses](#) during phase one of the re-opening.

In Maryland, Gov. Larry Hogan [announced a plan last week](#) to allow some elective medical procedures to resume, as he simultaneously [re-opened state parks and beaches](#) to certain outdoor activities. Leaders in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties [expressed concern](#) about the governor’s attempts to loosen restrictions on outdoor activities, noting that the rate of COVID cases in their jurisdictions [are vastly higher](#) than in the rest of the state. On Tuesday, [Gov. Hogan indicated](#) he would let those two counties chart their own re-opening timeline.

Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties account for nearly half of all [COVID-19 cases in Maryland](#), greatly outpacing their total population rate, and the [same dynamic is true](#) in Northern Virginia.

Important Safety and Employment Resources for Dealerships

As dealerships and repair facilities continue providing essential transportation services, it is critical that they comply with [CDC guidelines](#), and all state and local mandates from elected officials and health authorities. The state of California also produced a [comprehensive guide to dealership safety](#), which features a number of best practices around worker and customer health.

WANADA encourages you to familiarize yourself with these recommendations, along with those [produced by the commonwealth of Virginia](#) for their phase one re-opening plan, and implement them wherever possible.

NADA has also published a wealth of dealer safety resources on their online [Coronavirus Hub](#), including documents focused on [maintaining service operations](#) and the best steps to take if an [employee tests positive for COVID-19](#). They are also continuously updating [an FAQ page](#) addressing potential dealership health concerns related to COVID-19, and have published a [dealership guide to help dealers operate safely](#) throughout this crisis.

The [U.S. Department of Labor](#) has published a series of business best-practice guides as well, including [a list of 10 steps](#) all businesses can take to reduce COVID-19 exposure; the document is [available in 13 languages](#). Last week, the DOL also [published additional guidance](#) related to the federal unemployment compensation program that was authorized by the [CARES Act](#).

Under the new law, unemployment insurance claimants are able to receive up to \$600 per week in additional funds, and the eligibility for that program has been expanded as well to cover more workers, who separated from their employers in more ways.

Virginia DMV Further Extends Branch Closures

[The Virginia DMV](#), which had previously suspended in-person services until May 11, has now [closed all branches statewide](#) "until further notice." In their announcement regarding the extension, the DMV said they are working on a plan to allow certain vital in-person services on a by-appointment basis. When the department issues more information regarding that system, we will let you know.

The DMV has yet to extend the grace period for expiring documents that they [announced in late April](#), but it is already quite generous. As of now, all driver's licenses, identification cards, and vehicle registrations that had been set to expire in March or April will be extended 90 days from their previous expiration date. All documents set to expire between May 1 and June 10 will be extended for 60 days past expiration, or until July 31, whichever is sooner.

Many DMV services [are available online](#), or through the mail, and WANADA continues to encourage dealers to take advantage of those options for at least the near future. WANADA has also [published an updated guide to the operating statutes](#) of the three DMV systems in the Washington area. Both D.C. and Maryland's motor vehicle service stations also remain closed indefinitely.

Free Plug-In Vehicle Specialist Training Course Available

The plug-in electric vehicle advocacy group [Plug In America](#) is offering a [complimentary training course for dealership sales staff](#) to help educate them on the best ways to discuss and sell electric vehicles to consumers. The training course will educate staff on all the public incentives designed to promote EV sales, and help them become fluent in the logistics of electric charging and maintenance issues.

For more information about the training offer, [please click here](#). Dealerships who have two or more sales staff members complete the course will also be featured as PlugStar preferred dealers.

WANADA thanks Plug In America, the U.S. Energy Department's [Clean Cities Coalition Network](#), and our friends at the [Maryland Energy Administration](#) for their efforts in helping produce this training resource, and for helping us promote it to our member dealers.