



THE WANADA BULLETIN

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

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Some In-Person DMV Services Resume Around the Region

The motor vehicle departments in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia have expanded their in-person services across the Washington region, following the introduction of first-phase re-opening plans.

The [DC DMV announced on Monday](#) that the city's Southwest Service Center, located at 95 M Street SW, will re-open on June 2 for services on an appointment-only basis. [Please click here](#) to book an appointment.

There will not be a resumption in dealer walk-in services, and dealers are encouraged to continue availing themselves of the [DC DMV's online services](#) where possible. Please review [the DMV's latest update](#) for more information about best practices for getting dealer transactions processed in an expedited a fashion as possible.

We also encourage dealers in the region to utilize the [District's Online Dealer Interface System](#) for title processing work. For assistance, please email the ODIS helpdesk at odis.helpdesk@dc.gov . For general inquiries, please contact the DMV's Dealer Services department at dcdmvdealerinfo@dc.gov , or by calling (202) 737-4404.

In Virginia, the commonwealth has re-opened several DMV locations in Northern Virginia for in-person services on a by-appointment basis. Those locations include centers in Leesburg, Alexandria, Tysons Corner, and Manassas. You can view the full list of open locations, and their hours of operations, [at this link](#).

You can register for an appointment through [the Virginia DMV's registration portal](#). We encourage you to take advantage of the [Virginia DMV's Online Services page](#) wherever possible.

[In Maryland, the state MVA has announced](#) that, effective as of June 1, all tag and title agencies may drop off paperwork at all [MVA branches](#). [Please click here](#) for a full list of approved in-person dropoff services, along with additional work that can still only be completed in-person at the Glen Burnie branch. We encourage you to deliver any necessary paperwork to the MVA before 12 p.m. on any given day, in order to ensure your requests are processed as quickly as possible.

[As of now](#), MVA branches remain closed to the general public. We also encourage you to take advantage of the [MVA's online services page](#) whenever possible. And, as a reminder, please be

aware that the state is planning to launch the first phase of its streamlined [Customer Connect online services platform](#) on July 6.

WANADA has published an ongoing summary of current [state DMV statuses](#) on our association website. You can also view a robust list of pandemic-related resources at WANADA's [COVID-19 Information Library](#).

Masks Required in the D.C. Area as Region Begins to Re-Open

As of Monday, every county in the D.C. region has moved to some type of a “stage one” reopening, though the provisions vary by locality, as do the impacts to various businesses.

In Maryland, every county in the state besides Montgomery, Prince George's, and Baltimore City, has now implemented Gov. Larry Hogan's “[stage one](#)” order as it was [written on May 15](#), according to the state's [re-opening status](#) page. On Monday, [Anne Arundel](#), and Howard counties fully implemented stage one, which allows retailers to operate at 50 percent of their maximum capacity. Charles and [Frederick](#) counties moved to stage one last Friday.

On Monday, Montgomery and Prince George's counties did allow some resumption of previously-shuttered businesses, including curbside-facing retailers, manufacturing, non-essential medical procedures, and outside dining. As of now, the previously-existing mandates on patron capacity for indoor retailers that Maryland has deemed essential (including car dealerships and service areas) do remain in effect.

You can view Montgomery County's guidelines for phase one on their [Reopening Montgomery website](#). Prince George's County published an outline of their modified stage one in County Executive Angela Alsobrooks' [latest newsletter](#).

Across the region, one consistent requirement is a mandate patrons and employees of all businesses to wear cloth face coverings while patronizing indoor retailers, or, at minimum, while working in a public-facing setting. Masks have been required for both patrons and employees in [D.C.](#) and the [Maryland suburbs](#) for a while, but Virginia just instituted [a mask mandate](#) last Friday, which will be enforced by the state Department of Health.

At the same time that Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam announced the mask mandate, he also said that all of Northern Virginia would enter “phase one” of the state's [Forward Virginia](#) plan. Among other things, the first phase of the re-opening allows retailers to operate at 50 percent of their lowest maximum capacity, provided that they can also adhere to the standard social distancing requirements. You can view a full list of the commonwealth's guidelines for retailers [at this link](#).

In D.C., [Mayor Muriel Bowser authorized the city](#) to enter [their version of a “phase one”](#) last Friday, which resumes manufacturing, outdoor dining, and certain outpatient medical services, among other things. Non-essential retail operations are still limited to curbside service only. There are no new franchised auto dealerships in the District.

Reminder: Md. Excise Tax Vendor Discount for Dealers Has Expired

As of Monday, Maryland has eliminated a small excise tax vendor discount for dealers, but the adjustment only impacts cars sold today or later. As of June 1, dealers will no longer be able to retain a \$12-per-car state fee (or 0.6 percent of the total state excise tax collected, whichever is lower), as outlined in the [2020 state budget](#).

Beginning with sales that were completed on June 1 or later, dealers must remit the full 6 percent Maryland excise tax to the state government. You can view the language on page 61 of the budget, which modifies Section 13-812 of state law; the language pertaining to the vendor discount is in part (a), which is being eliminated from the state code.

Please update your dealer management systems to reflect this change in the tax code as soon as possible.

There had previously been questions about whether the elimination of the discount would be in place for sales that had been finalized before June 1, but where the excise tax had not yet been paid before that date. The state has provided additional guidance that the allowance will only be eliminated for sales that occur today or later, irrespective of when excise taxes on earlier sales are paid.

Please also note that Maryland has also raised the cap on the dealer processing charge from \$300 to \$500, and that new limit can be imposed on new car sales beginning on July 1. The \$500 cap will be the maximum charge allowed by law; each dealer can make their own determination as to what amount, if any, to charge based on their own circumstances.

The modified processing charge cap language is covered in Section 15-311.1(b)(3) of the state budget, located on page 63.

Franchised Dealer in N.Y. Pays \$1.5.M to Settle FTC Anti-Discrimination Suit

The Federal Trade Commission [announced last week](#) that a franchised auto dealer in New York had agreed to pay \$1.5 million to settle charges that they discriminated against Black and Latino car buyers, among other “illegal business practices.” The dealership will also be required to establish a fair lending program and to limit the amount of additional interest charges they can pass on to buyers.

You may view the federal government’s full complaint against Bronx Honda [at this link](#). You may also view a statement from FTC commissioner Rohit Chopra regarding the settlement and the evidence-gathering process [here](#).

According to the FTC’s press release announcing the settlement, the franchised dealership committed several illegal advertising and sales violations, including changing agreed-upon sales prices in the middle of a sale, double-charging customers for taxes and fees, and failing to honor published sale prices.

The FTC, in conjunction with the Bronx District Attorney's Office, also alleges that the dealership's owners instructed sales personnel to specifically charge higher fees and financing charges to Black and Latino buyers, while explicitly not doing the same to white customers.

The accusations follow in the wake of a [Justice Department lawsuit](#), filed last fall, that accused a used car dealership in Glen Burnie of committing unlawful lending discrimination against Black customers.