

JULY 2023

HOSPITALITY HOTLINE

Official Newsletter of the Ocean City
Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association



Member Message

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUSAN L. JONES

Happy early birthday America! (now please tell me, where did June go?!) While the season may have started slower for some, things seem to be picking up now that the sun has been regularly peeking out! Keep in mind, as a drive to destination, we fare pretty well when the economy struggles; so, hang in there, business is coming! And, as we are entering our busiest times of the year, remember to thank your staff. I know I'm super thankful for our newest addition, Kaylee Payne – read more about her on page 3.

Be sure to remember, we are in the hospitality business and that means taking care of our employees, so they take care of our guests. Often times, a simple word of thanks and a smile go a long way in showing your appreciation. Optimism, energy, and team-focused positivity will do wonders for the staffs' spirits, so thanks in advance for sharing your smiles! 😊



**MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION**

SUMMER SOIREE

The Maryland Tourism Coalition is hosting their 7th Annual Summer Soiree at the Holiday Inn 67th Street Pool Bar on **August 16th!**

Be sure to register [here](#).

Sponsorship Opportunities are available and are needed in order to help keep this a free event. Please consider a sponsorship as they start as low as \$100.

For more information about the event [click here](#).

MTC ANNOUNCES STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Recently, the MTC instituted a student membership for \$20/year.

This is a great way to introduce students to the hospitality industry!

Please share with your staff – full details on page 7.



Memorial Day through
Labor Day



Scan for
Participants!

Business Briefs



Share Your Views on Worcester County's Plans for Future Growth

Snow Hill, Maryland (June 15, 2023) – Worcester County Government (WCG) is beginning the 10-year update to the Worcester County Comprehensive Plan, and community members are invited to participate in a survey to provide input about the path of future county growth. The survey is available at www.surveymonkey.com/r/WorCoCPSurvey, or by using the QR code.

"The Comprehensive Plan is the playbook for how WCG will set land use policy for the next decade, and updates to this plan are based on public feedback," Development Review and Permitting Director Jennifer Keener said. "So, it is our goal for all who live in the community to have a voice in this process."

The survey is open to Worcester County residents and non-resident property owners, including students. It takes just 10 to 15 minutes to complete and can be accessed from any smart phone, tablet, or computer with internet access.

"We are asking everyone to share this information as well to assure as much community input in the process as possible," Keener said.

For more information about the Worcester County Comprehensive Plan, visit www.co.worcester.md.us/comprehensive-plan.

Is Your Business Prepared for Recreational Use Cannabis Webinar

Recently, the Washington County Chamber held a webinar on recreational use of cannabis. As you know, beginning July 1st, recreational use is permitted and there are many considerations that employers should take into account. Attorney Doug Desmarais presented a wealth of information.

Here is the recording link: <https://youtu.be/Lt2O9j2XMz0>.

A big thank you to the Washington County Chamber for hosting! Slides from the presentation can be accessed [here](#).



The State of the American Traveler in June 2023

By: Destination Analyst

Continued high excitement for, and willingness to prioritize, travel is driving another record summer—but travelers are shocked at the prices, and many are willing to make trip changes as a result.

The share of American travelers who said personal financial reasons have prevented them from traveling more than they would have otherwise preferred in the past 6 months has increased.

Nearly four-in-ten (38%) American travelers said they experienced sticker shock planning their most recent trip. Over 60% of those who experienced sticker shock when planning their last trip reported that this came from hotel rates, while half named airfare as the culprit. Nearly 47% reported sticker shock from restaurant and dining costs and 42% experienced the same from entertainment, recreation, or attraction costs.

[Check out the full article here.](#)



Business Briefs

Enroll Your Business Listing in Destination Maryland 2024

The Maryland Tourism Team is currently in the Business Listings production phase of their 2024 Destination Maryland Magazine. As the official fulfillment piece of the Maryland Office of Tourism, this magazine is a primary tool for Maryland visitor information with 200,000 printed copies distributed annually as well as downloadable from their website, www.VisitMaryland.org.

Destination Maryland Magazine is the primary avenue for partners wanting to promote their business, attraction or service to highly qualified visitors actively engaged in planning their Maryland vacations. Including your business listing in Destination Maryland allows you to leverage the state's multi-million dollar marketing efforts promoting Maryland to visitors and driving demand for both our print and digital travel guides. For the 2024 Destination Maryland Magazine, there is no cost to participate as a business listing partner.

The deadline to submit business listing information for the next Destination Maryland is July 25, 2023. Business listing information should be provided through this [form](#).

To learn more about 2024 Destination Maryland Magazine or reserve your placement in the magazine, please reach out to Carly at Carly.Stedman@milespartnership.com or 202-681-8169.

For more ways to work with the Maryland Office of Tourism year-round, please view this [checklist](#) of ideas and contacts.

- The team from the Maryland Office of Tourism

Ocean Bowl Skate Park Mural

The Downtown Recreation Complex (located between 3rd and 4th Street, West of Philadelphia Ave in downtown Ocean City, MD) is currently under construction and undergoing major updates. As part of the park update, the OCDC is planning a mural project to be painted at the Ocean Bowl Skate Park (specifically at the West wall of the skate bowl facing St. Louis Ave). The OCDC has support from local partners including the Town of Ocean City Recreation and Parks Department, the Art League of Ocean City, and the Downtown Association.

The purpose of this survey is to gauge support and collect public feedback regarding the mural project.

Please share your opinion and comments on this project.

[Click here to participate in the survey.](#)

Welcome Kaylee Payne!



We are thrilled to announce a new addition to the OCHMRA team, **Kaylee Payne**, who will take on the role as our Business Development and Marketing Associate.

Kaylee is a graduate of Salisbury University's Perdue School of Business with a Bachelor's degree in Marketing and a minor in Info Systems. She recently moved to Ocean City from Montgomery County, MD where she was previously working in the property management field. Additionally, she has experience as a summer server, so she is well equipped for her role at OCHMRA!

We're excited to have Kaylee come on board and she is excited to meet everyone! In her spare time, she enjoys sitting on the beach. Most recently, her bucket list included how to ski.

Welcome Kaylee at Kaylee@ocvisitor.com



Hospitality Highlights

WARM WELCOMES

A fond farewell and best wishes for happy retirement to **Kathy Enste** of **Comfort Gold Coast Inn**.

Ben Male has taken over as the new General Manager of **Home2 Suites**, by Hilton - congratulations on your new position and welcome to OC!

A big congratulations to Allied Member **APPI Energy** -- APPI Energy has merged with **Environ Energy**, an energy management company specializing in sustainability consulting and carbon reduction services.

Congratulations to Centerplate Sodexo's **Gary Leach** who welcomed his first granddaughter!

SAD GOODBYES

Our sincerest condolences to the Torrey and Happy Jack Pancake House family for the loss of **Robert "Bob" Torrey**. Bob, his wife of 45 years, Donna, and daughter and son-in-law Megan and Juan Alvarado were regulars at our OCHMRA dinner meetings. Bob served as OCHMRA President from 2015-2016 and will truly be missed by so many.



The Ocean City hospitality industry also lost another icon operator, **Tony Russo**, founder of several downtown hotel and restaurant businesses. Our sincere condolences to the entire Russo family on his loss.

Member Mentions

NEW OPPORTUNITY

Beginning in September, we will launch Member Mentions as an advertorial space in the Hospitality Hotline. Designed for our Allied Members, this will be a great way to reach the hotels, motels, restaurants, attractions and entertainment venues for as low as \$75 for a half page and \$125 for a full page (example see next page). There will only be 3 ad spaces available per month and they are first come, first serve. For more information or to reserve your space, please contact Kaylee Payne at kaylee@ocvisitor.com or 410.289.6733.

Tips for the Trade



From the Maryland Office of Tourism

Do you know how easy it is to add events to VisitMaryland.org's [events calendar](#)? If you, an organization, or an attraction in your region is hosting an event, it's easy to get the word out through VisitMaryland.org's [events calendar](#).

With tens of thousands of regular visitors, it's a great tool, and with the self-entry portal, it's never been easier to use! If you're wondering if an event has the right stuff for the calendar, you'll find the inclusion criteria here, [follow this link](#) for a step-by-step guide for self-entry, or if it's not your first rodeo, jump straight to the entry portal [here](#).



RAM Alcohol is an alcohol awareness certification program written specifically by hospitality industry professionals in Maryland. Responsible alcohol service helps businesses to avoid fines, increased insurance costs, the loss of a liquor license, and even loss of the business.

[Click here for more information!](#)



Featured Member Mentions - www.RevXWealth.com



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revxwealth.com

June 27, 2023

Dear Members,

I hope this message finds you well and in the middle of another profitable Summer !

We all take great pride in our businesses, but in certain situations, all of us have considered selling / exiting our business. We may be facing health challenges or family dynamic adjustments, or we may just be burned out and want to retire.

If so...Have you considered utilizing a Section 1031 Tax-Deferred Exchange to avoid capital gains tax due on the sale of your investment / rental property -or- a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) to defer and reduce your capital gains tax due if your property is a secondary residence and non-1031 eligible?

The market remains remarkably resilient in the face of widespread economic uncertainty. If you have recently considered the sale market, your timing could not be better. Capital gains have been extraordinary, to say the least. Have you considered deferring your tax due and maximizing your gain?

Are you aware that you can complete a Section 1031 Tax-Deferred Exchange into a 'management-free' portfolio of Real-Estate Properties through a Delaware Statutory Trust (DST)?

By way of background, we have worked with and assisted, many families, realtors, CPA's, and attorneys in Ocean City, Maryland and surrounding markets over the last 20 years with these planning strategies. Our platform is unmatched, as is our knowledge of the various planning strategies to be considered for your specific situation.

Given the complexity when evaluating these types of situations, you should seek professional tax, legal and financial advice in order to determine the best scenario for using one or combining both of these tools.

Should you have an interest in learning more about these tax-advantaged planning strategies, or even just evaluating it further, we would welcome an opportunity to speak with you. It would be our pleasure to introduce ourselves to you and to discuss your situation in more detail.

Best,

Frank B. Hanna, Jr., ChFC®
Founder

If you have a relationship with a Realtor or a Qualified Intermediary (QI) for Section 1031 Tax-Deferred Exchange Planning, please do not consider this letter a solicitation

Asset Management | Advanced Planning | 1031 eXchange

Securities offered through Arkadios Capital, Member FINRA/SIPC. Advisory services offered through Arkadios Wealth. RevolutionX and Arkadios are not affiliated through any ownership.



Community Connections

 Children's Organ
Transplant Association

 **SUN OUTDOORS** 
FRONTIER TOWN DUCK RACE
BENEFITING
COTA FOR EMILY'S LUNGS

~~~~~

WATERPARK LAZY RIVER  
SUNDAY JULY 2ND AT 6PM

FIRST DUCK AROUND THE LAZY RIVER  
WINS A \$200 VOUCHER FOR A FUTURE  
RESERVATION AT SUN OUTDOORS  
FRONTIER TOWN!

**\$5 PER DUCK CASH ONLY!**

PURCHASE YOUR DUCKS FROM THE FRONT  
OFFICE OR OTHER SELECT SELLING TIMES



**MARYLAND  
TOURISM  
COALITION**

## STUDENT MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

**Connect - Educate - Represent!** MTC strives to create the most productive statewide tourism climate possible. Members from all segments of the industry work together to promote business, participate in professional development activities and enhance our economic impact for the benefit of all Marylanders. As a tourism coalition, we can strengthen our industry, economy and our great state...together!

### **Student Membership special rate is only \$20 a year**

(Standard membership \$250 annually; Membership is 12-months based on registration date)



**To qualify: Students must be enrolled in full/part-time high school or college courses maintaining enrollment through the membership period. Minimum age 16 for student member.**

### **STUDENT MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:**

- Listed membership for one (1) student
- Monthly Member E-Newsletter
- Member to Member Discounts
- Participation in MTC Networking Events
- Ability to serve on a MTC committee upon approval from MTC Board
- 50% discounted registration fees to MTC sanctioned events and the ability for *sponsored* attendance at Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit\*
- Access to critical MD and national research and data from the U.S. Travel Association
- Access to the MTC online events calendar and member directory
- Access to internships and mentorships with MTC member organizations



### **MTC ANNUAL EVENTS:**

- Maryland Tourism Day
- Spring Seminar
- Summer Soiree
- Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit
- Annual Holiday Event



Student Members have the unique opportunity to fully participate in events, meetings, programs, trainings and other MTC sponsored programs. From exposure to different travel and hospitality organizations to internships and committee participation, students will have an advantage in gaining access and opportunities through the travel industry in Maryland.

\*Discounted pricing not available for MTTs program but sponsored attendance is available.

**To take advantage of the offer you can join by contacting  
Executive Director Ruth Toomey - [Ruth@mdtourism.org](mailto:Ruth@mdtourism.org)**

#TourismWorks4MD

626 C Admiral Dr. #311 Annapolis, MD 21401

[www.mdtourism.org](http://www.mdtourism.org)

# FOODWORKS

## Culinary Job Training Program

→ [www.mfbfoodworks.org](http://www.mfbfoodworks.org)



Our program offers 12 weeks of intense culinary training, ServSafe and assistance in job placement.

“ I chose FoodWorks knowing there would be a lot of career development, life and job readiness skills.  
— RAVEN CHANIECE LORDEN



### UA HOUSE\*

1100 East Fayette Street  
Baltimore MD 21202  
\*for 18-24 year olds

### HALETHORPE

2200 Halethorpe Farms Rd  
Baltimore, MD 21227

### EASTERN SHORE

Wor-Wic Community College  
32000 Campus Drive  
Salisbury, MD 21804

LET'S  
CONNECT



UA HOUSE AND HALETHORPE  
Adrienne Young  
[ayoung@mdfoodbank.org](mailto:ayoung@mdfoodbank.org)  
443.848.4703

EASTERN SHORE  
Kerry Cleaver  
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443.297.5440



# POLICY PRIMER: MARYLAND'S PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM



*In 2022, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (“the program” or “FAMLI”), otherwise known as the Time to Care Act (SB275/HB8), which made Maryland the 11th state, including Washington, D.C., to adopt a statewide family and medical leave program. During the 2023 legislative session, the General Assembly passed the modifications bill (SB828/HB988), which the Governor signed into law on May 3. This legislation made significant changes to the program. Under the program, eligible employees will be entitled to receive up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave per benefit year.*

*The Maryland Department of Labor (“the Department”) is required to issue regulations implementing the program by January 1, 2024. The Department will begin the regulatory drafting process and stakeholder involvement in June 2023.*

## **Implementation**

Contributions to the program will begin on October 1, 2024. This means that by this date, employers and employees will begin seeing their portion of the cost removed from their funds and paychecks to build up the state’s pot of funding before the program begins awarding benefits. Employees can submit claims for benefits starting on January 1, 2026. The Maryland Department of Labor (“the Department”) is required to issue regulations implementing the program by January 1, 2024.

## **Cost Sharing and Total Rate of Contribution**

The contribution rate is a 50/50 split between employers and employees. Maryland’s Secretary of Labor is required to set the total rate of contribution for employers and employees by October 1, 2023. This rate will be in effect beginning on October 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. The total contribution rate cannot exceed 1.2% of an employee’s wages up to the Social Security wage base.

## **Eligibility**

Beginning October 1, 2024, every employee working in Maryland and employers with 15 or more employees must begin contributing to the program’s fund. Self-employed individuals are not required to contribute. They may choose to opt-in to the program. A covered employee is defined as one who has worked at least 680 hours over a 12-month period immediately preceding the date on which leave is to begin. This includes full-time, part-time, private sector and government employees. However, this does not include federal government employees. The 680 hours could be made up of multiple jobs worked (in Maryland) over the 12-month period. Regarding if benefits apply to those who work remotely out-of-state for a Maryland employer, or those who work remotely in Maryland for an out-of-state employer, the Department will need to address that in their regulations.

Covered employers include any person or governmental authority that employs at least one individual in the state of Maryland.

## **POLICY PRIMER: MARYLAND'S PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE INSURANCE PROGRAM (cont.)**

### **Benefit Amount**

The weekly benefit amount must be at least \$50 and may not exceed \$1,000 for the 12-month period beginning January 1, 2026. The maximum benefit amount increases based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), however the benefit amount for each individual is not based on CPI. Only employees at the maximum benefit amount will see a change.

### **Application and Notification Periods**

Employees have up to 60 days before the anticipated start date of leave and no later than 60 days after the start date of leave to file an application for benefits.

- **Foreseen leave** – An employer may require an employee to provide the employer with written notice of their intention to take leave at least 30 days before starting the leave.
- **Unforeseen leave** – The employee shall provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable.

### **Concurrency**

Employers cannot require that their employees use or exhaust paid vacation, paid sick leave, or other paid time off under an employer policy before or while receiving FAMLI benefits. The employer and employee, however, can agree that the employee will use available paid vacation, sick leave or other time off to receive up to 100% of the individual's average weekly wage during their FAMLI leave period.

It's important to note that the above does not apply to separate employer-provided leave policy due to parental care, family care, or military leave or under a disability policy. For these employer-provided benefits, the statute states that an employer can require FAMLI benefit payments to be made concurrently with or otherwise be coordinated with payments made or leave allowed under the employer policy.

### **Qualifying Reasons to Apply for Benefits**

- To care for a child during the first year after the child's birth or before or during the first year after the placement of the child through foster care, kinship care or adoption
- To care for a family member with a serious health condition
- The employee's own serious health condition that results in their being unable to perform the functions of their position
- To care for a service member who is the employee's next of kin
- For a qualifying exigency arising out of the deployment of a service member who is a family member of the employee

*Please note that the 2023 legislation updated definitions to include domestic partners as covered family members and expanded the qualifying reasons to apply for FAMLI benefits.*

OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND

# Dining Guide

MAKE A DATE WITH DELICIOUS

SCAN THE CODE BELOW FOR ALL THE BEST PLACES TO DINE  
IN AND AROUND OCEAN CITY



OCEAN CITY  
HOTEL | MOTEL | RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION  
OCVISITOR.COM