

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Maryland Announces Franchise Renewal Fast-Track Review Program

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Maryland Securities Commissioner Melanie Senter Lubin announced recently that the state will implement a new franchise renewal “Fast-Track Program” launching Jan. 1 and aimed at expediting registration of eligible franchise renewal applications. The program seeks to encourage earlier filing of franchise renewal applications, reduce the heavy spring submission volume, and enable faster registration turnaround for franchisors.

The Fast-Track Program allows eligible franchisors to file their renewal application by Feb. 1, cure any comments from the Maryland Securities Division, and obtain pre-clearance in advance of April 10.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Fast-Track Program, the franchisor's Franchise Disclosure Document (FDD) must be currently registered in Maryland at the time of filing the franchise renewal application, the franchisor must have a fiscal year ending between Dec. 24 and Jan. 7, and the franchisor must not be subject to a pending investigation with the state's Securities Division.

Timeline

By Feb. 1, franchisors must submit their:

- FDD, revised for the renewal year
- Renewal application excluding the consent of accountant (Form F) and certification section of the uniform franchise registration application (Form A)
- Cover lettering opting into the Fast-Track Program

Within 15 business days of filing, the Securities Division will review and respond with any deficiency comments that must be cured. The franchisor will then have 15 business days to address any deficiency comments, and the Securities Division will review any deficiency comment submissions within 10 business days of receipt. Franchisors must submit the full, clean, completed renewal FDD with audit forms by April 10.

Cost

Franchisors will be required to pay the regular \$250 renewal fee when they submit the renewal application, but there is no additional fee for the Fast-Track Program.

If you have any questions or would like to begin preparing to opt into the Fast-Track Program, please contact [Amanda Dempsey](#), co-chair of the [Saxton & Stump Franchising, Licensing and Distribution Group](#).

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