

Hyattsville Life & Times

HYATTSVILLE'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Soon retail stores will be jam-packed and wall-to-wall with customers lined up for Tax-Free Week. It starts Sunday, Aug. 14-Saturday, Aug. 20 and stores are gearing up for customers' arrival.

Tax-Free Week includes apparel and footwear that is \$100 or less. Accessory items, such as backpacks and jewelry, do not qualify. This year Maryland's Tax-Free Week falls a week before kids go back to school and retailers are expecting school uniforms to be out of stock fairly quickly.



The Mall at Prince George's displays back-to-school items from the Shoe City store in the lead-up to Maryland Tax-Free Week. Photo by Precious Dorch-Robinson

Some businesses are urging customers to buy children's clothes before Tax-Free Week to guarantee their sizes will still be in stock. Old Navy currently has back-to-school sales that are up to 60 percent off.

"Customers know if they wait until next week a lot of their sizes will be out of stock. ... It's crazy even for younger girls' clothes; we cannot keep the stuff in stock," said a manager at Old Navy in the Mall at Prince George's.

The busiest times usually are lunchtime, but during Tax-Free Week the times will change to 5 p.m., when customers are getting off of work.

At Jimmy Jazz at the Mall at Prince George's, the manager, Ahmed Samura, said popular items include sneakers and any black color clothing including cargo pants. Samura expects the volume of customers to be high during the weekend when parents are shopping for back to school clothes.

The Mall at Prince George's will have activities throughout the week including a back-to-school pep rally followed by a free immunization clinic for Prince George's County Public Schools. The pep rally is Saturday, Aug. 20 from 10a.m.- 2p.m. and will feature local sports teams, bands and cheerleaders showing their talent and also fundraising.

The immunization clinic will be held Saturday, Aug. 20 from 11a.m.-3p.m. It's open only for children entering kindergarten, seventh grade or repeating the ninth grade. The immunization will be for HPV, MMR-Varicella (chickenpox), Tdap, Meningitis, Varicella and DTaP-Polio.

Store employees are expecting a good turnout with busy days all week and suggest customers come earlier to find the best deals. Tax-Free Week is also accessible online, if you're trying to avoid the crowds.

For more information on which items are tax-exempt, click here:http://comptroller.marylandtaxes.com/Public_Services/Agency_Information/Office_of_the_Comptroller/Comptroller_Initiatives/Shop_Maryland_Tax-free_Week/TaxableItems.pdf