

WHAT IS TAC:

Tourist Area and Corridor (TAC) Signage is a system of supplemental guide signs along roadways providing directions to eligible attractions which provide recreational, historical, cultural, or leisure activities to the public.

HOW TAC WORKS:

Signs direct motorists to eligible individual attractions in a designated geographical area. Each area has a defined roadway corridor to provide access to the attractions within.

The first TAC signs (A) in the series of signs are located on major highways and may name the geographical areas. The ramp signs and conventional road area signs (B) guide motorists to the corridor in an area or sub-area. The last set of signs (C) along the corridor contain directional arrows, list the attraction name and guide motorists to the drop-off zone or parking entrance for an attraction.

TO BEGIN THE PROCESS ...

Those interested in their attraction being a part of the TAC Signage Program may visit the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (SHA), TAC webpage for additional details, resources and the application. Please fully review all the materials prior to applying to the TAC Signage Program. Email any questions to taccordinator@mdot.maryland.gov.

The attraction representative submits a completed application along with supporting materials which documents its eligibility using the online application link. The material is forwarded to the Department of Commerce and SHA for review.

COSTS TO PARTICIPATE

APPLICATION AND ANNUAL ADMINISTRATION FEES:

The fee for the TAC program consists of two parts: 1. A non-refundable application fee of \$500, due when the application form is submitted. 2. An annual administration fee of \$1,000, due when the signage plan is approved. SHA will review the annual administration fee and revise at its discretion.

SIGNAGE DESIGN AND FABRICATION:

Once the application approval is provided, the attraction shall prepare a signage plan and submit it to DOC and SHA for review. If the signage plan is approved, the attraction shall be responsible for all costs for the design, fabrication and installation of the signs in the signage plan. The design must meet the size, color, reflectivity and material guidelines. SHA reserves the right to reject sign designs that are not compliant with federal, state and local laws and regulations.

SIGN INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE:

The attraction shall be responsible for maintaining, removing and replacing signs at the direction of SHA if an existing approved sign is determined to be non-compliant with program requirements for reasons including damage, fading, or safety concerns. The attraction is responsible for obtaining all required environmental and/or right-of-way permits prior to the commencement of any construction activities.

NOTE:

Existing TAC program participants who received approval prior to October 1, 2024, are not required to submit a new application until any of their existing TAC signs need modifications. Modifications may include but are not limited to, name changes, location change, sign replacements and sign repairs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR TAC SIGNS

To be eligible for signage from the nearest TAC corridor, individual attractions must meet the criteria below. Certain types of attractions are eligible for generic symbol signs as per the criteria on the next panel. The Eligibility Committee shall determine the eligibility of an attraction for signing based on its procedures. All signing is subject to space availability based on the SHA regulations and requirements. Visitor attendance may be taken into account.

An eligible attraction must primarily provide recreational, historical, cultural or leisure activities to the public and meet or adhere to the following:

- **MUST BE PRIMARILY A NON-RETAIL ATTRACTION** – no more than 20% of the interior square footage of the destination may be devoted to retail sales;
- **MUST BE OPEN TO RANDOM DAILY VISITATION** – the destination must not require advance reservations or extended attendance;
- **MUST APPEAL TO VISITORS FROM OUTSIDE THE AREA**
- must be open at least five hours per day;
- must be open five days per week including Saturday and/or Sunday;
- must be open at least 30 hours per week;
- must be open at least eight months each year (seasonal attractions may be exempt);
- must provide an online resource that includes hours of operation;
- must post consistent hours of operation across online resources, in the brochure and at the door, (some attractions may be exempt);
- must provide public access to onsite restrooms, water, telephones in case of emergency and parking;
- must provide an interpreter or guide, printed self-guided tour or interpretative signing during all hours of operation, (some attractions may be exempt);
- must meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities) requirements for handicapped accessibility and
- must not currently be well-signed by the attraction itself on a TAC Corridor.

While it is not possible to list all examples of businesses that are generally ineligible for TAC program, here are a few of note:

- Standard retail establishments such as grocery stores, hardware stores, pharmacies, bowling alleys, etc. that are not unique to Maryland.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SYMBOL SIGNS

Certain categories of attractions are eligible for signs that include generic symbols. Note that all such attractions must meet the qualifications at left (except for local golf courses which do not have to meet the “more than 50% of visitors from 50 miles or more away” requirement) and be approved by the Eligibility Committee.



Visitor Centers — Official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) operated visitor centers are eligible for signs with symbols along mainline highways and on trailblazing signs.



Golf Courses — Golf courses are eligible for trailblazing from mainline highways utilizing signs that include generic symbols if they are public, 18-hole courses with a par 63 or greater and they have tee times generally available without reservations.



Marinas — Marinas are eligible for symbol trailblazing from the nearest TAC corridor if they meet the following requirements: they have a boat launch with at least 10 slips, provide parking for vehicles and trailers, are open to the public without reservations, and are not closed to public use other than a single period of up to 120 consecutive days between November 1 and April 1. Marina symbol signs shall not appear on TAC Mainline Signs.

ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER VISITOR CENTERS, ANTIQUES STORES, WINERIES, BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES

Other Visitor Centers — Other visitor centers are eligible for trailblazing only from the corridor, if it is approved by the DMO and Office of Tourism Development.

Antiques Stores — Antiques stores are eligible for trailblazing from the mainline (not a symbol) if they can demonstrate that at least 30% of their items are 100 years old and no more than 20% of their items are less than 30 years old, and are approved by the Eligibility Committee.

Wineries, Breweries and Distilleries — Wineries, breweries and distilleries are eligible for trailblazing from the corridor (not a symbol) only if they provide a daily educational tour at least five days per week including Saturday and/or Sunday. An educational tour is a tour of a facility, is educational and informative in nature, is provided in accordance with a publicly available schedule and is guided by a knowledgeable employee of the facility.

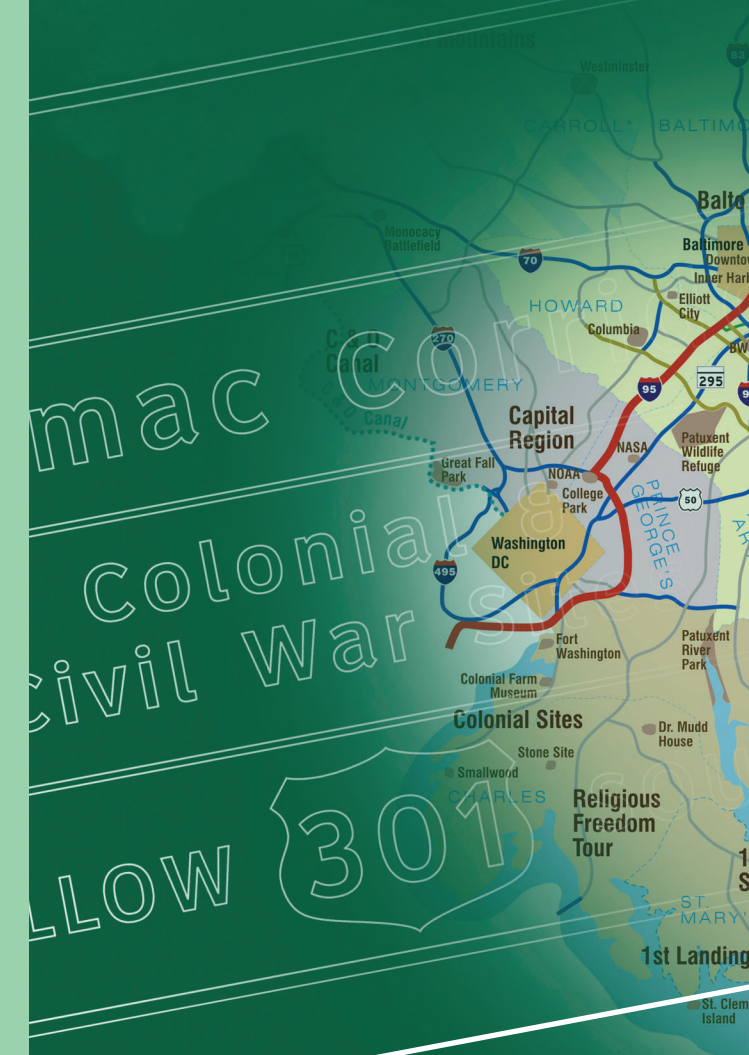


STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Contact Information:
Attn: TAC Coordinator
Maryland Department of Transportation
State Highway Administration
Office of Traffic and Safety
TAC Signage Program
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TAC

Maryland's Statewide Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program



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State Highway Administration
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