

Comptroller of Maryland
Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Subcommittee on Public Safety, Transportation, And Environment
Senator Sarah Elfreth, Chair
February 22, 2024

House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Public Safety & Administration
Delegate Jazz Lewis, Chair
February 29, 2024

With my continued gratitude for the strong partnership our agency continues to share with the General Assembly and the Administration, I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2025 budget request and response for the Office of the Comptroller of Maryland.

Working closely with this subcommittee, the full Committee, the General Assembly, and the Administration, the Office of the Comptroller has been able to strengthen its core operations to improve the quality of services we provide to the public each day and ensure timely implementation of legislative proposals.

I noted in my testimony last year that the Comptroller's Office is dedicated to being responsible partners in government with the General Assembly, and as partners, I am confident that together we can ensure that this office provides world-class services to your constituents, implements legislation fully and faithfully, and helps accomplish our shared goals for the state.

With your help, during the 2023 Legislative Session, six of our legislative priorities were passed and signed into law, including a bill to create an Office of the Taxpayer Advocate – a best practice already used by the federal government and in other states. Since last year, we have worked collaboratively with our leadership team and staff across the agency to identify goals for each division, which fit into the following three core priorities:

1. Implement critical agency-wide improvements to help our state government work better
2. Ensure that the resources and expertise of our agency create opportunity for and make a positive impact on MD families, communities, and businesses
3. Ensure Maryland is well positioned for responsible long term economic growth and success



Together, these core priorities will help us realize our new vision: To work in partnership to create a state that is more equitable, more resilient and more prosperous so that every Marylander can reach their full potential.

Core Priority 1: Implement critical agency-wide improvements to help our state government work better

Build the Team

Ensuring we have a team that can serve Marylanders is paramount to making government work better. Early last year, we conducted an agency-wide survey of staff, which revealed that our workforce was frustrated and felt underpaid and understaffed; they wanted more training opportunities; and they wanted better working conditions. To address these issues, we created a position of Chief Equity & Transformation Officer to work with human resources on ways to make employees feel more supported by leadership, and we hired a Training Director who is now developing interagency educational content and incorporating it into Portico, our online training delivery system to offer courses on managerial training and specialized tax training. We are working to ensure that our employees have the skills to take on whatever challenges may come, and we must guarantee that our divisions are appropriately resourced and directed so that everyone knows and owns their responsibilities and feel supported by their coworkers and leadership.

We are very interested in continuing to strengthen our internal training capabilities, including exploring how AI can help with training in real time for staff.

Continuing on the topic of a *healthy* workforce, I'm happy to report that we permanently relocated the bat colony that resided in the Revenue Administration Center at the time of our budget hearing last year, and we have been working to make much-needed improvements to our buildings and workspaces.

Thanks to the Legislature's support and our partnerships with the State Treasurer's Office and the Department of General Services, we were able to reclaim our buildings from the bats and began the long process of making the Treasury Complex a more hospitable place to work for our fellow human beings. Using a combination of \$500,000 in funds allocated by DGS from their FY 2024 Capitol Budget and \$500,000 from our agency's FY 2024 budget, the Comptroller's Office completed the following upgrades to our physical infrastructure: Bathroom refreshes, repainting of hallways and lobby, installation of bottle-refilling stations (one per floor), Life Safety - building is now only accessible by badge, creating a breakroom for staff (kitchenette, tables, vending machines), reconfigure the Legal Division's office space to accommodate new PINs, and new toilet paper dispensers throughout the Annapolis Treasury complex.

Earlier this year, the Office of the Comptroller completed the first phase of the relocation of state agencies from State Center to Downtown Baltimore. We were proud to be the first state agency to relocate, as part of a broader, state-wide effort to redevelop State Center while also reinvigorating Downtown Baltimore. We now have staff from our taxpayer services division operating out of 7 St. Paul Street which provides Central Maryland taxpayers easy access to services in downtown Baltimore and the building is conveniently located adjacent to transit and

parking facilities. Additionally, this space provides a new and modern working space for state employees and demonstrates the state's goal to make meaningful investments in downtown Baltimore. The second phase of the move will be completed later this summer when we move the remaining divisions out of State Center to 7 Saint Paul Street.

DLS COMMENT: The Comptroller should comment on the overall positive trend, whether variations in the vacancy rate have affected operations since January 2022, and whether vacancies in FEB and Executive Direction programs have any operational impacts.

A big part of improving the experience for our employees is ensuring the agency is properly staffed to meet the needs of the state and the taxpayers. The Comptroller's Office began this fiscal year with 116 vacancies, including the 51 new PINS the agency was awarded for FY 2024. Currently, the agency has a total of 60 PINS that are not committed. This represents a nearly 50% decline in vacancies since July 2023, and we currently have an agency vacancy rate of 5.3% - among the lowest for agencies throughout the state.

Of the roles that are still vacant, only five have been vacant longer than six months and none greater than a year.

Although there were some changes made to the PINS – both regarding classification and division assignment – 90% of the new PINS that the agency received in July 2023 have been filled. For those that have not yet been filled, many have been posted multiple times but are a challenge to fill because of less-competitive salaries compared to similarly skilled jobs in the private sector and local, county, and federal government. We intend to continue our aggressive effort to hire and retain talented employees to ensure that we continue to have a healthy, capable, and results-oriented workforce that delivers for Maryland's taxpayers.

The Office of the Comptroller and – as an example – its Field Enforcement Bureau prioritizes filling every vacant position through a fair and equitable process to ensure the agency continues to serve taxpayers, vendors, and tax professionals of Maryland in a respectful and responsive manner. The Field Enforcement Bureau was fortunate to receive six (6) new PINS in the fiscal year FY 2024 budget and worked diligently to fill all six (6) of these new positions despite challenges relative to delays in the delivery of vehicles, which are needed in advance of onboarding Compliance Inspectors and Enforcement Agents. Two (2) of these six (6) new positions were filled by preexisting Field Enforcement Bureau staff, creating two (2) new vacancies to backfill. The Field Enforcement Bureau currently has a total of seven (7) vacancies – not nine (9). Four (4) out of seven (7) of the vacant positions are the result of recent retirements. All seven (7) vacant positions are in various stages of the recruitment process and the Field Enforcement Bureau aims to fill these vacancies as expeditiously as possible.

The six (6) additional PINS in the FY 2024 budget have enabled the Field Enforcement Bureau to improve its operations. During FY 2023, its Compliance Inspectors and Enforcement Agents conducted an average of 942 business license and motor fuel-related inspections. Since the start of FY 2024, the Field Enforcement Bureau has achieved an incremental increase in the number of these inspections. For example, during the month of January 2024, Compliance Inspectors and Enforcement Agents completed a total of 1,493 business license and motor fuel-related inspections – representing a 62% increase over FY 2023's monthly average.

The Field Enforcement Bureau believes the three additional PINs included in the FY 2025 budget will significantly further improve its business licensing and motor fuel lab operations. The Office of the Comptroller and its Field Enforcement Bureau will continue to prioritize filling all current vacant positions and all new PINs it receives in FY 2025.

Build the Tools: Modernizing

In addition to building a great team, we also need to ensure we have the tools needed to serve Marylanders. This time last year, we re-organized the agency, and we advocated and received funding for new positions to help fill vital needs. In the FY 2024 budget, the General Assembly directed \$5.3M in much-needed IT funding to accelerate our technological modernization and the Comptroller's Office hired the agency's first Chief Information Officer, who is already hard at work on dozens of projects aimed at making our workforce more effective and responsive to taxpayers. Here are some of the most significant projects currently underway to update the technology in the agency:

FMIS Replacement

We are grateful for the Legislature's passage of House Bill 709 and Senate Bill 659, which created a directive to implement one centralized Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system used by all state agencies that will conform to all modernized business and technology standards and replace the current Financial Management Information System (FMIS) as the official accounting system of record for the State of Maryland. As the official accounting system of record for the State of Maryland, FMIS comprises accounting, purchasing, inventory, and reporting applications. The State implemented this system in the mid-1990s. The new ERP system will provide the State with a consolidated and modernized central financial system which will reduce the risk (including cybersecurity) and waste from the continuing use of the existing FMIS platform. The program to modernize and replace the FMIS system has accomplished foundational Program Administration stand-up activities and is currently in Phase 1 – Program Planning and Strategy. Within Phase 1 – Program Planning and Strategy, we have created several critical workstreams to organize project tasks and move us into Phase 2 no later than June 30, 2024. We anticipate entering Phase 2 at the end of FY 2024 or early FY 2025.

Integrated Tax System – Maryland Tax Connect

A core function of the agency – revenue collection – has long been hampered by an aging technology infrastructure that limits our flexibility and regularly causes delays for taxpayers. This current system, the State of Maryland Tax System (SMART) and the Computer Assisted Collections System (CACs), support the agency's tax processing, collections, and enforcement initiatives and is almost 30 years old.

On February 6 we achieved a major milestone: after a year of preparation, building, and training, we converted all business taxes to Revenue Premier, our new internal processing system. And we simultaneously launched Maryland Tax Connect, our external online portal, for business taxes. This release of Maryland Tax Connect allows business taxpayers to securely view period balances, make payments, and upload tax returns and supporting documentation.

This is the largest new IT system release the state has implemented in many years. From Tax Year 2023, we converted 673,408 business entities from our legacy mainframe systems. This

transfer resulted in the conversion of tax receipts in the amount of \$43,443,403,875 from the aging SMART system into the new, cloud-based, Maryland Tax Connect. Prior to the conversion, we took SMART offline for about a week to ensure the data could be transferred securely. This conversion, coupled with the large number of tax returns filed prior to the opening of tax season (a week later than usual this year per the IRS) put us behind on processing refunds for personal income taxes by about 10 days. But as of today, I'm pleased to announce that we have worked entirely through this backlog and have returned to our normal processing time of 3 to 5 business days.

ServiceNow CRM

The Comptroller's office currently lacks a modern Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that can capture the nearly 3,000 calls and 750 emails that the agency receives per day during the tax season. That information is currently being tracked either via email or a spreadsheet, which does not allow for the information and engagements to be tracked accurately and effectively. In the future, the CRM platform that the Comptroller will be utilizing is ServiceNow, which is in a current procurement process with DoIT for licensing and implementation services. Through the ServiceNow platform, taxpayers will be able to create accounts, submit requests with ease, and be able to track the progress of their requests. In addition, the Comptroller staff will have a tool that will allow for better workflow processes, automation of simpler tasks, and metrics to determine areas where business process improvement may be needed. IT's goal is to have the procurement process included on the final February Board of Public Works meeting agenda for approval to begin later in FYQ3.

Communication Platform

Another goal that IT has identified is the enhancement of a communication platform. The Comptroller's office has procured and implemented a business and taxpayer engagement platform to provide a process to better communicate with businesses that pay taxes in Maryland and for taxpayers that have an interest in communications from the agency. For example, in order to ensure Maryland business taxpayers were kept in the loop about updates related to the new Maryland Tax Connect portal, we sent used this platform to send email updates to every registered bFile user in our system, approximately 150,000 businesses.

Contract Management

To improve procurement and transparency within the agency, IT has procured and implemented the "OpenGov" contract management system to better track the data points of contracts including renewal periods, terms and conditions, and value. The contract management platform also maintains various templates for contract creation. Prior to the new platform being implemented, staff was tracking procurement details in an Excel sheet, which was ineffective when renewal periods were coming to an end.

Open Data- Board of Public Works (BPW) Awards

The "OpenGov" platform used for the procurement process will also be leveraged for all current and future transparency needs around data. The first phase of implementation will be the publishing of a new interactive lookup tool for all BPW awards over the past several years. This platform will also be key in establishing the open data platform as the Comptroller kicks off the first COMSTAT program within the agency. Our goal is to have the "OpenGov" platform for BPW awards configured and implemented this spring.

End Point Management and Security

To further enhance the Comptroller's network security, IT is implementing the Tanium Endpoint Management Suite to allow endpoint management, patching, compliance verification, and risk management. Award and procurement for this project are set for quarter three of FY 2024, with implementation to happen in the fourth quarter.

Cellphone Coverage

The entire Annapolis Treasury complex lacks reliable cellular coverage for every major carrier. Thus, the Comptroller is installing twelve (12) Verizon Wave devices throughout the Annapolis complex to mitigate the lack of Verizon coverage. IT is also working on a solution to bring major carrier coverage to all State buildings in Annapolis. The Department of General Services has been engaged and is supportive of this project.

CCTV Enhancement

All of the Comptroller's facilities lack or are deficient in CCTV cameras and/or up to date cameras. Presently, branch offices lack public WiFi for customers to utilize when in certain locations. The CCTV cameras in the Annapolis Data Center have not been upgraded since 2008. Thus, the Comptroller is planning to upgrade the CCTV cameras and additional cameras are being added to the secure areas throughout the complex. The Comptroller is also adding CCTV and WiFi to every branch office, including the Comptroller's new Baltimore office. The CCTV project is on schedule to be completed in the third quarter of FY 2024.

Core Priority 2: Ensure that the resources and expertise of our agency create opportunity for and make a positive impact on MD families, communities, and businesses

Over the past year, I have worked closely with agency leaders and division directors to examine our budget, refine our projections, and determine our next set of priorities. Our goal, as we developed our FY 25 budget request package, was to continue to build upon our past successes and identify those areas most in need of additional state support with the greatest potential to benefit the agency and Marylanders around the state. Dollars invested in the Agency are not only returned as revenue, but also result in an improved taxpayer experience, a better business climate, and adaptability to a rapidly changing and ever-more-digital world of finance.

DLS COMMENT: The Comptroller should comment on the significance of the difference between tax year and fiscal year trends in the historical reported Managing For Results (MFR) data and indicate the measures for which timing and differing policies across tax years may distort trends. The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends that the Comptroller submit MFR data on both a calendar year and fiscal year basis beginning with the fiscal 2026 MFR submission.

The Comptroller's Office would be happy to work with DBM to provide the most meaningful MFR data, perhaps by providing these metrics on a longer timeline to eliminate the conflicts caused by analysis of Fiscal Year versus Tax Year data. However, it's worth noting that recent anomalies - for example, the extension of tax filing deadlines due to the COVID-19 pandemic - created irregularities in how we have approached Fiscal Year analysis in the past.

Outreach and Expertise

Earlier this year, the Bureau of Revenue Estimates and our new Policy Division released the first-ever Comptroller's State of the Economy Report. They analyzed publicly available data, academic research, and government studies to analyze relevant economic indicators and compared that data across neighboring states as well as nationally. They also hosted a series of five (5) roundtable discussions and dozens of one-on-one meetings with business owners, economic development leaders, industry groups, and chambers of commerce in each region of the state in 2023. The report – a result of six (6) months of quantitative and qualitative research – provides an accessible, thorough, and honest diagnosis of key challenges and opportunities for Maryland's economy. It offers policymakers, businesses, economic development professionals, and the public at large hard data and trends to help inform their policy decisions.

The State of the Economy report is the first in a series of reports anticipated by the Office of the Comptroller that will continue to examine the state's fiscal health and future. This ongoing research will be informed by feedback that we receive from the public, private sector, and our partners in government. Upcoming reports will take a closer look at the role of immigrants in Maryland's economy, the barriers preventing women from joining or re-entering the workforce, the impact of cost of living on migration, and more.

In addition to putting our expertise to work on big macroeconomic questions, the Comptroller's Office wants to be more helpful to taxpayers to receive the tax credits and other benefits that the General Assembly created to help pay bills, fund higher education, or retire in place – among other laudable goals. These tax credits were designed specifically to support low- and moderate-income Marylanders, but unfortunately too many of our fellow citizens are unaware they are eligible for these critical supports. In essence, we want to close the gap between those who are eligible for these tax credits and those who actually claim the credits. To do that, we proposed legislation this session (HB845/SB1105) to build upon past goals of the General Assembly – specifically, HB252 from 2022 – of which I was a co-sponsor. That legislation, among other things, directed the Comptroller's Office to create a streamlined way to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit, but did not provide resources to connect the expertise within the Office of the Comptroller with eligible taxpayers. The legislation we proposed this session directs \$300,000 annually to outreach efforts designed to connect taxpayers with the tax credits the Legislature meant for them to receive. Additionally, the Comptroller's Office knows that many of these Marylanders eligible for the EITC and other vital benefits are not native English speakers. Unfortunately, the Comptroller's Office does not currently receive any dedicated appropriations for translation services, so we have included a request for \$100,000 for translation services in our FY 2025 Budget Requests to address this urgent need to provide this important service to the residents of our diverse state.

Core Priority 3: Ensure Maryland is well positioned for responsible long term economic growth and success

To ensure that we are positioning ourselves well for long term growth we must understand where we are and then move toward better outcomes. That is why we are dedicating more resources to research that can help our agency and others make data-driven decisions (i.e., the State of The Economy report). We are committed to sharing information about Maryland's economy and revenues on a regular basis and clearly communicate economic and fiscal trends to key audiences across the state.

To grow the economy, we are focusing on equity and closing the wealth gap. This requires us to be extremely thoughtful about where and how we spend / invest state money – whether through the Board of Public Works or State Retirement and Pension System – because of the impact that it will have for decades to come. By directing spending to historically under-invested communities and people through targeted procurement programs or efforts to increase spending with diverse asset managers in our pension system, we can expand the pie.

To enhance equity in tax administration by understanding who we audit (and who we don't), who utilizes tax credits (and who does not), expanding free tax preparation services, and ensuring that high-wealth individuals and large corporations pay their taxes.

To mitigate the impact of climate change on our state, we are closely evaluating the impact of our state expenditures and investments – particularly within the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System – on the climate.

Closing the Tax Gap

As you may have heard me say before, the Tax Gap is the difference between an individual or entity's true tax liability for a given taxable period and the amount of tax that is actually paid on time. There are two tax gaps – the "known tax gap" and the "unknown tax gap," and both are consequential to the state's budget and our ability to provide services our fellow Marylanders rely on.

Maryland is currently due more than \$3 billion in known, collectible, outstanding tax liabilities related just to individual income taxes. As the DLS budget analysis notes on Page 9, the agency's tax compliance activity dropped precipitously in Fiscal Year 2021.

With the Legislature's help in FY 2024 and FY 2025, our agency is now better positioned to 1) pursue assessments of outstanding liabilities by properly staffing our Compliance Division to identify amounts owed, and 2) resolve tax appeals more quickly, leading to faster settlements that send revenue to the state by directing resources to our Hearings & Appeals Division. In their analysis, DLS notes that they expect "these rates [of compliance activity] to continue to increase and return to prepandemic levels as taxpayers see more financial recovery, more Comptroller operations are renewed, and the ITS makes processing more efficient." We could not agree more with this statement and highlight this effort among our highest priorities within the agency.

The IRS estimates that the federal government's revenues are shorted by more than \$400 billion each year by under-reporting of income, which – assuming Maryland has a similar underpayment rate – equates to \$3 billion per year in unassessed and unpaid taxes owed to the state. These liabilities result from income that is concealed from the Comptroller's Office – as it is from the IRS – often via fraud or subterfuge. Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022 helped the IRS build out audit capabilities from rock bottom in 2010-2019, when the audit rate of millionaires fell by more than 70% and the audit rate on large corporations fell by more than 50%. Now, the IRS forecasts that "...revenues are expected to rise by as much as \$561 billion from 2024 to 2034, thanks to stepped-up enforcement made possible...by the IRA." Maryland needs a similar investment to ensure that taxes owed are taxes paid, allowing the Comptroller's Office to counter these schemes and uncover unpaid liabilities with investments

in personnel and technology, as well as new legislative authority we seek that would expand our ability to partner with other revenue-collecting entities nationwide.

We appreciate your interest in our Core Priorities and look forward to a continuing partnership. To ensure we can keep doing this work, we have presented several FY 2025 budget requests to supplement what we received in the Governor's budget:

FY 2025 Requests

The complexities of our tax code continue to increase, but for years, the state's investments in tax administration, and other supportive services within our agency, did not keep pace with our statutory obligations. At the same time, we have faced increasing security requirements from the IRS that we must be able to meet. We were grateful to receive additional PINS and funding to relocate our branch offices in the Governor's FY 2025 Budget. However, we also want to highlight several outstanding needs that we hope you will consider – all of which go toward revenue collection and tax compliance:

Request: Fund the statutorily required Office of the Taxpayer Advocate PINs (4)

Last year, the General Assembly passed HB707 to create the Office of Taxpayer Advocate with four PINS. Without these PINS, we cannot create the office as statutorily required. As noted, we do not have extra unused long-term vacant PINs.

Request: \$100,000 for Education/Translation Funding for Educational Materials

As noted above, we do not have any designated funding to translate tax flyers, tax forms, or other materials into other languages. Given the diversity of the state, this is extremely important to ensure tax compliance.

Request: \$5 million in technology funding

Although \$5 million will not fill all our needs, it will go a huge way toward ensuring we can complete the following items:

Issue RFPs for Technology to Help Uncover Unpaid Taxes

We engaged in a very successful pilot program this year to find owed but unassessed taxes in the new online economy (short term rentals, NFTs, social media influencers, etc). We would now like to do a full RFP and engage with a service to scale up this work. In addition, several states have been working with a different vendor we have used in other operations to identify out-of-state tax scofflaws and hold them accountable. Both of these projects will bring in additional revenue and help close Maryland's substantial tax gap.

Replace Technology Equipment per IRS Requirements

We have assessed our IT equipment and identified \$3.4m in assets due for replacement in FY 2025. We know we will not be able to replace all of these assets at once, so we have prioritized our needs to stay in compliance with IRS Regulations:

- The core switches and firewalls need to be upgraded to maintain compliance. The estimated cost is \$870k.
- The edge switches that all users connect to in Annapolis and branch offices need to be replaced by end of calendar year 2025. It is 80 total devices, and we were planning on FY 2025 funding with a 16–18 month deployment time due to volume.

The estimated cost is \$950,000. If we push it to FY 2026, we will need to expedite the order which will increase the cost by at least an additional 50%.

**As an important note, the Comptroller is no longer party to the MITDP so our agency can no longer access funding through that pot of money administered by DOIT to fund any of our technology needs. CH0242 of 2022 expanded and enhanced the State's regulatory framework for State and local government cybersecurity. The legislation also excluded the Office of the Attorney General, the State Treasurer, and the Legislative and Judicial branches. If we are not allocated funding in the budget, we have no ability to stay compliant with IRS requirements or do revenue-generating RFPs.*

Improve business processes

We aim to create robotic process automation (RPA) which is intended to free staff time to focus on more complex tasks. This is a revenue-generator and time-saver.

IRS Compliance and Enhanced Cyber Security Initiatives

As our agency implements additional online services for our 3 million taxpayers, it is our responsibility to ensure a secure and simple-to-use digital experience. We will implement a best of breed Identity Access Management (IAM) system for all online and internal systems to authenticate and authorize approved user's access.

Conclusion

At the core of every adjustment the Comptroller's Office is making is the goal of creating a more equitable, more resilient, and more prosperous state. I appreciate your time and partnership in this effort, and I respectfully ask for your support of the Comptroller of Maryland's Fiscal Year 2025 budget request to continue the successful work we have undertaken together on behalf of Maryland's taxpayers.



Brooke E. Lierman
Comptroller of Maryland

Addendum

Response to DLS Analyst "Operating Budget Recommended Actions"

- 1) "Reduce funding for increased health insurance costs as a technical correction. These expenditures are double budgeted, as funding is already budgeted in the Statewide Account within the Department of Budget and Management for this purpose."
 - The Comptroller's Office concurs with the reduction recommendation.



OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF MARYLAND

VISION

To work in partnership to create a state that is more equitable, more resilient, and more prosperous so that every Marylander can reach their full potential.

PRIORITIES

Implement critical agency-wide improvements to help our state government work better

- Right-size the agency, including reorganizing the leadership structure, to provide greater accountability, internal oversight, and success
- Invest in our workforce – from increasing positions, salaries, and training opportunities to improving the physical work environment – to ensure that we can recruit and retain high-performing and dedicated team members who feel valued and supported while also being positively challenged to do this important work
- Modernize technology across the agency so that all Maryland residents and businesses, as well as state agencies, can interact more efficiently with the Office of the Comptroller and access our services, data, and other resources with ease
- Foster a culture of belonging throughout the Office by embedding our core principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in decision-making, policies, and practice

Ensure that the resources and expertise of the Office create opportunity for and make a positive impact on Maryland families, communities and businesses

- Use technology to increase transparency around state spending and the state procurement process, including payments to state vendors and contractors
- Ensure that the Office is using data to drive decision-making, and use the data generated or accessible by the agency to create reports that inform policy decisions both internal and external to the Office of the Comptroller
- Engage in robust public engagement to better connect families, communities, local governments, and businesses across Maryland with the agency for assistance with services, including: filing taxes, accessing tax credits, obtaining legal guidance, setting up payment plans, and more, while also ensuring that the Office continues to develop new resources as needed by the public
- Responsibly steward our tax dollars through improved oversight, data transparency, and targeted outreach and engagement to increase state procurement with our minority business enterprises and small businesses

Ensure Maryland is well-positioned for responsible long term economic growth and success

- Modernize and simplify Maryland's tax collection process, and close the tax gap so that those with high incomes and complex assets pay their fair share.
- Enhance equity in tax administration by analyzing data on audits and uptake of various tax credits (among other factors) by different populations.
- Work to close the wealth gap and invest in disadvantaged communities through targeted procurement programs, efforts to diversify asset managers within the pension system, expanded free tax preparation services, and more
- Evaluate climate impact and sustainability of state spending and investment
- Support the development of responsible and equitable investment policies and practices
- Analyze the well-being of Maryland's economy and revenue structure on a regular basis and clearly communicate economic and fiscal trends to key audiences across the state.