
PUBLIC SERVICE

William Donald Schaefer set an ambitious agenda for efficiency and personal assistance for taxpayers in 1999, his first income tax filing season as Maryland's comptroller.

His state income tax representatives responded to twice as many inquiries sent by e-mail than ever before. They also provided extra evening hours of telephone tax help to 47 percent more callers, and satisfied 75 percent more requests from taxpayers for help with their Maryland tax forms free of charge. Enhancing the effectiveness of his 20 taxpayer service centers throughout the state, the Comptroller strategically relocated a field office on Maryland's Eastern Shore to better serve that fast-growing region.

The Comptroller issued nearly \$1.9 billion in state income tax refunds during fiscal year 1999.

In another important program, the agency returned \$12.5 million in unclaimed funds to rightful owners. Marylanders can search through the Comptroller's records of more than \$100 million worth of unclaimed wages, bank accounts and other abandoned funds by visiting the Comptroller's Internet



Helping people. Leroy Creek of the Comptroller's Revenue Administration Division completes yet another Maryland tax form among the 29,000 his agency completed during the 1999 tax filing season.

web-site at www.marylandtaxes.com. The owners or their heirs can claim the funds at any time.

The agency also joined ranks with 36 other states in offering an amnesty program for unclaimed property holders, allowing Maryland businesses until December 31, 1999, to report unclaimed property without incurring late fees.

In keeping with his career-long concern for those with special needs, Comptroller Schaefer helped enlist the support of many service stations across Maryland to offer full pump service at self-service prices for people with disabilities.