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Florida's sales tax holiday kicks off.

Aug. 01, 2013

Back-to-school shoppers in Florida will get a chance to save some cash this week when the state's sales tax holiday kicks off.

From Friday through Sunday, no sales tax will be collected on certain clothing items priced at \$75 or less, as well as school supplies that sell for \$15 or less.

There's a notable addition to the list of tax-exempt items this year: computers priced at \$750 or less, which includes desktops, laptops and tablets.

The list of tax-free items in each category is fairly broad, but there are exceptions. Clothing items such as jewelry, watches, briefcases and athletic equipment are still taxable. The same goes for printer paper and staplers. As for computer accessories, you can't get a tax break on computer bags or cases, smartphones, digital cameras or video game consoles and accessories. Also, books are not tax-exempt.

The Florida Department of Revenue maintains a comprehensive list of taxable and tax-free items, which you can view online at [theledger.com/taxholiday](http://theledger.com/taxholiday). Smartphone users also can visit the Department of Revenue's website, [dor.myflorida.com](http://dor.myflorida.com), for a QR code with a list of eligible items.

The sales tax holiday is a major event for consumers and retailers alike.

"The effect on Florida's economy with this sort of event is substantial," said Rick McAllister, president of the Florida Retail Federation, in a media conference call last week. "Clearly it is a stimulus to Florida's economy, and we're excited about this one coming up."

Amy Mears of Auburndale has two teenage children returning to school in the

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this year, he expects that figure to rise to approximately \$400 million.

Retailers are adding staff to handle the extra foot traffic this weekend, McAllister said, and will likely offer attractive discounts to compete for shoppers.

Back-to-school and college shopping is a major retail event each year, second only to the winter holidays, according to the National Retail Federation.

Families spent an average \$688.62 last year on clothes, supplies and electronics during a record-breaking season and are projected to shell out an average \$634.78 this year.

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