

Gift Card Cash Back Laws

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Issue

List the states that require retailers to return a gift card's remaining cash value to the cardholder, including the statutory maximum amount they must return.

This report updates the information contained in OLR Report [2015-R-0095](#).

Summary

Thirteen states require retailers to provide a cash refund, up to a certain amount, for a gift card's remaining value (see Table 1 below). The maximum amounts that these states require retailers to redeem for cash range from \$0.99 in Rhode Island and Vermont to \$9.99 in California, with the most common amount being \$4.99 (six states).

Table 1: States with Gift Card "Cash-Back" Laws

<i>State</i>	<i>Maximum Amount</i>
California (Cal. Civ. Code § 1749.5(b)(2))	\$9.99
Colorado (Colo. Rev. Stat. § 6-1-722(b)(2))	5.00
Connecticut (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 42-461(c))	2.99
Hawaii (Haw. Rev. Stat. § 481B-13(c))*	4.99
Maine (Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 33, § 1953(G)(5))	4.99
Massachusetts (Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. ch. 200A, § 5D)	5.00
Montana (Mont. Code Ann. § 30-14-108(4))	4.99
New Jersey (N.J. Stat. Ann. § 56:8-110(c))	4.99
Oregon (Or. Rev. Stat. § 646A.276(1)(d))	4.99

State	Maximum Amount
Rhode Island (R.I. Gen. Laws § 6-13-12(a))	0.99
Texas (Tex. Bus. & Com. Code Ann. § 604.152)	2.49
Vermont (Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 8, § 2704)	0.99
Washington (Wash. Rev. Code § 19.240.020(3))	4.99

**Will take effect January 1, 2020*

Primary source: National Conference of State Legislatures, State Laws regarding Gift Cards and Gift Certificates, December 19, 2018

Exemptions may apply, depending on the state. For example, many states require a gift card to be partially redeemed before a customer can request a refund. And other states exempt certain types of cards; Maine, for example, exempts prepaid telephone service cards, cards with an initial value of \$5.00 or less, cards provided as a promotion or refund for goods returned without a receipt, and prefunded bank cards.

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