

# Brief Economic Facts

## WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

Worcester is a dynamic, pro-business county with opportunities for business development, expansion and relocation. As Maryland's only seaside community, Worcester is strategically located in the heart of the Delmarva Peninsula, offering a superb, family-friendly lifestyle, and ready access to major metropolitan markets, including Washington D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia. Low property tax rates, an abundant workforce, and a transportation network of highways, rail, and airports serve the needs of business. Incentives to create jobs include state income and real property tax credits for businesses locating or expanding in three Enterprise Zones (Berlin, Snow Hill, and Pocomoke City). In addition, all of Worcester County is a U.S. SBA designated HUBZone. Low interest financing for working capital and fixed assets is available through a local revolving loan fund.



Worcester County's 2,120 businesses employ 20,600 workers; over 20 of these businesses have 100 or more workers. Tourism and agriculture are the largest industries in the county, and major private sector employers include Atlantic General Hospital, Bel Art Products, Hardwire, the Harrison Group and Royal Plus.

### LOCATION

Driving distance from Snow Hill:	Miles	Kilometers
Atlanta, Georgia	681	1,095
Baltimore, Maryland	120	193
Boston, Massachusetts	436	702
Chicago, Illinois	812	1,307
New York, New York	220	354
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	149	240
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	343	551
Richmond, Virginia	200	322
Washington, DC	132	212

### CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY<sup>1</sup>

Yearly Precipitation (inches)	44.2
Yearly Snowfall (inches)	7.7
Summer Temperature (°F)	74.8
Winter Temperature (°F)	39.0
Days Below Freezing	73.6
Land Area (square miles)	474.9
Water Area (square miles)	110.0
Shoreline (miles)	774
Elevation (feet)	sea level to 65

### POPULATION<sup>2,3</sup>

	Worcester County Households	Worcester County Population	Lower Eastern Shore*	Maryland
2000	19,694	46,543	155,934	5,296,486
2010	22,229	51,454	176,657	5,773,552
2020**	24,650	56,100	193,050	6,224,550

\*Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties

\*\*Projections

Selected places population (2010): Ocean Pines 11,710; Ocean City 7,102; Berlin 4,485; West Ocean City 4,375; Pocomoke City 4,184; Snow Hill 2,103

### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION<sup>2,3</sup> (2015)

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5	2,262	4.4
5 - 19	7,705	14.9
20 - 44	12,953	25.1
45 - 64	15,238	29.6
65 and over	13,382	26.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,540</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Median age		49.4 years

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## LABOR AVAILABILITY<sup>3,4,5</sup> (BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE)

	County	Labor Mkt. Area*
<b>Civilian Labor Force (2015 avg.)</b>		
Total civilian labor force	26,029	174,680
Employment	23,277	163,599
Unemployment	2,752	11,081
Unemployment rate	10.6%	6.3%
<b>Residents commuting outside the county to work (2010-2014)</b>	Number	Percent
	6,641	29.3%
<b>Employment in selected occupations (2010-2014)</b>		
Management, business, science and arts	8,207	35.6%
Service	5,011	21.7%
Sales and office	5,718	24.8%
Production, transp. and material moving	1,658	7.2%

\* Worcester and Wicomico counties, MD and Sussex County, DE

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS<sup>6,7</sup> (2015)

Employer	Product/Service	Employment
Harrison Group*	Hotels and restaurants	1,083
Atlantic General Hospital	Medical services	830
Walmart	Consumer goods	500
O.C. Seacrets*	Hotel and restaurant	380
Dough Roller*	Restaurants	350
Phillips Seafood Restaurants*	Restaurants	326
Carousel Resort Hotel & Condominiums*	Hotel and condominiums	294
Clarion Resort Fontainebleau*	Hotel and restaurant	270
Fager's Island*	Hotel and restaurant	240
Ocean Enterprise 589 / Casino at Ocean Downs	Casino gaming	235
Ocean Pines Association	Nonprofit civic org.	221
91st Street Joint Venture / Princess Royale*	Hotel and conference center	204
Trimper's Rides*	Entertainment, recreation	200
Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	Nursing care	197
Bel-Art Products	Plastics, lab equip., chemicals	185
Candy Kitchen	Candy products retail	150
Bloomin' Brands	Restaurants	142
Food Lion	Groceries	132
Castle in the Sand*	Hotel and restaurant	117
Home Depot	Home improvement prods.	114
Lowe's	Home improvement prods.	106
Super Fresh	Groceries	106

Excludes post offices, state and local governments

\*Reflects summer employment levels.

## EMPLOYMENT<sup>4</sup> (2015, BY PLACE OF WORK)

Industry	Estab-lishments	Annual Avg. Empl.	Emp. %	Avg. Wkly. Wage
Federal government	15	182	0.8	\$1,065
State government	6	157	0.7	794
Local government	45	3,092	12.9	906
Private sector	2,123	20,601	85.7	566
Natural resources and mining	24	93	0.4	774
Construction	241	1,095	4.6	748
Manufacturing	47	660	2.7	789
Trade, transportation and utilities	467	4,062	16.9	488
Information	22	157	0.7	983
Financial activities	274	1,154	4.8	730
Professional and business services	247	1,425	5.9	775
Education and health services	148	2,161	9.0	872
Leisure and hospitality	510	9,113	37.9	428
Other services	143	681	2.8	560
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,189</b>	<b>24,032</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>615</b>

Includes civilian employment only

## HOURLY WAGE RATES<sup>4</sup> (2015)

Selected Occupations	Median	Entry	Experienced
Accountants	\$28.00	\$17.50	\$34.25
Bookkeeping/accounting clerks	16.00	11.25	18.75
Computer user support specialists	19.75	13.00	24.50
Customer service representatives	13.00	9.75	17.25
Electronics engineering technicians	28.25	17.00	34.50
Freight, stock and material movers, hand	12.00	9.50	16.75
Industrial truck operators	15.00	11.75	17.00
Inspectors, testers, sorters	14.00	9.25	19.25
Maintenance and repair workers, general	13.50	10.00	17.50
Network administrators	33.25	21.00	37.50
Packaging and filling machine operators	9.50	8.75	12.00
Packers and packagers, hand	9.75	8.75	11.00
Secretaries	15.00	11.00	17.50
Shipping/receiving clerks	12.50	10.00	14.00
Team assemblers	13.75	10.25	16.50
Telemarketers	13.50	10.00	18.75

Wages are an estimate of what workers might expect to receive on the Lower Eastern Shore (Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties) and may vary by industry, employer and locality



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## TRANSPORTATION

**Highways:** U.S. 13, U.S. 50, U.S. 113, and MD 12

**Rail:** Maryland & Delaware Railroad, Norfolk Southern Railway, and Bay Coast Railroad

**Truck:** 61 local and long-distance trucking establishments are located on the Lower Eastern Shore

**Water:** Served by the Port of Salisbury (14' channel); the Port of Baltimore (50' channel) is located 124 miles from Snow Hill; Pocomoke River is navigable (7' channel)

**Air:** Scheduled air service is available at the Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport, 15 miles from Snow Hill (5000' and 6400' runways); the airport has daily flights to/from Philadelphia and Charlotte via USAirways Express; Ocean City Municipal Airport, three miles from the resort town, can accommodate general aviation (3200' and 4070' runways)

## RECREATION AND CULTURE

Worcester is home to 15 championship golf courses, beautiful state parks and forests, and Assateague Island National Seashore.

**Ocean City:** Over 8 million visitors flock to the resort city each year to enjoy a variety of beach, boardwalk and other oceanfront activities; special events include:

- Sunfest & Springfest
- Winterfest of Lights
- New Performing Arts Center
- White Marlin Open
- Air Show

**Berlin:** Historic community known for graceful Victorian architecture and many arts and entertainment venues including the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum and the Casino at Ocean Downs; special events include:

- Berlin Fiddlers Convention
- Jazz and Blues Bash
- Octoberfest Celebration

**Snow Hill:** Beautifully historic destination that is home to the Julia A. Purnell Museum and the nearby Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum; bustling streets filled with art and antique vendors, restaurants and small shops; Pocomoke River cruises provide a leisurely view of scenic beauty; special events include:

- Return to Goat Island Stand Up Paddle Board Race
- Ride to Sturgis
- Oktoberfest
- Blues Jam

**Ocean Pines:** Located just west of Ocean City and offering many community amenities, including golfing, nature trails, boating, fishing, and shopping; special events are:

- Annual Flounder Tournament
- Summer Concerts
- Golfing Tournaments

**Pocomoke City:** Home to the Delmarva Discovery Center and the Mar-Va Theater, as well as many scenic attractions in the downtown area; special events include:

- Cypress Festival
- Annual Christmas Parade

**Arts & Entertainment Districts:** Berlin, Snow Hill

## UTILITIES

**Electricity:** Delmarva Power and Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.; customers of investor-owned utilities and major cooperatives may choose their electric supplier

**Gas:** Pipeline vapor propane provided by Eastern Shore Gas and Sharp Energy to Ocean City, Ocean Pines, Pocomoke City and Snow Hill; Chesapeake Utilities/Sandpiper Energy provides natural gas to Berlin

**Water and Sewer:** Municipal water and sewer systems in Berlin, Newark, Ocean City, Ocean Pines, Pocomoke City and Snow Hill; municipal sewer West Ocean City to Herring Creek; several developments have their own water and sewer systems

**Telecommunications:** Predominant local carrier is Verizon through Maryland Broadband Cooperative, a rural broadband initiative; fiber broadband availability from Eastern Shore Communications and Comcast through Maryland Broadband Cooperative

## GOVERNMENT<sup>11</sup>

**County Seat:** Snow Hill

**Government:** Seven commissioners elected for four-year terms; code home rule government allows for broad local legislative authority

Madison Jim Bunting, Jr., President, Board of County Commissioners 410.632.1194

Harold L. Higgins, Chief Administrative Officer 410.632.1194

**Website:** [www.co.worcester.md.us](http://www.co.worcester.md.us)

**County Bond Rating:** AA+ (S&P); Aa2 (Moody's); AA (Fitch)

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[www.chooseworcester.org](http://www.chooseworcester.org)

Sources:

- 1 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (1981-2010 normals); Maryland Geological Survey
- 2 Maryland Department of Planning
- 3 U.S. Bureau of the Census
- 4 Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Office of Workforce Information and Performance
- 5 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- 6 Worcester County Department of Economic Development
- 7 Maryland Department of Commerce
- 8 Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission
- 9 Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation; Comptroller of the Treasury
- 10 Maryland Association of Realtors
- 11 Maryland State Archives; Maryland Association of Counties