

Brief Economic Facts

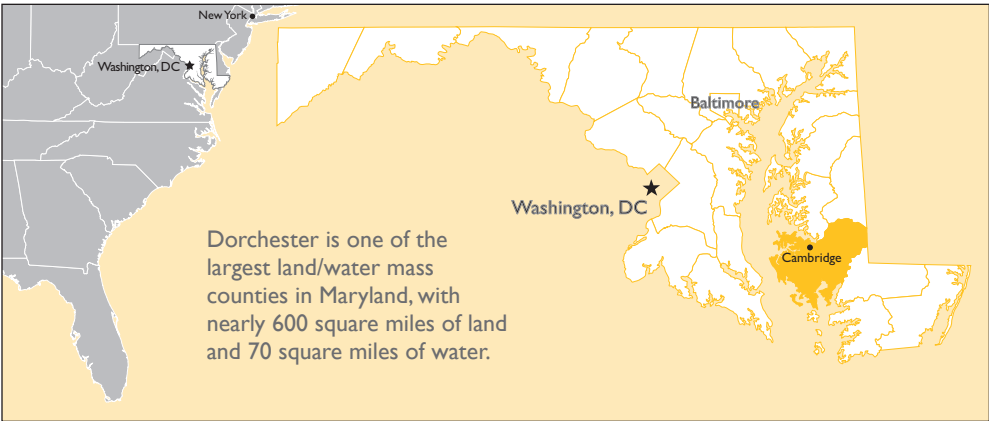
DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

Dorchester County, Maryland, is strategically located on the central Atlantic seaboard, within easy reach of metropolitan Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. Its location provides access to over one-fifth of the U.S. population concentrated along the New York–Richmond mega region.

The county’s private sector generates more than \$1.1 billion in economic output, supported by a strong industrial base and a pro-business climate. Dorchester offers a high quality of life, affordable housing, and expanding opportunities for business growth.

Anchored by the Dorchester Regional Technology Park, home to the Eastern Shore Innovation Center, the county supports startups with access to wet labs, fiber infrastructure, and Enterprise Zone tax incentives. Dorchester is also designated as both an Opportunity Zone and a federal HUBZone, offering additional advantages for growing businesses.

Recent revitalization efforts—including the Cambridge Marketplace, the LEED Gold-certified Packing House, and the planned Cambridge



Waterfront development—are transforming key commercial corridors into vibrant mixed-use hubs for innovation, entrepreneurship, and community life.

With millions in capital investment over the past five years, Dorchester County is a dynamic and growing community, poised for long-term economic success.

LOCATION

Driving distance from Cambridge:	Miles	Kilometers
Atlanta, Georgia	703	1,131
Baltimore, Maryland	75	121
Boston, Massachusetts	424	683
Chicago, Illinois	760	1,222
New York, New York	213	343
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	125	201
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania	296	477
Richmond, Virginia	184	296
Washington, DC	87	139

POPULATION^{2,3}

	Dorchester County Households	Dorchester County Population	Upper Eastern Shore*	Maryland
2010	13,525	32,618	197,980	5,773,552
2020	13,300	31,853	213,699	6,055,802
2030**	14,750	34,550	223,470	6,254,500

*Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent and Talbot counties

**Projections

Selected places population (2020): Cambridge 13,096; Hurlock 2,066; Algonquin 1,110

CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY¹

Yearly Precipitation (inches)	44.1
Yearly Snowfall (inches)	5.5
Summer Temperature (°F)	77.2
Winter Temperature (°F)	39.1
Days Below Freezing	70.7
Land Area (square miles)	593.2
Water area (square miles)	67.8
Shoreline (miles)	1,539
Elevation (ft)	sea level to 57

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION^{2,3} (2023)

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5yrs	1,751	5.4%
5 - 19 yrs	5,934	18.2%
20 - 44 yrs	8,849	27.1%
45 -64 yrs	8,724	26.8%
65 and over	7,354	22.5%
Total	32,612	100.0%
Median Age		43.9Years

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LABOR AVAILABILITY^{3,4,5} (BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE)

Civilian Labor Force (2024 avg.)	County	Labor Mkt. Area*
Total civilian labor force	15,460	229,220
Employment	14,913	221,559
Unemployment	2808	7,661
Unemployment rate	3.1%	3.3%
Residents commuting outside the county to work (2019-2023)	Number 5,220	Percent 35.6%

Employment in selected occupations (2019-2023)		
Management, business, science and arts	4,791	32.5%
Service	3,320	22.5%
Sales and office	2,651	18.0%
Production, transp. and material moving	2,333	15.8%

*Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties

MAJOR EMPLOYERS^{6,7} (2023-2024)

Employer	Product/Service	Employment
Amick Farms	Poultry Processing	1600
Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort	Resort, Golf & Conference Center	309
Protenergy Natural Foods	Food Manufacturer	265
Eastern Shore Hospital Center	Health care	253
Rexnord	Machinery parts	250
B&G Foods	Food Manufacturer	238
Preston Autoplex	Car Dealership	200
Walmart Supercenter - Cambridge	Consumer Goods	171
DS Smith	Sustainable Packaging Solutions	156
Signature Healthcare at Mallard Bay	Skilled Nursing Care Facility	150
Darling Ingredients	Animal By-Products Producer	145
LP Cambridge	Inpatient Nursing and Rehabilitative Services	140
Culta	Canabis Cultivator/Extractor	137
The Mushroom Company	Food Processing	108
Egide USA	Hermetic Packaging Solutions	85
LWRC	Firearms Manufacturer	76
Genesis HealthCare / Chesapeake Woods Center	Skilled Nursing Care Facility	75
Univ. of Maryland Horn Point Laboratory	Wetlands and Estuaries Research	74

Excludes post offices, state and local governments, national retail and national foodservice; includes higher education

EMPLOYMENT⁴ (2024)

Industry	Estab-lishments	Annual Avg. Empl.	Empl. %	Avg. Wkly. Wage
Federal Government	20	186	1.6%	1,825
State Government	7	839	7.0%	1,481
Local Government	22	1,396	11.7%	1,214
Private Sector	749	9,493	79.7%	922
Natural resources and mining	21	131	1.1%	890
Construction	86	522	4.4%	1,041
Manufacturing	43	2,895	24.3%	1,036
Trade, Transportation, and utilities	179	2,082	17.5%	904
Information	7	ND	ND	ND
Financial activities	77	368	3.1%	1,180
Professional and business services	117	716	6.0%	1,034
Education and health services	85	1,104	9.3%	953
Leisure and hospitality	74	1,235	10.4%	520
Other Services	62	ND	ND	ND
Total	798	11,914	100.0%	1,010

Includes civilian employment only

HOURLY WAGE RATES⁴ (2023)

Selected Occupations	Median	Entry	Skilled
Accountants and Auditors	\$37.78	\$27.15	\$47.78
Assemblers and Fabricators	\$20.15	\$16.44	\$22.66
Biological Technicians	\$22.40	\$18.94	\$25.30
Bookkeeping Clerks	\$23.12	\$17.76	\$27.22
Network Support Specialists	\$43.30	\$30.38	\$51.99
Computer Systems Analysts	\$52.21	\$33.37	\$63.50
Computer User Support Specialists	\$28.96	\$20.79	\$34.23
Customer Service Representatives	\$18.82	\$14.84	\$22.59
Electrical Engineers	\$37.50	\$25.81	\$49.04
Industrial Truck Operators	\$21.11	\$15.57	\$24.81
Information Security Analysts	\$63.78	\$46.16	\$79.18
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters	\$19.38	\$16.85	\$24.50
Laborers and Freight, Hand	\$16.81	\$14.67	\$19.68
Machinists	\$25.76	\$21.21	\$27.63
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	\$27.70	\$21.96	\$31.02
Mechanical Engineers	\$37.89	\$26.79	\$42.56
Packaging Operators and Tenders	\$17.49	\$15.11	\$20.54
Packers and Packers, Hand	\$16.24	\$13.62	\$18.42
Secretaries and Admin Assistants	\$21.55	\$16.53	\$25.60
Shipping, Receiving Clerks	\$18.00	\$16.03	\$22.05
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$17.73	\$14.27	\$18.91

Wages are an estimate of what workers might expect to receive on the Upper Eastern Shore (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot counties) and may vary by industry, employer and locality

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SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES^{3,8}

Educational Attainment - age 25 & over (2019-2023)	
High school graduate or higher	86.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	18.8%

Public Schools	
Number: 6 elementary; 2 middle/comb.; 2 high; career/tech 1	
Enrollment: 4,608	
Cost per pupil: \$21,196	
Students per teacher: 13.4	
High school career / tech enrollment: 750	
High school graduates: 279	

Nonpublic Schools Number: 6		
Higher Education (2022)	Enrollment	Degrees
2-year institution		
Chesapeake College*	1,794	298
4-year institutions		
University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)**	NA	NA

Several major universities are located in the region, including Salisbury University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Washington College.

*Located in nearby Queen Anne's County; coursework is offered in Dorchester County at the Chesapeake College Cambridge Center as well as other locations in the region

**Accredited in March 2016; offers joint graduate programs with other USM institutions including the system-wide program in Marine-Estuarine Environmental Sciences, in which UMCES has a leading role

TAX RATES⁹

	Dorchester County	Maryland
Corporate Income Tax	none	8.25%
Base – federal taxable income		
Personal Income Tax	3.20%	2.0-5.75%
Base – federal adjusted gross income		
*Graduated rate peaking at 5.75% on taxable income over \$300,000		
Sales & Use Tax	none	6.0%
Exempt – sales for resale; manufacturer's purchase of raw materials; manufacturing machinery and equipment; purchases of materials and equipment used in R&D and testing of finished products; purchases of computer programs for reproduction or incorporation into another computer program for resale		
Real Property Tax	\$1.0000	\$0.1120
Effective rate per \$100 of assessed value		
In an incorporated area, a municipal rate will also apply		
Business Personal Prop. Tax	none	none
No county personal property tax on ordinary business property \$2.44/\$100 applicable to utility operating property only In an incorporated area, a municipal rate will also apply; municipal exemptions may be available		
Major Tax Credits Available		
Enterprise Zone, Job Creation, More Jobs for Marylanders, R&D, New Jobs, Biotechnology and Cybersecurity Investment, A&E District		

INCOME³ (2019-2023)

Distribution	Percent Households		
	Dorchester County	Maryland	U.S.
Under \$25,000	20.2	11.3	15.0
\$25,000 - \$49,999	22.1	12.7	17.3
\$50,000 - \$74,999	16.7	13.2	15.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	11.3	12.0	12.7
\$100,000 - \$149,999	15.3	19.3	17.4
\$150,000 - \$199,999	8.5	12.4	9.3
\$200,000 and over	5.9	19.2	12.6
Median household	\$60,495	\$101,652	\$78,538
Average household	\$82,059	\$133,800	\$110,491
Per Capita	\$34,780	\$51,689	\$43,289
Total income (millions)	\$1,093	\$313,026	\$14,085,709

HOUSING^{3,10}

Occupied Units (2019-2023)	13,216 (68.4% owner occupied)
Housing Transactions (2024)	
Units Sold	551
Median Selling Price	\$268,500

*All multiple listed properties excludes auctions and FSBO

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY⁶

Dorchester County offers a variety of industrial and office properties for businesses. Two industrial parks with easy access to U.S. Routes 50 and 13 are within State Enterprise Zones and located in Cambridge and Hurlock. Water and sewer services are available to sites in both parks.

The 113-acre **Dorchester Regional Technology Park** is completed and building lots are available for sale. The park is served with water, sewer and fiber infrastructure, and offers excellent startup, relocation and expansion opportunities to technology, R&D, and innovative manufacturing companies.

Business Incubator
Eastern Shore Innovation Center (ESIC), Cambridge Tech entrepreneurs have found a home at the Eastern Shore's first purpose-built incubator, and the first building in the Dorchester Regional Technology Park.

Market Profile Data (2022)	Low	High	Average
Land – cost per acre			
Industrial	\$35,000	\$70,000	\$35,000
Office	\$20,000	\$150,000	\$40,000
Rental Rates – per square foot			
Warehouse / Industrial	\$1.50	\$8.00	\$3.75
Flex / R&D / Technology	\$4.50	\$7.50	\$6.00
Class A Office	\$14.00	\$30.00	\$21.00

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TRANSPORTATION

Highways: U.S. 50

Mass Transit: Delmarva Community Transit (DCT), a fixed route service, is a collaborative effort between several regional transit organizations; special services are available for persons unable to use the regional fixed routes

Rail: There are 39 miles of freight railroad track in Dorchester and neighboring county, managed by the Maryland Delaware Railroad, which connects with Norfolk Southern, to service the Mid Shore Region. The Maryland Delaware Railroad is in process of upgrading tracks from Hurlock (Dorchester County) to Seaford Delaware, and has an active campaign to grow freight business on the Eastern Shore.

Truck: More than 100 local and long-distance trucking establishments are located on the Upper Eastern Shore

Water: Port of Baltimore, 50' channel, 74 miles northwest of Cambridge; a leading U.S. automobile and break-bulk port; seven public terminals including the state-of-the-art Intermodal Container Transfer Facility

Air: The Cambridge-Dorchester Regional Airport runway is currently 4476' with plans to expand to 5400'; airport is outside of the restricted zones, resulting in shorter waits for landings and take-offs; charter service is offered at Easton Airport, 15 miles north of Cambridge; commuter service is available at Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport, 35 miles east of Cambridge

RECREATION AND CULTURE

Parks and Recreation: Wildlife refuge areas include Taylor's Island, LeCompte, and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuges, 16 community parks provide recreational opportunities, facilities include Hurlock Athletic Complex, Glasgow Street Athletic Complex/Tennis Courts, and the Dorchester County Pool, largest outdoor public pool on Maryland's Eastern Shore, fishing, boating, sailing, swimming, picnicking, hunting, cycling, canoeing and golfing are recreational pursuits in the county. www.dorchesterrecreation.org

Attractions: Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, Harriet Tubman Visitor Center, Chesapeake Mural Trail, Heritage Museums & Gardens of Dorchester, Dorchester Center for the Arts, Richardson Maritime Museum and the Ruark Boatworks in Cambridge, Historic High Street in Cambridge, Old Trinity Church, Spocott Windmill, East New Market National Register Historic District, Handsell (historic home) and Native American Longhouse, Historic Vienna (on the banks of the Nanticoke River), Birding Tours, Choptank River Lighthouse, Long Wharf Park, Farmers Market, Cambridge Ghost Walks, Horn Point Laboratory, Choptank Riverboat Cruises, Skipjack Nathan of Dorchester. www.visitdorchester.org

Events: 4th of July Fireworks, Thunder on the Choptank, Kids Fishing Derby, Groove City Culture Fest, Native American Artifact Exhibition, Waterman's Rodeo, Native American Festival, Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race, Dorchester Center for the Arts Showcase, Hurlock Fall Festival & Train Rides, Taste of Cambridge, Nanticoke River Jamboree, Fun Dog Show, Kite Festival, Christmas Train Garden, Vienna Christmas Parade, Cambridge-Dorchester Christmas Parade, Santa Swim, Vienna Luminaries & House Tours, Chicone Village Day, Burning of the Vines, May the 4th Fest Street festival, Cambridge Classic Powerboat Regatta, Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage, W.T. Ruark Fishing Tournament, GlizzyFest, Ice & Oyster Festival, Grand National Waterfowl Hunt, National Outdoor Show, Cambridge Beer Festival, Hearts on Main.

Races & Endurance Events: Six Pillars Century Cycling Tour, Maryland Freedom Swim, Cambridge Crab Run, IRONKids Triathlon, IRONMAN 70.3 Eagleman Triathlon, Gerry Boyle Firecracker Kids' Triathlon, IRONMAN Maryland Triathlon, Wild Goose Chase Women's Cycling Event, GFNY Maryland Cycling Event

UTILITIES

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

Gas: Natural gas is supplied to Cambridge by Chesapeake Utilities Corporation (Cambridge Gas Co. Division); customers may choose their gas supplier

Water and Sewer: Municipal systems in Cambridge, East New Market, Hurlock, Secretary, and Vienna

Telecommunications: Local carriers – Verizon Maryland and other local providers that offer service on proprietary or leased infrastructure; Fiber optic broadband capabilities – Bay Country Communications (cable television, internet), Comcast (phone, internet, cable television), Verizon (phone, internet, television); Long distance carriers – AT&T, Sprint, Verizon and others

GOVERNMENT

County Seat: Cambridge

Government: Five council members elected for four-year terms; charter form of government allows for the separation of the executive from the legislative branch; lawmaking powers are vested in an elected legislative body

George Pfeffer, President, County Council 410.228.1700

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Website: www.choosedorchester.org

Bond Rating: A+ (S&P); Aa3 (Moody's)

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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, Office of Workforce Information and Performance

5 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

6 Dorchester County Economic Development Office

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