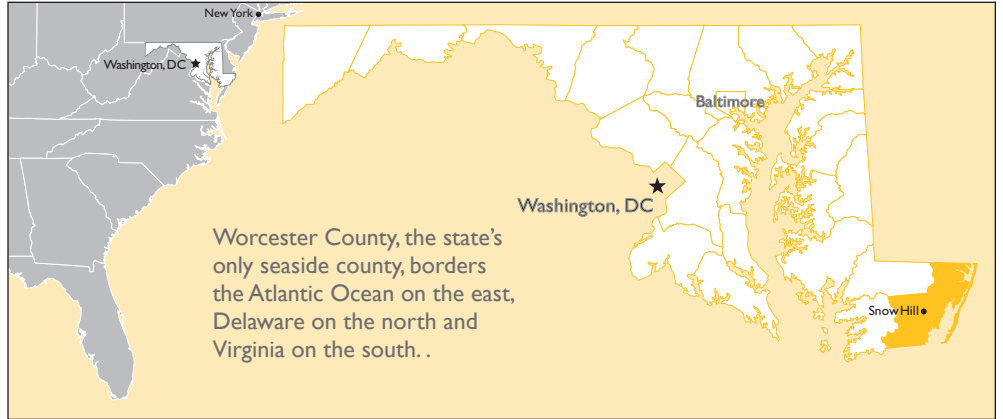


# Brief Economic Facts

## WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

Worcester County, Maryland, is thriving with exciting business and development projects. A major commercial venture, including a Giant grocery store, A Wawa, a Royal Farms, retail shops, is set to expand local commerce and enhance shopping options for residents. In Snow Hill, the Enterprise Zone designation continues driving economic revitalization with tax incentives to attract businesses and create jobs in its historic downtown. Residential development is also booming, with 129 new construction homes available, catering to the growing demand for housing.

Additionally, the county is updating its Comprehensive Plan, to be published 2025, to preserve community character and natural heritage while guiding future growth. The Department of Development Review and Permitting plays a pivotal role in managing land use, building projects, and site plans to ensure sustainable development. Worcester



County's extensive shoreline, natural beauty, and rich cultural history complement these advancements, making it an ideal location for new businesses and residents alike.

### 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
Pittsburg, 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
Days Below Freezing	73.6
Land Area (square miles)	474.9
Water area (square miles)	110
Shoreline (miles)	774
Elevation (ft)	sea level to 65

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

	Worcester County Households	Worcester County Population	Lower Eastern Shore*	Maryland
2010	22,225	51,454	197,980	5,773,552
2020	21,375	52,403	213,699	6,055,802
2030**	23,450	56,230	223,470	6,254,500

\*Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties

\*\*Projections

Selected places population (2020): Ocean Pines 12,145; Ocean City 6,844; Berlin 5,026; West Ocean City 4,661; Pocomoke City 4,354; Snow Hill 2,159

### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION<sup>2,3</sup> (2024)

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5yrs	2,201	4.1%
5 - 19 yrs	7,981	14.9%
20 - 44 yrs	13,416	25.0%
45 -64 yrs	14,731	27.4%
65 and over	15,371	28.6%
Total	53,700	100.0%
Median Age		50.7

# Brief Economic Facts WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

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

Civilian Labor Force (2024 avg.)	County	Labor Mkt. Area*
Total civilian labor force	26,679	229,220
Employment	25,565	221,559
Unemployment	1,114	7,661
Unemployment rate	4.2%	3.3%

Residents commuting outside the county to work (2020-2024)	Number	Percent
	7,070	17.1%

### Employment in selected occupations (2020-2024)

Occupation	Number	Percent
Management, business, science and arts	10,832	43.5%
Service	5,230	21.0%
Sales and office	5,071	20.3%
Production, transp. and material moving	1,672	6.7%

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

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS<sup>6,7</sup> (2024-2025)

Employer	Product/Service	Employment
Harrison Group*	Hotels & Restaurants	1387
Atlantic General Health Systems (now TidalHealth Atlantic)	Medical Services	960
Bay Shore Development*	Amusements & Hotels	698
Fagers Island*	Hotels & Restaurants	520
O.C. Seacrets*	Restaurant, Distillery & Liquor Store	506
Ocean Enterprise 589 / Ocean Downs Casino*	Casino gaming	320
Dough Roller*	Restaurants	289
91st Street Joint Venture / Princess Royale*	Hotels & Restaurants	258
Blue Water Development / Blue Water Hospitality*	Hospitality Mgmt. & Real Estate Dev.	256
Ocean Pines Association	Nonprofit civic organization	245
TidalHealth	Medical Services	192
Sunsations*	Beach Wear / Products & Souvenirs	182
Ashore Resort & Beach Club*	Hotel & Restaurant	161
Carousel Resort Hotel & Condominiums*	Hotels & Restaurants	158
Berlin Nursing & Rehabilitation Center	Nursing & Rehabilitation	158
Bel-Art Products/SP	Scientific & Lab Products	147
Trimper Rides*	Amusements	108
Hardwire	Protective armor products	108

Excludes post offices, state and local governments, national retail and national foodservice

\*Reflects summer employment levels

Based in part on employers that are willing to report

## EMPLOYMENT<sup>4</sup> (2024)

Industry	Estab-lishments	Annual Avg. Empl.	Empl. %	Avg. Wkly. Wage
Federal Government	14	220	0.8%	1,525
State Government	9	ND	ND	ND
Local Government	46	ND	ND	ND
Private Sector	2,385	22,633	86.0%	827
Natural resources and mining	38	117	0.4%	894
Construction	221	ND	ND	1,048
Manufacturing	57	788	3.0%	1,111
Trade, Transportation, and utilities	491	4,340	16.5%	737
Information	23	114	0.4%	1,699
Financial activities	276	1,156	4.4%	1,133
Professional and business services	360	1,822	6.9%	1,112
Education and health services	175	2,614	9.9%	1,117
Leisure and hospitality	565	9,661	36.7%	642
Other Services	172	801	3.0%	769
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,455</b>	<b>26,303</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>882</b>

Includes civilian employment only

## HOURLY WAGE RATES<sup>4</sup> (2024)

Selected Occupations	Median	Entry	Skilled
Accountants and Auditors	\$36.32	\$25.59	\$44.44
Assemblers and Fabricators	\$17.48	\$15.35	\$21.95
Bookkeeping Clerks	\$23.05	\$18.66	\$27.15
Network Support Specialists	\$33.14	\$24.56	\$42.08
Computer Systems Analysts	\$42.37	\$26.80	\$51.89
Computer User Support Specialists	\$26.40	\$20.95	\$32.25
Customer Service Representatives	\$18.74	\$15.48	\$22.24
Industrial Truck Operators	\$20.84	\$17.52	\$26.12
Information Security Analysts	\$49.17	\$32.11	\$63.31
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters	\$20.66	\$16.36	\$27.69
Laborers and Freight, Hand	\$17.94	\$15.27	\$22.34
Machinists	\$20.11	\$18.86	\$24.36
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	\$28.93	\$22.48	\$30.81
Packaging Operators and Tenders	\$21.24	\$16.68	\$27.86
Packers and Packagers, Hand	\$15.97	\$15.00	\$17.93
Secretaries and Admin Assistants	\$21.33	\$16.98	\$25.53
Shipping, Receiving Clerks	\$18.00	\$15.79	\$23.08
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$18.25	\$15.90	\$19.47

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

# Brief Economic Facts WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

## SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES<sup>3,8</sup>

### Educational Attainment - age 25 & over (2020-2024)

High school graduate or higher	94.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher	35.3%

### Public Schools

Number: 5 elementary; 5 middle/comb.; 3 high, 1 career/tech; 1 special; 1 early learning

Enrollment: 6,985

Cost per pupil: \$23,372

Students per teacher: 11.9

High school career / tech enrollment: 1,110

High school graduates: 462, 95.9% grad rate

Nonpublic Schools Number: 6

### Higher Education (2025)

Worcester County Public Schools is proud to be home to nine (9) Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, and five (5) National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence!

Two University System of Maryland institutions are located nearby, including the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in neighboring Somerset County (enrollment 3,371) and Salisbury University in Wicomico County (enrollment 7,243). One two-year Community College, Wor-Wic Community College, is located in Wicomico County (enrollment 3,049).

## TAX RATES<sup>9</sup>

	Worcester County	Maryland
<b>Corporate Income Tax</b>	none	8.25%
Base – federal taxable income		
<b>Personal Income Tax</b>	2.25%	2.0-6.5%
Base – federal adjusted gross income		
*Graduated rate peaking at 6.5% on taxable income over \$1,300,000		
<b>Sales &amp; Use Tax</b>	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		
<b>Real Property Tax</b>	\$0.8450	\$0.1120
Effective rate per \$100 of assessed value		
In addition to this rate, there are some miscellaneous taxes and/ or special taxing areas in the county; in an incorporated area, a municipal rate may also apply		
<b>Business Personal Prop. Tax</b>	\$2.1125	none
Rate per \$100 of depreciated value		
Exempt – manufacturing and R&D machinery, equipment, materials and supplies; manufacturing, R&D and warehousing inventory. In an incorporated area, a municipal rate may 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

## INCOME<sup>3</sup> (2020-2024)

Distribution	Percent Households		
	Worcester County	Maryland	U.S.
Under \$25,000	13.3	11.1	14.7
\$25,000 - \$49,999	14.8	12.4	16.7
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17.4	12.8	15.5
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12.8	11.9	12.6
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.4	18.9	17.5
\$150,000 - \$199,999	8.8	12.5	9.6
\$200,000 and over	13.4	20.3	13.4
Median household	\$81,745	\$103,678	\$80,734
Average household	\$117,610	\$136,642	\$113,530
Per Capita	\$73,572	\$79,259	\$73,204
Total income (millions)	\$2,839	\$322,875	\$14,671,198

## HOUSING<sup>3,10</sup>

Occupied Units 2020-2024 24,136 (78.0% owner occupied)

### Housing Transactions (2025)

Units Sold	1,971
Median Selling Price	\$424,990

\*All multiple listed properties excludes auctions and FSBO

## BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY<sup>6</sup>

Worcester County offers a diverse range of commercial and industrial spaces across its regions, spanning 2 to 80 acres. The presence of three designated Maryland Enterprise Zones in Berlin, Snow Hill, and Pocomoke provides new and expanding businesses access to crucial property and job tax credits. Additionally, the county takes pride in its two Arts and Entertainment Districts, actively fostering and supporting diverse artistic and cultural initiatives.

Pocomoke City serves as the county's central manufacturing hub, housing the expansive 175-acre Pocomoke Industrial Park, with continued growth. As a designated SBA HUBZone with nine additional commercial properties along Route 13, totaling 1,041 acres, Pocomoke City aims to provide incentives for existing business owners while attracting new light manufacturing, warehousing, and research and development companies to create higher-paying, permanent job opportunities and give small and medium-sized businesses a competitive edge in government contracting.

Additionally, there are three federally designated Opportunity Zones located in Snow Hill, Berlin, and downtown Ocean City, aiming to stimulate economic growth by offering tax incentives to investors. The VLT (video lottery terminal) program utilizes slot machine proceeds from Ocean Downs Casino to assist small, minority, and women owned businesses throughout the county.

For incoming businesses, Worcester County's Department of Economic Development extends enticing financing options, leveraging various state and federal programs tailored for job creation and business growth.

# Brief Economic Facts // WORCESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND

## TRANSPORTATION

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

**Truck:** More than 70 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 American Airlines; 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 9 championship golf courses, 56 beautiful state parks and forests, and Assateague Island National Seashore.

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

- White Marlin Open
- Air Show
- Performing Arts Center
- Numerous Annual Festivals & Concerts

**Berlin:** Historic community known for graceful Victorian Architecture, many electric shops, restaurants, the Calvin B. Taylor House Museum, Mermaid Museum, and Ocean Downs Casino special events include:

- Berlin Fiddlers Convention
- Bathtub Races
- Octoberfest Celebration
- Farmers Market (Producer Only)

**Snow Hill:** Beautifully historic destination that is home to the Julia A. Purnell Museum and nearby Furnace Town Living Heritage Museum; bustling streets filled with art, antique & retail shops, restaurants; Pocomoke River Canoe Company provides rentals and tours of scenic beauty; special events include:

- County Fair
- Blessing of the Combines
- Blues Jam

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

- Year-Round Farmers Market
- Annual Flounder Tournament
- Summer Concerts
- Veterans Day Ceremony

**Pocomoke City:** Quaint riverfront town known as the Friendliest Town. Home to the Delmarva Discovery Center, the Mar-Va Theater and Sturgis One-Room School House, as well as many scenic attractions; special events include:

- Annual Christmas Parade
- Heritage Days
- Boat Docking Challenge
- 4th Friday Street Festivals

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

## UTILITIES

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

**Gas:** Pipeline vapor propane provided by Chesapeake Utilities/Sandpiper Energy and Sharp Energy to Ocean City, Ocean Pines, Pocomoke City and Snow Hill; Chesapeake Utilities/Sandpiper Energy provides natural gas to Berlin, Ocean Pines, northern Worcester County and West Ocean City. Chesapeake Utilities/Sandpiper Energy is extending natural gas to Pocomoke in near future.

**Water and Sewer:** Municipal water and sewer systems in Berlin, Newark, Ocean City, West Ocean City, Ocean Pines, Greater Ocean Pines area, Pocomoke City and Snow Hill; municipal sewer West Ocean City to Herring Creek and southward to Rt 376 at the Frontier town campground.

**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

**County Seat:** Snow Hill

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

Theodore (Ted) Elder, President, Board of County Commissioners 410.632.1194

Weston Young, Administrative Director 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)

**Worcester County Department of Economic Development**

Melanie Pursel, Director

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<https://choosemarylandscoast.org/>

Sources:

- 1 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (1981-2010 normals); Maryland Geological Survey
- 2 American Community Survey
- 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 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