



# MACo Winter Conference

December 6-8, 2023 | Hyatt, Cambridge, MD

1,000

INFLUENTIAL  
ATTENDEES

30

INFORMATIVE  
SESSIONS

90

INSPIRATIONAL  
SPEAKERS

70

INNOVATIVE  
EXHIBITORS

*Eye of the Storm*

REGISTRATION BROCHURE



# MACo Winter Conference Eye of the Storm

December 6-8, 2023 | Hyatt, Cambridge, MD

## What's next for MARYLAND COUNTIES?

*MACo's Winter Conference leads into Maryland's General Assembly Session—the intensive 90 days of law-making that affect all residents of our state. Approximately 900 government leaders and legislators will gather at MACo's Winter Conference to discuss how to prepare for the fiscal and policy realities of 2024 and beyond.*

Now that county and state officials have navigated through their first year of a new term of office with a new Administration, it's time to batten down the hatches and prepare for potentially choppy waters ahead. With budgets stretched to the max, and looming – but uncertain – county-funded commitments on the horizon, local governments are in a precarious position. Add to that the ongoing concerns with affordable housing, climate change, and workforce recruitment and retention – among others – and it's easy to see the perfect storm is brewing. This conference will discuss where Maryland is right now on these important issues, what's ahead, and how governments and community partners can work together to face these challenges and weather the storm.

*If you're involved in local government in any way, you should attend— don't miss your chance to shape the next four years in Maryland!*



## Register today!

[www.mdcounties.org/MACoCon](http://www.mdcounties.org/MACoCon)

# MACo's Winter Conference will empower you to:

## LEARN

Gain knowledge and understanding of the issues facing local governments today.

## ENGAGE

Find solutions to important challenges through face-to-face exchanges with county officials, county professionals, and legislators.

## COLLABORATE

Save money and increase efficiency through partnerships with stakeholders and vendors.

## About MACo:

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) is a non-profit and non-partisan organization that serves Maryland's counties by articulating the needs of local government to the Maryland General Assembly.

The Association's membership consists of county elected officials and representatives from Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City.

MACo is the only organization serving the needs of county governments and elected officials across Maryland.



# OVERVIEW

## Wednesday, December 6, 2023

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM	Registration Open
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Continental Breakfast
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Exhibits Set Up
8:30 AM - 8:45 AM	Networking and Coffee Break
8:45 AM - 10:15 AM	Academy Core: Public Information Act
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Networking Coffee Break
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Academy Core: Basics of Risk Management
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	Opening Roundtable
11:00 AM - 6:30 PM	Exhibits Open
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Affiliate Member Meetings & Lunches
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch Buffet
1:15 PM - 1:45 PM	Networking Coffee Break
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Educational Session Block (4 sessions)
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Popcorn Break
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Educational Session Block (4 sessions)
4:15 PM - 5:15 PM	MACo's Good Government Book Club Discussion
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Women of MACo Reception
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM	Welcoming Reception
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Welcoming Banquet & Awards Ceremony*
8:30 PM - 9:00 PM	Corporate Partner Dessert Reception
9:00 PM - 11:00 PM	<b>Backyard Games Night!</b>

## Thursday, December 7, 2023

7:30 AM - 3:30 PM	Registration Open
7:30 AM - 3:00 PM	Exhibits Open
7:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Continental Breakfast
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	County Elected Officials Forum, Breakfast, & Business Meeting*
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM	General Session
9:30 AM - 4:00 PM	Guest Networking Lunch (offsite, registration required)
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Networking Coffee Break
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	General Session
11:45 AM - 12:45 PM	Lunch Buffet
11:45 AM - 12:45 PM	Affiliate Group Meetings & Lunches
11:45 AM - 12:45 PM	Rural County Coalition Lunch
11:45 AM - 12:45 PM	Large County Coalition Lunch
1:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Networking Coffee Break
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Educational Session Block (4 sessions)
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Chocolate Break
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Networking Coffee Break
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Educational Session Block (4 sessions)
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	Diversity Caucus Reception
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Inaugural Banquet Reception
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	Inaugural Banquet*
8:30 PM - 9:30 PM	President's Reception
9:30 PM - 11:30 PM	Karaoke Reception

*Please note: schedule is tentative and subject to change. More details are listed on the following pages. Check [www.mdcountries.org](http://www.mdcountries.org) for updates.*

## Friday, December 8, 2023

7:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Registration Open
7:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Continental Breakfast
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Academy Core: Ethics
8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Special Session
9:30 AM - 9:45 AM	Networking Coffee Break
9:45 AM - 11:00 AM	2024 General Assembly Forecast
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	Networking Coffee Break
11:15 AM - 12:15 PM	Closing Session
12:15 PM - 12:45 PM	Wrap-Up Boxed Lunches

\*=ticket required



# Schedule

## Wednesday, December 6, 2023

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM | **REGISTRATION CENTER**

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM | **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

8:45 AM - 10:15 AM | **ACADEMY FOR EXCELLENCE**

### **Public Information Act**

What kind of information should be released to the public upon request? Many difficulties can be avoided by knowing the answer. This class helps officials and staff at all levels understand the requirements of state law governing requests for public records and suggests best practices for handling those requests. The class includes small roundtable discussions using real-life scenarios to further illustrate appropriate responses to requests from the public or the press.

10:00 AM - 4:30 PM | **SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC "LIFE IS ON"  
ATTENDEE LOUNGE**

### **Sponsored by Schneider Electric**

This is your space to take a break, respond to email, or have a quick meeting!

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

**Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC,  
MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic,  
Zelenkofske Axelrod**

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

### **Unlocking the Power of Artificial Intelligence: Transforming Local Government for a Smarter Future**

**Hosted by Amazon Web Services**

Generative AI is having a transformative role in building smarter communities. Learn the practical applications of generative AI across counties and cities, ranging from intelligent virtual assistants that assist residents in finding relevant information to innovative solutions that automate routine administrative tasks. Discover inspiring use cases where generative AI is empowering local government agencies to provide personalized services, foster resident engagement, and optimize resource allocation, ultimately leading to more sustainable and efficient communities.

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM | **ACADEMY FOR EXCELLENCE**

### **Basics of Risk Management**

One of the main responsibilities of local governments is to protect its residents from risk to themselves and their property. Risk may result from a number of sources, including fire, crime, automobile accidents, harm to the infrastructure, or as a result of waste disposal. This class is designed to sharpen the awareness of officials that local government activities are subject to risks that may result in significant loss. Through

learning about steps to reduce and control loss exposure and tools for identifying hazards, government officials can learn how to avoid the consequences of taking unnecessary risk.

10:45 AM - 11:45 AM | **OPENING ROUNDTABLE**

### **Housing - What's New, What's Next**

**Hosted by MACo's Planners Affiliate**

Affordable housing remains a top policy issue as communities grapple with both a shortage of housing and daunting market forces that make solutions even harder to pursue. Join us for this participant-driven session to hear how counties are handling this issue and share what has worked or is in the works in your county.

11:00 AM - 6:30 PM | **EXHIBITS**

Visit the exhibits in the main foyer and Choptank Ballroom to meet potential partners and learn more about their cost-saving products and services.

11:00 AM - 2:45 PM | **AFFILIATE MEETING (private)**

### **MACHO Meeting**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | **AFFILIATE & INTEREST GROUP WORKING  
LUNCHES**

(\*private, only county employees may attend)

**County Communications Professionals and PIOs Affiliate\***

**Information Technology Directors Affiliate\***

**Human Services Affiliate\***

**Emergency Management Directors Affiliate\***

**Regional Councils (invitation only)\***

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | **LUNCH BUFFET**

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

### **Maximizing Your Benefits with FAMILI: Strategies for Coordinating Benefits and Educating Employees**

**Hosted by American Fidelity**

With paid FAMILI leave right around the corner, coordination and education are key. Counties need to understand how their current benefits may be affected and make any necessary changes to maximize coordination between existing benefits and paid FAMILI leave. Once employers understand coordination of benefits, they can create a strategy for educating employees and helping them understand their options under FAMILI and the employer's policies. American Fidelity has been helping employers and employees with benefits education for more than 60 years - join this session to find out how they can help Maryland's Counties through FAMILI implementation.

# Schedule

**Wednesday, December 6, 2023**

12:45 PM - 1:15 PM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

***Increasing Access to Healthcare for County Government Employees***

***Hosted by CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield***

As county governments face the challenges of access to care, CareFirst is building solutions to help your employees get the most of their benefits, improve outcomes and ultimately reduce cost of care. With CloseKnit, employees have a convenient, affordable choice in their CareFirst provider network for whole healthcare—accessible 24/7/365 for nearly everything that ails them. Through CloseKnit’s easy-to-use app, members can access the care they need, including preventive and urgent care services, as well as mental and behavioral health support, insurance navigation and more. Join this session to find out more about how CareFirst and CloseKnit can help county employees!

1:15 PM - 1:45 PM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

***Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC, MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic, Zelenkofske Axelrod***

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | **AFFILIATE SESSIONS**

***Cards on the Table: Bringing Data Centers to Maryland***

***Hosted by MACo's Administrators Affiliate***

Technology infrastructure is a rising component of commercial growth, across our region and beyond. What would it take for Maryland to rival our neighboring states as hosts for data centers and similar facilities – and who’s holding the cards in this high stakes competition? This panel will talk through your own local plans, and the many considerations for these specific commercial uses, that frequently require high-energy volume, backup generation capacity, and further considerations.

***Juvenile Justice Pt 1: The Local Role***

***Hosted by MACo's Attorneys Affiliate***

In the wake of new legislation going into effect concerning juvenile offenders, there has been a great deal of discussion as to whether the new laws and protocols are effectively deterring juvenile crime. This session will discuss changes the legislation required and what that means for state and local agencies, along with the current health of local diversion programs. Decreasing juvenile crime is non-negotiable for county residents across the state and this impartial look at current measures will help illuminate this issue ahead of the 2024 legislative session.

***Batten Down the Hatches: Mitigating a Changing Climate***

***Hosted by MACo's Emergency Managers Affiliate***

In the face of escalating climate change, county emergency management has emerged as a critical player in mitigating and adapting to these environmental challenges. From risk assessment and preparedness to response and recovery, county emergency managers engage in cross-sector collaborations with government entities, non-profits, academia, and private sector organizations to drive climate-conscious emergency management practices. In this session, an expert panel will share practical insights and actionable strategies to foster a more sustainable and prepared future.

***Recreational ROI: Beyond Fun and Games***

***Hosted by MACo's Parks & Recreation Directors Affiliate***

Investing in parks and recreation programming can be a powerful tool in any county’s economic development toolbox. Accessible playgrounds, educational activities, and healthy and safe ways to enjoy the outdoors are just some of the robust recreational offerings that can make the difference for residents when looking for a new home. This panel will delve into the parks return on investment, focusing on methodologies for measuring and communicating the tangible and intangible benefits...like increased property values, reduced healthcare costs, and better quality of life for residents.

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

***Managing Risk - Focusing on the Here and Now, As Well As Emerging Threats***

***Hosted by Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT)***

The day-to-day challenges faced by county governments are constantly changing and evolving. LGIT experts will discuss a variety of current and emerging issues including: current loss drivers, sheriff’s liability, and the “Cyber Coverage Conundrum.” Speakers will also touch briefly on the Time to Care Act and recreational cannabis use and what we may see out of the General Assembly over the next few months.

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

***Social Security: The Choice of a Lifetime***

***Hosted by Nationwide Retirement Solutions***

Filing for Social Security benefits is one of the biggest financial decisions employees will make. That’s why it’s called "the choice of a lifetime." How and when you file could increase your annual benefit by as much as 80%. Join this Solutions Showcase to learn from Nationwide Retirement Services the many filing rules and strategies so you can make the choice that fits with your overall retirement income plan.

# Schedule

## Wednesday, December 6, 2023

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM | NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC,  
MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic,  
Zelenkofske Axelrod*

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM | POPCORN BREAK

Join the exhibitors for a fun and delicious break!

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM | AFFILIATE SESSIONS

***Leveraging Federal Infrastructure Funds: A Conversation with MDOT***

*Hosted by MACo's Budget & Finance Officers Affiliate*

The nearly \$2 trillion in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding represent a generational opportunity to invest in Maryland's transportation, energy, and environmental infrastructure. In this session, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will provide an overview of its resources to support county grant submissions and will preview upcoming federal discretionary grant opportunities of interest to Maryland counties in calendar year 2024.

***Environmental Rift: When Global Health Threats Become Local Concerns***

*Hosted by MACo's Health Officers Affiliate*

As communities learned from COVID-19, what happens globally can quickly become a local threat. Milder winters, warmer summers, and fewer frost days are making it easier for infectious diseases such as Lyme, West Nile, rabies, dengue, and salmonellosis to expand into new habitats and infect more people. Animals have been pushed from native areas due to development and climate changes, causing increased contact with humans. Higher temperatures in the air and water enable fungi and other disease-causing threats to grow, spread, and thrive, while developing even more resistance to existing medicines. Learn from this panel of

experts about the public health threats counties should be most concerned with and how each jurisdiction can be prepared. Health Officers will share the latest information and provide prevention strategies for what lies ahead.

***Steadfast in the Storm: Effective Crisis Communication for Counties***

*Hosted by MACo's Communications & PIO Affiliate*

Uncover the art of crisis communication, tailored for county legislators and employees. Explore proven tactics using technology like text alerts and social media. Delve into real-world case studies, and learn how to adapt messaging in real-time, build resilience, and maintain public trust. Discover best practices to coordinate seamlessly with emergency services and ensure accurate information dissemination. Join us in this dynamic session to navigate the complexities of crisis communication effectively.

***Juvenile Justice, Pt 2: The Kids Aren't All Right – Local Diversion Programs and Strategies***

*Hosted by MACo's Human Services Affiliate*

New legislation has changed the way juvenile offenders are held accountable for crimes in Maryland. Diversion programs are evidence-based strategies that help troubled youth address the root causes of rebellious behavior rather than criminalizing their actions. With now limited judicial options for reinforcing accountability for youth, bolstering diversion and support programs is even more vital. In this "part 2" panel exploring juvenile justice issues, experts will discuss existing programs, how they are responding to increased demand, and what policymakers can do to help.



# Schedule

## Wednesday, December 6, 2023

4:15 PM - 5:15 PM | **MACo GOOD GOVERNMENT BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION AND RECEPTION**

*Sponsored by J.P. Morgan*

Participants can join a discussion on a book affecting public service and best practices as officials, employees, and colleagues. The selection for is "The Good Enough Job: Reclaiming Life from Work," by Simone Stolzoff. The first 25 people to respond to [agrosskrueger@mdcounties.org](mailto:agrosskrueger@mdcounties.org) will receive a free copy of the book, thanks to MACo's generous sponsor, J.P. Morgan.

4:15 PM - 5:15 PM | **CLEAN CHESAPEAKE COALITION MEETING**

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM | **WOMEN OF MACo RECEPTION**

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM | **WELCOMING RECEPTION**

*Hosted by Hyatt*

*Co-Sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, Pepco & Delmarva Power, and Verizon*

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM | **WELCOMING & AWARDS BANQUET (ticket required)**

*Hosted by the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT)*

*Co-Sponsor: Potomac Edison, a FirstEnergy Company*

*Centerpieces: Royal Plus*

This event is a highlight of MACo's Winter Conference. Join us to celebrate MACo's public service, best practices, and legislative award winners.

8:30 PM - 9:00 PM | **CORPORATE PARTNER DESSERT RECEPTION**

*Hosted by MACo's Corporate Partners*

9:00 PM - 11:00 PM | **BACKYARD GAMES RECEPTION**

This fun networking event features games like cornhole, giant Jenga, and more to help you connect with fellow attendees and get energized to start the next day's sessions!

## Thursday, December 7, 2023

7:30 AM - 3:30 PM | **REGISTRATION CENTER**

7:30 AM - 5:30 PM | **SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC "LIFE IS ON" ATTENDEE LOUNGE**

*Sponsored by Schneider Electric*

This is your space to take a break, respond to email, or have a quick meeting!

7:30 AM - 9:00 AM | **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM | **EXHIBITS**

Visit the exhibits in the main foyer and Choptank Ballroom to meet potential partners and learn more about their cost-saving products and services.

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM | **COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS FORUM, BREAKFAST & BUSINESS MEETING (ticket required)**

County Elected Officials (County Executives, Council Members, and Commissioners) are invited to attend this breakfast and business meeting to conduct the Association's official business and share best practices with their peers.

9:15 AM - 10:15 AM | **GENERAL SESSION**

*In This Economy? Forecasting and Funding Maryland's Future*

A leading economist will review the trends and expectations for Maryland's near-term economy and its effects on county governments. National and regional trends will be reviewed,

including how they are affecting our workforce, our local economy, and your county government's ability to budget responsibly while providing critical services.

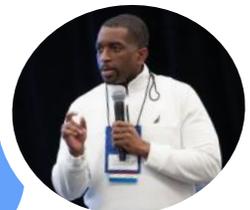
10:15 AM - 10:30 AM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC, MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic, Zelenkofske Axelrod*

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM | **GENERAL SESSION**

*Let's Talk AI – The Good, the Bad, the Ugly*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds immense potential to revolutionize county governments, offering transformative solutions to enhance services, streamline operations, enrich constituent communications, and improve decision-making. However, this transformative power also brings challenges and potential pitfalls like ethical issues, new and evolving cybersecurity threats, and privacy concerns. In this session, learn best practices for harnessing the power of this transformational technology to modernize county government while mitigating risk and safeguarding sensitive information.



# Schedule

**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

11:30 AM - 12:45 PM | **LUNCH BUFFET**

11:45 AM - 12:45 PM | **AFFILIATE & INTEREST GROUP WORKING LUNCHES**

(\* = private, only county employees may attend)

**Attorneys Affiliate\***

*Sponsored by Dicello Levitt*

**Human Resources Affiliate\***

*Sponsored by American Fidelity*

**Parks & Recreation Affiliate\***

**Large County Coalition**

*Sponsored by American Fidelity*

**Rural County Coalition**

*Sponsored by MacLeod Law Group, LLC*

12:30 PM - 3:30 PM | **GUEST NETWORKING LUNCH**  
(pre-registration required)

Personal guests of registered attendees and exhibitors are invited to a special networking lunch.

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC,*

*MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic,*

*Zelenkofske Axelrod*

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | **AFFILIATE SESSIONS**

**Correctional Officers as Caregivers: The Importance of Mental Health and Crisis Support**

*Hosted by MACo's Corrections Affiliate*

Correctional officers are the first line of support for incarcerated individuals in need of rehabilitative services. In working with one of the most vulnerable populations in the state, these officers prioritize the health and well-being of those in their care over taking care of themselves. With significantly shorter life expectancy and constant exposure to first-, second-, and third-hand trauma, it is vitally important that these professionals can access mental health and crisis support services. As one of the most difficult professions in county government, these roles must be supported in order to recruit and retain the next generation of caregivers in the carceral setting. This panel will discuss the work environment for correctional officers, how that impacts these individuals, the incident management protocols currently in place, and where new policies could help.

**Double-Edged Sword: Do Short-Term Stays Have Long-Term Benefits?**

*Hosted by Maryland's Destination Marketing Organizations*

Counties leverage hotel or lodging taxes on traditional hotel stays as a driver of local revenue and economic development.

Maryland's tourism is evolving, however, with a greater share of visitors opting for short-term rentals. This panel will explore the

multitude of county government considerations around this growing industry and how short-term rentals impact tourism, workforce attraction and retention, affordable housing, and local revenues. Experts will address connections, concerns, and questions for your county and beyond.

**Hit the Ground Plumbin' – Getting Apprentices to Work in Waste, Water, and Septic**

*Hosted by MACo's Environmental Health Officers*

Legislation from the 2023 session established an apprenticeship program for environmental health specialists at Morgan State University. While in-class instruction is vital to learning the tricks of the trade, field experience will empower these future employees with the on-job skills they need to succeed quickly. Learn from experts in the field about why apprenticeships are so valuable and how local governments can leverage this new program to get qualified candidates on the job faster.

**Regulations: Why Counties Care & Making Your Voice Heard**

Much of the focus in Annapolis is on the General Assembly and the legislative process. For 90 days a year the legislature debates and makes laws that impact every facet of life. Outside of that window, the executive enforces those laws and exercises an almost equally important power – the ability to create and enforce regulations. While the regulatory process often gets less focus, counties should still pay attention. This panel will hear from state experts - including representatives from MDE, DNR, and DOL – as they describe the regulatory process and its impact on county governments.

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

**Gen Z and Mental Health**

*Hosted by Cigna Healthcare*

Generation Z includes people aged 11 to 26 years of age and is expected to make up 30% of the workforce by 2030. Every generation has a number of events that can affect the way they view the world. This generation has experienced times of financial instability, ongoing conflict and violence, with nonstop access to the internet. Cigna has published studies around mental health and this age demographic has consistently shown to have the most concerning results...the highest amounts of loneliness, the least amount of resilience, and the lowest average scores for vitality. When they enter the workforce, they are bringing expectations for diversity and mental health options, which - if not met - can drive them to seek employment elsewhere. Join this session to learn how to meet and exceed these expectations as a new generation emerges in the workforce.

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM | **CHOCOLATE BREAK**

Stop by for a sweet boost before afternoon sessions!

# Schedule

**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC, MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic, Zelenkofske Axelrod*

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM | **AFFILIATE SESSIONS**

**All Ships Rise: The Role of County Leaders and Employees in DEI Practices**

*Hosted by Maryland's County DEI Officers*

The role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Directors has seen exponential growth in the last three years, but recently hit a stumbling block. Many organizations now find themselves with an enthusiasm for change that has not always translated into a willingness for action. As DEI leaders have faced opportunity, they have been met with resistance from peers and leaders alike, many struggling with their role in the process. Due to the very personal and sensitive nature of ideas around injustice and inequity, implementing best-practices into performance has proven to be a challenge across the state. Learn from leaders in this rapidly growing and evolving field about effective strategies for meeting a workforce where they are and bringing them along.

**2024 Elections and Beyond...**

*Hosted by MACo's Administrators Affiliate*

Counties administer and fund elections at the local level, overseeing polling places and coordinating poll workers every two years. But with modern trends in voter preference, new technology, difficulties recruiting and retaining election judges, threats and intimidation from hostile actors, new and evolving cyber threats, and defending against a constant stream of disinformation, the 2024 election cycle is top of mind for county leaders and state and local election officials alike. In this session, an expert panel will look ahead to the 2024 election and beyond, including strategies and potential policy changes to ensure fair, open, safe, and transparent elections.

**Engineering for the Environment: Collaborating with the Nonprofit Sector**

*Hosted by MACo's Engineers Affiliate*

Maryland has a robust nonprofit ecosystem, with several major local and statewide organizations focused on preserving the state's natural resources. These nonprofits can provide counties with resources to further infrastructure development. By leveraging the benefits of outside stakeholders, such as technical capabilities, workforce capacities, specializations, funding partnerships, etc., counties can reduce barriers and further local objectives. This panel will highlight nonprofit partners and examine the benefits of collaborating on certain projects.

**Maximizing Your Cybersecurity Cash**

*Hosted by MACo's Information Technology Directors Affiliate*

Budgets are tight, but the ever-growing cyber threat landscape jeopardizes sensitive information, public safety, and the delivery of essential services. Now more than ever, counties must bolster cybersecurity and prioritize cyber resilience through collaborative efforts to identify, protect against, detect, and respond to malicious cyber threats. In this session, an expert panel will discuss the current threat landscape, offer guidance on priority investments, explain how counties can leverage economies of scale to reduce costs, and share best practices for maximizing the return on state and federal cybersecurity funding opportunities.

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM | **MILLER CONSULTING RECEPTION**

*Sponsored by Miller Partnership Consultants*

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow attendees, thanks to our generous sponsor!

4:15 PM - 5:15 PM | **LGBTQIA+ INTEREST GROUP MEETING**

Attend this meeting to discuss LGBTQIA topics and discuss formalizing this group as part of MACo's Diversity Caucus.

4:30 PM - 5:30 PM | **AFFILIATE MEETING (private)**

**Administrators' Meeting**

Private - only County and Council Administrative Officers (and their Deputies/Assistants) may attend.

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM | **DIVERSITY CAUCUS RECEPTION**

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM | **INAUGURAL BANQUET RECEPTION**

*Co-Sponsors: ANGARAI, ezVOLTz, International Software Systems, Inc., LGIT Health*

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM | **INAUGURAL BANQUET (ticket required)**

*Co-Sponsors: Comcast, Kaiser Permanente, Motorola Wine Service, Skyline Technologies, Tyler Maryland*

Celebrate the installation of MACo's 2024 Board of Directors. Connect with old friends, meet new ones, and hear from a special guest speaker about the legislative outlook for the year ahead!

8:30 PM - 9:30 PM | **PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION**

*Co-Sponsors: Cigna, Keenan Pharmacy Services, Northeast Maglev*

Join MACo's newly installed President and Board for a celebratory reception.

9:30 PM - 11:30 PM | **KARAOKE RECEPTION**

*Sponsored by Zektick + Company*

Join us for a fun evening as our attendees showcase their musical talents!

# Schedule

**Friday, December 8, 2023**

7:30 AM - 10:30 AM | **REGISTRATION CENTER**

7:30 AM - 10:30 AM | **SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC "LIFE IS ON" ATTENDEE LOUNGE**

*Sponsored by Schneider Electric*

This is your space to take a break, respond to email, or have a quick meeting!

7:30 AM - 9:30 AM | **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

*Sponsored by Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company*

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM | **ACADEMY FOR EXCELLENCE**

**Ethics**

Officials should be knowledgeable of their public ethics ordinance, as generally required by state law. Many officials fill out the necessary forms and assume that they have complied with the law. But are their day-to-day actions living up to the intent of the law? There is often a fine line between legal and ethical behavior, and this class illustrates the differences through real-life scenarios and small group discussions.

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM | **GENERAL SESSION**

**Education Reform: The Blueprint for the Blueprint**

Maryland's landmark education reform law known as "The Blueprint" envisioned historical changes and investments in the state's public schools. Now into implementation, the plan is still evolving and reality is setting in – sometimes leaving counties and school systems seeking a blueprint to the "The Blueprint." Where is Maryland in reaching goals for teacher advancement, improved special education delivery, early childhood education, and the full range of goals in the Blueprint? And what are the means to still bring about these outcomes with challenging budgets at both the State and local levels? Speakers in this panel will tackle these questions and more.

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM | **SOLUTIONS SHOWCASE**

**Help Families in Your Community Get Health Coverage and Access Savings**

*Hosted by Maryland Health Connection*

A community with health coverage is healthier and more protected from the unexpected. Did you know that Maryland has free and low-cost health options available for residents? This session will offer valuable information on how your community can access quality, affordable health coverage through the State's official health insurance marketplace.

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC, MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic, Zelenkofske Axelrod*

9:45 AM - 11:00 AM | **GENERAL SESSION**

**2024 General Assembly Forecast**

*Sponsored by DMI*

What's in store for the 2024 legislative session? From fiscal outlooks to pending policy changes, this is your sneak-peak at what's next in Annapolis. Attendees will get key insight into need-to-know issues and more from legislative leadership and the Administration.

11:00 AM - 11:15 AM | **NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

*Sponsored by Davenport & Company, LLC, MD-DE-DC Beverage Association, OpenGov, Smartmatic, Zelenkofske Axelrod*

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | **GENERAL SESSION**

**Closing Session: Closing the Gap: Filling Vacancies, Fostering Workplace Cohesion**

*Hosted by MACo's Human Resources Directors Affiliate*

The fast-changing workforce dynamic feels even more tumultuous post-pandemic, with potential employees evaluating workplace options closely. Maryland's public sector continues to struggle to recruit and retain employees – with an old formula of security and benefits sometimes proving to be insufficient to maintain staffing levels. This session will review best practices and innovative solutions for employee benefits and retention strategies... among the biggest leadership and management challenges facing each and every jurisdiction.

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM | **SPECIAL SESSION**

**OPEB Investment Trust Meeting**

Multiple counties and local entities have banded together to jointly invest today's assets toward tomorrow's retiree health care costs. During this open session, MACo's OPEB Investment Trust will conduct its quarterly business—and you are welcome to join and hear from the investment managers, auditors, and actuaries who make this a great option for your county (or library, or community college) to "plug and play" and get your assets to work!

12:15 PM - 12:45 PM | **WRAP-UP BOXED LUNCHES**

*Sponsored by American Fidelity*

Grab a boxed lunch to enjoy on your way home or sit and talk with friends about what you've learned before you hit the road!



# HOTEL RESERVATIONS

*The Hyatt and the Holiday Inn Cambridge  
are completely sold out.*

## **WANT TO BE ADDED TO THE WAITLIST?**

*MACo is holding a waitlist for both hotels.*

*Email [agrosskrueger@mdcounties.org](mailto:agrosskrueger@mdcounties.org) and include: guest name, check-in and check-out dates, guest title and organization, email address.*

*Please make back-up accommodations, as the waitlist is already very long and we are unlikely to get everyone into the Hyatt.*

## **FUTURE CONFERENCES**

Summer Conference: August 14-17, 2024  
Roland Powell Convention Center, Ocean City, MD

Winter Conference: December 11-13, 2024  
Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Hotel, Cambridge, MD

# Don't Miss MACo's Exhibit Show!

Wednesday, December 6, 2023..... 11:00 am—6:30 pm

Thursday, December 7, 2023..... 7:30 am—3:00 pm

*Approximately 70 vendors will be present to showcase their cost-saving products and services.*

Interested in exhibiting? More info here: [www.mdcountries.org/WCD23ExhibitorBrochure](http://www.mdcountries.org/WCD23ExhibitorBrochure)

## **Exhibitors from MACo's Previous Winter Conference:**

- Academy for Excellence in Local Governance
- Accela
- Accenture
- Aetna
- American Fidelity
- ANGARAI
- AT&T
- Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC
- Bolton
- CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield
- Carrington & Associates, LLC
- Chaberton Energy
- Check Point Software Technologies, Inc.
- Cigna
- Comcast
- Convey911
- CVS Caremark
- Dynatrace
- EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc., PBC
- ezVOLTz
- Fortinet, Inc.
- Healthworks LLC
- Infoblox
- Kaiser Permanente
- Keenan Pharmacy Service
- LeafFilter Gutter Protection
- LGIT Health
- Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT)
- Maryland Community Action Partnership
- Maryland Correctional Enterprises
- Maryland Department of Transportation
- Maryland Energy Administration
- Maryland Environmental Service
- Maryland League of Conservation Voters
- Maryland Library Association
- Maryland Relay
- Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA)
- MD-DE-DC Beverage Association
- Motorola Solutions, Inc.
- National Vision Administrators, LLC
- Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS)
- Northeast Maglev
- OpenGov
- Pepco & Delmarva Power
- Point & Pay
- Presidio
- PSA Insurance and Financial Services



# MACo Winter Conference—REGISTRATION RATES

December 6-8, 2023 | Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay, Cambridge, MD

[Online Registration](#) | [Hotel Reservations](#) | [More Details](#)

## Attendee Registration Rates:

	Before 11/03/23	Through 11/17/23	After 11/17/23
<b>COUNTY MEMBERS (ELECTED, APPOINTED, OR HIRED COUNTY GOVT ONLY)</b>			
Full Registration <i>(includes all conference sessions, meals, and breaks for 1 person)</i>	\$370	\$395	\$450
Wednesday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$265	\$295	\$350
Thursday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$265	\$295	\$350
Friday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$205	\$230	\$260
Personal Guest Reg. <i>(includes Wed/Thu Banquets, Wed Lunch, Thu Networking Lunch)</i>	\$250	\$260	\$280
<b>OTHER GOVERNMENT (MUNICIPAL, STATE, FEDERAL EMPLOYEES)</b>			
Full Registration <i>(includes all conference sessions, meals, and breaks for 1 person)</i>	\$465	\$490	\$545
Wednesday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$305	\$335	\$390
Thursday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$305	\$335	\$390
Friday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$305	\$335	\$390
Personal Guest Reg. <i>(includes Wed/Thu Banquets, Wed Lunch, Thu Networking Lunch)</i>	\$260	\$270	\$290
<b>COMMERCIAL (PROFIT &amp; NON-PROFIT)</b>			
Full Registration <i>(includes all conference sessions, meals, and breaks for 1 person)</i>	\$555	\$580	\$635
Wednesday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$360	\$390	\$445
Thursday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$360	\$390	\$445
Friday Sessions & Lunch only <i>(order Banquet tickets separately)</i>	\$360	\$390	\$445
Personal Guest Reg. <i>(includes Wed/Thu Banquets, Wed Lunch, Thu Networking Lunch)</i>	\$280	\$290	\$310
<b>MEAL TICKETS</b>			
Wednesday Welcoming Banquet	\$85	\$95	\$100
Thursday Inaugural Banquet	\$95	\$100	\$110

## General Registration Policies

### Full Registration for 1 person includes:

- All conference sessions and exhibit halls
- All conference meals, receptions, and breaks

### Daily Registration for Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday for 1 person includes:

- All conference sessions and exhibit hall for that day
- Conference Breakfasts and breaks for that day
- Lunch for that day
- Banquet tickets may be purchased separately - **but only with a daily registration for the day of that event;**
- Multiple daily registrations must be purchased consecutively. Example: Wednesday/Thursday Sessions Only registrations are allowed, but Wednesday/Friday Sessions Only registrations are NOT allowed.

**Children are not allowed in any of the official conference spaces, due to safety and liability concerns.**

**REGISTER ONLINE**

**Check payment will be accepted, if needed—email [sofiapa@mdcounties.org](mailto:sofiapa@mdcounties.org) to arrange check payment.**

**Please contact Sofia Pablos-Aguirre with any questions regarding registration at 410.269.0043 or email [sofiapa@mdcounties.org](mailto:sofiapa@mdcounties.org).**

**Members of the Maryland General Assembly, Members of the Press, and MACo Corporate Partners can [register online](#) or email [sofiapa@mdcounties.org](mailto:sofiapa@mdcounties.org) to register.**