



## MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES (MACo)

### POLICY ASSOCIATE INFORMATION / APPLICATION PACKET

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- II. Advertisement
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**Application materials, as detailed below, should be submitted to:**

[lvelasco@mdcounties.org](mailto:lvelasco@mdcounties.org)

Your application must include the following attachments:

- Cover letter detailing present salary, desired salary with justification, and your qualifications specific to the job description.
- Resume, including educational background and work experience, emphasizing work experience relevant to the position. Include any professional social media accounts you manage or to which you have contributed.
- References, limited to three, including their contact information. References will not be contacted without prior approval.
- Writing sample showing formal persuasive writing.

Complete applications must be received by 4:30 pm on November 16, 2018. Please note: Interviews will be conducted on an ongoing basis and the position may be filled prior to this deadline. Previous applicants need not apply. Send all materials via email to [lvelasco@mdcounties.org](mailto:lvelasco@mdcounties.org) with "Policy Associate Application – [your name]" in the subject line of the email.

**An email response will be sent to verify the receipt of each application**

## **POLICY ASSOCIATE**

**The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo), an Annapolis-based membership association representing Maryland's counties, announces a professional position opening for a Policy Associate to cover and advocate on legislative and administrative policy issues affecting county governments. Responsibilities also include policy research, social media communication, blog writing, curation of assigned conference session content, and coordination with county professional organizations.**

**Requirements: excellent written and oral communication skills, computer proficiency, and understanding of social media channels (particularly Twitter). Familiarity with Maryland state and local government and the Maryland legislative and policy process strongly preferred. Law or Master's degree in relevant policy area desired. Salary is negotiable with generous benefits provided. Previous applicants need not apply.**

**Interested parties should refer to [www.mdcountries.org](http://www.mdcountries.org) for application process, greater position & benefits detail, and MACo background. Completed applications are due by November 16, 2018.**



## About MACo:

MACo is a non-profit and non-partisan organization serving 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's members determine Association policy and positions on executive and legislative proposals through an elected [Board of Directors](#) and a volunteer Legislative Committee. Through MACo's advocacy, training, education programs, partnership opportunities, and annual conferences, members are provided with endless resources to improve their capacity to serve their residents.

[Fourteen Affiliate Members](#) representing county government professionals work with MACo to enhance their members' effectiveness, and assist the Association in formulating its legislative agenda and in structuring [conference](#) presentations.

[Four Chapter Organizations](#) are available through MACo to provide county elected officials with forums to meet for education and enrichment among peers with common interests.

MACo is the only organization serving the needs of county elected officials and governments across the state. MACo's office is located in downtown Annapolis.

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## Legislative and Intergovernmental Relations

MACo provides a single unified voice for county governments throughout the state. The Association advocates for county positions before the General Assembly, the Governor and executive branch officials, and federal decision-makers.

Each county has representation on the MACo Legislative Committee, the cornerstone of the Association's advocacy efforts. The Committee meets weekly during the General Assembly Session to determine the Association's positions on legislative issues and intergovernmental relations which have an impact on county governments.

During the interim, the Committee plans MACo's legislative initiatives for the upcoming Session. The Committee, in conjunction with MACo staff, research and track all proposed legislation affecting county governments in Maryland.

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## Education and Training

MACo hosts two annual conferences and several other events to offer continuing education and professional development for county elected officials and representatives of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. The goal of the conferences is to provide county decision-makers and other participants with a clearer perspective on the challenges facing counties, and most importantly, to provide strategies for addressing these challenges. Designated sessions at the conferences qualify for credit with the [Academy for Excellence in Local Governance](#).

- [The Winter Conference](#) is a 3-day event and is held in December or January. It draws more than 500 county and state elected and appointed officials, legislators, and commercial representations. Educational session topics focus on reviewing timely issues that will be relevant during the upcoming Maryland General Assembly Session.
- [The Summer Conference](#) is held mid-August in Ocean City and centers around a four-day educational program, a 60-booth Tech Expo, a 250-booth tradeshow, networking with county and state officials, and connecting with businesses who have a stake in county government activities or services. Nearly 3,000 individuals participate in this event.
- [Other events include](#) MACo's Spring Symposium, Administrators Conference, Attorneys Conference, Annapolis Immersion Training, and Board Retreat

## Information and Research

MACo disseminates information through the Association's website ([www.mdcounties.org](http://www.mdcounties.org)), the *Conduit Street* blog (<http://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/>), the *Conduit Street Podcast* (<http://www.mdcounties.org/Podcast>), Twitter (<http://twitter.com/conduitstreet>), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/MDCounties/>), events and meetings, legislative reports and white papers, and publications. Must-read publications include the MACo Directory of County Officials, MACo's Salary Survey and Budget & Tax Rate Survey, and the weekly email, *This Week on Conduit Street*. MACo staff offer technical assistance, research, and support to county members. The Association serves as a clearinghouse for issues pertaining to Maryland county government.



**POSITION TITLE:** Policy Associate

**ORGANIZATION:** Maryland Association of Counties

**POSITION REPORTS TO:** Executive Director

**SUMMARY:**

Participates as an integral team member in the MACo legislative process by conducting legislative advocacy on behalf of MACo within a defined range of policy issues. Researches, analyzes, tracks, and presents on bills affecting county government and advocates MACo's position as directed by the Legislative Committee. Serves as a research-driven analyst for the association on issues relating to county government in Maryland. Regularly prepares articles for MACo's *Conduit Street* blog and engages social media to keep membership informed. Supports conference session development in specific policy issue areas. Collaborates with and supports assigned professional affiliate organizations.

**Duties/Responsibilities**

**PUBLIC POLICY**

- Develop and maintain expertise in assigned specialty areas.
- Develop and maintain rapport with the Affiliates related to assigned specialty areas.
- Develop and maintain rapport with State agencies, members of the General Assembly, and interest groups regarding specialty areas and specific issues as assigned.
- Attend and participate in meetings and conferences regarding specialty areas and specific issues as assigned.
- Advocate MACo's position on bills as directed by MACo's Legislative Committee, developing strategies and leveraging research, relationships, and outreach to attain MACo's desired outcome (passage, failure, or amendment of the bill).

**MACo LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

- Participate and contribute as part of standing "policy team" for range of discussions and activities.
- Conduct legislative histories, analyses, and other appropriate bill research in specialty areas.
- Secure and review all General Assembly bills and bill synopses, as soon as they are available.
- Review hearing schedule, identifying county-relevant events for MACo coverage, promotion to members, or other attention as appropriate.

- Analyze pending legislation affecting counties, focusing on history, purposes, meaning, and impacts; prepare reports for review meetings.
- Assemble pertinent bill information, fiscal impact and research for ongoing synopsis reviews with policy staff.
- Assist with identification of impact bills and communicate information among policy staff.
- Present bill summaries and make recommendations in preliminary meetings as to whether impact bills in specialty areas should be designated as action bills.
- Present bill summaries and make recommendations to the Legislative Committee as to whether MACo should oppose, support, or take no position on bills within specialty areas.
- Track progress of impact and action bills within specialty areas.
- Prepare written and oral testimony for action bills within specialty areas.
- Recommend to Executive Director use of grassroots advocacy efforts for specific bills and issues.
- Lobby individual members of the General Assembly.
- Participate in weekly Impact Bill Follow-Up meeting with policy staff.
- Participate in weekly Action Bill Meetings with MACo staff, county legislative staffers, and the Maryland Municipal League staff on which bills may pass; prepare reports and analyses as necessary; provide supporting documentation as requested.
- Monitor, attend (on behalf of Executive Director and other policy staff) and report on relevant meetings, including General Assembly Committees, Task Forces, and MACo affiliate organizations.
- At conclusion of Session submit to Legislative Director individual bill summaries in specialty areas for inclusion in the annual Legislative Summary.
- Submit to Legislative Director relevant information regarding bills within specialty areas for use in compilation of post Session statistics.

#### **LEGISLATIVE AND COUNTY ISSUES RESEARCH**

- Research and analyze issues relating to pending and anticipated legislation, MACo Initiatives, and general issues affecting county government in Maryland using resources such as federal and state codes, statutes, and regulations, Maryland General Assembly bill files and MACo files, archival or newspaper histories, publications, court cases, and the internet.
- Interpret data obtained from research for the Executive Director and other policy staff.
- Prepare and interpret summaries, surveys, reports, and analyses incorporating information obtained through research for the Executive Director, Board of Directors, and Legislative Committee.
- Establish and maintain resources for responses to frequently requested information, such as local government structure and survey results. Respond to survey and research requests.

## OUTREACH

- Prepare daily articles for *Conduit Street* blog and other MACo communications, highlighting news of interest to county officials.
- Develop material for *Conduit Street* blog and other MACo communications to offer updates and analysis of policy issues, highlight relevant reports and research, and promote MACo efforts and advocacy.
- Engage social media to inform and educate MACo membership, and promote MACo events and activities.

## CONFERENCE / EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATION AND LOGISTICS

- Assist in program development for Summer and Winter Conferences and other events as assigned, including topic identification, speaker selection, and confirmation for selected Affiliates or other speakers as assigned.
- Obtain speaker contact information, including biographies, and session presentation materials.
- Prepare education session summaries for conference publications and marketing materials.
- Provide supporting role as needed for conference preparation.
- Assist with preparation of participant, speaker, and VIP packets.
- Serve as on-site contact and coordinator for specific conference sessions, meetings, and events, as assigned.

## ADMINISTRATIVE

- Draft correspondence and prepare memoranda for the Executive Director and MACo members as assigned.
- Manage electronic and paper files using standard file management techniques to ensure ease of retrieval.
- Purge and reorganize existing files in specialty areas and specific issues as assigned.
- Answer telephones and other office administrative tasks on an as-needed basis.