

10 Ways to enhance your business acumen in Harford County!

Resolve to do these action items in 2024 by making just one a priority for today! Take a few minutes and set a course to strengthen your business plan, expand networking and community-industry engagement, and streamline your efforts to doing business with APG!

1. Know your tax credit opportunities. Enterprise Zones to Opportunity Zones, More Jobs for Marylanders to Cybersecurity, Manufacturing to Veteran Hiring, find out which tax credits in Maryland can benefit you. Visit [Maryland Department of Commerce](#), go to “tax credits,” and enter categories like “defense” or “technology” to learn more.
2. Get to know the Office of Small Business Programs at Aberdeen Proving Ground (OSBP-APG). They provide information and resources to those who want to conduct business with APG and the C5ISR community. Knowledgeable representatives seek to ensure a fair portion of contract awards, and total U.S. business dollars are placed with organizations within specified socioeconomic program areas (SB, SBD, HUBZone, SDVOSB, WOSB). Click [here](#) to visit OSBP-APG, and tab “Company Profiles eKiosk” to register your company on the OSBP-APG eKiosk.
3. Assess the strength of your one-page capabilities statement. Is it clean and concise? Does it strongly convey past performance? You need APEX Accelerator. From navigating NAICS codes to searching databases for contracting opportunities, contact Alex Peacock, Counselor with University of MD’s APEX Accelerator to schedule an appointment: 310-405-6550 or apeakcoc1@umd.edu
4. How’s that business plan looking? Is it time to dust it off and make a go of it, or maybe your existing business plan feels lackluster, and it needs a boost? Contact the Small Business Development Center and schedule an appointment to focus on a solid business framework, better marketing and even funding opportunities! Email [Ryan Del Gallo](#), SBDC counselor or call at 443-373-3377.
5. Mark your calendar and plan to attend APG’s Advanced Public Briefing to Industry (APBI) set for April 23-25, 2024. This three-day event will identify potential contracting opportunities that are aligned with the roadmaps of each respective APG organization,



specifically focusing on FY 2025–26. The APBI slides are anticipated to be posted electronically approximately two weeks prior to the start of the event. The purpose of the APBI is for the Government to brief upcoming opportunities to industry to help it better understand Army capability requirements and shape its internal development efforts. Visit [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) and set up a free Unique Entity ID to register and access slides.

6. Know the impacts of CMMC and cyber compliance on your business opportunities. On Dec 26, 2022, Department of Defense announced the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) 2.0 program will set three levels of cybersecurity compliance for defense industrial base (DIB) contractors, and allow for contractors to perform security self-assessments at some of the lower requirement levels. These three levels incorporate basic safeguarding, general protection, and a higher level of protection against risk from advanced persistent threats.” The Pentagon is seeking public comment on the proposed rule through Feb. 26. Visit [DoD’s Chief Information Office](https://oig.dod.mil/) site to learn more.
7. Explore the Maryland’s Defense Network website. Register for free and search defense companies in Maryland, research existing grants and contracts, gain insights into federal purchasing, and explore new federal contract opportunities. Other features include a manufacturing company directory, an events calendar, and a defense patent database. Create your account today on the [Maryland Defense Network](https://mdn.org/).
8. Make volunteerism a focus for your workplace. It builds morale within your organization and gives back to a grateful community. If interested in having employees participate in volunteer efforts here in Harford County, we can connect you with Community Services, Parks & Recreation, the Office of Disability Services, and other non-profit organizations for a variety of activities and events where your team’s involvement can make a difference! Email [Karen Holt](mailto:karen.holt@harfordchamber.org) or call 410-638-3059 and let us know what you’re interested in supporting.
9. Have an entrepreneurial spirit, a business start-up concept but not sure how to get started? Explore your business idea and take advantage of resources to help grow your spark into a shingle with Venture Access. Venture Access is sponsored through the Harford County Office of Economic Development and powered by the Harford County Chamber of Commerce. Meet like-minded entrepreneurs and gain insightful assistance with grants, loan programs, tax deductions, home based business operation and set a path to grow your start up! Contact Natalie Pixley at 410-838-2020 or natalie@harfordchamber.org.
10. Explore the various professional organizations and find a networking niche that best suits your needs. Did you know there are more than 16 different defense and tech-related professional organizations supported by more than 100 defense contracting companies in Harford County and the Greater APG community? From local chapters of AFCEA and AUSA, to the Industrial Representatives Association, Army Alliance, Inc. and NMTC, these associations support STEM education and scholarship programs, mentoring, veteran supports and fundraisers plus bring a keen perspective on partnering opportunities and teaming efforts while doing business with APG. Browse the [defense organization listing](#) (pages 18-24) and find an opportunity to get involved today!