

# LEAD PENINSULA



CLASS OF 2027

*Application Packet*

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A PROGRAM OF THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA CHAMBER

# About the Program

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LEAD fills the need to Learn, Explore, Absorb, and Disseminate the portrait of the Virginia Peninsula!

LEAD Peninsula is a community and civic immersion program, which offers a comprehensive, behind-the-scenes look at the components that make the Peninsula run efficiently and effectively and prosper economically. LEAD Peninsula also fosters opportunities for increased communication and cooperation among the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

Since 1984, LEAD Peninsula has been introducing its class members to the major facets of the greater Peninsula community through an intensive eleven-month program. The LEAD Peninsula members participate in educational sessions, tours, and candid conversations with community leaders. The goal is to provide intellectual and personal connectivity experiences with the various aspects of our community – business, education, environment, health, history, hospitality, human services, infrastructure (water/sewer), local, state and federal government, military and federal impact, public safety, tourism, transportation, workforce development, etc.

LEAD Peninsula is not technically a leadership development program, but it is a tool in developing future leaders on the Peninsula and for your business/organization. Participation in this influential program is a win-win-win, good for the Peninsula, good for the Chamber as an influential voice of the Peninsula business community, and good for your organization.

An extremely valuable experience, both personally and professionally.

Will Gardner

The program challenged me to think more strategically about collaboration and systems level change, while reinforcing the importance of leading with integrity, empathy, and accountability. LEAD Peninsula sharpened my ability to advocate for my organization and to build partnerships that move our mission forward in meaningful and sustainable ways.

Shauntrice Williams

An incredibly meaningful and impactful experience.

Shelly Averett

LEAD Peninsula is already a respected and outstanding program. Please consider helping us to expand its influence and impact, and to drive continual improvement by nominating and enrolling one of your recognized or emerging leaders.

**For more information on the LEAD Peninsula program, or for questions on the application process, contact Jaime Parrish at [jaime@vpcc.org](mailto:jaime@vpcc.org).**

# Applicant Checklist

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If you received a printed copy of the application, you can contact the Chamber to receive an electronic version. **Before submitting your application packet, make sure you have done the following:**

- Completed the 'Applicant's Personal Information' section (page 4)
- Completed the 'Applicant's Employment Information' section (page 5)
- Read the 'Applicant Agreement' section (page 5)
- Signed and Dated the 'Applicant Agreement' (page 5)
- Completed and Attached the Essay Question (page 6)
- Obtained your sponsor's/employer's permission—They must complete the 'Business/Organization's Agreement' section of the application (page 6)
- Attached a recent (high resolution) headshot and bio
- Attached two (2) letters of recommendation to the application. If you are applying with a sponsoring organization, at least one letter should be from your supervisor or a senior manager in the organization. Reference letters should be signed and should address the following:
  - How the letter writer knows the applicant and the length of their acquaintance
  - An assessment of the applicant's demonstrated leadership qualities
- Completed the application packet in its entirety and saved it electronically

**Submit original application by email to: [jaim@vpcc.org](mailto:jaim@vpcc.org)**

OR mail the entire application package to:

Virginia Peninsula Chamber | 11850 Merchants Walk, Suite 110 | Newport News, VA 23606

**Application Deadline: Friday, April 3, 2026**

## Notes

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1. Applicants will receive written notification of their enrollment status by Friday, May 1, 2026. No advanced invoices or acceptance of payments until everyone is notified of their acceptance.
2. Applications are not held from year to year. Those not accepted for this year's class may apply again next year.
3. The anticipated Program Schedule is listed on page 7 of the application packet.
4. Participant's attendance records will be available upon request throughout the program year.

# Applicant's Personal Information

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Please print clearly.

SALUTATIONS: Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  Other (Including Military Rank)  \_\_\_\_\_

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FIRST NAME

MIDDLE NAME

LAST NAME

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NICKNAME/PREFERRED NAME

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EMAIL ADDRESS

CELL PHONE NUMBER

## WORK ADDRESS

## PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS

(If different from Work Address)

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STREET ADDRESS

STREET ADDRESS

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CITY

STATE

ZIP

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Have you previously applied for admission into the LEAD Peninsula program? No  Yes

## SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION

Personal and/or Business.

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WEBSITE

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LINKEDIN PROFILE

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FACEBOOK PROFILE

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INSTAGRAM PROFILE

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OTHER

**\*Please attach a recent (high resolution) headshot and bio.**

# Applicant's Employment Information

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CURRENT EMPLOYER

EMPLOYED SINCE (MONTH/YEAR)

JOB TITLE

Briefly describe your current responsibilities at work:

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# Applicant Agreement

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Participants are expected to:

1. Be actively and fully involved in all aspects of the LEAD Peninsula program.
2. Interact with classmates, presenters, and chamber staff.
3. The program asks participants to stretch themselves and to value and leverage diverse points of view. This objective works best face to face. As a result, **successful completion of the program stipulates that participants attend the mandatory overnight retreat, and miss no more than two of the monthly sessions, or the equivalent amount of hours.** All missed time must be made-up prior to graduation. Special circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

All participants who fail to meet the above requirements are subject to dismissal from the class – with no refund of any portion of the tuition. A participant's failure to meet these requirements will be reviewed by the Virginia Peninsula Chamber, and a determination will be made. Interested persons are expected to be aware of these requirements prior to submitting an application to be in the LEAD Peninsula program.

**By signing below, the applicant agrees to and understands the terms and conditions stated above.**

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

DATE

# Essay Question

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What is one significant challenge and one significant opportunity facing the Virginia Peninsula? Explain why these are so significant, and give your recommendations for meeting the challenge and taking advantage of the opportunity. *\*Please use another sheet of paper to answer the essay question, and attach to your application packet.*

# Tuition

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A one-time tuition payment commensurate with membership status covers all program costs including (but not limited to) program materials, transportation to and from program day activities (on dates where more than two venues are visited), meals, accommodations for the overnight retreat, and a graduation celebration/commencement ceremony.

**Member Rate:** \$2,795.00 | **Non-Member Rate:** \$3,295.00\*

*\*The Virginia Peninsula Chamber connects business with opportunities, providing long-term value by concentrating our efforts on the present and future business community, making the Peninsula a premier business community. To explore additional benefits of the Chamber and join us in our mission, please click [here](#) to become a member.*

NOTICE: Fifty percent of tuition may be refunded if the applicant withdrawals five business days before the retreat. No refunds will be granted after that date.

# Sponsor/Employer's Agreement

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Please print clearly.

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NAME (PRINT)

TITLE

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EMAIL

PHONE

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BILLING ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

**By signing below, you certify as the applicant's sponsor/employer that this applicant has the full support of their Business/Organization for the time, personal commitment, and financial support required to participate effectively in the LEAD Peninsula program.**

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SPONSOR'S/EMPLOYER'S SIGNATURE

DATE

# Program Schedule

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The LEAD Peninsula Class of 2027 will meet on the following dates. For scheduling purposes, applicants should mark their calendars off for the entirety of each day. Specific times will be released at least one week prior to each session.

**MANDATORY WELCOME RECEPTION** ..... Thursday, August 6, 2026

**MANDATORY OVERNIGHT RETREAT** ..... Thursday, August 13—Friday, August 14, 2026

Designed to foster meaningful connections among participants, this immersive experience gives participants the opportunity to meet their fellow classmates and connect with Chamber staff in a relaxed, welcoming setting. Attendees will receive all program materials for the year, take part in team-building activities, and participate in a DISC debriefing led by Owen Van Syckle – all to ensure everyone starts the year feeling comfortable, connected, and ready for the journey ahead.

**MONTHLY PROGRAM DAYS** ..... x10

Tuesday, September 15, 2026	Tuesday, February 16, 2027
Tuesday, October 20, 2026	Tuesday, March 16, 2027
Tuesday, November 17, 2026	Tuesday, April 20, 2027
Tuesday, December 15, 2026	Tuesday, May 18, 2027
Tuesday, January 19, 2027	Tuesday, June 15, 2027

Each monthly program day will be assigned to one of the following topics: (1) Education and Workforce Development, (2) Energy and Environment, (3) Federal Impact - Military, (4) Government, (5) Health and Human Services, (6) History, Hospitality, and Tourism, (7) Public Safety, (8) State of Poverty Simulation, (9) Technology and Manufacturing, or (10) Transportation.

**COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY** ..... Tuesday, June 22, 2027

Celebrates participants' successful completion of the program with remarks, recognition, and the presentation of certificates.

**OPTIONAL RICHMOND TRIP** ..... To Be Determined

Class participants will have the opportunity to participate in a trip to Richmond, Virginia during the General Assembly. This optional session will take place on a Tuesday, in either late January or early February of 2027.



VIRGINIA  
**PENINSULA**  
**CHAMBER**



**LEAD**  
**Peninsula**

Established 1984

11850 Merchants Walk, Suite 110 | Newport News, VA 23606  
[www.VirginiaPeninsulaChamber.com/LEAD-Peninsula](http://www.VirginiaPeninsulaChamber.com/LEAD-Peninsula)