



NEWS RELEASE | 6/02/25

Peninsula College to Transition from Fort Worden Campus in Port Townsend

PORT TOWNSEND, WA – Peninsula College has announced the difficult decision to close its physical campus at Fort Worden in Port Townsend at the end of the current academic year, as part of a strategic response to a projected \$2.2 million budget deficit for the 2025–26 fiscal year.

Peninsula College, like many community colleges across the state, is navigating a series of financial challenges including an erosion of state funding for higher education, a budgeting error by the Washington Office of Financial Management, and unfunded cost-of-living wage increases for employees.

Even though Peninsula College has made significant progress in recent years—restoring enrollment levels to 2014 levels, launching nine new programs with more in the works, and securing over \$11.2 million in grant funding—it’s necessary to stabilize the budget and protect the College’s long-term future, especially in these turbulent times. In-person Enrollment at the Port Townsend campus has declined significantly, even before COVID—fewer than half the students we once served.

While this decision marks the end of in-person operations at Fort Worden, Peninsula College remains committed to serving East Jefferson County students through enhanced online, hybrid, and mobile education options. The College is actively working to expand its reach through community partnerships to better serve the region’s evolving needs.

"This decision was not made lightly, but it is one I believe will ultimately allow us to serve more students in Jefferson County," said Peninsula College President Suzy Ames. "Our commitment to access, innovation, and community partnership remains strong. In the long run, we are committed to finding a permanent location in Jefferson County that serves the community where and how they need us the most."

Though the Fort Worden location will close, Peninsula College’s services—including academic advising, financial aid support, and wraparound student services—will continue to be available to all students in East Jefferson County through remote and mobile formats.

“There is a lot of buzz in the community about expanding access and services in Port Hadlock and Chimacum,” Ames said. “PC will be exploring ways to have a strong presence there.”



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This transition aligns with the College's broader strategy to enhance access and sustainability across its service district, including new investments in mobile technical programs and expanded digital learning opportunities.

We will continue our regularly scheduled programming for summer quarter which includes limited office hours, advising, student services by appointment, and in person Transitional studies classes.

Students currently enrolled or planning to attend in-person fall quarter classes in Port Townsend are encouraged to contact Anna Forrestal, Director, Port Townsend at AForrestal@pencol.edu, or (360) 417-6317. If you have not advised yet, please schedule an appointment soon to ensure a smooth transition into fall quarter.

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