



Department of
Administrative Services

Office of Data and Efficiency



Powered by Collaboration: Ohio's Path to Enterprise Data Management, Governance, and Innovation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past two years, Ohio has strengthened and matured its data management and analytics program with a balanced and collaborative approach to each of the pillars of people, process, and technology. As a result, the state is better positioned to effectively manage datasets, empower employees to manage data as a strategic asset, and provide business value through informed decision making.

Ohio's data strategy establishes an enterprise approach to managing state data as a strategic asset that is unified, legally based, and grounded in data governance. [Ohio Revised Code § 125.32](#) authorizes the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to establish a statewide data management and analytics program. Complementing ORC 125.32, is [Executive Order 2019-15D](#) issued by Governor Mike DeWine that created the InnovateOhio Platform (IOP), requiring agencies to adopt a unified digital ecosystem.

The [enterprise data governance program](#) is based upon five key principles which include: secure data, responsible enablement, data as a strategic asset, quality ensuring reusability, and interoperability. A federated, cloud-based Enterprise Data Catalog ensures metadata is centrally accessible, facilitating interoperability across state systems.

A solid foundation is necessary, but the real test is creating a statewide culture that cares about data management and supports data governance efforts through collaboration. Through its innovative enterprise strategy, Ohio has turned this goal into a reality.

IDEA

THE OPPORTUNITY

While Ohio has had a mature data analytics program and technology ecosystem, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) [Office of Data and Efficiency](#) recognized opportunities to strengthen data governance, improve data management, and develop lean processes for enabling responsible data sharing between state agencies, boards, and commissions. Collaboration was not quite siloed but was "surface level," not rooted in lean processes and best practices, and lacked core enterprise structures for governance and efficiency. Enterprise data management training and education was primarily focused on privacy and security. Agency projects were detoured as subject matter experts sifted through terabytes of data attempting to unlock business value. Data inventories were not digitized, and institutional knowledge was the norm. The enterprise model for data management was outdated and in need of a refresh.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Decision making is improved when all state employees use data as a strategic asset and collaborate to support sustainable outcomes.

Effective data management includes the development of strategic enterprise practices such as the establishment of an enterprise data governance policy which:

- Defines data roles and responsibilities
- Requires governing bodies for accountable data sharing and use of artificial intelligence
- Promotes accurate and complete data classification and data quality
- Establishes that all agencies utilize an enterprise data catalog
- Ensures statewide data governance training and education

However, effective data management must extend beyond established policies and procedures into well-planned execution. Thus, clarity in data management is put into action through the state's enterprise data catalog and through privacy and security strengthened with classification standards within the data catalog.

Demonstrating the effectiveness and necessity of programs and services is challenging when there is uncertainty about where the data is located, how to access it, and whether the information available is complete, accurate, reliable, and appropriate for sharing.

WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT?

Ohio covered a lot of ground with significant results and success in creating an enterprise-wide, innovative approach to data management and governance. It started with the hiring of the state's first data governance manager, then establishing a statewide data governance policy, rolling out a first of its kind state enterprise data catalog, and the development of the [Ohio Statewide Data Sharing Compact](#).

Ohio now has an answer for everything in data management.

- Need to know what data a state agency manages? Go to the catalog.
- Need more information about the State of Ohio Enterprise Data Catalog? Go to the online resource hub created specifically for the State of Ohio Enterprise Data Catalog.
- Need to know processes for the data catalog? Go to the catalog's Living Playbook.
- Need to develop a framework? Go to the DAMA International Data Management Body of Knowledge (DMBoK) resource and the [statewide Data Governance Policy, IT-19](#).
- Need to get a data sharing agreement done quickly? Start with the [Ohio Statewide Data Sharing Compact](#).
- Need to hire data management professionals? Go to the [Data Position Classification Series](#).
- Need to train your employees in data literacy or upskill your data professionals? Go to the [Data Analytics Learning Center](#).
- Need help with a data analytics project? Use the Deliverable Based Data Analytic Services pool of pre-qualified data and AI vendors to accelerate your business needs.

When it comes to data management, Ohio has it covered.

WHAT MAKES IT UNIVERSAL?

NASCIO's 2026 State CIO Top Ten Priorities include data management and analytics (8th) and AI (1st). Ohio's efforts to advance data management and governance directly align with these priorities. Ohio recognizes that you cannot build reliable AI without rigorous data governance and high-quality data. By replacing nearly siloed practices with an enterprise data catalog and standardized frameworks, Ohio has built a scalable, universal model.



IMPLEMENTATION

The [Office of Data and Efficiency](#) leads the state’s data management and analytics program and related data strategy roadmap. With data governance being a top priority, the State CDO and Data Governance Manager coordinate closely with the State CIO, CISO, CPO, and the Chief AI Strategist, and partner with agency CDOs through the State CDO Council and State Data Governance Committee. Key accomplishments through this collaboration include:

- Developing and aligning core state data management policies, including [IT-19 Data Governance](#), [IT-17 Use of AI in State of Ohio Solutions](#), and [IT-13 Data Classification](#).
- Establishing and executing data governance priorities.
- Advancing data management practices through an enterprise data catalog.
- Increasing the number of state agencies with CDOs from 13 in August 2023 to 29 in January 2026 — now every state cabinet agency has a represented CDO.

As a complement to these achievements, Ohio has also improved its workforce readiness through the establishment of a dedicated data position classification series and the hiring of a Data Professional Development Manager who is responsible for developing the [Data Analytics Learning Center](#) (DALC). The DALC provides a data certification program for state employees in data literacy, analytics, and leadership. It aligns to [DAMA International](#) standards to promote alignment and strengthen best practice in education and collaboration.

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE STATE OF OHIO ENTERPRISE DATA CATALOG

Ohio’s data catalog is a first-of-its-kind state government federated cloud solution that serves as the state’s central metadata repository. It is foundational to enterprise data management and statewide governance, rolling out in agency waves beginning in 2025; currently 15 state agencies have been onboarded.



THE PROCESS AND PEOPLE

Agencies completed a readiness assessment and were assigned to an implementation wave. Wave kickoff meetings provide agencies with baseline foundations emphasizing the importance of data culture and collaboration between data stewards and data custodians.

Early in the catalog implementation, the project team realized the need to put information at the fingertips of project participants. An internal data governance web resource hub was created which provides policy references, the Living Playbook (a comprehensive guide for business and technical users of the State of Ohio Enterprise Data Catalog), Project Status, and other support information and training resources.

Each implementation wave provides agencies with one-on-one technical sessions followed by functional adoption sessions delivered via vendor/state led training. Functional adoption emphasizes building a usable, trusted, enterprise ready catalog through curation. Without functional adoption, the catalog is merely a list of schemas, tables, and columns. This meaningful catalog work continues for many months and becomes a part of the agency software development lifecycle well after the agency graduates from the wave. Weekly alignment meetings address issues, provide feedback, and provide educational topics for continuous engagement and agency buy-in.

ACCOUNTABILITY

To maintain momentum post wave, agencies use the Functional Adoption Plan to document completed work, outline future goals, and prepare for data governance audits conducted by the Internal Audit team from the Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM). Analytics dashboards monitor completeness of metadata as catalogs are curated.

GROWTH AND MATURITY THROUGH COLLABORATION

A dedicated Data Governance and Enterprise Data Catalog Community of Practice was established to provide a forum for agencies to share their data maturity efforts and journey. This monthly forum also focuses on the frameworks, standards, and processes that guide how the state creates, consumes, controls, and derives value from its data.

IMPACT

WHAT DID THE PROJECT MAKE BETTER?

The establishment of the State Data Governance Framework provided unified statewide standards to enable a more responsive and consistent decision-making process about how data is managed, shared, and protected. This in turn has promoted a data culture of collaboration and agency best practices. Furthermore, the enterprise purchase of the data catalog saved the state millions of dollars by taking advantage of economies of scale.

The State Data Governance Council, which brings together the State CDO, CIO, CISO, CPO, Chief AI Strategist, and agency data leaders, collaborates to develop policies and procedures that ensure data used in analytics and AI projects is governed responsibly, ethically, and transparently throughout its lifecycle. This in turn unifies statewide standards enabling faster and more consistent decision-making about how data is managed, shared, and protected. The [Ohio Statewide Data Sharing Compact](#) strengthens trust and collaboration by providing agencies with a streamlined, legally supported framework for secure and consistent data sharing.

These efforts have already produced tangible improvements. Agencies are classifying data using a common framework making enterprise reporting more accurate, improving cross agency program access to shared metadata, increasing focus on data quality, providing a better understanding of state data assets to improve services for Ohioans, and strengthening guardrails for AI projects mitigating risk and improving public trust.

Overall, Ohio's strategy has transformed data practices into an aligned, collaborative, and accountable enterprise model that other government entities can replicate as they modernize and align their own data management ecosystems.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Ohio is building upon its people, process, and technology foundations to implement a unified data management approach to improve alignment and mature Ohio's data environment. Completing and accurately curating the State of Ohio Enterprise Data Catalog remains a priority to fully understand statewide assets, improve programs for Ohioans, and support efforts to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse for better business outcomes. Key next steps include strategic governance of AI agents; renewed focus on enterprise data interoperability and data quality; standardized data classification and labeling; standards for suppression and aggregation; ongoing policy and procedure enhancements; improved agency data onboarding/offboarding; expanded governance training; and standardized data request processes across agencies.

Internal audits by the Office of Budget and Management and statewide data management and analytics maturity assessments inform the prioritization of Ohio's data roadmap, reinforcing a future-focused governance program and enterprise data maturity. Ultimately, citizens benefit from Ohio's sustained commitment to innovative data governance.



“The strength of our strategy lies in alignment. Through collaboration amongst state and agency data, security, and technology leaders, we’ve built a governance model that delivers both innovation and responsible enablement. We are making decisions and delivering on implementing priorities to ensure that data is managed responsibly while providing the insights our state needs to better serve Ohioans.” Raivo Murnieks, State CDO.