

Data as a Strategic Asset

Empowering AI-Powered Government through Govern, Connect, and Deliver.

Who Am I?

Career background, strategic vision, and enterprise responsibilities leading Maryland's state data strategy

Natalie Evans Harris

State Chief Data Officer

Maryland Department of Information
Technology (DoIT)

Leading Maryland's state data strategy,
driving data infrastructure, governance,
analytics, and economic mobility statewide.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



CAREER JOURNEY — How I Got to the CDO Role

20+ Years in Data & Tech Leadership: Proven track record across federal government, social impact ventures, and ethical data strategy.

Federal & Venture Experience: Former Obama White House OSTP Senior Policy Advisor, Biden Dept of Commerce Senior Advisor, and Founding Director of the Black Wealth Data Center.



EXECUTIVE VISION — Vision for Maryland's Data Future

Equitable & Driven Transformation: Harnessing data as core infrastructure to empower agency decisions and advance economic mobility for all Marylanders.

Trust, Security & Responsible AI: Fostering public trust through unified enterprise data architecture, security standards, and responsible AI policies.



CORE RESPONSIBILITIES — Role & Portfolio Ownership

Office of Enterprise Data (OED): Directing operations across Data Sharing, Governance, Analytics, and GIS (MD iMAP).

Key Capabilities & Governance: Spearheading Maryland Data Exchange (MDX), CDO council governance, data maturity frameworks, and DSA/DUA standards.

Why Data Strategy Matters

Enterprise data strategy acts as the primary engine driving your organization's priorities. By treating data as a strategic asset, we enable precise, measurable action across your critical domains:

CURRENT STATE

The Status Quo

- Fragmented agency systems
- Reactive service delivery
- Missed at-risk populations
- Duplicated effort & cost
- Limited AI readiness

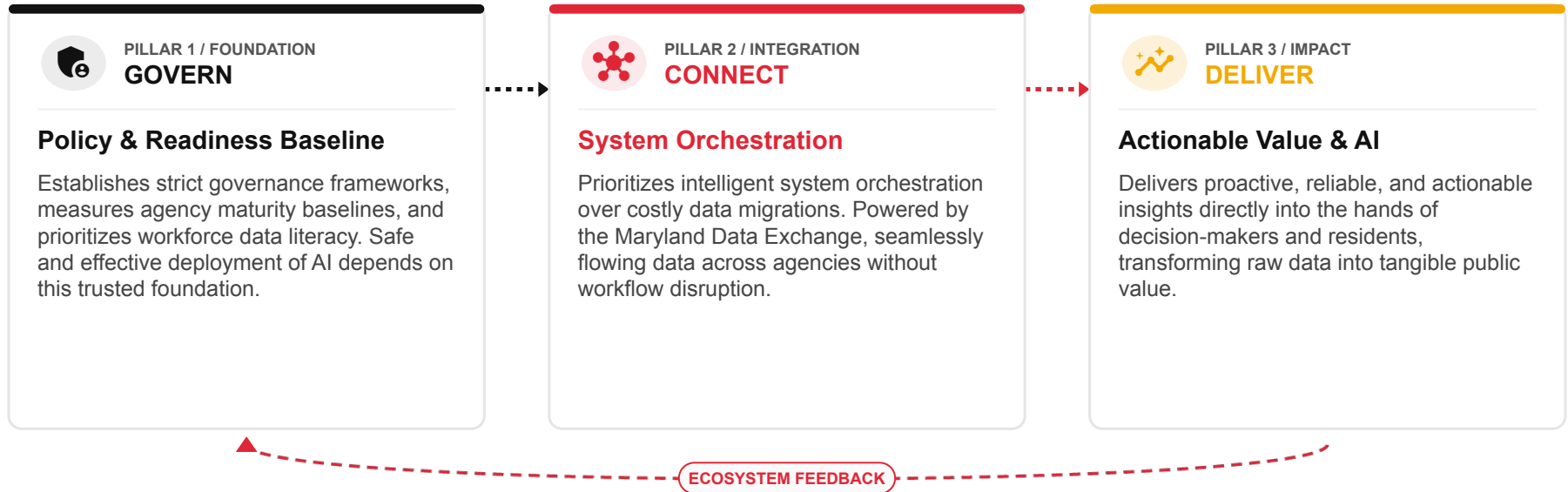
DESIRED FUTURE STATE

With Data Strategy

- Unified data ecosystem
- Proactive interventions
- Predictive targeting
- Consolidated ROI
- AI-ready government

The Core Pillars: GOVERN, CONNECT, DELIVER

Maryland's approach to scaling data capabilities and artificial intelligence relies on **expanding agency capacity**, building **robust connected platforms**, and ensuring **user-centered delivery of digital services** that prioritize the resident experience—a robust, interconnected tripartite model.



Building the Foundation for Trust and Capability

Effective governance is the prerequisite for innovation. Maryland is establishing rigorous standards to ensure data is managed securely and ethically.

01 / CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

Maturity Baselines (DCAM)

We utilize the **Data Management Capability Assessment Model (DCAM)** to establish clear, objective agency baselines, allowing us to track progress and target investments effectively.



02 / STATEWIDE STANDARDS

Standardized Governance & DSAs

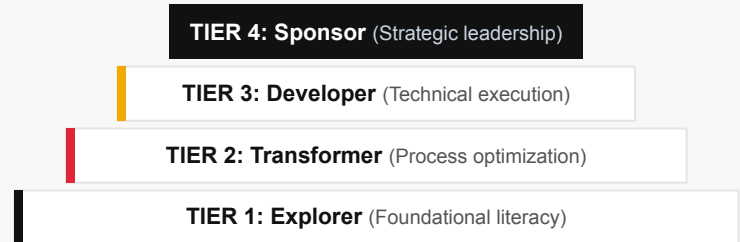
We are deploying statewide governance templates and standardized Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) that explicitly include **AI model guardrails**, stringent privacy protections, and ethical deployment criteria.

03 / TALENT & CAPACITY

Workforce Upskilling: MD Data Academy

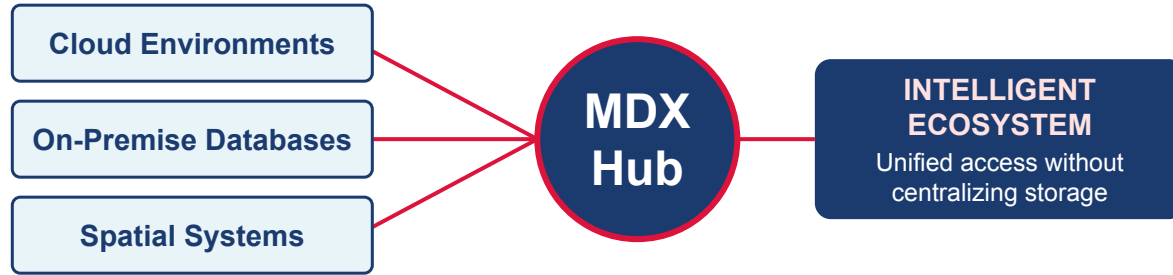
The **Maryland Data Academy** is transforming our state workforce through an **11-skill taxonomy**, ensuring every level of the organization has the necessary data literacy to leverage AI tools responsibly.

TIER UPSKILLING PERSONA PYRAMID

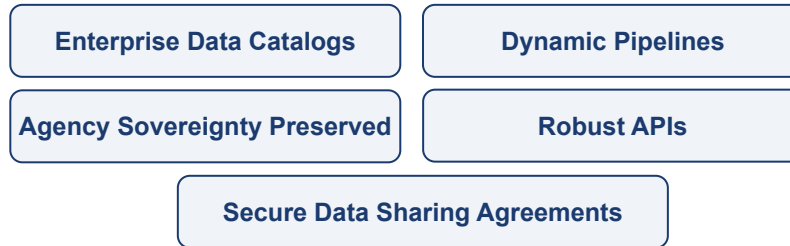


Integrated Data Enables Actionable Intelligence

The Maryland Data Exchange (MDX)



Key Capabilities:



Maryland's connectivity strategy focuses on agile orchestration to unlock data value rapidly.

The Maryland Data Exchange (MDX): MDX serves as our central nervous system, connecting existing cloud environments, on-premises databases, and spatial source systems.

Modern Architecture: We utilize robust APIs, enterprise data catalogs, and dynamic pipelines to seamlessly route information across the state enterprise.

Data Sovereignty: This orchestration model preserves agency data sovereignty, allowing individual departments to maintain control over their systems while participating in the broader state ecosystem.

Collaborative Frameworks: We are establishing multi-agency Data Trust frameworks that facilitate secure, governed, and efficient cross-agency data sharing to solve complex, multi-dimensional policy challenges.

platformMD: Enterprise environment for hosting managing raw data on behalf of agencies.

Turning Data into Results for Marylanders

\$106.6M

in Enterprise Cost Savings

Centralized GIS Services across 48 agencies

Operating cost: \$4.5M

With an operating cost of just \$4.5M, net enterprise savings of \$106.6M were generated across 48 agencies through centralized efficiency.

11,000+

Veteran Families Proactively Served

Connected SNAP + Housing + Labor data

No bureaucratic silos

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVMF) Veteran Data Trust exemplifies our commitment by securely connecting data to serve over 11,000 families.

“The true measure of our data strategy is the tangible return on investment and the direct impact on Maryland residents.”

Scaling Responsible AI Across Maryland

As we look toward 2026 and beyond, Maryland's Govern, Connect, and Deliver framework provides a comprehensive blueprint for scaling AI responsibly across the public sector.



PILLAR 1 / FOUNDATION GOVERN

Responsible Foundation

We have established the necessary safety guardrails and ethical standards, supported by continuous upskilling through the Maryland Data Academy to ensure human-in-the-loop accountability.



PILLAR 2 / INTEGRATION CONNECT

Trustworthy Ecosystem

The Maryland Data Exchange (MDX) creates an intelligent, federated ecosystem. By avoiding centralization bottlenecks, MDX feeds high-quality, trustworthy data directly into enterprise AI tools.



PILLAR 3 / IMPACT DELIVER

Measurable Outcomes

Our ultimate focus remains on measurable public AI outcomes. By automating complex workflows and enabling proactive services, we are transforming government from a reactive entity into a predictive, resident-centric service provider.

Data Strategy Isn't About the Data

It's About People, Progress & Public Trust

Questions? Let's connect.

Natalie Evans Harris, MD State CDO