# Data Management and Governance Practice

## 2026 Annual Report

**February 15, 2026**

Presented to:

Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government

Presented by:

Department of the Secretary of State

Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Tribal Populations

Department of Administrative and Financial Services

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# Introduction

The Data Governance Program was established by PL 2021, Chapter 717 (An Act to Promote Equity in Policy Making by Enhancing the State's Ability to Collect, Analyze, and Apply Data) and further clarified by PL 2023, Chapter 581 (An Act to Amend the State's Data Governance Program).

1 MRSA §547 requires that "the Secretary of State, or the secretary's designee, Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services, or the commissioner's designee and the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Tribal Populations established by Title 5, section 12004-J, subsection 19 shall jointly report on the status of the program and the consultations under subsection 3 to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over state and local government matters annually by February 15." The listed entities collaborate together as the Enterprise Data Council.

Contained in this report are the results of the activities conducted by the Data Management and Governance Practice in 2025.

# Executive Summary

In May 2022, Governor Mills signed Public Law Chapter 717, establishing a data governance program. During the 131st Legislature, the law was amended by PL 2023 c. 581 to promote consistent collection of racial and ethnic demographic data to promote equity through informed data-driven decision making in future state policy and law.

Data Governance refers to policies relating to access and use of data, while Data Management includes the processes, tools, and enabling technology. To reflect this, the term "Data Governance Program" is expanded to the more comprehensive "Data Management and Governance Practice."

At its core, Data Management and Governance Practice (DMGP) is the path for modernizing how we think about, collect, track, share, use and record data. The purpose of the DMGP is to create an environment wherein live data can be safely and securely shared between State agencies and with the public to improve policies, programs and services for the people of Maine through racial impact statements, disparate impact statements, data-driven decision making, financial analysis, and grant applications. DMGP will coordinate data collection, sharing, and usage across all state agencies through a collaborative process of creating state-wide policies on data usage, procedures for collecting and sharing data, and ongoing enforcement of established practices.

This will result in standardized data formats, data categories and technology capabilities across agencies and systems; improved overall data quality; and ensuring data collection practices align with best practice privacy requirements. A long-term goal is to work with agencies to create plans to replace and modernize legacy data systems with those that will easily allow data to be used to improve decision-making for programs, services, and outcomes.

This year's activities broadly supported the goal of State agencies using data to make decisions to improve programs and services, identify gaps, and create racial/disparate impact statements.

Per PL 2023, Chapter 581 (An Act to Amend the State's Data Governance Program):

- DMGP met with Data Stewards from 20 State entities (departments, bureaus, offices, divisions, boards, and commissions) to identify core business processes, assess current data maturity, and consider potential use cases for the adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools.
- A Data Maturity Assessment pilot was conducted with the help of two State agencies to provide them with a big-picture assessment of their current capabilities related to data (governance, security, privacy, quality, and availability). Lessons learned from this pilot will be applied to all Executive Branch agencies through a template and interviews with Data Stewards.
- The Executive Branch Data Governance Policy was created to provide guidance and clarity on enterprise data governance roles and responsibilities across State agencies.
- Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) guidelines were created to assist agencies with sharing data in a manner consistent with best practices. An accompanying template will be shared with agency Data Stewards in 2026.
- DMGP participated in AI Task Force meetings to provide insight into the State's current level of data maturity and readiness for adopting Gen AI tools.
- Convened inaugural external stakeholder meeting with representatives from diverse sectors focused on underserved populations, data privacy, and informed consent.

Additionally, items committed to in last year's report:

- Fully completed the demographic data inventory from 2024, which was a point-in-time assessment of SOM's demographic data collection and usage among 13 categories.

**Key Take-Aways:**

- Among all State entities, there are now 130 Data Stewards who serve as designees for coordinating DMGP work within their respective programs and systems.
- State agencies need consistent formatting and best practices for sharing data. Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) Guidelines were created to support these efforts.
- The Executive Branch Data Governance Policy introduces the Federated Operating Model, which is a de-centralized approach to managing data across the State of Maine. This means that the central governing body led by the CDO sets standards, while individual agencies, through their Data Stewards, are given discretion on how to implement and apply these standards.
- Effective Data Governance is the foundation of adopting and using Gen AI tools with confidence. This is especially true regarding Data Cataloging and Tagging, which can mitigate risk of data loss, improve FOAA response time, automate records management and retention, and identify State data sets that can be used to train large language models.

**On The Horizon:**

The DMGP recognizes that organizational cultural change is crucial to the advancement of data governance initiatives. Through communication, education and training, DMGP will establish a structured approach to implement changes, ultimately fostering a collaborative environment of

working together towards a common goal of enhancing data quality, data privacy, and making data-informed decisions.

Greater access to quality data can empower decision makers to strive for equity and improve outcomes in program and service delivery. A robust Data Management and Governance Practice intersects with: cybersecurity, privacy, systems procurement, business continuity and disaster recovery, records retention, legislation, budgets, and Generative Artificial Intelligence.

As an iterative process, DMGP is committed to:

- Collaborating with State agencies to successfully overcome barriers to data sharing, including legal, systemic, and lack of consistent formatting.
- Reviewing, recommending, and adopting standard formats and definitions for demographic data as identified in 1 MRSA §547.
- Coordinating with MaineIT to create and maintain a systems inventory that includes the total number, purpose, technical life expectancy, format and expectations of all data systems, including identifying the number of disparate systems that perform the same business function or have considerable overlap.
- Conferring with the Bureau of Human Resources to determine feasibility of separate classifications encompassing the roles and responsibilities of agency Data Stewards and Data Officers.
- Engaging with stakeholders across agencies to identify use cases where effective data governance can add significant value to programs, services, business processes, data sharing, or reporting.
- Publishing data governance policies and standards for the Executive Branch.
- Conducting tailored workshops and training sessions to educate agency Data Stewards to advance data governance standards and principles
- Engaging external stakeholders that advocate for underserved populations to provide input surrounding data privacy and informed consent.

# Enterprise Data Council

The Enterprise Data Council was established via the Executive Branch Data Governance Policy to provide guidance on statewide data governance initiatives. Members are required to confer on a quarterly basis; however, all parties involved believe that conferring more frequently best serves the State's interests.

This group consists of members from the following entities:

- Department of the Secretary of State (Secretary of State, Maine State Archives, Information Services, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women)
- Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations
- Department of Administrative and Financial Services (Office of the Commissioner, Office of the State Economist, Chief Data Officer, Chief Information Security Officer)

The Enterprise Data Council has continued to meet throughout the year to collaborate, evaluate, and assess best practices to help guide the Data Management and Governance Practice, ensuring that equity is considered in every aspect.

# Data Management and Governance Practice (DMGP)

The Data Management and Governance Practice (DMGP) is the official designation of the statewide data governance program, as initially established by PL 2021 Chapter 717. It is a collaboration between the Chief Data Officer (CDO) and agency Data Stewards, who are collectively responsible for implementing and executing statewide data initiatives. Since it spans across all Executive Branch agencies, it is referred to as a *practice*, rather than a program.

The goal of the DMGP mirrors that of the Enterprise Data Council (EDC) and the legislation: to create an environment wherein high-quality live data can be safely and securely shared between State agencies and with the public to improve policies, programs and services for the people of Maine. Examples include racial impact statements, disparate impact statements, data-driven decision making, financial analysis, and grant applications.

As the designee of the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, the CDO participates in the EDC. This ensures smooth communication between the two entities.

# Agency Data Stewards

As described above in the "Key Take-Aways" section, DMGP adopted a federated model to data governance, in which each Executive Branch agency designates Data Steward(s) with the responsibility to oversee compliance with DMGP policies and standards and engage in statewide data initiatives. Because State agencies own their data, pursuant to 5 MRS §1982 (9) they have a vested interest in using it more effectively to improve decision making.

This federated model will allow Executive Branch agencies to have consistent statewide policies and standards to improve shareability, quality, and interoperability, while maintaining a degree of autonomy with their own data. Statewide policies and standards set forth by the CDO will serve as defaults for Executive Branch agencies. This empowers agencies to create and maintain data policies and standards that are more detailed than the statewide ones while adhering to the minimum requirements set forth in CDO policies and standards. This is similar to how the Teleworking policy is coordinated within the Executive Branch: The Bureau of Human Resources has a baseline policy, and agencies may be more detailed. This approach promotes collaboration and discussion. Across all State entities, 130 individuals have been identified as agency Data Stewards to advance data governance. The Executive Branch Data Governance Policy clarifies roles and responsibilities to help them be effective participants in statewide data initiatives. This is included in the Chief Data Officer's Road Map for the DMGP, which will be explained in further detail in the section entitled, "Data Management and Governance Road Map."

# Data Management and Governance Practice Year 3

## DMGP Accomplishments

In 2025, DMGP engaged with 20 entities across the State of Maine. Consistent with the DMGP Road Map, this entailed meeting with agencies to understand their existing level of data maturity, policies, and procedures. Some agencies have already opted to designate a Data Officer to coordinate the activities of individual bureau/office/division Data Stewards.

As part of its ongoing mission to work with agency Data Stewards, the DMGP will coordinate with the EDC to provide training and workshops to improve data literacy. This will promote understanding and consistency among State agencies. DMGP plans to meet with all State entities on a quarterly basis.

## Executive Branch Data Governance Policy

The Executive Branch Data Governance Policy was created to provide State agencies with a framework for successful data governance and has been included in the Appendix of this report. It applies to all Executive Branch entities and serves as a default. The policy establishes the decision-making structure for enterprise data governance activities through the EDC with input from agency Data Stewards, external stakeholder groups, and legal expertise (as required). It also takes into account other statewide initiatives, such as the AI Task Force's report that was published in October.

To support agencies' efforts at establishing or refining their existing data governance practices, the policy also clarifies roles and responsibilities for Data Stewards. Additional designations, such as Data Officer and Data Custodian, are introduced to help agencies deal with greater complexity and scale or the need for more granular detail and expertise within specific systems, respectively. As

the State of Maine improves data maturity across agencies, it may be beneficial to create dedicated positions to lead this work.

Beginning in 2026, agency Data Stewards will be encouraged to create policies that meet their unique business and programmatic needs by expanding upon the Executive Branch Data Governance Policy. They are meant to complement one another.

## Stakeholder Outreach and Feedback

DMGP convened its inaugural external stakeholder meeting in December. Groups were invited from several sectors, including but not limited to: health care, higher education, housing, human rights, faith-based communities, non-profit networks, tribal entities, and veterans. Invitees were selected for their commitment to advocating for underserved populations, data privacy, and informed consent. Going forward, DMGP will meet with this group on a biquarterly basis to gather feedback.

## Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) Guidelines

While meeting with agency Data Stewards, the need for consistent data sharing agreement formatting emerged. One such example is the Cross-Departmental Data Governance Group that was established to facilitate the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS), and consists of Data Stewards from the following entities:

- Department of Corrections
- Department of Education
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Labor
- Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF)
- University of Maine System

The DMGP took the opportunity to create a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) Guidelines document and a template to allow agencies to safely and securely share data. This was not a goal originally identified in the 2025 annual report to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government; however, we feel that it will continue to provide value for State agencies.

An additional goal of the DSA Guidelines was to create a frictionless experience for agencies that do not regularly enter into data sharing agreements. Following these best practices will help agencies fulfill legislative requirements, such as reporting. With assistance from an intern from the University of Maine, an intensive data sharing whitepaper was developed to serve as the basis for the best practices recommended in the guidelines. The DSA Guidelines and whitepaper were both reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General upon recommendation from the EDC. The guidelines do not preclude agencies from creating or using their own data sharing agreements but provide a helpful checklist of critical elements that will make such documents more robust while reducing risk and liability.

The accompanying template is still being developed and will be shared with agency Data Stewards in 2026 through the DMGP SharePoint site. In the future, detailed data standards will provide technical requirements. These will be combined with documents like the DSA Guidelines to create a data governance framework that fleshes out the broad Executive Data Governance Policy.

## Data Maturity Assessment Pilot

Data Maturity refers to how effectively an organization can use data to improve decision making and outcomes. An organization is considered to be mature when the following features are present:

1. Governance – Data policies, procedures, and processes
2. Security & Privacy – Role-based access controls and regulatory compliance
3. Quality – Continuous improvement by tracking and measuring key performance indicators
4. Availability – Identifying and eliminating siloes, sharing data when possible

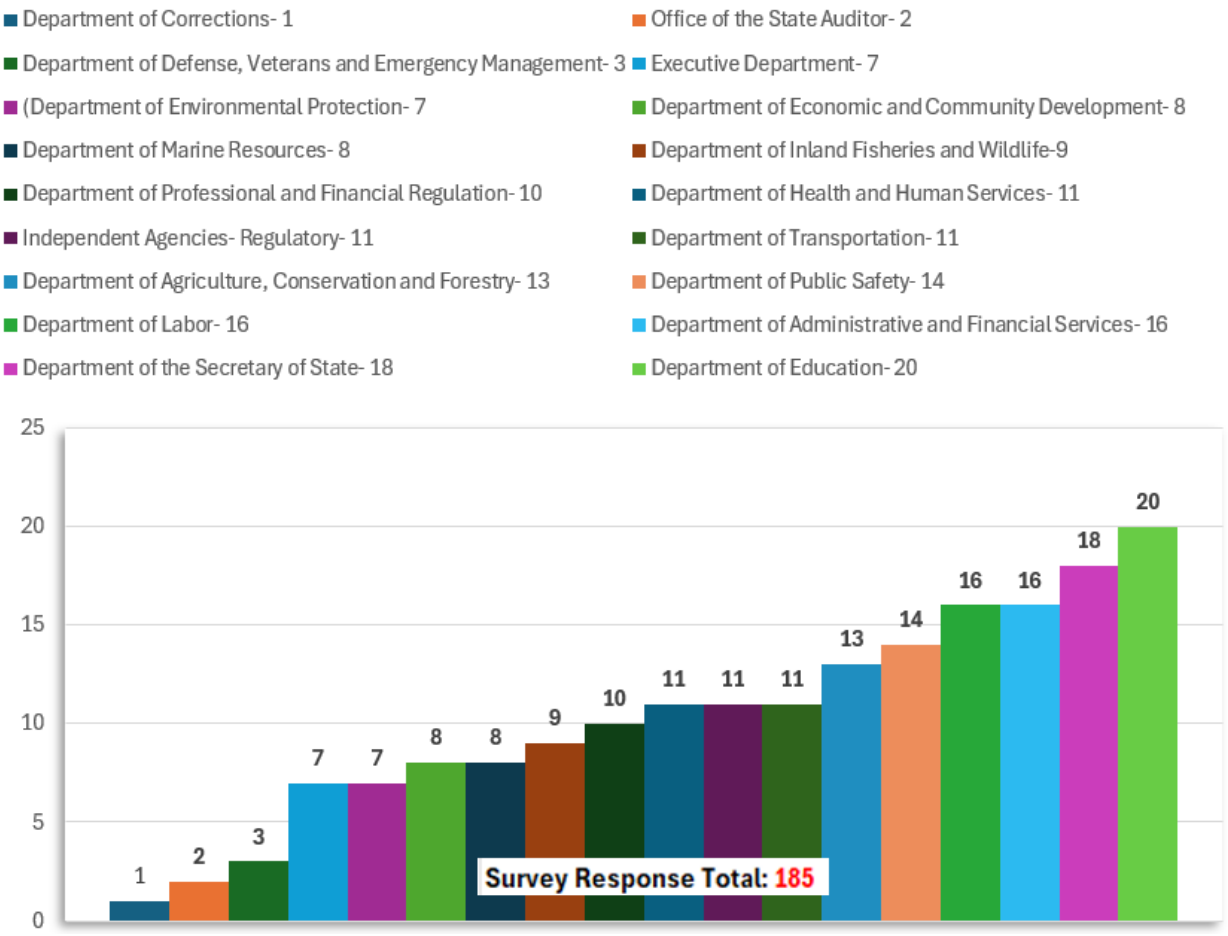
With funding obtained through MaineIT, DMGP engaged two State entities to participate in an intensive 8-week data maturity assessment pilot between May and June. Similar to the Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) Guidelines, the pilot was not a planned activity listed in last year's report. DMGP used the opportunity to lay the groundwork for Phase 2 of the Road Map (Metadata Management).

The participating agencies were the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (DHHS) and Office of Cannabis Policy (DAFS). Both agencies were asked to map out critical business processes and reports to establish a high-level data lineage. One of the outcomes of the pilot was a basic data cataloging template (MS Excel). In 2026, Data Stewards will be asked to use this template to begin data cataloging efforts.

While this tool-agnostic approach is a good start, DMGP eventually will need to identify an enterprise data cataloging tool to reduce costs and simplify maintenance for agencies. Data cataloging and tagging are critical for the successful adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools, as they can address privacy concerns, automate records management and retention, and enhance MaineIT's cybersecurity posture.

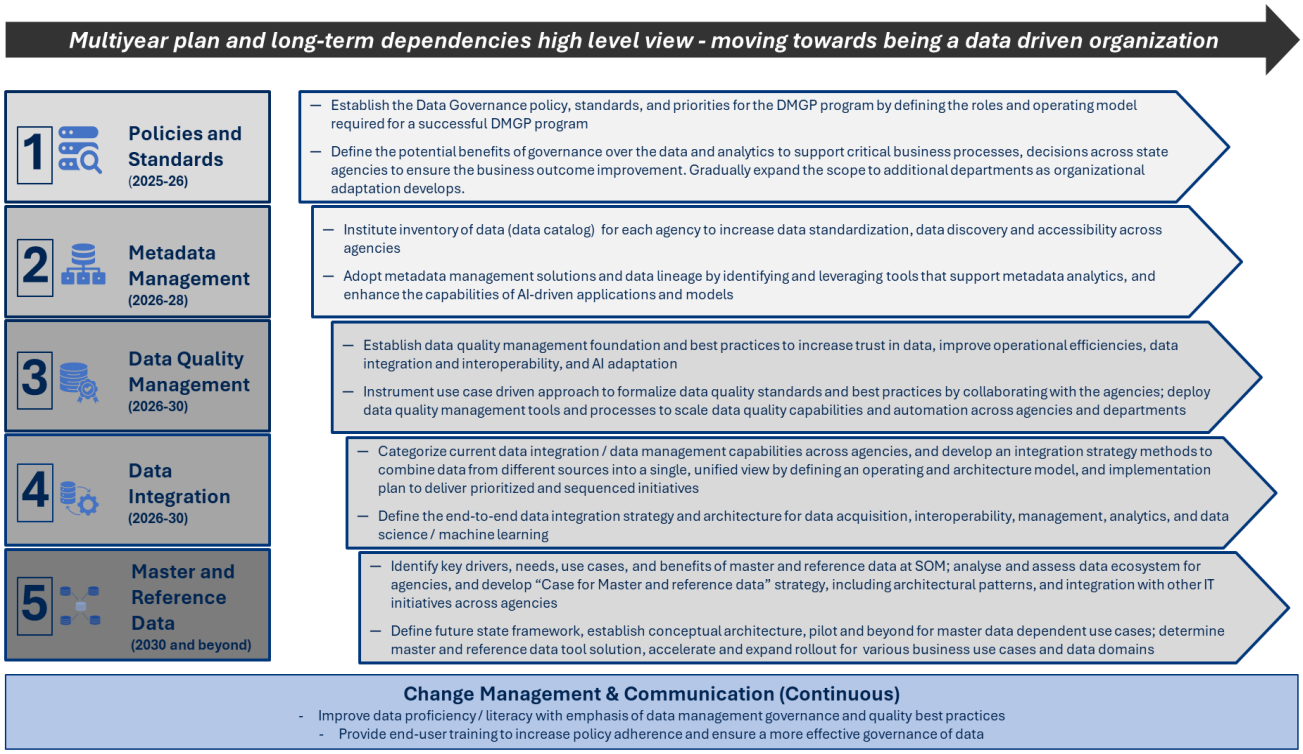
## Demographic Data Inventory

In 2024, Commissioners and executive leaders were asked to identify agency Data Stewards to complete a demographic data inventory of 13 categories across all data systems. The response rate from last year's Demographic Data Inventory survey was 76% among all State entities, with over 286 systems accounted for. To ensure an accurate point-in-time count of the State of Maine's demographic data collection and use, DMGP partnered with the Project Management Office to obtain responses for all remaining entities. The chart below shows the number of responses received by entity. Agencies with multiple bureaus, offices, and divisions are more likely to have a larger number of data systems that collect and use demographic data.



# Data Management and Governance Road Map

DMGP is a marathon, not a sprint. To incrementally move toward the goal of creating an environment wherein accurate, live, like-formatted data can be safely and securely shared between State agencies and with the public to improve decision making, DMGP has created a road map that outlines broad strategic initiatives to be implemented in the next five to ten years.




Developing and maturing data governance requires integration of various transformational business and technology initiatives through collaboration with agencies across the State of Maine. There are technical challenges that must be identified and overcome, as well as a cultural shift in perspective of how State government thinks about, collects, tracks, shares, uses and records its data.

Progress on data governance is already happening. Efforts to advance this work will require a continued inventory of what data exists, how that data is collected, strategies to facilitate better data sharing, and implementing data quality management and data integration practices. Ongoing education and training of and with agency Data Stewards is also a key component.

DMGP efforts will focus on creating policies and standards based on best practices about data collection and storage, with the goal of increasing consistency of data.

DMGP continues to undertake significant work to ensure the State of Maine's emerging data governance practice considers equity at every stage of data collection, storage, and usage, in accordance with the statutory mandate. Establishing a Community of Practice to incorporate stakeholder feedback, as referenced in statute, will allow DMGP and agency Data Stewards to

provide quality data that the public can trust to identify potential disparate impacts in programs and services.

Phases 1 and 2 of the Road Map must be completed in order. Progress can be made concurrently with other phases. Phase 5 (Master and Reference Data Management) will be a continuous process, requiring strong organizational change management and participation from agency Data Stewards.

## 1. Policies and Standards (2025 – 2026)

A data governance policy encompasses a clear decision structure, including components such as an enterprise data council, working groups, data officers, and data stewards. It outlines the responsibilities of various roles involved. By establishing this clear decision structure and defining the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, State agencies can adhere to a robust data governance framework, thereby supporting effective data management and optimizing data utilization.

Data governance policies and standards provide a structured approach to managing data across various agencies and play a crucial role in empowering state agencies to improve their data and analytics capabilities. This work can be completed without dedicated funding.

By implementing data governance policies and standards, agencies can ensure that the data they collect and use is accurate, consistent, and reliable. This is essential for making informed decisions and providing high-quality services to the public. Data Governance standards and guidelines also enable agencies to share information more efficiently, leading to better coordination and collaboration in addressing state-wide issues with increased transparency and accountability. Data governance standards help protect sensitive information by implementing robust security measures and privacy controls, which are crucial for safeguarding personal data and maintaining compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Data governance policies empower employees to better understand and utilize data in their daily work, leading to more informed and data-driven decisions.

## 2. Metadata Management (2026 – 2028)

Metadata can be simplified as "data about data." It provides information about other data. Metadata management is the process of handling and organizing metadata to ensure that data is easily accessible and understood by users. It enables the creation of a catalog or inventory of data assets, facilitating easy discovery and retrieval of information. Metadata management also establishes clear definitions to ensure consistency and understanding across the organization. By effectively managing metadata, the State of Maine can improve data discovery, data integration and interoperability, enhance data quality, ensure data compliance, and support better decision-making. Tools will be needed to identify and analyze metadata attributes from 1,200+ unique systems. This work cannot be done by the Chief Data Officer or agency Data Stewards without these tools.

This phase of the road map is critical for the successful adoption of Gen AI tools, as data cataloging and tagging will allow MaineIT and State agencies to identify sensitive data at the metadata and attribute level, well beyond the capability of humans. Such efforts can expedite FOAA requests, clearly identify which State data sets can be used to train large language model AI tools, and potentially automate records management and retention schedules.

## 3. Data Quality Management (2026 - 2030)

Data Quality Management is the process of ensuring that the data is accurate, complete, reliable, and relevant. It involves a set of practices, policies, and technologies aimed at maintaining high data quality throughout the entire data lifecycle, from creation and collection to usage and deletion. Data Quality Management warrants that data meets predefined quality criteria and business rules by verifying its accuracy, completeness, and consistency at the time of entry or transfer. It also helps consolidate data from different sources to provide a unified and consistent view.

By effectively managing data quality, agencies can ensure their data is trustworthy, which is vital for making informed decisions, enhancing operational efficiency, and maintaining regulatory compliance. Similar to Metadata Management, this will require dedicated funding.

## 4. Data Interoperability and Integration (2026 - 2030)

Data interoperability and integration are crucial for enabling seamless data exchange and collaboration across various systems, platforms, and agencies. By implementing robust data interoperability and integration practices, agencies can unlock the full potential of their data, enhance operational efficiency, and achieve better outcomes.

- Data interoperability refers to the capability of different systems and applications to communicate, exchange, and use data meaningfully. This is achieved by adopting common data standards, formats, protocols, and application programming interfaces (APIs), along with other mechanisms that facilitate interaction and data sharing. These practices ensure consistency and compatibility across various systems.
- Data integration involves combining data from multiple sources to provide a unified and comprehensive view. This process includes data consolidation, transformation, mapping, and synchronization.

This phase is where the enabling technology takes center stage. API's will be needed to allow legacy systems to communicate and share data with new systems that adhere to data policies and standards. Data crosswalks will allow data to conform to potentially different Federal and State definitions and standards.

## 5. Master and Reference Data (2030 and Beyond)

Master Data and Reference Data are two important types of data that organizations manage to ensure consistency, accuracy, and reliability of information.

- Master Data represents the critical entities within an organization, which are used across multiple business processes and systems. These entities are often shared and referenced by various departments and applications. Master data is essential for maintaining a single version of the truth, ensuring that all systems and processes refer to the same, accurate data. Examples of master data include Customers (patients, residents, clients), Employees, and Locations.
- Reference Data is a subset of master data that consists of static or slowly changing data used to categorize or classify other data within an organization. It provides context and meaning to transactional and master data. Reference data helps ensure consistency and standardization across different systems and processes by providing a common set of values for categorization and classification. Examples of reference data include Country Codes, State Codes, Budget Codes, and Tax Identification Numbers.

Effective management of master and reference data is crucial for agencies to maintain data accuracy, consistency, and reliability across various systems and processes. It establishes a single source of truth for critical business entities by minimizing data duplication and inconsistencies, streamlining operations, and enhancing data integration. By effectively managing master and reference data, organizations can improve data quality, enhance decision-making, and ensure smooth and efficient operations.

### 6. Organizational Change Management (Continuous)

Organizational Change Management (OCM) is an approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. It involves managing the impact of changes and ensuring smooth and successful implementation to promote buy-in. By clearly defining the vision and objectives of the change initiative and developing a comprehensive change management plan, agencies can effectively manage process or system change, minimize resistance, and achieve successful and lasting transformation through communication and training.

OCM is vital for the successful implementation of data governance initiatives across agencies. By integrating OCM with data governance program, agencies can effectively manage the human aspect of change to ensure the successful and lasting implementation of data governance practices through effective communication and end-user training. This approach enhances policy adherence and promotes more effective data governance by managing data responsibly, which leads to improved data quality, better decision-making, and enhanced operational efficiency.

# Future Considerations

## Enterprise Systems and Tools

Part of the DMGP's strategy as outlined in last year's report is to encourage the adoption of enterprise systems to meet 80% of State agencies' business/program needs, while allowing them to customize the rest. This is known as "Enterprise Scale."

Enterprise systems increase the efficiency of State resources by lowering costs, while enabling apples-to-apples comparisons of data. They also allow agencies with smaller budgets to have access to systems they would not be able to procure on their own, or free up funds for other uses.

One such opportunity would be identifying the number of disparate systems that perform the same business function, such as issuing licenses. Each of these may be managed by a different vendor in a proprietary ecosystem, making it much more difficult and expensive to establish interoperability and enable data sharing. As described in last year's report to this committee, a sunset and on-ramp strategy affords agencies sufficient time to replace existing systems with enterprise systems, when applicable.

The selection and acquisition of an enterprise data cataloging tool would reduce the cost for individual agencies; however, DMGP recognizes that a single product may not be viable for the 1,200+ systems in the MaineIT Application Inventory or those maintained by vendors.

## Head Count

To fully develop the State of Maine's data governance program and assist agencies in utilizing data for improved decision-making, DMGP will consider staffing needs over time.

As agencies build capacity and move further along the DMGP road map, the nature of the work becomes increasingly complex. To effectively support their agencies, Data Stewards will need to possess technical knowledge of business processes, data, systems, and related concepts.

There are currently 130 staff identified as Data Stewards across all State entities. Although some agencies do have dedicated positions to deal with data quality, analytics, and business intelligence, most of these 130 staff will be conducting data governance activities in addition to their core job functions.

While the DMGP will provide workshops and training to improve data literacy, and mature data stewardship, it is incumbent upon State agencies to provide adequate staffing to meet their agency's data governance needs.

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI)

Robust and effective data governance practices are critical for the successful adoption, training, and use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) tools.

DMGP will submit a supplemental budget request for FY 2027-28 to scale up data cataloging and tagging activities related to Phase 2 of the DMGP Road Map (Metadata Management). The request will include estimates for professional services, tools, and licenses. These activities will benefit the State of Maine and its residents in several ways:

1. Identifying which data categories and data sets are off-limits for training large language models (and similar tools)
2. Evaluating and controlling the accuracy and fairness of Gen AI inputs to reduce bias
3. Categorizing data by risk, based on MaineIT's data classification scheme: Restricted, Confidential, Private, or Public. This provides a heat map of our most vulnerable data, and supports the cybersecurity function of data loss prevention
4. Assisting with (and potentially automating) all phases of the data lifecycle management process, from creation to decommission/destruction/archive, based on the attributes of the data in question
5. Enhancing identity and access management (role-based) security protocols
6. Expediting FOAA requests, based on data classifications

### Cost Estimates:

Over time, DMGP will consider future growth and associated costs, including estimates for tools, software solutions, and skilled professionals to assist with conducting data governance activities such as data cataloging and tagging. The estimate will be limited to a small pilot consisting of up to three agencies and one data system, each.

## DMGP Action Steps for 2026

Meeting with agency Data Stewards this year, initial attitudes towards enterprise data governance ranged from cautious optimism to skepticism. Previous attempts at data governance were not sustained and therefore did not yield tangible results. Many expressed concerns about the feasibility of data cataloging tools, professional services, pacing, and increased workload, seeing these as substantial barriers to progress. Others expressed apprehension about a perceived lack of autonomy or ownership of agency data.

Each hour-long conversation covered several topics, such as agency data governance policies and procedures, business process mapping, spend on tools and professional services, access-based controls, quality assurance, and critical business reports. Agency Data Stewards were advised that they would be asked to create or update data governance policies for their programs and systems in the coming year, with support from the DMGP. These open and honest discussions did a lot to diffuse preconceived notions around the purpose of the DMGP and established the Chief Data Officer as an ally.

In 2026, DMGP will build upon these successful engagements with agency Data Stewards to advance data governance in three keys areas: policy, data cataloging, and data literacy. The following are activities the DMGP can complete in 2026 with existing resources:

1. Workshop #3: Executive Branch Data Governance Policy and Introduction to Data Cataloging

- Define and explain the Federated Operating Model
- Explore Data Steward roles and responsibilities
- Introduce MS Excel data cataloging template

2. Collaborate with Agency Data Stewards to Develop Data Governance Policies and Procedures That Support Their Unique Programmatic, Service, and Business Needs.
    - Use Executive Branch Data Governance Policy as a framework to craft or expand agency-specific policies around access controls, data formatting, decision-making structure, aligning with strategic planning, etc.
    - Quarterly meeting cadence will enable multiple formal opportunities for discussion

3. Data Cataloging
    - Begin basic data cataloging efforts with MS Excel template as a tool-agnostic approach
    - At least one quarterly meeting per agency will be dedicated to furthering this work
    - Since each agency's current level of data maturity is different, success will be measured by improvement compared to baseline

4. Data Steward Training Academy
    - Work with MaineIT and the Bureau of Human Resources' Talent Management Division to create and publish four training courses on the LUMEN learning management system
    - Asynchronous learning will help DMGP's small team remain focused on advancing policy and data cataloging activities, while ensuring agency Data Stewards have a shared understanding of core concepts.
    - Courses will be assigned once to agency Data Stewards and will not require refreshers
    - Initial courses will include:
        - Introduction to Data Governance Data Literacy I: Understanding and Using Data (Beginner)
        - Data Literacy II: Data Visualization and Communication (Intermediate)
        - Data Literacy III: Data Stewardship in Practice (Advanced)
    - The Data Steward Training Academy will be expanded each year, eventually covering topics like Data Cataloging and Tagging, Metadata Management, Data Quality, Interoperability and Integration, and Master and Reference Data.

5. DMGP Budget Request

# Enterprise Data Council Action Steps for 2026

- Consult with DMGP to identify training opportunities for agency Data Stewards, provide input on course content and workshops.

- Review and approve statewide data initiatives. Provide feedback to Chief Data Officer to troubleshoot challenges or address procedural concerns.
- Consider impact of Artificial Intelligence Task Force report and external stakeholder feedback on DMGP activities.

# Appendix

## Glossary of Terms

**Data Catalog** - collection and classification of metadata

**Data Governance** - the ability to use demographic, socioeconomic, and spatial data to make better-informed policy decisions for programs and services

**Data Inventory** – types of data an organization currently collects, and what data it needs, but does not currently collect

**Data Literacy** - the ability to read, understand, create and communicate data in context, including an understanding of data sources and constructs, analytical methods and techniques applied, and the ability to describe the use case, application, and resulting value

**Data Management** - the processes, tools, and enabling technology that support Data Governance

**Data Maturity** – level of sophistication of an organization's data management and governance policies, procedures, and practices. In the absence of written policies and procedures, it defaults to what is actually being done

**Data Maturity Assessment** – process by which organizations identify current practices and policies, data systems, data inventory, data catalog, and prohibitions and restrictions around legal or ethical sharing of data

**Data Quality** - The degree to which data is accurate, complete, timely, consistent with all requirements and business rules, and relevant for a given use

**DMBOK** – Data Management International's Data Management Body of Knowledge model. It contains 10 core domains:

- Data Quality
- Data Architecture
- Data Modeling and Design
- Data Storage and Operations
- Data Security
- Data Integration and Interoperability
- Document and Content Management
- Reference and Master Data
- Data Warehousing and Business Intelligence
- Metadata

**Federated Operating Model** - De-centralized approach to managing data across the State of Maine. This means that the central governing body led by the CDO sets standards, while individual agencies, through their Data Stewards, are given discretion on how to implement and apply these standards.

**Gap Analysis** - comparison between the current state of an organization's data management and governance policies and practices and its aspirational state

**Integration** – unification of multiple data systems and technologies into one. Although some integration will occur, this will not be DAFS's primary approach as there are currently over 1,200 disparate data systems, and centralizing all of this data into a single entity would likely create a security concern

**Interoperability** - the ability of disparate data systems to work effectively together and share data. DAFS's vision of the Data Management and Governance Practice is to support interoperability among the State's various data systems, rather than merge them into one (integration)

**Metadata** – "Data about data." This includes the purpose, date of creation, quality, location, author, file size and name. Much of this information can be de-identified to promote legal and ethical sharing of data.

**Master and Reference** – Master and Reference data establish a single source of truth for critical business entities by minimizing data duplication and inconsistencies, streamlining operations, and enhancing data integration. This data is the backbone of all financial systems. When this information is inconsistent across different parts of an organization, essential business functions suffer. Examples of master and reference data include budget units, merchant category codes, payroll information, office locations, and tax identification numbers.

**Prohibitions and Restrictions** - the laws, policies, and other safeguards or barriers that prevent an organization from sharing data

**Structured Data** – Data that has a standardized format (usually a predefined data model) that makes it easier to access for reporting and other purposes.

**Unstructured Data** - Data that is not stored in a structured database format and does not follow a predefined data model. Examples include Microsoft Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoint presentations.