

**NCDIT**  NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

Connecting North Carolina to Tomorrow



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# SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

## At NCDIT, we are focused on building connections.

This includes connecting our state's agencies to the latest technology, connecting North Carolinians to high-speed internet and the devices and skills to use it, connecting data across government entities to solve broad cross-cutting challenges, and connecting a skilled pipeline of workers to opportunities in the IT field.

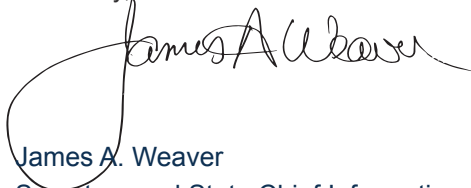
Every aspect of our operations is connected to a service, and it is essential that we work in close collaboration with our customers to deliver solutions that enable government to better meet the needs of the people of our state.

We could not accomplish this without a skilled and dedicated team of employees. That is why it is essential to build a strong culture to retain our current employees and also connect with students early on to grow the next generation of IT leaders.

The pages that follow showcase the incredible work our team accomplished in the 2023-24 fiscal year to leverage technology in innovative ways to better serve North Carolina's people, businesses and communities and guard against potential threats.

I hope you will take the time to read the stories woven throughout this report that highlight specific efforts we are undertaking to connect our state to a brighter future.

Sincerely,



James A. Weaver  
Secretary and State Chief Information Officer



# ABOUT NCDIT

The N.C. General Assembly established the N.C. Department of Information Technology as a cabinet-level agency in 2015 to consolidate and optimize enterprise IT functions within the executive branch. The goal was to better meet the needs of the state's residents, businesses and visitors while also realizing efficiencies and cost savings through economies of scale.

Led by the State Chief Information Officer and staffed by approximately 1,300 employees, NCDIT is the primary IT service provider to state agencies and is responsible for the security of the state's data, systems and network. It is also NCDIT's responsibility to ensure state IT projects are appropriately procured, delivered and managed effectively.

Specific duties of the department, as defined in N.C. General Statute 143B, Article 15, include:

- Ensuring the security of the state's IT systems, assets and data as well as developing standardized systems and processes
- Developing and administering a comprehensive long-range plan to ensure the proper management of the state's IT resources
- Setting technical standards for information technology
- Reviewing and approving IT projects and budgets
- Establishing IT security and privacy standards
- Providing for the procurement of IT resources
- Developing a schedule for the replacement or modification of IT systems

NCDIT is dedicated to transforming the state's shared IT services by adopting modern technology solutions and improving communications and collaboration platforms to meet state agencies' needs while effectively managing risks and security.

# VISION, MISSION & PRIORITIES



## Our Vision

Government that strategically leverages technology for an equitable, prosperous, healthier and educated North Carolina



## Our Mission

Enable trusted, business-driven solutions that meet the needs of North Carolinians



## Our Priorities

- Broadband and connectivity
- Cybersecurity
- Privacy and data protection
- Digital transformation

# ENTERPRISE FUNCTIONS & DIVISIONS

As technology has evolved and its use has increased, the N.C. Department of Information Technology has also evolved to ensure it is well positioned to carry out its mission.

- Architecture & Design
- Broadband & Digital Equity
- Cybersecurity & Risk Management
- Data & Analytics
- Operations & Engineering
- Privacy & Data Protection
- Statewide IT Procurement
- Strategy & Governance

## Architecture & Design

NCDIT ensures that IT solutions – whether built or procured – align with the Statewide IT Strategic Plan. The department proactively implements new solutions based on identified gaps to reduce redundancy of solutions, optimize costs and mitigate risks. NCDIT also works with state agencies to apply existing, new and emerging technologies to transform and optimize business and operating models. This helps agencies plan, design, innovate, facilitate, navigate and operationalize the digital enterprise.

## Broadband & Digital Equity

The Division of Broadband and Digital Equity leads the state’s efforts to expand high-speed internet access and promote digital equity and inclusion by administering a wide range of state and federal programs aimed at closing the state’s digital divide. Together, these efforts are working to ensure that all North Carolinians have access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet, as well as the devices and skills needed to safely navigate today’s digital world.

The division also oversees the First Responder Emerging Technologies program, which helps first responders stay on the leading edge of new technologies, including FirstNet, the nationwide public safety broadband network.

## Cybersecurity & Risk Management

NCDIT provides leadership in the development, delivery and maintenance of a whole-of-state cybersecurity program that safeguards North Carolina's information and supporting infrastructure against unauthorized use, disclosure, modification, damage or loss.

The department is also a member of the N.C. Joint Cybersecurity Task Force. Among the task force's responsibilities are providing incident response, resource support and technical assistance to government agencies and educational entities that have experienced significant cybersecurity incidents.

## Data & Analytics

NCDIT provides the infrastructure to host state projects, services, data and applications. It also manages and coordinates enterprise data integration efforts through the N.C. Government Data Analytics Center. The Data Division (renamed the Enterprise Data Office in November 2024) also includes the N.C. Center for Geographic Information and Analysis, which provides geographic information system services; the N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority, which operates NC HealthConnex (North Carolina's state-designated health information exchange); and the N.C. Longitudinal Data Service, which provides access to cross-sector, linked data for research purposes.

## Operations & Engineering

With a few legislative exceptions, NCDIT provides all IT support for consolidated agencies. The department partners with other state agencies, local governments and educational entities to provide reliable, cost-effective services that meet current and future requirements, service levels and budgets. NCDIT also centralizes partners' services, as necessary, for ease of use, security, optimal cost and efficiencies.

## Privacy & Data Protection

NCDIT leads the state's privacy program, setting privacy standards and working with agencies to ensure data privacy and protection while leveraging data assets to improve North Carolina. The Office of Privacy and Data Protection provides strategic direction, services, policy, guidance and best practices to guide and support state agencies in embedding privacy and transparency into their operations. It also works with stakeholders and business partners to prioritize privacy risk assessment and data protection.

The office also provides customized training to employees and monthly outreach to embedded privacy points of contact across agencies. It provides resources, guidance, assessment support and support for procurement-related functions involving sensitive information and artificial intelligence, particularly generative AI.

## Statewide IT Procurement

NCDIT's Statewide IT Procurement Office approves the purchase of all IT goods and services exceeding \$25,000 for state agencies. These contracts are valued collectively at more than \$1 billion annually. The office works closely with other NCDIT entities that review the procurements to ensure they are adequately funded, meet NCDIT standards and specifications, and comply with applicable state laws.

Statewide IT Procurement also manages all mandatory and convenience statewide contracts. These large, multivendor agreements are used by all state agencies and can also be used by local government entities.

## Strategy & Governance

NCDIT is responsible for working with state agencies to develop and administer a comprehensive strategic plan to ensure the proper management of the state's information technology resources. This plan is used to create and maintain a strategically aligned portfolio of IT services and solutions that meets the state's business needs and effectively leverages state resources to serve residents, businesses and visitors.

The department is also responsible for establishing a consistent process for planning, maintaining and acquiring the state's IT resources as well as ensuring that state programs and projects align with policies, standards and architecture.



## CONSOLIDATED AGENCIES

The N.C. General Assembly created the N.C. Department of Information Technology to manage most of the “enterprise information technology functions” in the executive branch. This allows agency IT divisions to better leverage resources and knowledge among other agencies for better solution outcomes and to ultimately reduce costs.

N.C.G.S. 143B-1325 directs the department to consolidate IT functions of executive agencies under the department. To date, the following consolidations have been completed:

- N.C. Department of Administration
- N.C. Department of Adult Correction
- N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
- N.C. Department of Military & Veterans Affairs
- N.C. Department of Natural & Cultural Resources
- N.C. Department of Public Safety
- N.C. Department of Transportation
- N.C. Office of State Budget & Management
- N.C. Office of State Human Resources

# BOARDS & COUNCILS

**NCDIT provides staff support for several boards and councils. By statute, the State CIO is represented on each of them.**

## Information Technology Strategy Board

The Information Technology Strategy Board plays a critical role in defining and planning North Carolina's enterprise technology projects. It also advises how to prioritize them and identifies areas where funding adjustments might be needed. In addition, the board uses industry best practices to guide the Statewide IT Strategic Plan.

In addition to the State CIO, the 12-member board includes the state budget officer, president of the University of North Carolina System, president of the N.C. Community College System and secretary of administration. The state auditor is a non-voting member.

It also includes six North Carolina residents with backgrounds and familiarity with business system technology, information systems or telecommunications who are appointed by the Governor and leadership of the N.C. General Assembly.

## N.C. 911 Board

The N.C. 911 Board sets a uniform 911 service charge that is collected by all telephone and voice communication providers. Revenue from the charge goes into the 911 Fund, which the board manages and distributes funds from to support 124 public safety answering points across the state.

The 17-member board also plays an integral role in ensuring adequate funding to maintain and expand 911 capabilities across the state. Its efforts include the successful implementation of Next Generation 911 statewide.

The State CIO serves as chair. Eight members represent vendors – including commercial mobile radio service providers, local exchange carriers and a provider of voice over internet protocol technology. The remaining eight members represent professional associations for first responders, including telecommunicators, law enforcement and firefighters, as well as representatives of county and municipality governments.

## N.C. Geographic Information Coordinating Council

The N.C. Geographic Information Coordinating Council develops policies regarding geographic information, geographic information systems and related technologies. It also advises the Governor and the N.C. General Assembly on responsibilities and funding for geographic information management and use.

Volunteers from the public and private sectors also foster cooperation among government agencies, universities and the private sector, creating policy and resolving technical issues related to North Carolina's geographic information and GIS technology.

The council consists of up to 35 members – seven of whom are appointed by the Governor and six by leadership of the N.C. General Assembly. Other members, as defined in statute, include leadership for several executive branch agencies as well as representatives of local government and the GIS community. The State CIO is a non-voting member.

## N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority Advisory Board

The legislatively appointed, 12-member N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority Board consults with the N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority on the advancement and operation of NC HealthConnex, the state's designated health information exchange.

The board is comprised of representatives from the health care community – including health care providers and experts, a patient representative, representatives from hospitals and health centers – and experts in health data analytics and information technology.

The State CIO and the secretary for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services – as well as the directors of the State Health Plan and NCDIT's Government Data Analytics Center – serve as non-voting ex-officio board members.

## N.C. Longitudinal Data Service Governance Board

Established in February 2022, the N.C. Longitudinal Data Service Governance Board supports the work of the N.C. Longitudinal Data Service. The service coordinates access to cross-sector, longitudinal and linked record-level data that is used to address the state's most pressing questions via data-informed decision-making, continuous improvement and performance management processes.

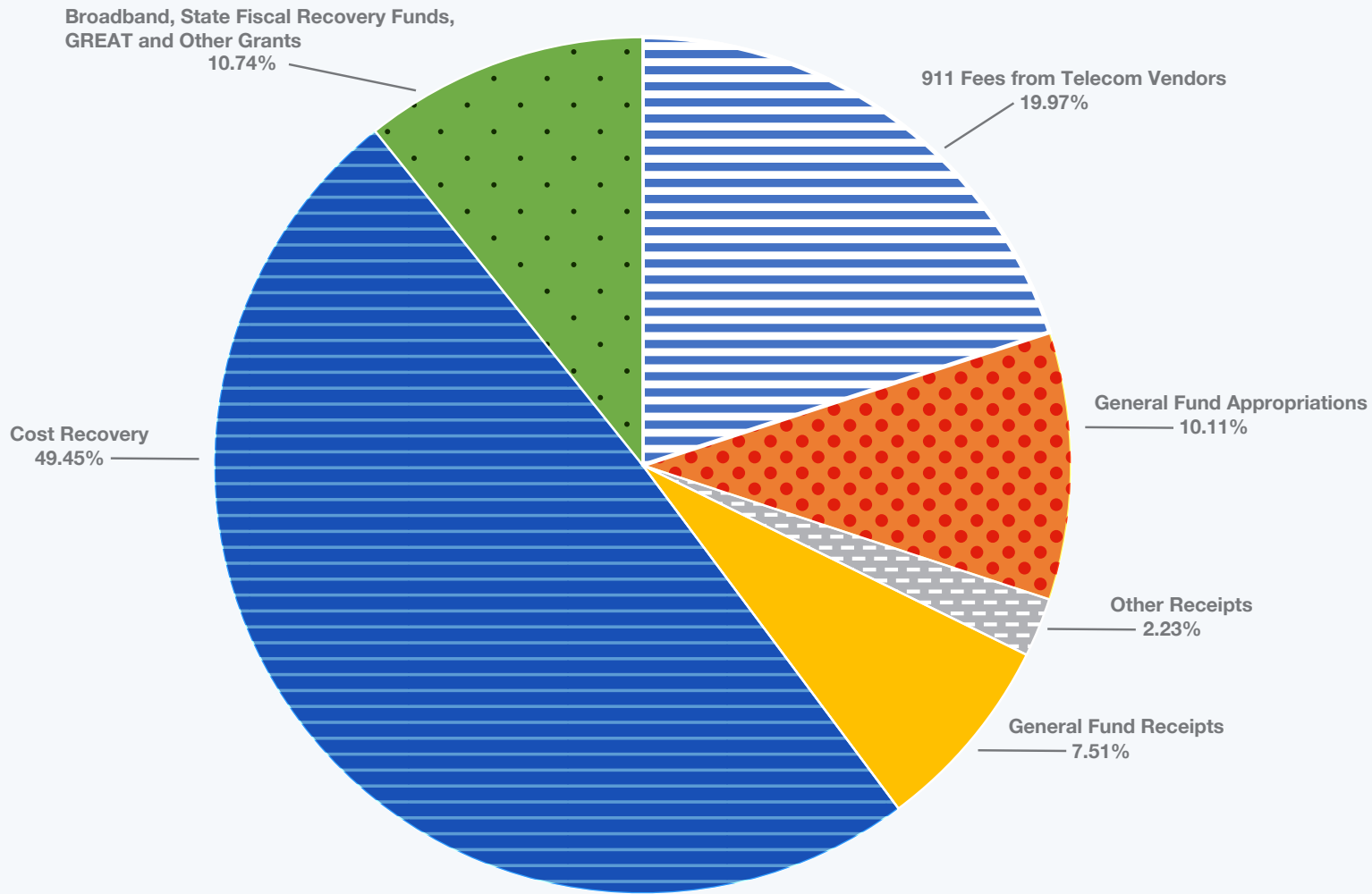
Board members are senior leaders from each entity that contributes data to NCLDS. The State CIO as well as a representative from the Governor's Office serve as non-voting members.

Data contributors include the state departments of Health and Human Services, Public Instruction and Commerce as well as the N.C. Community College System Office, the University of North Carolina System Office and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities.

# 2023-2024 BUDGET

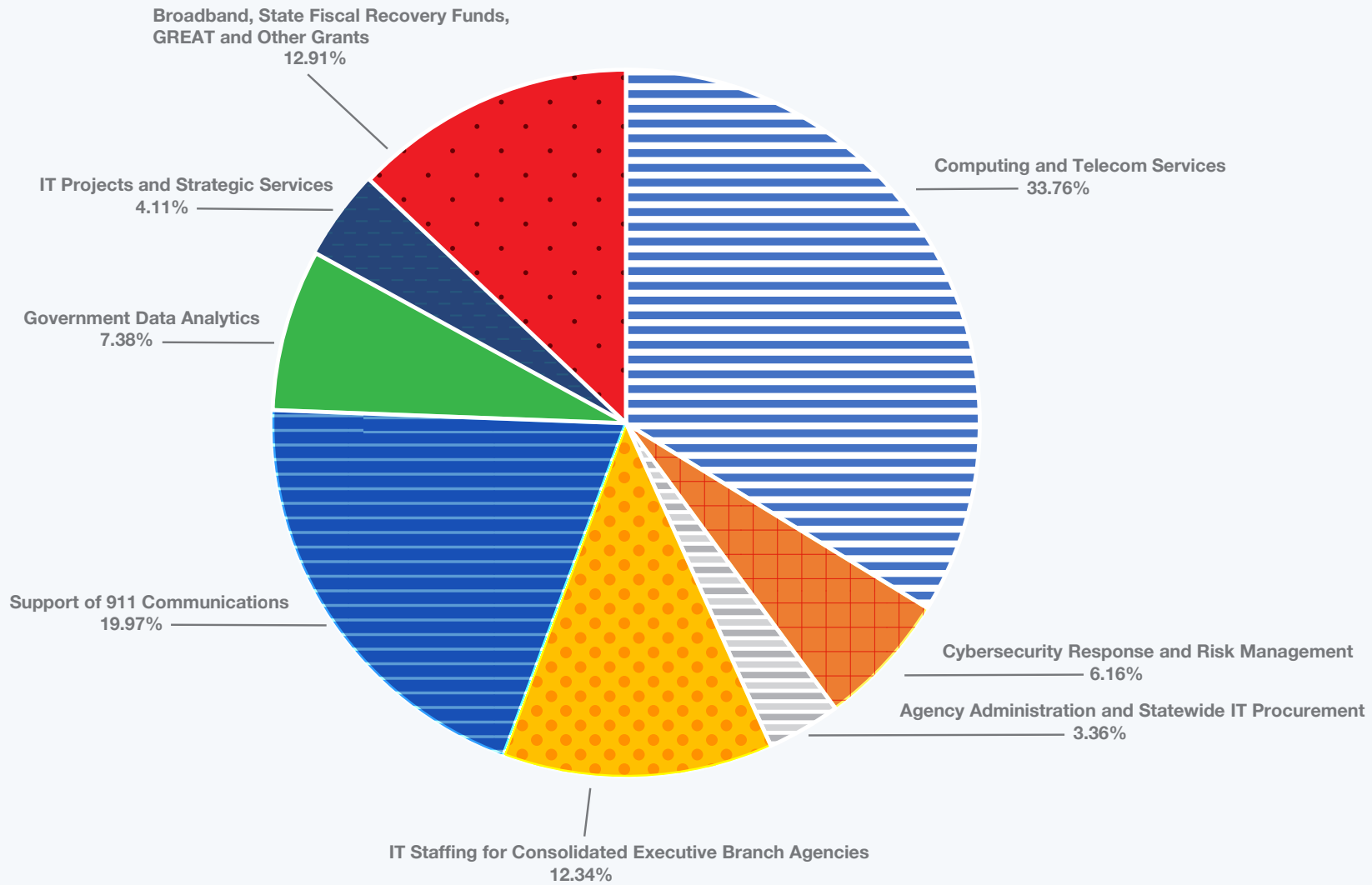
## Revenue by Funding Source

Budgeted Revenue: \$804,565,977



# Budget Expenditures

Budgeted Expenditure: \$804,565,977



# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO NEXT GENERATION 911

In an emergency, people count on access to 911 services regardless of where they are or how they can communicate.

To ensure everyone in North Carolina can quickly reach emergency services, the N.C. 911 Board in 2018 embarked on a comprehensive effort to transition the 124 board-funded public safety answering points (PSAPs) that it funds to Next Generation 911.

Completed in February 2024, the modernized 911 system uses AT&T ESInet™ – a digital emergency services internet protocol-based network – and leverages a statewide geodatabase that aggregates and validates GIS data to accurately pinpoint a caller's location.

In September 2024, the Next Generation 911 system was put to the ultimate test when Hurricane Helene left a path of destruction in western North Carolina, unlike anything ever experienced in the state.

“The statewide ESInet was a literal lifesaver during and after Hurricane Helene,” N.C. 911 Board Executive Director L.V. Pokey Harris said. “Had the old technology and analog network still been in place, the infrastructure would have been destroyed, and we would not have had the capability to route calls to other PSAPs and connect people to critical emergency services.”

ESInet enables the secure routing of digital information – including landline calls,



The state's Network Monitoring and Assistance Center continuously monitors the statewide AT&T ESInet™ to ensure 911 calls are delivered.

cellphone calls and text messages – to the appropriate PSAP based on geographic location.

It also provides high-speed data network connections that allow every PSAP to serve as a backup for others on the system in the event of an overload of emergency calls or a natural disaster, like Hurricane Helene.

“Thanks to the resiliency and redundancy of this network, we had no reports of 911 calls not being delivered,” Harris said.

In the wake of the storm, 19 PSAPs in western North Carolina rerouted 911 calls to 23 partner PSAPs across the state. From Sept. 26 through Sept. 28, 911 telecommunicators across the state answered nearly 90,000 calls – a 55%

increase in call volume over the same timeframe in 2023.

In addition, the state's Network Monitoring and Assistance Center (NMAC) in Raleigh was vital throughout the storm.

The first and only of its kind in the nation, the NMAC continuously monitors the service and performance of the statewide ESInet while coordinating efforts to ensure 911 calls are immediately and automatically rerouted based on predetermined route plans.

“We hope we never experience a storm like Helene ever again,” Harris said. “But if we do, we have confidence in knowing that the N.C. 911 Board's investment in ESInet produced substantial benefits for North Carolina.”

# GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Foster a Connected North Carolina to Improve Opportunities and Outcomes for all North Carolinians

The N.C. Department of Information Technology seeks to strategically leverage technology to support a stronger North Carolina and connect its residents to new opportunities.

The department is continuing efforts to ensure that digital government services are accessible to everyone and can be easily used from anywhere on any device. It is also working with other state and local government agencies to develop innovative solutions that meet the state's evolving information technology needs.

### Expanding Broadband

#### Broadband Equity, Access, & Deployment Planning

North Carolina's five-year action plan for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program was approved by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in August 2023 as part of the required process to access the state's \$1.53 billion federal BEAD funding allocation. It serves as the state's comprehensive plan to address high-speed internet access and digital equity as well as broadband workforce development.

To ensure that the plan is inclusive of the needs of all North Carolina communities and populations, the Division of Broadband and Digital Equity held eight in-person regional listening sessions and one virtual session, as well as 23 smaller listening sessions. The division collected more than 6,500 responses to the state's first digital equity survey of individuals' needs and compiled more than 1,000 digital equity resources to help users get online as part of its Asset Inventory Survey. Highlighting these efforts, Results for America selected North Carolina as one of five leading states for evidence-based decision-making.

In September 2024, NTIA approved the state's initial proposal for the BEAD program, which allows North Carolina to access additional funding and implement the program.



## Broadband Expansion Programs

In February 2024, the Division of Broadband and Digital Equity announced the prequalification of 41 internet service providers to participate in state broadband expansion programs, including the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB), Broadband Pole Replacement and Stop-Gap Solutions programs.

The CAB program awarded nearly \$118 million through July 1, 2024, to connect 46,728 households and businesses in 44 counties to high-speed internet. NCDIT posted counties' CAB scopes of work so providers could submit proposals to expand high-speed internet access to unserved and underserved homes and businesses.

The \$100 million Broadband Pole Replacement program reimburses providers for eligible pole replacement costs to facilitate the deployment of high-speed internet service to households, businesses, agricultural operations and community anchor institutions. The program launched on Feb. 1, 2024, and service providers can submit reimbursement requests for eligible expenses dating to June 1, 2021.

The Stop-Gap Solutions program received federal approval in January 2024 and will provide funding for areas unserved or underserved with broadband following investment from Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) grants and the CAB program.

In March 2024, NCDIT submitted 14,571 additional challenges to the Federal Communications Commission's National Broadband Map on behalf of state residents to help ensure federal maps accurately show North Carolina homes and businesses that do not have access to high-speed internet.

## Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grants

NCDIT awarded \$10 million in June 2024 to deploy high-speed internet infrastructure to 2,254 homes and 70 businesses in six counties through the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) grant program, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.

## FirstTech Funding to Expand Public Safety Broadband Network

In November 2023, NCDIT's First Responder Emerging Technologies (FirstTech) program invited state government entities to apply for up to \$2 million in funding for the expansion of the Public Safety Broadband Network on state campuses. FirstTech is currently working to locate a tower at Samarcand Training Academy, a law enforcement complex in Moore and Montgomery counties that provides training for state law enforcement agencies and



juvenile justice officers and counselors, as well as many other local and federal agencies.

## Promoting Digital Inclusion

### Healthy & Connected Workforce

NCDIT partnered with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Rural Health to support the Healthy and Connected Workforce project, with funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission. This project was completed on Oct. 31, 2023, and gave Appalachian residents access to quality health care, wireless internet, digital health literacy skills training, telehealth equipment and device ownership. The program included 229 patients, 128 of whom saw improved health outcomes.

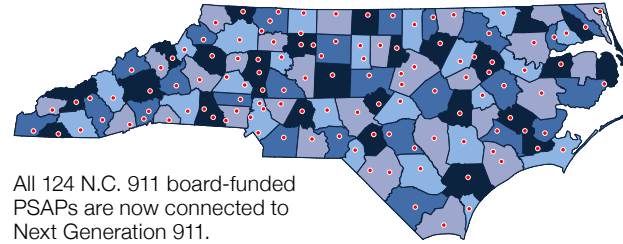
### North Carolina Digital Equity Plan

The North Carolina Digital Equity Plan, accepted by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration in March 2024, provides strategies to address high-speed internet affordability, access to devices and digital literacy for all North Carolinians over the next five years. It incorporates feedback from thousands of individuals and organizations serving communities across the state. With federal acceptance, the state became eligible to apply for more than \$22 million in federal funds to implement the plan and submitted the funding application in May 2024.

## Digital Champion Grant Program

In June 2024, the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy awarded \$30 million in Digital Champion grants to 63 community service, nonprofit, higher education and regional organizations across the state for projects to help North Carolinians afford high-speed internet, obtain digital devices and access digital literacy resources. The program received more than 230 applications from community organizations.

## Enhancing 911 Capabilities



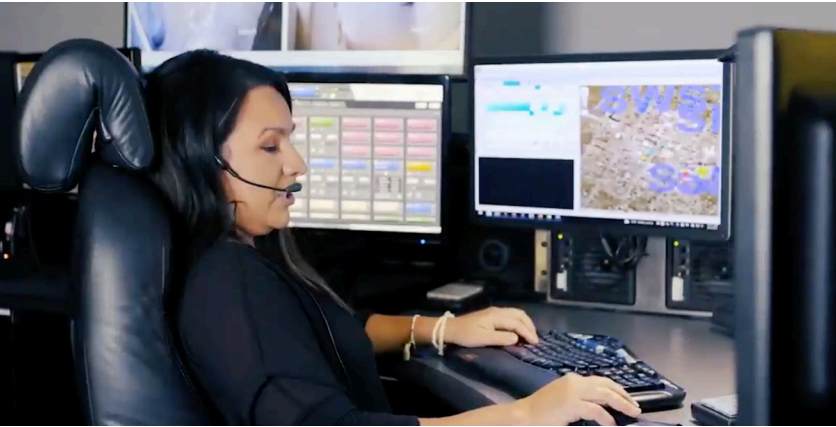
All 124 N.C. 911 board-funded PSAPs are now connected to Next Generation 911.

### Completion of Statewide Next Generation 911 System

Anson County’s 911 upgrade in February 2024 marked the completion of the N.C. 911 Board’s efforts to transition all 124 public safety answering points (PSAPS) that it funds to Next Generation 911. This managed internet protocol-based network – which uses AT&T ESInet™ – replaces an analog system that had been in place for decades. North Carolina began the transition to Next Generation 911 in November 2018, when Durham 911 became the first PSAP in the nation to join AT&T ESInet.

In addition, in early 2024, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro became the first military installation in North Carolina, and one of the first

in the nation, to connect to AT&T ESInet. Although this was not an initiative of the N.C. 911 Board, it strengthens the overall security and resiliency of 911 in North Carolina.



## Promotion of 911 Telecommunicator Careers

The N.C. 911 Board continued its statewide public service announcement campaign to help local government-operated PSAPs recruit telecommunicators. The 24-week campaign ended in June 2024 and attracted more than 80,000 visitors to the board's telecommunicators career webpage. This recruitment effort will continue to air campaigns through the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

## Public Safety Answering Point Education & Training

The N.C. 911 Board formally launched an education and training program, along with a training webinar series for telecommunicators. The rollout of the Virtual Academy offers primary PSAPs an online training platform for telecommunicators.

## 911 PSAP Grants & Upgrades

In August 2023, the N.C. 911 Board awarded \$16.5 million in grants for facility and equipment upgrades at 12 PSAPs across the state.

The board also awarded more than \$4.3 million in portable radio grants for 91 PSAPs and funded 12 proposals to share computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data through the CAD-to-CAD 911 call data interoperability initiative.

To continue to improve the resiliency of the Next Generation 911 network, the board approved a contract for and began implementation of FirstNet as a wireless redundant backup solution for primary PSAPs.

In addition, the board assisted Durham 911 and Guilford Metro 911 with a call handling equipment hardware refresh.

## 911 Public Safety Answering Point Assessments

As of June 2024, the N.C. 911 Board had assisted 114 of the 124 board-funded 911 PSAPs in assessing their 911 operations and compliance with state law and rules, and 63% reported zero deficiencies. Plans were created to assist PSAPs in addressing identified deficiencies.

## Improving the Constituent & Customer Digital Experience

### Website Quality Assurance & Accessibility

To help provide an accessible experience for all users, NCDIT in August 2023 rolled out a website quality and accessibility monitoring tool that is available for any state website. Essential for ensuring website compliance, the tool regularly scans for issues related to accessibility, search engine optimization and content quality and provides reports with detailed information about each issue and tips on how to fix it. As of June 2024, NCDIT has worked with state agencies to implement the tool on 67 websites.

### Digital Accessibility & Usability Standards

In April 2024, NCDIT published the Digital Accessibility and Usability Standard, which provides guidance for state agencies in designing and delivering websites and digital services intended for the public. The standard also outlines statutory requirements, clarifies mandates and expands on best practices for the state's digital assets.

### Digital Accessibility Community of Practice

NCDIT created the statewide N.C. Digital Accessibility Community of Practice (A11y CoP), a collaborative and inclusive forum where people of all experience levels with a common interest in

digital accessibility come together to share insights, expertise and best practices. Since launching in January 2024, more than 200 people from many different state agencies, academia and private organizations have joined A11y CoP.

### New Parking System

NCDIT worked with the N.C. Division of State Parking to successfully deploy a new parking system for the N.C. Department of Administration (NCDOA) that employs a contactless payment process to allow visitors to pay faster, therefore improving parking management and efficiency. Work involved installing payment processing software, network, hardware and a point-of-sale touch panel system for quicker access to system functions.

### Driver License Credential System

NCDIT and the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles (NCDMV) implemented a new driver license credential system over a period of four weeks. Teams installed 555 computers and cameras in 118 offices statewide to include same-day training for the examiners. This effort delivered an innovative series of driver licenses, permits and IDs, with more than 50 security features that set a new standard in security to combat fraud.

### Interface for State IDs

NCDIT worked with the N.C. Department of Adult Correction (NCDAC) and NCDMV to prepare for the August 2024 launch of an automatic feed to provide basic information about offenders nearing release so that they can receive state IDs. Possessing a government-issued ID greatly enhances an offender's

**CHECK IN HERE**  
Regístrese aquí

**Scan this code  
to check in**  
Escanee este código para registrarse



**Or text "U99 Get in line"  
to 1-844-990-5095**  
Siga las instrucciones en los mensajes de texto

**Follow instructions on  
text messages**  
Siga las instrucciones en los mensajes de texto



Courtesy: N.C. Department of Transportation

ability to access essential services, secure employment and function effectively within the community, ultimately supporting smoother reintegration and reducing recidivism rates.

### Q-Anywhere Appointment Scheduling Enhancements

NCDIT worked with NCDMV to enhance online appointment scheduling to reduce no-show rates in driver license offices. Customers using online appointment scheduling are now required to confirm their appointment after scheduling it and again four days before the appointment. Appointments that are not confirmed are canceled, which allows offices to better serve others.

### Integration of Credit Card Payments for Fishing Licenses

NCDIT and the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Marine Fisheries enabled credit card payments for commercial and for-hire fishing licenses through an integration with the division's Fisheries Information Network system. This modern payment structure streamlines the licensing process, providing greater convenience and efficiency for stakeholders in the fishing industry.

### Mail Service Center Billing Upgrades

NCDIT upgraded the state's mail service center software and billing system to support the newest operating systems and shift the courier billing database to a web-based system. These upgrades make it easier to provide timely and accurately processed mail between state agencies and North Carolina residents.. The upgrades also help state agencies improve mail handling and billing processing time.

## Collaborating with Other State Agencies

### Metropolitan Area Network Migration

To meet legislation requiring the demolition of the N.C. Department of Administration (NCDOA) building in downtown Raleigh, NCDIT relocated the infrastructure for the Metropolitan Area Network, which centrally connects devices to the internet and supports networking services to 50 buildings in the Raleigh area. The benefits of this change include eliminating a single point of failure for the network and increasing network capacity to meet growing demand.

### State Human Resources Relocation

NCDIT and Office of State Human Resources coordinated to move and install network services, upgrade the file and print server, provide technology support for personnel and create a secure hardware storage room during OSHR's move to a new location due to the demolition of the NCDOA building in downtown Raleigh.

### Mobile Construction e-Ticketing

NCDIT worked with NCDOT to implement an application that allows Division of Highways inspectors to electronically receive information from delivery trucks while maintaining a safe distance from the trucks on project worksites. This application improves efficiency and safety for NCDOT employees and contractors.



Courtesy: N.C. Department of Administration

### Site-Wide Area Network Upgrades

NCDIT worked with the N.C. Department of Adult Correction (NCDAC) to upgrade networks at the state's 53 prisons to 250 MB circuits, which helps alleviate bandwidth constraints and allows for better offender telehealth video encounters, application performance and transmission of prison security video solutions.

### iNet Expansion & Improvements

To meet ever-changing needs and new requirements, NCDIT and NCDAC expanded and improved iNet, the separate, secure network for offenders that provides targeted or limited connectivity for educational and training materials for approved programs.



Courtesy: N.C. Department of Transportation

## Statewide Traffic Signal Coordination System

Working with the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT), NCDIT implemented a new statewide cloud-based traffic signal coordination system. The prior signal system software was inadequate for the number of traffic signals that NCDOT and partner municipalities maintain, and it was challenging to connect municipalities that maintained their own signal systems due to embedded software limitations. The new system is appropriately sized, removes the previous limitations and streamlines the connection of signals.

## Critical Incident Notification System

NCDIT supported NCDAC in developing the Critical Incident Notification System to address a crucial need for communication among the department's 20,000 employees, who are spread across various facilities across the state. This system allows section heads to report significant events and disseminate alerts via email and SMS, ensuring prompt transmission of vital information to decision-makers to facilitate coordinated emergency response. By connecting all divisions – from prisons to community supervision and support services – this system offers a streamlined, integrated approach to managing incidents, enhancing situational awareness and response efficiency, ultimately strengthening the agency's ability to protect and serve the public.

## Offender Medicaid Applications

With North Carolina's Medicaid expansion, most of the state's incarcerated population will be eligible for Medicaid coverage upon release. NCDIT and NCDAC are developing a tracking system to assess offenders for eligibility and help initiate Medicaid applications 90 days prior to release. This initiative aims to provide crucial health care support for offenders and aid their reintegration into society.

## Offender Self-Assessment & Supervision Check-In

NCDIT and NCDAC implemented solutions to improve the community supervision process for both offenders and supervisors by enabling more secure, remote and self-report functionalities. These enhancements ensure faster, timelier and

more efficient evaluations, interventions and risk assessments, which ultimately contribute to a more effective and responsive community supervision system.

## Statewide Panic Alarm Solution

NCDIT and the N.C. Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) supported N.C. Emergency Management, the N.C. Center for Safer Schools and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction in creating a statewide panic alarm solution that provides real-time alerts about threats in public secondary schools for school staff and public safety officials. Integrated with the State Emergency Response Application, this solution allows for faster and more coordinated responses, significantly improving the safety and security of public secondary schools across North Carolina.

## Distributed Antenna System Installation

Using funding from a U.S. Department of Justice grant, NCDIT worked with NCDPS to install distributed antenna systems at key N.C. National Guard facilities to enhance communication capabilities with federal, state and local emergency response partners.

This upgrade provides the National Guard with robust, reliable cellular and radio communication capabilities and mitigates the risk of communication failures during natural disasters or other emergencies.

## Support for New N.C. National Guard Pay System

NCDIT supported NCDPS and the Office of State Human Resources in developing and implementing a comprehensive action plan to integrate the N.C. National Guard's new human resources application and the state's integrated HR payroll system. This ensured the smooth flow of data between the systems, improving the efficiency, timeliness and accuracy of pay processing and record keeping for thousands of N.C. National Guard service members and their families.

## North Carolina Financial System Interfaces

NCDIT and NCDAC, in coordination with a vendor, built several new interfaces with the state's new financial system, the North Carolina Financial System, to streamline operations. The interfaces increase efficiency, as NCDAC's Food and Nutrition Management section produces 30 million meals annually and NCDAC's Central Engineering tracks construction and building costs. This integration enhances accuracy, reduces administrative overhead and allows both sections of NCDAC to operate more efficiently and cost-effectively.

# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY

It is a muggy late summer morning, and children enrolled in Vivian Saunders' Digital Connections Camp in Bertie County are gathered around a computer.

Not only are they being entertained, but they are also learning crucial internet skills that will help keep them safe from cybercriminals while online.

Thanks to the NCDIT Office of Digital Equity and Literacy's \$1.3 million digital navigator grant award to the NC Cooperative Extension, digital skills trainers in 14 counties across the state are working to realize their vision: "Every individual on a farm, in a household and in business will have the digital skills necessary to EARN, LEARN, BE WELL and LIVE WELL."

"Today's kids are digital natives, already possessing many of the skills they will need to participate in the modern digital landscape," said Rebecca Jinnette, a digital skills agent for NC Cooperative Extension's NC Digital Futures Program in Bertie County.

"I focus on topics like digital well-being and online safety with my younger students. When I work with teens, I also emphasize how digital upskilling can increase their marketability to prospective employers. I try to meet my teen students where they are and include outlets for creative expression in my curriculum to keep the classes exciting."

Since starting the program in August



2023, digital skills trainers have helped more than 3,250 North Carolinians become more confident online and have shared digital skills and internet safety information with 315,500 people.

The program focuses on aging adults, low-income families, veterans and small-scale farmers.

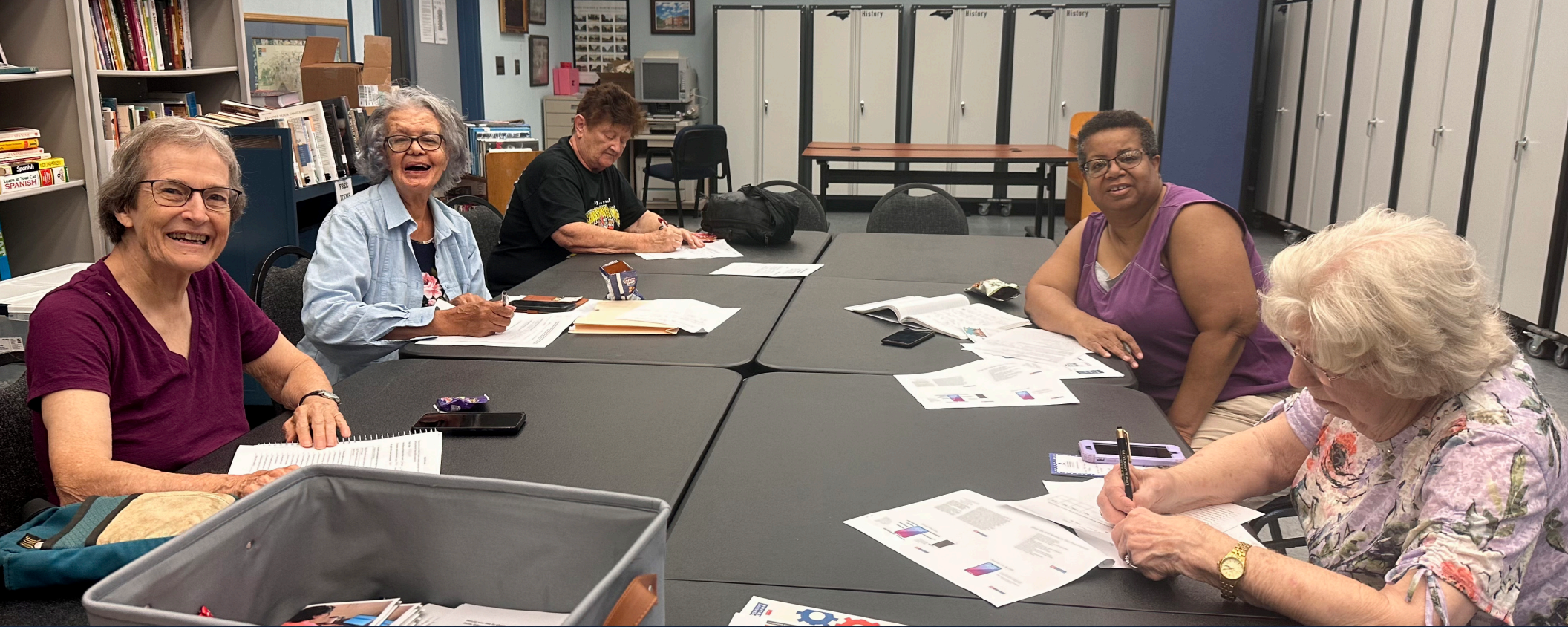
Digital skills agents are trusted local partners that incorporate digital education into

existing local health, nutrition, agriculture and community development programs.

By building relationships within the communities they serve, these digital skills agents are helping to improve basic computer and smartphone skills, promote online safety and show people how to use their devices to access telehealth and wellness services.

These efforts support Governor Roy





Cooper's plan to close the digital divide, enhance North Carolinians' quality of life and support economic development within rural communities.

In Granville and Person counties, Ashley Cummings, a digital skills agent and licensed partner with AARP's Senior Planet, facilitates impactful group education sessions at four senior centers and multiple libraries in rural communities.

Her engaging lectures and hands-on workshops have senior citizens returning time and time again for essential digital skills that help them safely connect to telehealth and online medical portals for lab reports, messages from physicians and reminders for

upcoming procedures and visits.

"I learned how to access MyChart today," said Catherine Belcher, Granville County resident and recent participant in one of Cummings' "Tech Time" events. "I did not realize there was so much info in the chart or so many things that could be done."

Currently, NC Cooperative Extension's educators offer workshops, classes and one-on-one sessions in Bertie, Caswell, Cherokee, Columbus, Davie, Edgecombe, Granville, Guilford, McDowell, Nash, Person, Randolph, Sampson and Wilson counties.

With additional funding from federal, state and county governments as well as private partners, the program is expanding to other

counties.

NC Cooperative Extension plans to use its remaining NCDIT grant funding to add remote worker training to its educational offerings in January 2025.

It is also planning to use the funding for a digital skills training curriculum being developed by NC State University's Friday Institute for Educational Innovation.

This curriculum will be created and backed by internationally recognized standards, which will help develop credentialing for digital skills training to expand participants' workforce development and employability.

## Transform the Delivery of Services

North Carolina's technology landscape is growing and changing at an incredibly fast pace, requiring NCDIT to proactively transform how it delivers IT services and solutions. The department is committed to connecting state and local government entities – and the people they serve – to modern processes and products.

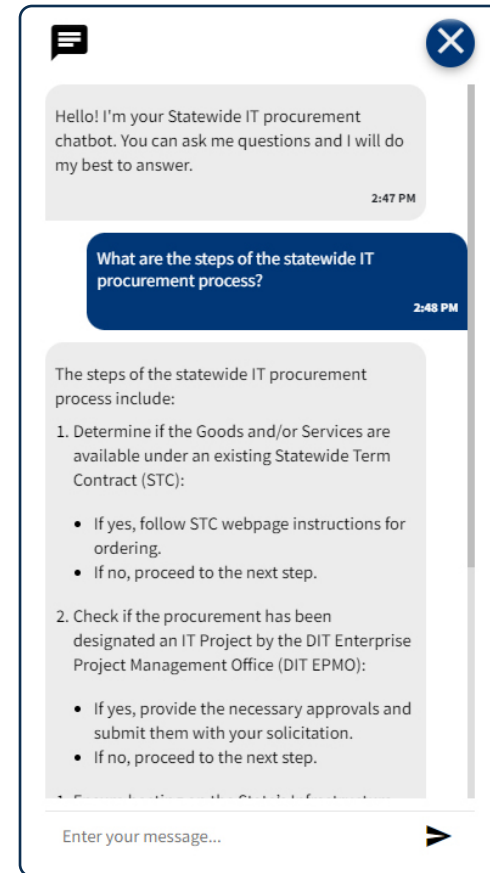
### Enhancing IT Procurement

#### Strengthening Procurement Language to Address Generative AI Use

With artificial intelligence becoming embedded in more IT solutions, NCDIT updated and strengthened language in its procurement terms and conditions to address use of generative AI, created AI-focused vendor questionnaires to identify and assess risk and incorporated data protection and transparency requirements to ensure accountability when AI is used in vendor products. These updates allow for more efficient approval of procurements while ensuring state data is protected. A working group is developing additional standardized language for more types of procurement documents and a checklist to aid in procuring AI solutions.

#### Statewide IT Procurement Chatbot

Among several efforts implemented over the past year to help create a clearer, more efficient statewide IT procurement process, NCDIT developed and deployed an AI chatbot on its Statewide IT Procurement website. Available 24/7, the chatbot is programmed to answer common queries, which reduces the amount of time users spend searching the website or having to wait for a procurement staff member to respond. Over time and with repeated use, it will evolve to provide even more helpful information to deliver greater customer service. Future enhancements include real-time status updates on active procurements under review.





## Historically Underutilized Businesses Vendor Day

In May 2024, NCDIT's Statewide IT Procurement Office and the N.C. Department of Administration's Office for Historically Underutilized Businesses hosted a daylong event to share with HUB vendors how to do business with the state and to share upcoming IT contracts that might be of interest to them. More than 60 vendors who provide IT services attended.

State law encourages public entities to do business with HUB vendors. NCDIT set a yearly spending goal of 10% for HUB vendors and tracks spending data for the purchase of goods and services by HUB vendors.

## Intelligent Automation

NCDIT's Statewide IT Procurement Office implemented multiple intelligent automations in the eProcurement system to increase operational efficiencies, improve reporting and potentially save 900 hours of manual work. This included automating the exception request process, checking for missing information between the IT procurement management system and centralized document database, and uploading documents.

## Procurement System Implementation

NCDIT and the N.C. Department of Transportation implemented a new tool using the NC eProcurement System to streamline the agency's procurement process for employees. It includes a simplified user-friendly purchasing tool and enables better collaboration with internal customers and vendors.

## Modernizing Services

### Next-Generation Enterprise IP Telephony Service

In December 2023, NCDIT completed a four-year effort to deploy a new cloud-based telephony platform for the state – an effort that involved migrating more than 20,000 state employees from a legacy solution nearing its service end-of-life. The new NCDIT-managed Next-Generation Enterprise IP Telephony Service enhances business processes and improves overall productivity in how individuals, groups and agencies interact, collaborate and communicate. This modernized, centralized Voice over Internet Protocol service offers enhanced communication methods that effectively support a 21st-century government.

### Contact Center as a Service

In May 2024, NCDIT completed a 24-month migration of more than 1,500 customer service agents in 50 business units to a new state-of-the-art, cloud-hosted, omnichannel contact center solution. The new hybrid cloud and on-premise solution, which uses automation and artificial intelligence, allows the public to engage with government services in the ways they have come to expect, without having to wait on hold.

## Automation & Integration

NCDIT automated cloud tenant services builds and provides an architecture template for the cloud environment. This initiative has improved provisioning times and quality of service for customers of the department's cloud services and enabled greater conformance to standards.

# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO IT SOLUTIONS

Over the past two years, NCDIT's Statewide IT Procurement Office has transformed how state agencies must go about procuring high-dollar IT services and products. Introduced in January 2023, the new process has resulted in greater efficiencies in the review of such purchases as well as a better experience for agencies.

The next step for NCDIT was to develop an information-rich dashboard to provide greater transparency and accountability.

Developed within NCDIT and launched in April 2024, the system includes data from multiple resources that have been consolidated in a central database and integrated with the state's eProcurement system.

State agency customers and NCDIT staff now have greater visibility into procurements, which must undergo a 10-step process that includes privacy, security, legal and enterprise architecture reviews – all necessary to comply with state law and NCDIT standards.

The dashboard allows chief information officers and other leadership at state agencies to see where their requests are within the IT procurement process.

It also gives NCDIT staff an overview of the number of active, completed and canceled IT procurements as well as more granular information, such as the number of steps still needing approval, and the target and actual

dates for completing each step.

Knowing this can help procurement staff proactively identify issues before they cause delays and help procurements that are behind schedule get back on track.

## Introducing Automation

The data also provides the Statewide IT Procurement Office with other important insights that have resulted in increased efficiencies and more accurate data.

For example, while analyzing reports, the team identified a significant number of procurements that appeared to be behind schedule – with only about 30% of the steps completed on time.

After investigating, the team discovered that the work had been completed but the eProcurement system was not updated. This produced inaccurate data that did not give reliable results or confidence in the system.

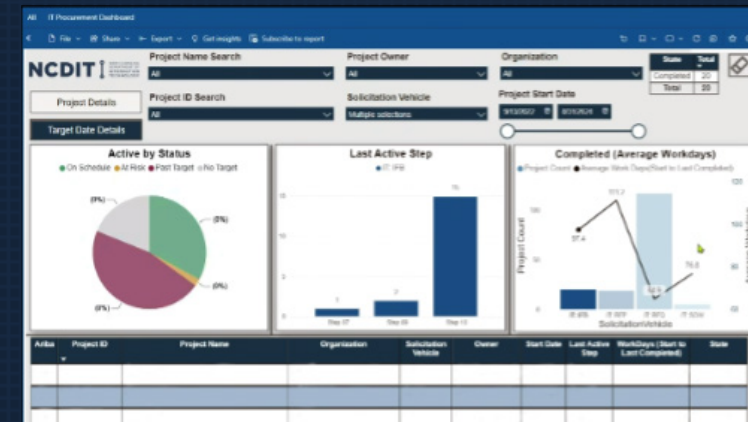
To address this issue, NCDIT implemented a cutting-edge solution to automate the manual step of marking reviews complete.

Additional automations were implemented to assign target dates for the completion of each step, review the steps nightly and move procurement to the next step if they are on schedule. If a step is not completed on schedule, the system alerts key stakeholders via email.

These automations have helped remove human error, improved data accuracy and

saved time for all users. They also allow the procurement team to focus on addressing any bottlenecks that occur.

Data now shows more than 80% of procurement project steps are completed on schedule, and that number is steadily increasing.



The Statewide IT Procurement dashboard provides greater visibility into IT procurements.

The Statewide Procurement Office now has a strong foundation to reach its goal of at least 90% of procurement steps being completed on schedule, and the team continuously evaluates the process for potential improvements.

With a transparent, more efficient and customer-friendly IT procurement process, NCDIT is able to connect agencies with products and services in a timely manner and ensure procurements meet state standards and laws.

## Optimize and Secure the State's IT and Application Portfolios

Cybersecurity and risk management are increasingly critical as technology advances and the state is exposed to new and more sophisticated cyberthreats. NCDIT is also prioritizing the optimization of North Carolina's IT investments and applications to ensure efficiency, productivity and cost effectiveness.

### Strengthening Cybersecurity

#### Rollout of Multifactor Authentication

In April 2024, NCDIT completed a phased rollout of multifactor authentication to approximately 65,000 employees at 49 state and local government agencies who use the department's Microsoft 365 tenant. MFA requires users to confirm their login when signing into a supported application. Previously, NCDIT implemented MFA for the Office of the State Controller's HR Payroll system in July 2023.



#### Web Application Firewall Funding & Deployment\*

NCDIT secured non-recurring funding in North Carolina's FY 2023-2024 state budget to centrally fund a web application firewall to serve as a first line of defense against threats to the state's network. Implementing the firewall has resulted in the protection of 95 state agency root domains with more than 400 domain name system (DNS) records across 20 agency accounts. NCDIT provides application developers and owners training, resources and support to ensure that applications can be added to the platform and managed by the teams working within the applications.

#### Endpoint Protection Funding & Deployment\*

Funding in the FY 2023-2024 state budget also provided next-generation endpoint protection for two years for all executive branch agencies. NCDIT has deployed more than 60,000 clients, vastly

\*Recurring funding will need to be secured to continue support for these resources beyond the original two-year timeframe. NCDIT continues to seek ways to expand coverage under both services to help reduce the risk of website and endpoint device compromises.

improving the state's security posture and allowing NCDIT global insight into rising cybersecurity threats that may be targeting various state agencies.

## New Positions

NCDIT established 12 new positions for the Enterprise Security and Risk Management Office to help ensure it can continue to meet the demands of the state's evolving cybersecurity landscape.

## Citizen NCID Modernization Project

As part of a two-year effort, NCDIT in September 2023 completed the first phase of a project to modernize its N.C. Identity Management tool. Commonly known as NCID, it serves as the state's primary access control and identity management system that many state and local government agencies use to provide online services to employees and the public. The project involved enhancing security, moving non-government user accounts to a cloud-based system and making improvements that let users more easily and efficiently manage their NCID accounts.

## New Tools for Incident Response & Recovery

To enable faster incident recovery from cybersecurity attacks, NCDIT acquired three incident response and recovery systems that provide temporary resources for victims to run on a safe server environment.

## State & Local Cybersecurity Grant Program

NCDIT provided programmatic and technical support to N.C. Emergency Management in administering \$10.8 million in federal grants as part of the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program. Funded under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, these grants will help 91 entities across the state of North Carolina address cybersecurity risks and threats to their IT systems.

## Air-Gapped Data Backup

To ensure greater capability in preventing and recovering from ransomware and other threats, NCDIT implemented air-gapped, immutable storage protection. The technology isolates backup systems from the network and helps prevent the data from being exposed to bad actors and cyberthreats. The solution protects more than 78,000 email accounts and more than 1,000 hosted systems in NCDIT's data centers.

## Public Safety Answering Point Cybersecurity Support

The N.C. 911 Board continued work from the previous year to support public safety answering points (PSAPs) in their efforts to protect, respond and recover from cybersecurity threats and incidents. The board approved and awarded more than \$485,000 to fund PSAP proposals for cybersecurity remediation initiatives. In addition, the board held three cybersecurity incident response plan workshops.

## Operating System Upgrades

NCDIT upgraded more than 3,600 NCDIT-managed laptops to the latest operating system by June 2024, nearly two years before support expires to proactively make the IT environment more secure and ensure uninterrupted productivity.

## Modernizing Applications

### Mainframe Service Transition

NCDIT partnered with a top mainframe hosting service provider to provide hosting services for all state-owned mainframe applications. The initial shift of moving disaster recovery to mainframe services helped NCDIT avoid a \$1 million capital expense, and this strategic initiative is expected to save the state more than \$11 million over the next five years. It also provides flexibility in how the department uses existing resources through reallocation to be more responsive to agencies' needs.

### Cloud Storage Transition

In support of the N.C. Department of Adult Correction (NCDAC), NCDIT restructured applications to move certain files to a secure cloud-based storage environment. This ongoing project aims to reduce the database size by half, significantly cutting costs related to backups and recovery. This transition allows for more efficient database management, enhances scalability and performance and better positions NCDAC to leverage AI for extracting business intelligence from unstructured data. This strategic move optimizes

resource usage, improves data accessibility and opens new avenues for advanced data analytics.

## Fiscal Management & Budget Systems Upgrade

NCDIT upgraded the N.C. Department of Administration's (NCDOA) fiscal management invoice and fiscal budget approval processes to a low-code software development environment that features integrated workflows. These improvements allow the state's financial management teams and agency budget managers to catalog and digitally organize records, invoices and approvals for more efficient searching and access.

## State Construction Office Interscope Upgrade

NCDIT developed a software module (which serves as an extension to the existing software the State Construction Office uses) that replaces paper capital construction project change orders with an efficient electronic process. This allows the digital submission of change orders, tracking of approval flows and easy cross-referencing of reports. This new process has improved approval times and reduced calculation errors.

## Support for the N.C. Financial System

NCDIT implemented software upgrades to support account numbers in the new North Carolina Financial System for the state's Mail Service Center, Motor Fleet Management, State Construction Office, NCDOA's invoice approval and



fiscal budget approval systems, and the N.C. Office of Fiscal Management's invoice payment and budget approval and purchase-card processes. This new process improves efficiency in locating records that are cataloged and organized digitally. These upgrades have eliminated the need to cross-reference old and new account numbers, reduced manual errors and increased efficiency for these services.

## Rail Crossing Photo Inventory

NCDIT worked with N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to implement a new rail crossing photo inventory system for the department's Rail Division. This automated solution watermarks and inventories railroad crossing photos that are in an internal online library with a date and time stamp. It also allows users to dynamically view, search and edit images. The next phase of development includes a mobile app that will combine several legacy systems into a single, powerful digital enterprise solution.

## Real Property Phase II

In support of NCDOA, NCDIT implemented enhancements to the Real Property Solution, including increasing the data available on dashboards to improve metrics for leadership and creating a public-facing site to increase data transparency. Other notable upgrades are improvements to the geographic information systems map website and additional data and systems integration to acquire detailed room and floor data.

## House Move Permitting

In support of NCDOT, NCDIT developed and implemented a new system for issuing house move permits and integrated it into the current Permit Information Management System for oversize and overweight permitting. The new system provides a modern user interface, automated tasks and workflow, and improved checks and balances to ensure the accuracy of data and improve safety on the roads.



## Commercial Driver License Process Automation

The N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles' (NCDMV) School Bus and Traffic Safety unit and Commercial Driver License (CDL) Unit have instructors, examiners and CDL compliance officers that train, test, certify and audit CDL drivers. Currently, processes are performed manually using paper forms that have presented many challenges for the business units.

NCDMV was awarded a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration grant to implement a solution that will achieve and maintain federal compliance, provide a paperless workflow and capture and store information securely. The solution provides business units with greater efficiency and accuracy by equipping field staff with a tablet computer to electronically complete forms, obtain electronic signatures, capture photos and automatically store completed forms in a secure online library.



# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO A NEW ERA IN INNOVATION

North Carolina has long leveraged artificial intelligence, machine learning and data integration to help answer policy questions and aid in efforts to combat fraud, improve criminal justice, monitor public health outbreaks and support other initiatives.

The rapid advancement of generative AI, however, has the potential for this emerging technology to empower state employees to be innovative in ways that improve service delivery, improve public engagement and streamline operations across state government.

For example, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services is in the early stages of modernizing its child welfare services through the Partnership and Technology Hub for North Carolina (PATH NC) project. It employs large language models to search case notes, complex policies and other documents to provide consistent answers to users involved in the child welfare system.

But generative AI – specifically publicly available tools such as ChatGPT – also brings risks and concerns about how to safely, responsibly and ethically leverage its potential while maintaining public trust.

“The public has to put a certain amount of trust in the government,” NCDIT Chief Privacy Officer Cherie Givens said. “From tax collection to medical histories, we have an enormous responsibility to protect the data that is entrusted to the state.”



For more than a year, Givens has led NCDIT’s efforts to create the North Carolina Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence Framework. Aligned with existing state privacy laws and IT policies, it consists of principles, practices and guidance to provide a measured and consistent approach for state agencies to innovate while reducing privacy and data protection risks.

Based on the Fair Information Practice Principles – which the state adopted in 2022 to guide privacy and security practices – and feedback from government stakeholders, the AI framework incorporates standards from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, guidance from the federal government and industry best practices.

The AI framework is the first step in incorporating generative AI into state government’s technology toolset.

“In balancing the transformational benefits of leveraging generative AI to transform the way services are delivered, NCDIT is taking a multifaceted approach to help agencies and

employees safely and responsibly use and harness the benefits of generative AI,” said NCDIT Chief Data Officer Christie Burris.

Other initiatives include forming an AI work group, led by both Burris and Givens, of subject matter experts from across state government. The group’s charter focuses on collaboration to produce work products that respond to the quickly evolving AI landscape and to support agencies as they journey from concept to procurement to implementation of generative AI.

NCDIT is also developing standard AI language for RFPs, contract terms and conditions as well as generative AI vendor questionnaires to provide transparency and accountability when the technology is used in vendor products.

To help employees navigate how they might use generative AI, NCDIT has posted guidance, training and other resources on its website at [it.nc.gov/AI](https://it.nc.gov/AI). The department is also developing comprehensive training for state employees.

“We are excited by the significant opportunity that generative AI presents to modernize our state’s government services,” Givens said. “But government has a responsibility to adopt and advance these technologies in ways that will benefit society while mitigating risk and harm to the people we serve.”

## Promote an Inclusive and Innovative Workforce

NCDIT recognizes that its people are its most valuable resource. The department is committed to investing in its current and future workforce as well as upholding a supportive and inclusive work environment that encourages employees to collaborate, innovate and grow.

### Attracting, Developing & Retaining a Skilled & Diverse Workforce

#### Talent Pipeline Through Apprenticeships & Internships

NCDIT developed an apprenticeship program, in partnership with ApprenticeshipNC and the N.C. Community Colleges System, to recruit and develop future technologists in cybersecurity, networking and user support. In spring 2024, a networking apprentice was hired and assigned to NCDIT, while two cybersecurity apprenticeships were filled at the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the N.C. Department of Public Safety.

During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, NCDIT hosted 27 interns as part of the department's four paid internship programs. Two interns moved into permanent positions, while five interns transitioned into other temporary positions. Launched in spring 2023, the internship programs aim to reach key demographics: people who want to enter the IT field but do not intend to pursue a college degree; students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities; members of the neurodiverse community; and people who are pursuing tech-related college education or experience.



## Mentorship Program Launches First Cohort

The department has embraced mentorship as a way for employees to grow professionally. The NCDIT Mentorship Program is a grassroots initiative driven by a group of employees who have experienced the benefits of mentorship in their own careers and advocate for mentorship opportunities in the department. With a successful pilot program in 2023, the first nine-month cohort launched in January 2024. So far, 22 NCDIT team members have been mentored by 22 colleagues.

## Recruitment & Onboarding Automations and Improvements

NCDIT launched automations to improve the efficiency, productivity and timely delivery of the department's recruitment and onboarding processes, including data integrations with the Office of State Controller. These improvements provide real-time transparency for management and executive leadership, reduce the number of onboarding documents and enhance the pre-hire portal experience. They also simplify the steps for hiring managers, including the ability to make counteroffers or hire back-up candidates in fewer steps. The ongoing project will continue to enhance non-human resources aspects of onboarding, including provisioning of equipment and devices.

## Equal Employment Opportunity Data-Driven Hiring & Annual Report

To align directly with the Statewide IT Strategic Plan's goal of promoting an inclusive workforce as well as NCDIT's Equal Employment Opportunity plan,

the Human Resources Division launched in March 2024 the EEO Data and Inclusive hiring initiative in which HR provides hiring managers with EEO data and information about best practices for inclusive interviewing and hiring. This information is shared for informational purposes and to aid conversations around diversity in recruitment.

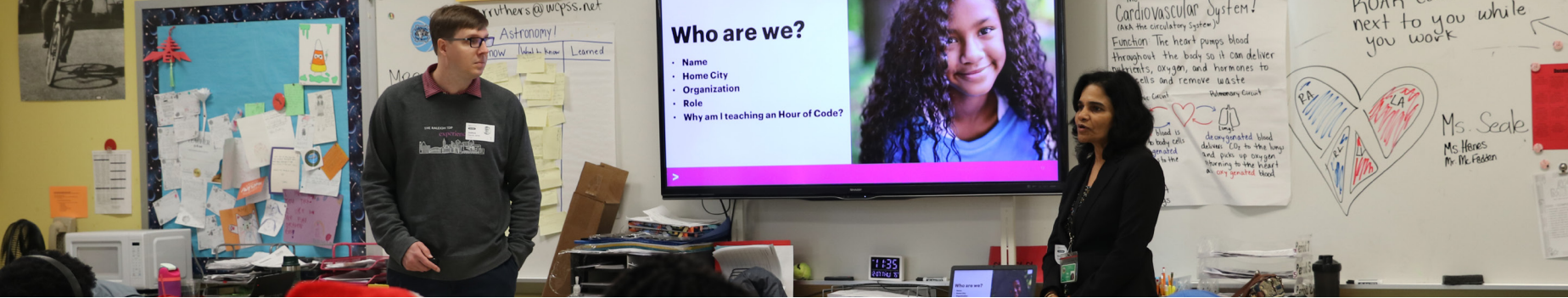
## Manager's Forums

To promote the continued development of employees who lead teams and manage programs within the department, NCDIT launched the bimonthly Manager's Forum. Each one-hour session focuses on a different leadership topic while also giving managers a chance to share knowledge, concerns and answer each other's questions. The first four sessions in spring 2024 covered succession planning, agile leadership and handling on-the-job employee injuries.

## HR Recruitment & Selection Consulting Project

In accordance with N.C.G.S. 143-746, NCDIT's Office of Internal Audit completed a consulting engagement to assist the Human Resources Division with evaluating and enhancing current recruitment and selection documentation practices. It was initiated at the request of NCDIT HR management as an extension of its ongoing recruitment and selection enhancement efforts and to help identify opportunities for additional process improvements.

The December 2023 testing results indicated NCDIT HR has effective document completion and retention practices for recruitment and selection processes for the areas reviewed within the engagement.



## Implementation of Retirement Planning Information Sessions

NCDIT implemented the Navigating Retirement webinar series and held five sessions for employees who are eligible to retire within the next five years. The series covers a variety of topics, including retirement eligibility requirements, an overview of how retirement benefits are calculated, health insurance and other benefits, supplemental retirement plans and re-employment options after retirement.

## Learning Management System Ticketing Enhancements

NCDIT supported the Office of State Human Resources in developing a ticketing system automation and metrics dashboard for the state's learning and performance management systems, which state employees use for training and development. The enhancements address the diverse needs of OSHR management, system administrators and state agency personnel by providing a centralized, automated, real-time solution for efficient ticket management and issue resolution. This solution has greatly reduced lag time in the ticketing process, which handles more than 1,900 tickets in a six-month period.

## Student Outreach Efforts

### Hour of Code

In December 2023, more than 25 employees facilitated in-person and virtual Hour of Code sessions – alongside corporate partner Accenture and nine other state entities – for 8,000 middle school students from 40 North Carolina schools. The annual event, which coincides with Computer Science Education Week, celebrates computer science, “demystifies” code and broadens participation in the IT field by showing that everyone can learn the basics. In 2024, NCDIT and Accenture partnered to offer sessions statewide.

### North Carolina Education Datathon

NCDIT employees in February 2024 volunteered to provide guidance to high school and college student teams participating in the North Carolina Education Datathon, an event sponsored by the N.C. Government Data Analytics Center in partnership with The Hunt Institute and the Office of Governor Roy Cooper. During the competition, student-led teams analyze publicly available datasets and develop innovative solutions for complex education-related problems.

# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO A SKILLED WORKFORCE

NCDIT's apprenticeship and mentorship programs are opening new pathways into the IT field, eliminating barriers for non-traditional job candidates and enabling them to continue to grow professionally throughout their careers.

In partnership with ApprenticeshipNC and the N.C. Community Colleges System, NCDIT developed an apprenticeship program to recruit and develop future technologists in cybersecurity, networking and user support. The first three apprentices were hired in the spring of 2024 in networking and cybersecurity.

Joseph Mandato had worked as a break-fix technician and network engineer for school systems before enrolling at a community college to move into higher positions. When a faculty member recommended the apprenticeship program, he questioned whether he was a right fit for it.

"I thought of the people that I would be applying against. I thought of 18-, 19-year-olds with no work experience who have never been in the field. And then there was me. I'm in my mid-30s. I have five years of experience," Mandato said. "Is this something that I should be applying for? Am I the right candidate for an apprenticeship?"

An NCDIT staff member, however, encouraged him to pursue the opportunity.

"They said, 'What does a typical college student look like? You know, who is a normal



Joseph Mandato became one of the first hires of NCDIT's new apprenticeship program.

college student? Anybody can be a college student. Anybody can start at any time in their life," he said.

In April 2024, Mandato became the first hire through the NCDIT apprenticeship program.

Amanda Richardson, chief information officer for the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, said Mandato was exactly the type of apprenticeship recruit she was hoping to find. He filled a crucial gap on the security and compliance team that had been difficult to fill.

"One of the big things that attracted me to the program was having this resource for talent and an avenue for recruitment through the community college system," Richardson said. "It's a win-win for both sides."

Mandato is gaining exposure to all areas of the department from access controls and service desk to vendor management and strategic planning.

"I want to get to be the subject matter expert on everything. I'm trying to sponge up as much information as I can," he said. "Everyone here has been really helpful and accommodating and willing to teach me things. They don't hoard their information."

The apprenticeship program has launched Mandato on a new career journey.

"You're giving me the opportunity to make a shift into a career field that sometimes seems you can't get into it," he said. "Having this pathway has been really good for me."

## Leverage Data Assets and Analytics to Further Advance a Data-Driven Government

NCDIT's Data Division (renamed the Enterprise Data Office in November 2024) supports 15 state agencies through data integration, analytics and visualization, among other activities.

The office seeks to transform data into information to facilitate decision support, increase operational efficiencies and improve outcomes for the people of North Carolina by integrating and sharing data assets. In addition, NCDIT partners with agencies to help them protect the data and privacy of all those who interact with state government.

### Supporting State Agencies' Data Needs

#### State Unemployment Insurance Tax System Analytics

NCDIT supported implementation of NCSUITS, the N.C. State Unemployment Insurance Tax System, a cloud-based replacement for the N.C. Division of Employment Security's tax mainframe. The department updated analytics and application processes to ensure the continuity of fraud and compliance alert generation for activities related to unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, employee misclassification and the underground economy.

#### Court Case Management System

The Administrative Office of the Courts is undertaking a multiphase transition from a 30-year-old mainframe application to a cloud-hosted integrated case management system called Enterprise Justice (Odyssey). NCDIT continued its support of this transition with the migration of the Criminal Justice Law Enforcement Automated Data Services, known as CJLEADS, and Case Worker ASSIST.

#### CJLEADS Audit Automation Tool

A new audit automation reporting tool was built to assist agencies in completing their annual CJLEADS audit requirement more efficiently. To remain in compliance, the annual audit report should be acknowledged once per calendar year by each of the nearly 600 organizations using CJLEADS; however, they may audit as often as they wish.



The new audit tool allows administrators to manipulate the data range to meet the needs of their agency. CJLEADS administrators can also generate ad hoc/investigative audit reports without submitting the manual forms to the CJLEADS Audit Team, saving time for users and the N.C. Government Data Analytics Center's Production Services Audit team.

## IntelShare Intelligence & Investigation Management Solution

The IntelShare Intelligence and Investigation Management (IIM) solution was released in August 2023 to enhance user experience and support current and future business needs. IIM is an integrated suite of law enforcement modules that supports the daily operational activities of the N.C. Information Sharing and Analysis Center. The center works with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to fight terrorism and criminal activity. This system replaces a legacy system, initially licensed in 2015 as part of the CJLEADS contract. This is a multiphase project that will continue to roll out over the coming year.

## N.C. Early Childhood Integrated Data System

NCDIT supported the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services in developing a system to replace its Early Childhood Integrated Data System. The new system provides a governed, secure and highly automated process for state agencies, researchers and evaluators to request and receive privacy- and security-protected data that helps the state develop data-driven solutions for high-priority early childhood challenges. The department also added three data

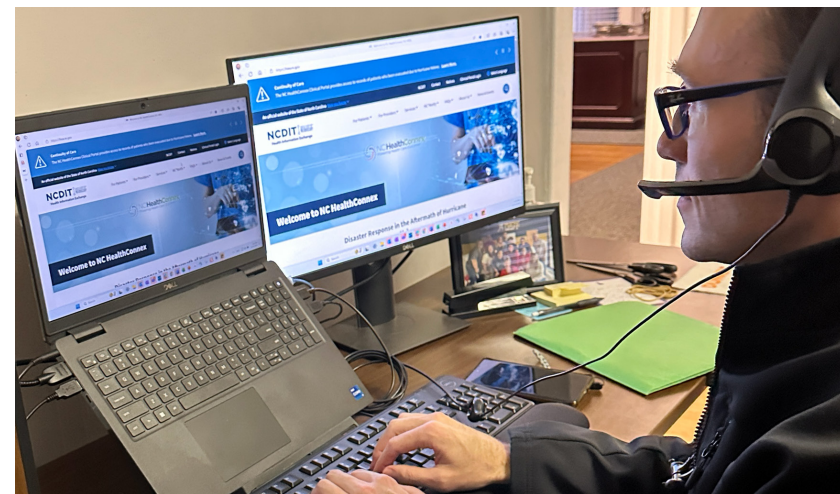
sources, and researchers can now request data from 10 programs through the system.

## N.C. Longitudinal Data Service Soft Launch

NCDIT soft-launched the N.C. Longitudinal Data Service, which allows state agencies, research and evaluation partners as well as practitioners to access cross-sector, linked data to answer some of the state's most pressing questions of policy and practice. The first use cases in partnership with data contributors include data on early childhood experiences, early learning outcomes and workforce outcomes.

## Completion of NC HealthConnex Pharmacy Pilot

NCDIT's N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA) completed a pilot program to connect the first four pharmacies to NC HealthConnex, the state-designated health information exchange. This will help improve coordination of care between pharmacists and primary care providers and reduce medication errors for patients in North Carolina.



## Data Aggregator Validation

The NC HIEA earned the Validated Data Stream designation through the National Committee for Quality Assurance Data Aggregator Validation program. This validation establishes NC HealthConnex as a single, trusted source of data for organizations such as North Carolina Medicaid and eliminates required quality data checks for health care providers participating in the NC HIEA.

## Maternal Health Alerts

The first maternal health care facilities participating in the Accountability for Care through Undoing Racism and Equity (ACURE4Moms) study went live to the Maternal Early Warning System (powered by NC\*Notify, the event notification service of NC HealthConnex). The NC HIEA and 40 of its full participants are data partners in the five-year study, which is being conducted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute. The Maternal Early Warning System generates maternal health alerts with information available through NC HealthConnex. Facilities can receive alerts when a patient has any physical, mental or social risk factors related to low birthweight.

## Orthoimagery Building Footprints with AI Support

The N.C. Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (CGIA) completed the generation of building footprints using orthoimagery with support of AI and machine learning technology within NCDIT's cloud hosting environment. This data was and continues

to be critical in support of broadband mapping and data challenge efforts.

## Climate Stressors Interactive Maps

CGIA supported the N.C. Office of Recovery and Resiliency with the development and deployment of interactive maps for the North Carolina Resilience Exchange. The maps allow users to explore the impact of different climate stressors on key issues such as vulnerable populations, roads, agriculture or ecologically important species.

## Highlighting the Value of GIS

In response to a lack of understanding of the importance of geographic information systems to state agency missions, CGIA coordinated with each state agency and an NCDIT summer intern to produce a series of story maps called "The Value of GIS." These maps highlight the many ways GIS is integrated into supporting mission-critical applications for agencies' business.

## Analyzing Data for State Agencies

### Prison Transportation & Logistics

NCDIT and the N.C. Department of Adult Correction (NCDAC) implemented a new application for the Population Management Section to manage the complex data and logistics involved in the interagency transfer of 50,000 offenders annually

across 55 prisons. This tool streamlines decision-making, reducing processing time from 5-20 minutes to 1-3 minutes per transfer and improves the placement of offenders in facilities based on educational, vocational and medical needs.

## Fact Sheet Generation

NCDIT worked with NCDAC to implement the Fact Sheet Generation Project, an automated system to quickly and accurately create fact sheets on inmate populations, transfers and community supervision as part of NCDAC's weekly operations. This project enhances transparency and supports informed decision-making based on up-to-date information. It also saves time and resources and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the department's communication and reporting efforts.

## Marine Fisheries Biological Database Modernization

NCDIT and N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) completed a migration and modernization that improves the capabilities, usability, speed and security of accessing fishery data. This was the final step of a multiphase effort to modernize a comprehensive database (developed in 1980) that contains 18 million field sampling collections spanning more than 120 programs.

## AccessDEQ: Permitting Transformation Program

In partnership with the NCDEQ, NCDIT achieved several milestones in AccessDEQ, an initiative to transform and modernize the environmental permit



Courtesy: N.C. Department of Environmental Quality

process. Milestones include a new online payment system that has since processed more than \$500,000 in payments; a more efficient and transparent Erosion and Sediment Control permitting solution; and first-ever business analytics and dashboards programs across five NCDEQ divisions.

## Water Resources Pretreatment Program

NCDIT and NCDEQ developed a modern data analysis application for the Federal and State Pretreatment Program, which gives states, municipalities and the Environmental Protection Agency regulatory authority to control the discharge of industrial wastewater into publicly owned wastewater treatment works. More than 600 significant industrial users discharge industrial wastewater to more than 100 works throughout North Carolina. NCDIT replaced a legacy data management system that had become partially unusable, and staff no longer knew how to update or fully support.

The new application, which entered production in September 2024, includes data visualizations and export capability and enhanced capabilities for activity tracking and resource analysis.

## Modern, Cloud-Based Document & Records Management System

NCDIT helped the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources implement a modern cloud solution for a document and records management system to support its archaeological sites as well as other state agencies, external partners and constituents. The new system strengthens data security and geographical information services integration. It also improves reporting capabilities, simplifies legislative compliance and enhances expansion opportunities for datasets to meet state and federal mandates.

## Data Governance Implementation

NCDIT and the Office of State Human Resources established a departmental Data Governance Council and implemented standardization and centralization of report templates, data visualizations, data definitions and standard operating procedures for the office's Talent Acquisition and Safety, Health & Worker's Compensation Division. The project will continue for other divisions in the next fiscal year.

## Modernization of the Flood Inundation Mapping & Alert Network

NCDIT supported N.C. Emergency Management in modernizing the Flood Inundation Mapping and Alert Network, known as FIMAN, to ensure sustainability,

reliability, security and improved functionality for providing real-time flood data and alerts and risk-based decisions during flooding events. The updated, more secure, mobile-friendly website and the cloud-based, platform-as-a-service solution can handle high demand and be accessed on any device. New features, such as road inundation data, provide a more holistic view of flooding impacts, aiding in better decision-making and emergency response.

## Enhancing Privacy & Data Protection Services & Ensuring Responsible Use of AI

### Streamlined Privacy Assessments

The state's Office of Privacy and Data Protection streamlined the Privacy Threshold Analysis (PTA) template to reduce the time it takes for users to complete. The PTA, which NCDIT requires for new systems or projects that might use personal or sensitive information, helps agencies assess risks and document the handling, use and sharing of sensitive information for transparency and accountability. The office also created a Privacy Impact Assessment template for documenting complex uses of personal or sensitive information. Not only is it used to assess risk, including risk associated with use of AI, but it also helps agencies identify and implement technical controls to protect the data.

### Privacy Office Staff Expansion

To bolster the Office of Privacy and Data Protection's work supporting agencies' privacy and data

protection needs, NCDIT hired a privacy and procurement attorney in December 2023. Funding in the FY 2023-2024 state budget allowed for the addition of a technical privacy adviser to support the implementation of technical privacy controls and to review agencies' risks related to the use of personal information or personally identifiable information. NCDIT has advertised the remaining four positions to support privacy, data protection and AI statewide procurement reviews as well as risk assessments, agency outreach, training and awareness, incident response and policy creation.

## Data Inventory & Classification Project

NCDIT obtained funding for a statewide data inventory and classification project. Led by the Office of Privacy and Data Protection, this effort focused on identifying the types of data the state holds across agencies, inventorying and classifying that data, and monitoring where it resides and who can access to it. Stakeholders from privacy and NCDIT's security, data, operations, strategy and enterprise architecture offices provided specifications to procure a solution by early 2025 to inventory and classify the state's data.

## State-Focused Privacy Training

To support the state's data privacy efforts, the Office of Privacy and Data Protection developed and rolled out web-based privacy training for executive branch employees focused on the eight Fair Information Practice Principles, which guide agencies in the fair and responsible handling and use of personal

information. Training on North Carolina laws impacting privacy has been developed and will be rolled out in the next fiscal year.

## AI Guidance & Resources for State Employees

The Office of Privacy and Data Protection launched the "AI Corner" (<https://it.nc.gov/AI>) as an online resource for state employees. The website includes training resources and guidance for the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence – and more specifically, publicly available generative AI. The website features the North Carolina State Government Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence Framework, a living document for state agencies, designed to provide a comprehensive risk management approach to the use of AI. This page continues to be updated with news, best practices, AI trainings and more.

## AI Working Group

In spring 2024, NCDIT formed a working group in partnership with multiple state agencies to discuss and develop guidance related to AI in state government. The work group's charter focuses on collaboration to produce work products that respond to the quickly evolving AI landscape and support agencies as they journey from concept to procurement to implementation of generative AI. Members of the work group include privacy, security, data, agency CIOs and others.

# CONNECTING NORTH CAROLINA TO IMPROVED QUALITY OF CARE

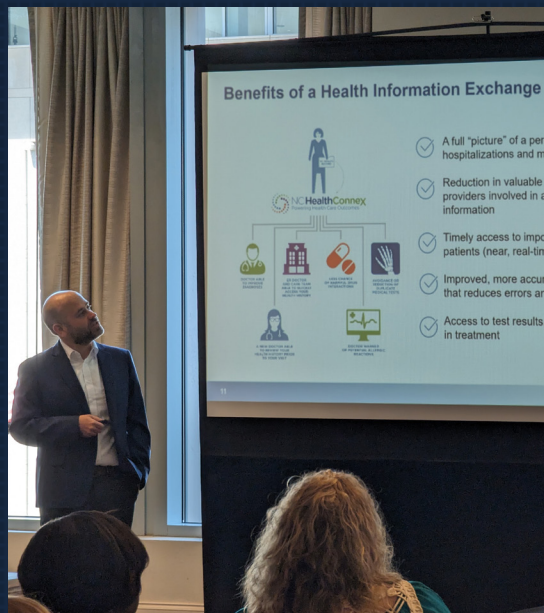
The N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority, which manages the state-designated health information exchange, NC HealthConnex, achieved two large milestones in its mission to connect health care providers so they can safely and securely share health information.

## Data Aggregator Validation Designation

In December 2023, the NC HIEA earned its first Validated Data Stream designation through the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) Data Aggregator Validation program, which evaluates an organization's management and exchange of health data.

A key component of North Carolina Medicaid's Quality Strategy is measuring and incentivizing health care providers to improve their performance. This validation contributes greatly toward making the data flowing through to health care providers and public health analysts even more useful in their ability to improve quality of care and health outcomes for North Carolina residents.

Validation also means that payers such as North Carolina Medicaid can look to NC HealthConnex as a single, trusted source of data. Health care providers who are participants of the NC HIEA do not have to go through a time-consuming validation process for quality reporting measures every time a payer wants to use their data.



Sam Thomson, executive director of the NC HIEA, presents about NC HealthConnex at the 2024 Public Health Data Summit in May 2024.

Duke Health and UNC Health partnered with the NC HIEA to achieve this validation. Data streams that earn validation undergo a rigorous, end-to-end review of the quality and integrity of data and the procedures used to manage and safeguard it.

“The shared vision between North Carolina Medicaid and the NC HIEA to leverage NC HealthConnex for quality measure reporting is one step closer to becoming a reality,” said State Chief Data Officer Christie Burris, who is also the NC HIEA's former executive director. “Through efforts like these, we will save state dollars and relieve provider

administrative burden while continually working to adhere to the NCQA's high standards of data quality.”

## First Pharmacies Connected to NC HealthConnex

The NC HIEA also completed its pharmacy pilot program in January 2024 and began connecting the first pharmacies to NC HealthConnex.

Full participants of the NC HIEA can now see pharmacy dispense data from connected pharmacies in the NC HealthConnex Clinical Portal, a secure, web-based system through which health care providers can view important health information.

With NC HealthConnex, health care providers can access labs, diagnostics, allergies and medication history to reduce medication errors and confirm with lab results that medications are working. With the addition of dispense data, providers also can now see when patients have picked up prescriptions.

In turn, pharmacists can now see patients' labs, allergies and information about functional and cognitive skills as well as other prescriptions, so they do not dispense contraindicated medications.

As of June 30, 2024, approximately 380 pharmacies were connected to NC HealthConnex, and more continue to be onboarded.

# HURRICANE HELENE RESPONSE

Hurricane Helene left catastrophic flooding and destruction in its wake when it passed through western North Carolina in late September 2024, resulting in an estimated \$59.6 billion in damages\* and the tragic deaths of more than 100 people.

The deadliest storm in the state's history prompted an unprecedented and coordinated response from all state agencies, in partnership with local and federal entities.

NCDIT supported and prioritized the many different information technology needs of local governments and state agencies with operations in the region, mobilizing resources and expertise to address the immediate needs of customers impacted by the disaster, while also laying the groundwork for long-term recovery and resilience-building efforts.

Below are highlights of the actions and ongoing support in response to the disaster:

## 911 Calls

The N.C. 911 Board worked in lockstep with the 124 public safety answering points it funds across the state to ensure 911 calls were answered and that impacted PSAPs were supported during and after the hurricane.

The state's Next Generation 911 system worked as designed to reroute 911 calls, as needed, to PSAPs that were not affected by the storm. As a result, there were no reports of 911 calls not being delivered, providing resiliency during a time of uncertainty for residents in western North Carolina. The board continues to support long-term recovery for impacted PSAPs.

\*Estimated total for damages and needs, as of Dec. 13, 2024, according to the Office of State Budget and Management

## Damage to State Facilities & Assets

NCDIT tracked service outages at state facilities, damage to broadband connections and progress on repairs and worked with vendors to support and prioritize reconnection.

With much of the region's communications network out of service, NCDIT worked with internet service providers and cellular providers to assess damages and needs for rebuilding infrastructure. The Division of Broadband and Digital Equity brought together many of its digital inclusion partners to discuss collaboration on recovery efforts. Digital equity grantees were given flexibility to make scope and budget revisions to help them respond to their communities' digital inclusion needs because of the storm.

NCDIT also proactively engaged with local governments to determine potential needs and to communicate ways the department could support them through emergency management and readied resources, including equipment, IT staffing support, meeting space/workspace, virtual hosting capabilities, website support and phones.

## Laptops & Equipment

NCDIT's Enterprise Operations team proactively identified laptops and other equipment within the department that could be quickly deployed to affected state agencies and local governments. Laptops were wiped clean, prepped for delivery and deployed as requests came in through the N.C. Division of Emergency Management.

NCDIT also secured and provided switch boxes necessary for the deployment of low-orbit satellites in devastated areas. The department also coordinated with state agencies, the state's community college system and local governments to determine additional needs for the satellites and to establish short- and long-term procurement vehicles for them.

## Customer Support

NCDIT ensured websites and customer support centers could support additional traffic related to disaster response. To ensure agency customers received priority response for Hurricane Helene-related requests, NCDIT created a dedicated request form in the NCDIT Service Portal as well as a corresponding dashboard to track support tickets.

## Mapping & Data Needs

The N.C. Center for Geographic Information and Analysis provided as-needed support to agencies regarding mapping and data requests. CGIA also explored imagery collection options for storm-ravaged counties through the statewide orthoimagery program.

The N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority prioritized new participation agreements and credentialing of providers in western North Carolina so they could gain access to the NC HealthConnex Clinical Portal, a web-based application that allows providers to access critical clinical information such as medical history, medications and treatment plans for displaced patients. The NC HIEA added 92 new accounts and users for immediate access.

In addition, the N.C. Government Data Analytics Center provided real-time identity validation and fraud verification for the N.C. Division of Employment Security as it handled the significant increase of unemployment insurance new claimants from hurricane-affected counties.



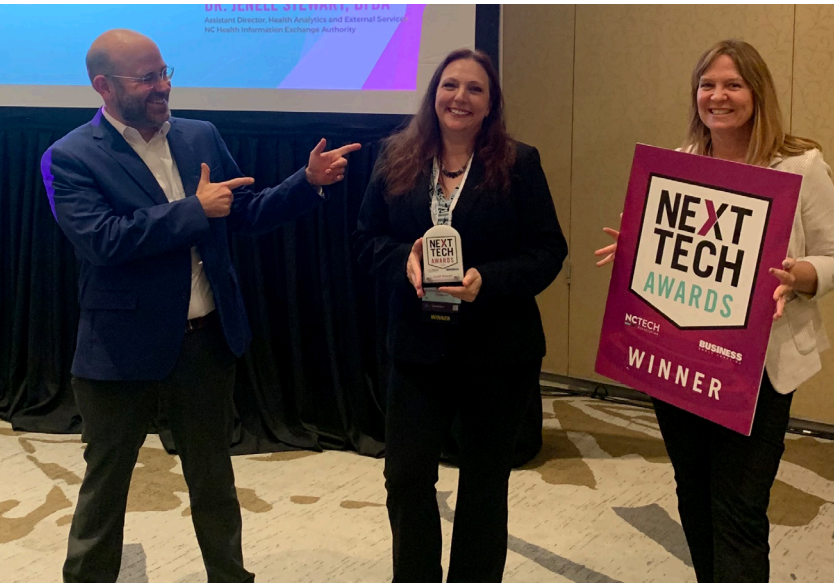
# AWARDS & RECOGNITION

## State Recognition

### North Carolina Tech Association

#### NEXT TECH Award

Jenell Stewart, assistant director of health analytics and external services for the N.C. Health Information Exchange Authority, received a NEXT TECH Award for emerging leaders in Tech+Innovation. Stewart helped establish the strategic direction of NC HIEA's analytics program and grow the state's health information exchange, NC HealthConnex, into a trusted data source. She also oversaw development of the N.C. Stroke Registry, which aims to improve the state's stroke system of care.



Jenell Stewart, center, on May 22, 2024, receives a NEXT TECH Award for emerging leaders in the category of Tech+Innovation.



NCDIT Secretary Jim Weaver is honored on Dec. 3, 2024, with NC TECH Awards' Public Leader of the Year.

## Public Leader of the Year

NCDIT Secretary Jim Weaver was named NC TECH Awards' Public Leader of the Year for championing initiatives such as closing the digital divide throughout North Carolina, building the human capital in the state's IT workforce and transforming the IT procurement process. He has pushed state government to make digital services more available and accessible while prioritizing security and privacy for state data and networks.

## Use of Tech in Cybersecurity

The N.C. 911 Board was a finalist in the NC TECH Awards for increasing cybersecurity awareness for public safety answering points, which might be vulnerable to cyberattacks or lack the resources to adequately prepare for them. Its efforts include a partnership with the N.C. Joint Cybersecurity Task Force as well statewide trainings, vulnerability assessments and cybersecurity remediation funding.

## Use of Tech in Government

NCDIT's Digital Solutions team was a finalist in the NC TECH Awards for its guidance to help agencies prioritize a digital-first experience for constituents. Efforts include developing the state's first Digital Accessibility and Usability Standard for public-facing websites and services as well as its work to promote a digital-first, inclusive culture among state employees. Other notable efforts are creating a community of practice focused on digital accessibility and the annual We Are NC Gov conference, which explores topics related to digital government.

## Best of North Carolina Awards

### NCDIT-Administration

NCDIT staff supporting the N.C. Department of Administration were recognized for their work in modernizing the state's state parking system with a new, secure fiber network that supports contactless payment, among other improvements.

### NCDIT-Environmental Quality

The NCDIT-Environmental Quality's Regional Operations team was honored for providing excellent

support during the deployment of a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephony solution for the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. The team traveled to each regional office across the state, engaged the vendor and other regional office teammates while installing a department-wide technology.

### NCDIT Geographic Information & Analysis Team

NCDIT's Geographic Information and Analysis team was recognized for providing invaluable resources to the State Board of Elections for major projects, including statewide redistricting efforts and polling place evaluations.

### NCDIT-Natural & Cultural Resources

Mike Pembroke, an NCDIT endpoint security specialist supporting the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, was honored as an extremely valuable and hard-working employee who demonstrates an eagerness to learn new processes and improve current ones for DNCR customers. He was also recognized for assisting teammates and giving reliable technical advice.

### NCDIT-Public Safety & NCDIT-Adult Correction

NCDIT-Public Safety and NCDIT-Adult Correction staff were honored for their hard work, dedication and commitment to provide the best IT services possible for both agencies, which are 24/7/365 safety-of-life departments, since the agencies' formal separation in 2023.

## NCDIT Statewide Procurement Office

NCDIT's Statewide IT Procurement Office was honored for leading an interdepartmental effort to reduce the time it takes to complete an IT procurement for the state.



Members of the Statewide IT Procurement team receive a Best of North Carolina award on Aug. 15, 2024.

## Office of State Human Resources

The N.C. State Office of Human Resources' IT Data Governance and Analytics team was recognized for launching the Data Governance Program, with support from NCDIT's Government Data Analytics Center, to standardize and centralize HR data and provide key metrics to effectively analyze workforce trends in state government.

## NCDIT-Transportation

NCDIT-Transportation and the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles were honored for implementing a new driver license credential system and meticulously conducting the planning, coding, system configurations and networking to roll out 555 new computers and cameras in 118 offices statewide over four weeks.

## National Recognition

### Center for Digital Government

#### Outstanding Achievement Award – Public Safety, Emergency Management, Criminal Justice & Corrections

The Center for Digital Government recognized NCDIT's FirstTech program for helping public safety agencies use advanced technology and working with government, nonprofit and industry partners to deliver emergency dispatch paging information over digital television signals, helping speed up emergency response.



## Digital States Survey

North Carolina was one of only nine states to achieve an overall grade of "A" on the 2024 Digital States Survey, maintaining its top grade from the 2022 edition of this biennial survey. The survey is administered by the Center for Digital Government and evaluates all 50 state governments' use of digital technologies.


## Civic Hacking Agency’s ScanGov Report Card

North Carolina was among eight states to earn an “A” for digital experience on government websites evaluated by the Civic Hacking Agency’s ScanGov Report Card. NC.gov, the one-stop portal to state government, developed and managed by NCDIT, received a 95% overall score on 19 criteria.

## 2023 Geospatial Maturity Assessment

North Carolina was the only state in the nation to receive a grade of “A” among 47 states evaluated in the National States Geographic Information Council’s 2023 Geospatial Maturity Assessment. This grade recognizes North Carolina’s national leadership in data-driven government, working with local and state partners to provide crucial geospatial data for decision-making.

GEOSPATIAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT 2023	
North Carolina Report Card	Overall Grade: A
<b>COORDINATION</b>	GRADE: A
<b>STATE-LED THEMES</b>	GRADE
Address	A
Cadastre	A
Elevation	A-
Orthoimagery Leaf-Off	A
Transportation	A
NG 9-1-1	A
<b>FEDERAL-LED THEMES</b>	
Geodetic Control	A
Government Units	A
Orthoimagery Leaf-On	B



## National Association of State Chief Information Officers State IT Recognition Awards

### Cybersecurity

The Enterprise Security and Risk Management Office was named a finalist for its work to centralize funding for common cybersecurity tools for state agencies and local government entities. This approach allows NCDIT to operate as a centralized security operations center and to offer these tools at no cost or low cost to smaller entities that lack the resources to adequately defend against cyberthreats.



### Information Communications Technology Innovations

The partnership of NCDIT’s Division of Broadband and Digital Inclusion, N.C. Center for Geographic Information and Analysis and N.C. Geographic Information Coordinating Council to create maps with much more precise views of broadband access and adoption was a finalist in this category. The team used NC OneMap, the state’s geospatial database, and AddressNC, a database of nearly 6 million addresses in the state supported by the N.C. 911 Board, to improve emergency response.

# LOOKING AHEAD

Hurricane Helene demonstrated how essential the internet is to connect people to critical, life-saving information and services. It also underscored the importance of the state's investments to close the digital divide.

As long-term recovery begins, NCDIT remains committed to connecting western North Carolina and building more resilient critical infrastructure to create stronger communities.

Connecting North Carolinians to affordable and reliable internet as well as the skills and devices to use it also provides greater opportunities to expand online government services. Investing in this digital transformation will allow people to access services when and where it is most convenient to them.

The scope and scale of cybersecurity threats are broadening every day, and the state must protect its networks, data and devices from cybercriminals. Cybersecurity and data protection will be more important than ever as more residents go online and more government services become digital. In addition, the quickly increasing use of AI and automation present tremendous opportunities across state government, but adds substantial risk.

Increased, recurring funding will be essential for NCDIT to expand whole-of-state cybersecurity to protect the state's networks, data and operations.

The rapid rate at which technology is evolving also means that agencies will need to procure IT goods and services efficiently while meeting security, privacy and other requirements. In addition, more

and more products include technology components with significant cybersecurity and privacy implications.

NCDIT expects to see an increase in the number of IT procurements in the coming years. To meet this demand, the Statewide IT Procurement Office will continue to build on the significant progress it has made to improve the IT procurement process. The team is exploring additional automations and process improvements to help reach its goal of at least 90% of procurement steps being completed on schedule.

Meeting the state's future technology challenges will require a strong workforce. Our ongoing work to build a talent pipeline and a strong agency culture will be essential to recruiting and retaining a skilled and dedicated workforce that is prepared to adapt to constantly evolving conditions.

Our work is strengthening all aspects of North Carolinians' lives, including health, public safety, education, the environment, transportation, natural and cultural resources and the economy.



Connecting North Carolina to Tomorrow 