Microsoft

Transform collaboration within and across agencies with Microsoft Teams

Microsoft 365 and government

Governments serve the public interest—a dynamic set of expectations that reflect the public's own changing experiences with the service economy. Citizens expect governments to provide sustainable programs, appropriate services, and responsive solutions. The most indispensable infrastructures—real or intangible—in society are the domain of public-sector agencies.

The stakes are high whether you're tasked with providing public safety, keeping the transportation network flowing, or implementing housing policies. You need to deliver on your public commitments in the context of multi-layered matrices of rules and procedures across agencies and demonstrate your agency's impact against its goals through transparent portfolio reviews.
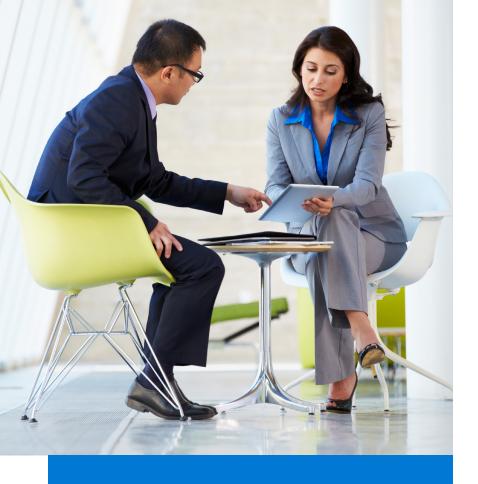
Top of mind for government employees

Government tools should enable faster access to data and secure information-sharing across agencies to improve mission outcomes, increase civic engagement, and accrue public trust in institutions.

• Policy makers show citizens how public input is valued and incorporated into initiatives.

• Public health officials build relationships across communities to identify obstacles and create best practices.

• Social workers begin early intervention immediately, through fast access to case files and streamlined interagency collaborations.

• Tax auditors securely balance data protection standards with the financial transparency taxpayers deserve.

• Researchers and scientists provide better information more quickly through open data and faster review cycles.

• Court personnel get efficient tools to speed case processing and reduce their reliance on paper-based systems.

• First responders can maximize limited government resources and minimize their response times through real-time communication and incident knowledge from the field.

Implementing modern collaboration and communications capabilities can streamline how you coordinate efforts within and across agencies—so you can more impactfully deliver against your mission.

Are you empowering your people to effectively coordinate on policies and programs?

By employing a digital strategy, governments can change the way business is done through the integration of people, process, and data—placing the citizen at the center of the agency's mission.

Embracing digital transformation

Government agencies can be slower to adopt modern technology than other sectors. If you're still doing things the way you were a decade ago, you're missing an opportunity to be more impactful.

Embracing digital transformation helps keep people more connected—to each other and to the information they need. You can improve how your teams work together, with other agencies, and intra-agency. Employees can spend less time searching for data by having improved access to their organization's knowledge base.

Through modern technology, you can empower your employees to break down barriers, work optimally where policies intersect, and ultimately move initiatives forward more effectively. This can help you:

• Break down the physical and virtual barriers that slow down communication.

• Streamline communication and collaboration to maximize your workforce productivity.

• Make information easier to find and share across agencies, enabling real-time decision making and more immediate results.

• Ease the burden of time-consuming tasks by accelerating joint initiatives and streamlining workflows through a clearer division of labor and accountabilities.

• Strike a greater balance between privacy, security, and compliance while giving your workers the freedom to collaborate effectively.

Effective collaboration

To help achieve your agency's mission, you need to improve coordination of efforts internally and across agencies. Policies and programs often touch more than one department, agency, or jurisdiction. However, physical and virtual boundaries between these entities can complicate the flow of information and hinder critical decision making.

Legacy tools and procedures impact your missions, often making information-sharing unnecessarily complex and collaboration cumbersome. By using outdated capabilities, you can cause misalignment between reporting and communication, duplicated work, and less secure environments, which can waste time or compromise data.

Challenges can arise from staying connected when working remotely or in the field. Without the right tools, you can experience inefficiencies, including unnecessary travel back and forth to the office to submit reports, audits, or transcribe notes to be saved. This is time better spent with citizens or focused on the task at hand. And the quality of the data can be compromised when the relevant stakeholders can't access or edit it in real time.

There's also the issue of knowledge and experience transfer as civil servants retire. For years, government employees relied on standard operating procedure documents. As a new generation of civil servants enters the workforce with different skillsets and technological expectations, how do you bridge this gap to facilitate knowledge transfer?

You need tools that enable you to collaborate with the right people without compromising the security of sensitive information.

How can I break down communication barriers between my team and others?

Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 provides solutions to empower government employees to work together more securely to improve mission outcomes. With tools like Microsoft Teams, you can transform how you collaborate and coordinate efforts within and across agencies.

The hub for teamwork in Microsoft 365, Teams helps governments to:

• Connect employees with stakeholders across departments in a shared workplace.

• Centralize communication and coordination to provide visibility, accountability, and keep initiatives moving forward.

• Enable teams to access resources from virtually anywhere, so they can spend time with citizens or on the frontline without delaying processes.

• Do all this while helping to protect sensitive information your teams work with daily.

Centralize communication and coordination

Organizations work from multiple locations, with different tools and conflicting procedures across departments and agencies. Technology can help to break down those physical and virtual barriers to facilitate partnerships that sustain programs.

Bring working groups together in a single hub

Microsoft Teams is a shared digital workspace that centralizes chats, meetings, calls, files, and tools. Whether you need to bring senior staff members together across locations to discuss a new regulation or connect an emergency management team before, during, or after an incident, Teams unites groups efficiently in a shared space.

Through persistent chat in Teams, stakeholders can connect one-on-one, in small groups, or as a team. Chats are saved, so you can reference past comments or decisions while maintaining the flow of the current conversation. You can hold audio or video meetings to save time from traveling between offices, enabling dispersed groups to easily join meetings as if they were in the same room.

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> With so much communication involved in government, it's crucial to make sure critical information isn't missed.

Keep things moving forward

You can use Microsoft Teams to help keep initiatives moving forward across programs with appropriate visibility.

With Office 365 apps like Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and SharePoint integrated into Teams, your staff can centralize agency documents, so team members can create, edit, and review documents at the same time. Documents can be reviewed and approved all in one place, with no need to search for the latest version or transfer edits from multiple versions. Integration with apps like Microsoft Planner helps provide everyone working together visibility into blockers. You can assign tasks and track progress to facilitate reliable handoffs and align with rules and procedures.

When a swift decision or response is needed, team members can be tagged and notified about a message that needs to be addressed. Urgent messages can be sent with priority notifications that will alert a recipient on their mobile or desktop devices until a response is received, every 2 minutes for up to 20 minutes. Messages can also be delegated to other team members to help facilitate a timely response.

Get a complete picture of what's going on and make better decisions as a team.

Communicate more securely across other agencies

When your agency implements new policies and programs that affect other organizations, Microsoft Teams can help you share information and coordinate communication with external stakeholders while maintaining control of critical data.

Using Guest Access in Teams, you can add outside contacts to the team, giving them access to team-specific information including conversations, shared files, and meetings, but not overall access to agency information. External Access lets you find and send messages to federated contacts who also use Teams in their agency, making it easier to connect with the people you need.

Make informed decisions, faster

With Microsoft Teams, you can optimize your use of data through the integration of Microsoft Power BI dashboards. This allows you to provide shared access to datasets. When relevant information is visible to everyone, the team can make informed decisions faster.

By combining and visualizing data from both internal and external data sources, you can generate insights into economic and political factors, policy considerations, and population information. Power BI reports can be shared with the team and set up with automatic data refresh, so the team is equipped with the latest information.

How can my team work efficiently when they aren't in the office?

Connect from the office or the field and include all team members

A new generation of workers expects the flexibility to collaborate and access materials from almost anywhere. They want to prepare for briefings while in transit, follow office discussions during site visits to hospitals or schools, or stay updated on emerging issues, whether out at a community meeting or at home.

Help all of your employees—diverse, geo-distributed, and of any generation—to be more productive and satisfied in their work when they can connect from the office or in the field no matter what device they're using.

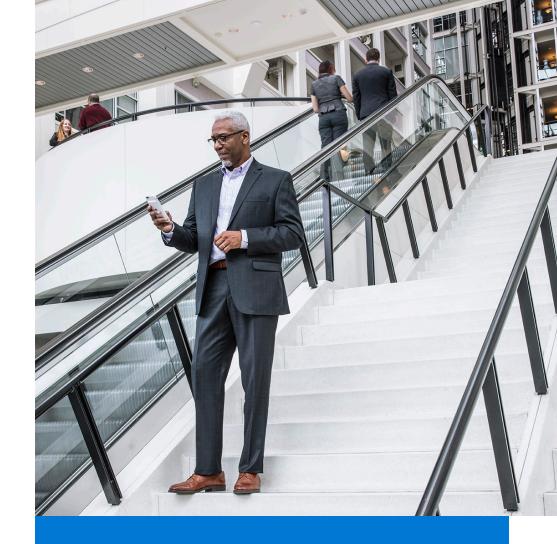## Provide a consistent and secure experience across devices

With Microsoft Teams, you can help your government employees stay connected with a consistent experience across devices. Employees can view and edit documents remotely while keeping your data secured. Teams enables your employees to store, share, and update Office 365 documents while keeping content and formatting intact.

As your employees work remotely, you want them to be as effective and efficient as they are in the office. Agencies require intelligent communications tools that deliver collaboration experiences and boost productivity. Using Teams, you can increase meeting effectiveness and create a secure messaging environment to protect information from unmanaged devices. Plus, to help remote and field workers stay more focused when connecting in meetings, you can enable them to blur their background during video calls, reducing distractions.

Promote inclusive and accessible teamwork

Microsoft joins with government agencies in the commitment to provide equal access for employees with disabilities and differences. To achieve this shared mission, Microsoft is committed to ensuring that its productivity applications and services are more accessible by people with a wide range of cognitive, hearing, vision, mobility, and speech abilities.

Microsoft Teams enables you to be more inclusive. For example, meeting attendees who are deaf, hearing impaired, or who have different levels of language proficiency can use real-time speaker captions or subtitles to follow discussions and contribute fully. With Immersive Reader in Teams, chat messages can be customized for vision needs including changing font size, color, or to have the message read aloud. Your staff can benefit from the intuitive controls in Office 365—such as Accessibility Checker and automatic alt-text. These tools can help you make your content accessible and identify and fix accessibility gaps in content.

Government leaders are expected to use accessible and inclusive language to communicate with constituents and across agencies.

You don't have to compromise on convenience to attain compliance.

Securely share and protect sensitive information

Finding the balance between security and productivity is a critical task for government agencies. Proactive security measures help protect your agency from cyberattacks that can steal or destroy public, personnel, and mission-critical information. At the same time, easy data-sharing and efficient communications within and across agencies keep missions moving forward. With Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Teams, you can enable more secure communication and collaboration—from the desktop through the mobile experience.

Protect information in the field

Government employees in the field use mobile devices and chat apps to report information from their from the remote site. Many field staff have had to rely on unsecured consumer chat apps to communicate with coworkers. Unfortunately, this makes processes inefficient, and more importantly, could make your agency vulnerable to serious security risks and compliance violations.

Communicating in Teams helps protect sensitive information from being stored on unsecured mobile devices. You can use app protection policies to prevent agency data from saving to the local storage of an unmanaged device or moving the data to other apps that aren't protected by app protection policies. Secure messaging stores communication threads and mobile images within Teams directly rather than the local device.

Microsoft Teams is a hub for teamwork that helps governments transform communication and collaboration within and across agencies to keep programs moving forward, promote responsiveness to citizens, and improve mission outcomes.
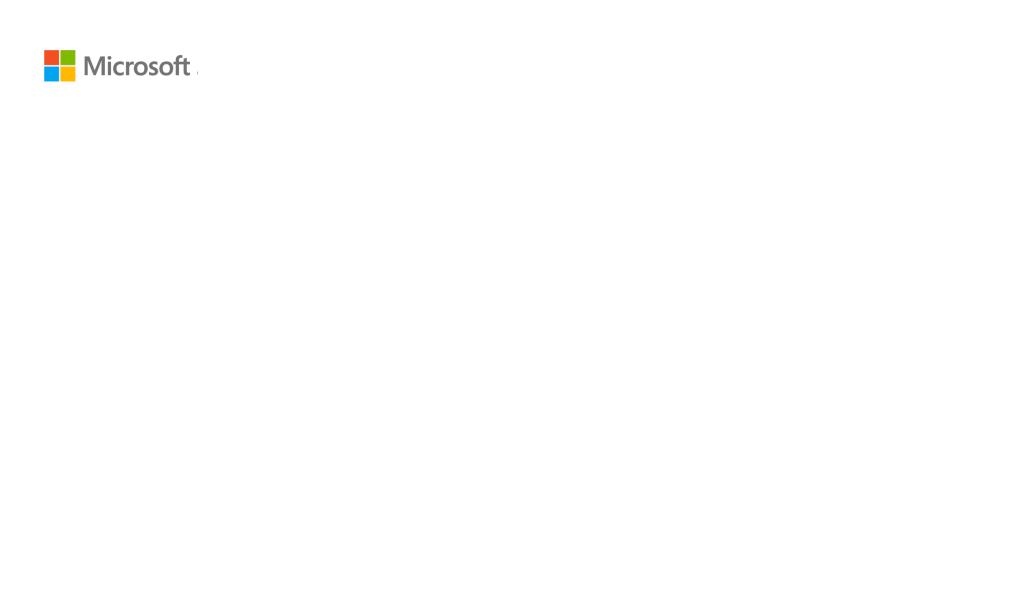
Work with confidence

Microsoft 365 security and compliance capabilities help you ensure that sensitive information is accessed and shared only with the appropriate people, with proper classification, governance, and identity. Capabilities built into Teams enable you to block sensitive information from being shared in chat messages with people who shouldn't see it. And when you need to respond to information requests or audits from legislators, media, and constituents, Microsoft 365 gives you the tools to quickly find and retain chat messages and documents.

Next steps

Learn more about [Microsoft 365 and government.](#)
Get started with [Microsoft Teams.](#)