Driving Innovation
with the Intelligent Cloud
What is Azure Government?

Azure Government is an exclusive instance of Microsoft Azure with world-class security and controls designed for highly sensitive data, enabling government customers to safely transfer mission-critical workloads to the cloud.

Azure has 38 services included in our FedRAMP High compliance program and robust networking throughout the United States with 8 announced regions, including 2 DoD regions certified at Impact Level 5, all connected via private dark fiber. Each region is over 500 miles apart with data replication across regions for business continuity.

Government leaders are looking for breakthrough ways to advance the mission, manage ever-increasing volumes of data, and refresh legacy systems while creating a foundation for the future.

Technology is the key enabler, helping federal agencies meet ever-increasing expectations, even with limited budgets to dedicate to these growing challenges.

Digital transformation using cloud technology enables federal civilian agencies to rapidly modernize, driving innovation while increasing the efficiency and security of existing systems.

Utilizing the cloud gives IT organizations the opportunity to do more with limited budgets, freeing up resources to focus on new initiatives that can advance the mission, increase the agility of federal employees, modernize legacy infrastructure, and ensure the nation is prepared for the unexpected.
Deliver secure + modern citizen services

Citizens today expect more from government services in terms of user experience and speed of access. For federal civilian agencies, this means providing ways for citizens to engage government on their own terms, on any device, at a time that works for them. With Azure Government, you can give your citizens secure, accessible ways to interact with government and increase the efficiency of your service offerings at the same time.

Key Azure solutions for secure + modern citizen services

As you plan and build secure + modern citizen services such as websites and apps to help citizens engage on their terms, consider some of the following services to accelerate development cycles, ensure security, and optimize the performance of your services. For example, you can:

Choose a platform service like Azure App Service. This open, flexible, and fully-managed platform service means you handle the infrastructure maintenance while you think up new ways to connect with citizens. And, you can accelerate development cycles with continuous integration capabilities as well as pre-built components, apps, and connectors.

Enable single sign-on to simplify user access to your cloud applications from any device using Azure Active Directory, a comprehensive identity and access management solution which enables users to easily access the services and applications you choose to make available. Azure AD works for apps in the cloud, on mobile, or on-premises, and you can layer additional security requirements such as Multi-Factor Authentication to further protect citizens and agencies.

Scale instantly and elastically to adapt to changing workloads with Azure Cosmos DB, a database built from the ground up with horizontal scale at its core. This database guarantees high availability and low latency anywhere in the world, so you can be confident your applications deliver speed and consistency no matter where the end user is located.

Accelerate app development and make maintenance easy and productive using Azure SQL Database, which helps you migrate your SQL Server databases without changing your existing apps. Take advantage of built-in intelligence that tunes itself to learn app patterns and adapts to maximize performance, reliability, and data protection.

Example of secure + modern citizen services:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) uses Azure Government to give veterans access to information that is both clear and easy to understand, not only to help veterans make informed decisions about their healthcare but also to improve overall patient satisfaction and outcomes. The online tool Access to Care provides public access and transparency to key data to help veterans, their family members, and caregivers make more informed decisions about healthcare.

Built and hosted in multiple Microsoft Azure Government regions, the VA’s Access to Care site features highly scalable public-facing websites, giving veterans and their families an online portal that simplifies complex data such as new and established patient wait times, satisfaction scores for access to primary and specialty care, and timeliness of urgent appointments.

In the process of planning this project, the VA issued a FedRAMP High ATO to Microsoft Azure Government—a critical step in the agency’s cloud readiness. By building and hosting Access to Care on Azure Government, the VA is continuing to embrace digital modernization and improve its services for veterans around the world.

“Through the power of cloud technology, we are able to take information of great importance to Veterans and our stakeholders, such as the Access to Care website, and make it directly available to our constituents.”

Jack Bates
DIR ECTOR, O& T BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SERVICE LINE
Modernize legacy infrastructure to operate more efficiently

According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the cost of maintaining legacy infrastructure can be more than 75% of an agency's IT budget. With only a fraction left for modernization and innovation, IT leaders are left with a challenging remit. Agencies planning to modernize their infrastructure in accordance with the Modernizing Government Technology Act (MGT) still need to prove the business case for their cloud investments.

With Azure Government, your organization gains the ability to move mission-critical workloads to the cloud and the flexibility to modernize on your terms. The sole government-only offering to span infrastructure, platform and software capabilities and services (IaaS, PaaS, and SaaS), Azure Government offers the broadest coverage for compliance and regulatory standards, including two DoD regions certified at Impact Level 5.

Azure has always been hybrid by design, helping organizations address requirements around regulations, connectivity, and latency. Many government agencies turn to a hybrid approach as the bedrock of their IT modernization strategy, with the goal of seamlessly moving between public cloud environments and their own infrastructure.

Scenario: Using Azure Stack to modernize legacy infrastructure

We’re further advancing our consistent, comprehensive hybrid cloud capabilities by bringing Microsoft Azure Stack to Azure Government. Azure Stack gives you even more options for modernizing on-premises legacy applications that are not ready for the public cloud due to cyber defense or any other requirements.

Government customers can use a combination of Azure Stack and Azure Government to support the full-spectrum of unclassified and classified data and special access programs, or seamlessly move between government cloud and on-premises environments. Using a common set of tools for developing, deploying, and managing data and applications, customers can develop and deploy applications in Azure Government and gain full flexibility to deploy on-premises using Azure Stack to meet specific data compliance, regulatory or policy requirements.

For example, Azure Stack can help meet regulatory requirements when government entities like embassies or military bases in foreign countries may not be able to use local cloud services for data or applications due to data residency requirements.

Key Azure solutions for modernizing legacy infrastructure

When planning your app modernization strategy, it pays to focus your IT resources on innovation instead of managing hardware. With Azure Infrastructure as a service (IaaS) you can install, configure, and manage your own operating systems, middleware, and apps, only paying for what you use, when you use it. With Azure Platform as a service (PaaS) solutions, you get a complete environment for delivering anything from simple cloud-based apps to sophisticated, mission-critical applications.

Some of the key IaaS and PaaS capabilities for modernization include:

**Build apps faster** with a serverless architecture that can scale on demand with Azure Functions, an event-driven compute experience that allows you to execute your code, written in the programming language of your choice, without worrying about servers.

**Offload the heavy lifting** of datacenter management with Azure Storage, which provides a range of solutions for your needs, scalability you won’t outgrow, and the agility to accommodate changing requirements. No more capital expense for new hardware, just flexible cloud options you pay for as you need them.

**Gain massive capacity** with High Performance Computing (HPC) services that can help you break free from the overhead and limitations of on-premises infrastructure. Tap into unlimited resources to scale challenging workloads such as analyzing large-scale data and running simulations.

1Source: US Government Accountability Office, May 2016, GAI-16-696T
Ready your agencies and departments for unexpected events and disasters

Federal civilian agencies have a mandate to ensure business continuity in the face of regional or national emergencies and need to respond swiftly when help is needed across the country. To respond quickly, these agencies need to ensure their backup and recovery strategies are intact, with capabilities for fast failover and automated recovery.

Using traditional backup solutions to achieve true application disaster recovery is extremely cumbersome, error prone and not scalable. Even many replication-based software offerings only recover individual virtual machines and can’t handle the complexity of bringing up a functioning large-scale application. Azure Government offers cloud-based backup and site recovery services to provide reliable protection for your data and services, ensuring business continuity when you need it. It’s a cost-effective way to ensure you’re prepared for the unexpected.

Built for the strictest security and compliance requirements of U.S. Government agencies and their partners, Azure Government provides true geographic redundancy by replicating data in multiple datacenters located more than 500 miles apart. All data, applications, and hardware reside in the continental United States, and are managed exclusively by U.S. screened personnel.

Key Azure solutions for backup and recovery

- **Cost-effective backup:** For backup, many agencies are replacing secondary sites and on-site tape backup using simple pay-as-you-go (PAYG) services such as Azure Backup. Azure Backup provides a compelling alternative to tape with significant cost savings, shorter recovery times, and up to 99 years of retention.
- **Secure and always available:** Azure Backup stores three copies of your data in three different locations in the primary datacenter and another three copies in a remote location. Data is encrypted before it leaves your datacenter, sent over a secure connection to Azure, and stored encrypted in Azure.
- **Simpler compliance and reporting:** With Backup, you gain centralized monitoring and reporting across on-premises and Azure. And with just a few clicks, you’ll be able to export Power BI reports about your backups, making compliance easy.
- **Fast, automated recovery:** If changes occur, you can use Traffic Manager to easily route traffic from one site to another to optimize performance and availability. With Azure Site Recovery, you can create a fully automated restore plan, including recovery scripts that enable failover in minutes.

* These services currently available in Azure commercial, some have been announced as coming soon to Azure Government. Please see the Products available by region page for service availability and subscribe to the Azure Government blog to hear the latest on Azure Government.

Scenario: Using Azure Site Recovery for 1-click disaster recovery

Cloud migration or disaster recovery is not only about replicating your virtual machines but also about end-to-end application recovery that is tested, error free, and stress free when you decide to migrate or when disaster strikes. This is the promise of Azure Site Recovery.

**Recovery plans** in Azure Site Recovery help you plan for a systematic recovery process by creating small independent units, such as an application, that you can manage. Your recovery plan allows you to not only define the sequence in which the virtual machines start, but also to automate common tasks during recovery.

One way to check your level of preparedness for cloud migration or disaster recovery is to ensure every application is part of a recovery plan and each recovery plan is tested for failover to Microsoft Azure. With this complete, you can confidently migrate or failover your entire datacenter to Microsoft Azure.

Learn more about how you can use recovery plans to failover or migrate applications to Microsoft Azure in the most tested and deterministic way in this blog, or learn more about some of the key Azure services for backup and recovery below.

Rest assured during an outage or disaster scenario with a solution that protects the widest range of enterprise applications of any cloud disaster recovery provider. Fail over your apps—and your entire datacenter—in a matter of hours instead of weeks or months.
WHY AZURE GOVERNMENT

Unlock **innovation** with powerful data and analysis services to rapidly build **intelligent** solutions at scale.

Enable **productivity** with a growing marketplace and managed services to help you focus on your mission.

Rest assured with the **trusted** cloud exclusive to government, with world-class security and advanced threat protection services.

Meet critical **compliance** standards and exceed U.S. Government regulatory requirements.

Accelerate development with an open platform and unified tools and services in a **flexible** and truly **hybrid** environment.
Microsoft government cloud services adhere to the US Criminal Justice Information Services Security Policy.

Microsoft Azure Government supports Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation (DFARS) requirements.

Microsoft received Department of Defense (DoD) Provisional Authorizations at Impact Levels 5, 4, and 2.

Microsoft was granted US Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) P-ATOs and ATOs.

Microsoft certifies that its cryptographic modules comply with the US Federal Info Processing Standard.

Microsoft has controls that meet the requirements of US Internal Revenue Service Publication 1075.


Microsoft DoD certifications address and exceed US NIST 800-171 security requirements.


Microsoft cloud services offer Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates.