

# 2024

## GovOps ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Transforming government through innovation, developing a skilled workforce and promoting results-oriented practices in partnership with more than 150 departments statewide.



CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AGENCY



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# MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

I am pleased to present this year's Government Operations Agency (GovOps) annual accomplishments report. It details the tremendous progress we've made for all Californians and demonstrates the continued dedication, strategic focus, and resilience of our agency.



Over the past year, we have made significant progress across our departments, boards and offices, driven by our dedicated staff. Each has played a role in advancing our key initiatives and ensuring we remain focused on service delivery for those we serve. From enhancing operational efficiency and optimizing resources, to delivering innovative solutions, our teams continue to show why GovOps, and our 13 collective departments, boards and programs, are frequently called upon to implement important priorities for Governor Newsom's administration.

I am incredibly thankful to have the support of each team member within our agency, departments, boards, and programs, as 2024 proved we are up for any challenge we face. I look forward to what 2025 will bring while recognizing the numerous accomplishments from this year. Thank you to all of those who made this an especially momentous and memorable year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Amy Tong". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Amy Tong**

*Secretary, Government Operations Agency*





## About GovOps

The Government Operations Agency (GovOps) leads implementation of strategic initiatives focused on accelerating innovation in state operations. The Agency is one of 11 cabinet-level agencies that reports to the Governor. It oversees and supports the work of 13 departments, boards, and offices with more than 22,000 employees and an annual budget of \$67 billion.

GovOps works to accelerate innovation, develop a skilled workforce and promote results-oriented practices in partnership with more than 150 departments statewide.

“

***The challenge is for all of us to learn what's possible, take risks in our daily work, and learn from our mistakes, as we reinvent government to keep up with the changes happening all across society.***

*– Secretary Amy Tong*



## Vision

To reimagine and deliver a government that better serves all Californians.

## Mission

Our mission is to advance effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in state operations.

## Strategic Goals

1. **Develop the State Workforce** – Using people centered approach, develop and support strategies across departments to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce that reflects Californians.
2. **Accelerate Innovation** – Explore emerging business and technology trends and put new ideas into practice that advance state operational goals.
3. **Sustain Business Transformation** – Build an agile and resilient government by streamlining processes, eliminating inefficient practices, and measuring key results in state operations.
4. **Advance Equity** – Lead state government in embedding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in state operations in support of a California for all.





## Agency Core Values

### **Collaboration**

- Leverage diverse and individual strengths among colleagues.
- Create positive work environments to promote collaboration and achieve results.
- Build public confidence in government by creating opportunities for resident input to improve how government works.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility**

- Actively promote the presence of differences so that collective efforts and the state workforce reflects California.
- Create work environment where everyone, regardless of race, gender, disability or sexual identity feels included and welcome.
- Improve systems and processes that can improve equity.

### **Leadership**

- Provide solutions and alternatives to the most complex operational problems.
- Support and motivate teams to create a sense of direction, purpose, and excitement to optimize workforce productivity and efficiency.
- Cultivate an inclusive culture of learning, continuous development, and accountability to achieve more value-added activities.

### **Respect**

- Champion respect, recognition, and praise to build trusting relationships.
- Value others experiences, viewpoints, and personalities to create a feeling of cooperation.
- Support others' growth and development.



# Our Departments, Boards, and Offices

GovOps oversees state government improvement, including the strategic management of state resources and advancing innovation in government. In addition, we have direct responsibility for 13 different state departments, boards and programs. These entities support our agency's mission to improve management and accountability of government programs, increase efficiency and promote better and more coordinated operational decisions.



**Suzanne M. Ambrose**

Executive Officer,  
State Personnel Board



**Liana Bailey-Crimmins**

State Chief Technology Officer and Director,  
California Department of Technology



**Mary Ann Bates**

Executive Director,  
Cradle-to-Career Data System



**Marcie Frost**

Chief Executive Officer,  
California Public Employees'  
Retirement System



**Lynda Gledhill**

Executive Officer,  
California Victim Compensation Board



**Ana M. Lasso**

Director,  
Department of General Services



**Cassandra Lichnock**

Chief Executive Officer,  
California State Teachers'  
Retirement System



**Nicolas Maduros**

Director,  
California Department of  
Tax and Fee Administration



**Jennifer Maguire**

Director,  
Department of FISCAL



**Office of Data  
and Innovation**



**Jeffrey Marino**

Director,  
Office of Data and Innovation



**Eraina Ortega**

Director,  
California Department of  
Human Resources



**Kenneth J. Pogue**

Director,  
Office of Administrative Law



**Selvi Stanislaus**

Executive Officer,  
Franchise Tax Board



# GovOps 2024 Initiatives

## Develop the State Workforce

Using people centered approach, develop and support strategies across departments to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce that reflects Californians.

## Work for California, Work with a Purpose

The “Work for California” (Work4CA) hiring and recruitment pilot ran from January through March 2023 to improve the State’s recruitment and hiring practices. The pilot included an in-person hiring event held in Oakland on February 23, 2023. While initially started to attract recently displaced employees from the technology sector, the campaign also advertised many other employment opportunities across the State.



Following the conclusion of the Work4CA pilot, it became clear that there was a strong need for a centralized recruitment initiative. As a result, the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) took over the branding of the Work4CA campaign for future events.

CalHR launched the Work4CA website in January 2024 and followed up with the launch of our paid media campaign in April. The paid media campaign focused on outreach and education to the public and state recruiters to position the State of California as the premier employer of choice. Work4CA will continue to educate and increase awareness about the different paths toward state employment and walk prospective applicants at all levels and abilities through the state application and hiring process. The Work4CA website also highlights hiring events and vacancies across different departments.



Below are some notable statistics since its launch in January:



**70.8k**

users have visited  
the site



**44.6%**

increase in page  
views in June from the  
previous month



**37.6%**

increase in website  
engagement in June  
from the previous month



In alignment with GovOps' strategic goals of developing the state workforce and advancing equity, the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) led a recruitment campaign under the brand "Work for California" (Work4CA). The Work4CA brand and messaging awareness as well as broad-based marketing and education campaigns play a critical role in helping CalHR gain visibility and momentum as an employer of choice with Californians.

By using a strategic and targeted approach, CalHR reached the public with increased communication about its new recruitment resources, employment opportunities, recruitment events and benefits programs. Ensuring that information is consistent, easy to understand and readily available to partner agencies and the public is imperative for successful communication. These efforts also enhance CalHR's external image and help cultivate the next generation of leaders and employees who reflect California's diverse talent pool.



CalHR used focus groups to develop a targeted and results-driven awareness campaign and determine campaign messaging and execution. With feedback from the focus groups, CalHR worked with vendors to revise the campaign to:

### **Great Benefits. Job Security. Work with a Purpose.**

Between April and June 2024, CalCareers saw the following trends on the website:

**31.6%** increase year over year in new account creation.

**27%** increase year over year in applications submitted.

**2.2%** increase year over year in candidates hired.

**0.22%** change in total appointments.

Overall, the Work4CA campaign kick-off was a success, bringing in awareness of state jobs, the benefits of working for the state, and helping job seekers through the application process.

# Regulatory Changes to Promote Equity and Consistency

In July and August 2024, two significant regulatory packages approved by the State Personnel Board (SPB) took effect that clarified and streamlined current personnel practices and addressed deficiencies in the state's selection process. The regulatory changes included additional criteria for exam and job announcements, a more efficient process for requesting probationary period extensions, additional documentation requirements for temporary assignments or loans, and a streamlined unlawful appointment determination process. The regulatory changes provide cost benefits to the state by reducing the amount of time and resources required to administer the civil service selection, and unlawful appointment determination process. Additionally, several of these regulatory changes create a more fair, equitable, and consistent state civil service selection process. This supports the Governor's and the Board's continuing efforts to build and retain a responsive, highly skilled workforce while simultaneously preserving the integrity of the merit system.

## Building a GenAI-Ready Workforce



In July 2024, CalHR, the Office of Data and Innovation (ODI) and the California Department of Technology (CDT) deployed training opportunities for state government workers and respective departments in the use of state-approved generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools.

The training aims to equip staff with the necessary skills to use new tools effectively, fostering a workforce ready to take on the challenges and opportunities presented by GenAI.

- **General Workforce Training: Responsible AI for Public Professionals.** State employees can register for this free training on [CalLearns](#). This training will help participants gain a better understanding of what GenAI is and isn't, understand risks related to GenAI use, and how to minimize them, and identify opportunities to use GenAI.
- **Foundations of GenAI certificate series:** CalHR and ODI have created a five-course series focused on essential skills and knowledge for deploying GenAI safely and effectively.
- **GenAI Technical Training:** CDT's Office of Professional Development is partnering with industry leaders and nonprofit organizations to establish a statewide technical training curriculum designed to prepare the state's technology and cybersecurity workforce to ensure GenAI technologies are implemented effectively, safely, and securely.





## GovOps Statewide Leadership Summit

On July 16, 2024, GovOps hosted the 2nd annual state leadership summit, Transformational Leadership to Deliver Results for All Californians. The summit brought together state executive leadership to discuss achievements as well as encourage leadership alignment around bold, innovative, and results-focused service delivery to all Californians. The Governor and First Partner delivered inspiring fireside chats to uplift public service and foster an innovative mindset. Agency Secretaries participated in panels to discuss critical achievements, their role in supporting positive change for all Californians, and programs that produce results and demonstrate a culture of innovation in state government. Over 380 department directors and executive staff participated as attendees and speakers.

The summit gathered executive leaders from throughout state agencies and departments to share priorities for achieving effective government operations and service delivery. Throughout the year, these forums provide opportunities for leaders to hear and learn from experts and each other on timely topics.

## Government Innovation Summit

On August 20, 2024, GovOps, ODI, and e.Republic brought together over 800 state innovators and industry partners at the 2024 Government Innovation Summit to connect on innovative approaches, share project success stories, and harness the power of emerging technologies like GenAI for the public good. Director Jeffrey Marino highlighted the innovative work his team at ODI are doing around product management, human-centered design, and data science to further the goal of

# California

## Government Innovation Summit

creating a government that is modern, effective, and provides exceptional service to all Californians. Keynote speaker James Taylor inspired attendees to foster a collaborative spirit and a creative mindset to transform public service delivery and administrative processes. Presented by Government Technology Magazine, the Best of California Awards program recognized California state government employees and projects for their contributions to improving the customer experience Californians have with their government through innovation. Secretary Amy Tong highlighted the innovative work of the five GenAI proof-of-concept projects initiated by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA), the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS), and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) under the recent executive order and awarded the first ever Innovator of the Year award.





# Accelerate Innovation

Explore emerging business and technology trends and put new ideas into practice that advance state operational goals.



## Generative AI in California

In 2023, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-12-23 to study the development, use, and risks of GenAI technology throughout the state and to develop a deliberate and responsible process for evaluation and deployment of GenAI within state government. GovOps and its departments are leading the GenAI work across the administration in collaboration with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), and the California Cybersecurity Integration Center (Cal-CSIC).



In December 2024, the state launched a [new website](#) focused on the GenAI work happening across state government. The new site serves as a one-stop resource for state staff, the innovator community, and those following California's nation-leading progress on testing opportunities to safely and responsibly use GenAI tools to address current challenges.





## GenAI Sandboxes

Guided by Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order, the GenAI sandbox initiative has been a critical step in integrating GenAI into state operations safely and effectively. Led by CDT, this effort allows state agencies to test GenAI solutions in isolated, systems-secured "sandbox" environments built and maintained by CDT, ensuring that any potential issues remain contained and do not impact state systems. Each sandbox is vendor-agnostic and cloud-based, offering flexibility for testing a range of AI tools while keeping control over data and business processes. The focus on using public, non-sensitive data ensures privacy and enables thorough evaluations that allow agencies to make well-informed procurement decisions and maintain costs. Contracted vendors manage the GenAI applications while the state maintains oversight of the data within the secure sandboxes. By developing innovation in a structured, low-risk environment, California has positioned itself as the leader in responsible government adoption of GenAI and created a model for others to follow.



## GenAI RFI2 Procurement

In January 2024, the Department of General Services (DGS) led the state competitive GenAI Request for Innovative Ideas (RFI2) procurement efforts with an accelerated timeframe, issuing five solicitations, and

awarding ten proof-of-concept (POC) contracts in April/May 2024. DGS collaborated with project stakeholders, facilitated development of the solicitations, engaged the vendor community through conferences and confidential discussions, supported the state departments through evaluations, and negotiated with selected vendors to execute contracts. In parallel, DGS worked with stakeholders to develop and issue guidance on how to procure GenAI tools outside of the POC process. The guidance document, online toolkit and policy bulletins identified the guardrails required for GenAI purchases such as pre-procurement risk evaluation, vendor disclosure of the use of GenAI, CDT consultation of

risk level, solicitation and contract language and special contract terms and conditions protecting the state's data. In September 2024, DGS was recognized for the success of both the RF12 procurements and guidance by the National Association of State Procurement Officials, the National Association of Chief Administrators and the National Governor's Association with the inaugural Procurement Impact Award for California's demonstration of collaboration as well as significant value impact to both procurement and the public.

## GenAI Proof-of-Concept

In spring of 2024, the state entered into agreements with ten vendors to test, iterate and evaluate GenAI through proof-of-concept (POC) projects. The state will pay each POC vendor \$1 to ideate in the secure and isolated sandbox testing environment. This gives the state and the vendors time to see what works, what doesn't, and make necessary adjustments during a 6-month window. Working side-by-side with state teams, each vendor will test their proposed GenAI solutions using real, publicly available data to create a realistic representation of state operations.



***We are now at a point where we can begin understanding if GenAI can provide us with viable solutions while supporting the state workforce. Our job is to learn by testing, and we'll do this by having a human in the loop at every step so that we're building confidence in this new technology.***

***– Secretary Amy Tong***

Throughout the POC process, the participating state departments, CDTFA, CalSTA, Caltrans, CalHHS, and CDPH collaborated closely with CDT and the vendors to assess the accuracy, security, and privacy of their solutions to refine any necessary technology requirements during this process.

At the conclusion of this process, ODI will help assess future agreements and ensure a human-centered design approach, combined with research-backed insights and high-level evaluation metrics to help inform the state's prospective GenAI solutions.

# GenAI Innovator Showcase

On September 26, 2024, GovOps hosted the first large-scale GenAI innovator showcase as an opportunity to conduct market research and explore emerging GenAI technology to enable state departments to better serve the residents of California. More than 30 technology innovators from across California gathered in Sacramento to discuss how cutting edge GenAI technology can help solve critical state issues from homelessness to better forecasting the impacts of a recession.



Leaders from the Department of Finance (DOF), the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS), the Employment Development Department (EDD), Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH), and Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) heard more than 60 presentations collectively, and engaged directly with technology innovators on specific challenges facing their departments.

*"The robust interest we received from innovators in this showcase is a testament to important work being done by California to integrate GenAI into the state sector, considering California remains the tech capital of the world. The goal is to use this technology to enhance our services, not replace our workforce."* - **Amy Tong, Secretary, California Government Operations Agency**

*"Today's AI showcase was an incredible opportunity to hear and see the possibilities of incorporating GenAI into our operations. My team and I are excited to further explore GenAI to enhance and complement our existing operations."* - **Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance**



## GenAI Proof-of-Concept Round 2

Following September's first large-scale GenAI Innovator Showcase event, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), Employment Development Department (EDD) and Department of Finance (DOF) announced they are making progress exploring GenAI to address critical issues that are top of mind for Californians.

*"Our hard work is paying off after months of thorough research and engaging with the innovator community to determine whether GenAI is the answer to some of the challenges the state is currently facing. Governor Newsom has made clear his priority to leverage technology and innovation to deliver a government that works for every Californian, while keeping the state a global leader in cutting edge tech."*

**- Amy Tong, Secretary, California Government Operations Agency**



***California must innovate and not take the traditional governmental approach when transformative technology like GenAI is here today and can be used right now to help address challenges we face across state government. We must continue our work to be responsible, proactive, and 'learn by doing' so we can test if GenAI can help us now or in the future.***

***- California Governor Gavin Newsom***

Working with the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency, HCD is seeking to track the creation and implementation of housing plans, programs, and initiatives across the state more efficiently and quickly. The lack of transparency in housing plans, programs, and initiative implementation progress is leading to less equitable housing planning and development, and fewer homes built overall. Using GenAI may increase transparency and accuracy, enabling HCD to provide more equitable housing services across California.

*"We need to utilize all the tools at our disposal to improve the lives of all Californians. By using GenAI to better track and evaluate how local jurisdictions are planning and building housing across California, we can address barriers to housing development and promote affordable housing investments in neighborhoods of opportunity."* - **Tomiquia Moss, Secretary, Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency**

The EDD is also working with the State Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) to find innovative GenAI solutions to address the dual challenge of enhancing recession forecasting and its ten-year industry and occupational employment projections. The EDD currently lacks a tool that aligns economic predictions with emerging employment trends, refines statistical models, and supports improvements. Additionally, it does not have a system capable of using real-time data to address workforce challenges during recessions. Utilizing GenAI solution may produce accurate recession forecasts to better inform state and local workforce planning and policy development. This, in turn, may enable the department to respond proactively to changes in the state's economy.

*"I applaud Governor Newsom's foresight in pursuing the responsible use of AI to enhance our ability to serve Californians. AI is a potentially powerful tool for honing our ability to predict when our fellow residents will need economic assistance and what kinds of workforce training will best prepare them for the jobs of the future."* - **Stewart Knox, Secretary, Labor and Workforce Development Agency**

DOF is seeking an innovative solution to synthesize legislative bill analysis, which is a complex and lengthy process throughout the year. DOF staff currently work across multiple systems to complete their analysis that is vital to the state budget. This work includes considering fiscal impacts to the state, stakeholder feedback, previous years' analysis and studying other intricate information. The goal for this work is to find ways to bring all data sets together and provide staff with comprehensive summaries they can consider early in their process.

*"We look forward to potentially leveraging AI technology to streamline our workload, improve decision-making, and ensure responsible allocation of California's financial resources."* - **Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance**

## NVIDIA AI Collaboration

California is partnering with NVIDIA on a new initiative to collaborate on cutting-edge AI efforts and provide students, educators, and workers with unprecedented access to this transformative technology. The initiative, signed by Governor Gavin Newsom and NVIDIA founder and CEO Jensen Huang, aims to:





Train students, educators  
and workers



Support job creation and  
promote innovation



Use AI to solve challenges  
that can improve the lives of  
Californians

Among other goals, it strives to bring new AI resources into community colleges from NVIDIA – including curriculum and certifications, hardware and software, AI labs and workshops, and more – to open new pathways for students, educators and workers to learn new skills and advance their careers.

*“California’s world-leading companies are pioneering AI breakthroughs, and it’s essential that we create more opportunities for Californians to get the skills to utilize this technology and advance their careers. We’re teaming up with NVIDIA to connect AI tools directly to students, educators, and workers – creating a pipeline to drive the innovations of the future.”*

– **California Governor Gavin Newsom**

*“We’re in the early stages of a new industrial revolution that will transform trillion-dollar industries around the world. Together with California, NVIDIA will train students, college faculty, developers, and data scientists to harness this technology to prepare California for tomorrow’s challenges and unlock prosperity throughout the state.”*

– **Jensen Huang, Founder and CEO, NVIDIA**



# California Earns an A Grade

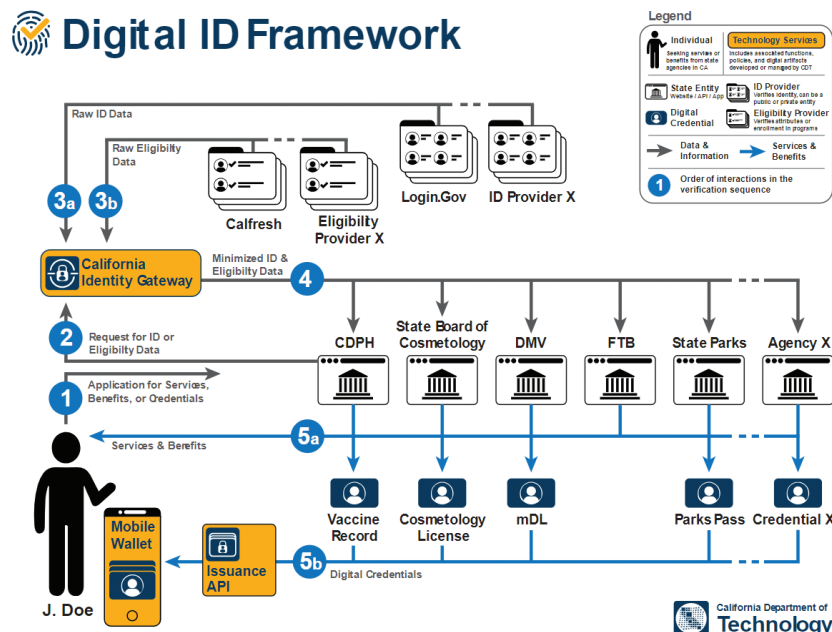
In September 2024, the Center for Digital Government announced the results of its 2024 [Digital States Survey](#), a biennial evaluation of the technology practices of all 50 states. California earned an A grade in the Digital States Survey.



This grade, up from a B+ in 2022, is the result of dedicated state leadership and outstanding partnerships with industry and academia. The A grade epitomizes the vision for a seamless and secure digital experience for all Californians and the state's workforce. In addition to the stellar A grade, California was also awarded first place in Information Technology Leadership.

## California Digital Identity Project

CDT leads the development, implementation, administration, and management of the California Digital Identity Framework – a collection of data, technology infrastructure, digital services, and governance that allows for digital identity and program eligibility verification. A digital identity (or “digital ID”) is the electronic validation of an individual's identity similar to a physical ID card. A digital ID can be presented electronically to verify an individual's identity in order to access information or services online. The Digital ID framework is a combination of systems and electronic artifacts that securely and conveniently allows the State to verify individuals' identities to determine benefits eligibility, access to government services, and to distribute benefits to eligible individuals. Currently, CDT is in the pilot phase of California's Digital ID project.





## DGS May Lee State Office Complex

The Department of General Services (DGS) designed and constructed the new May Lee State Office Complex (MLSOC) on a 17.3-acre site in Sacramento that was previously home to the old State Printing Plant. The MLSOC is the State's largest office complex project to date and is comprised of office space and amenities totaling approximately 1,250,000 GSF. The project features a seven-story parking garage, central utility plant, 300-person auditorium, 25-room training center, childcare facility for 120 children, coffee shop, large dining hall, two retail spaces, fitness center, and a secure indoor bike storage room.

The complex is the largest all-electric Zero Net Energy (ZNE), zero carbon (ZNC) complex in the country. The project exceeded all contract and labor goals, achieving 7 percent Disabled Veteran (DVBE), 28 percent Small Business (SBE), 25 percent Apprentice Hours, and 30 percent Targeted Worker Hours.

The 4-year design-build construction project completed \$30 million under budget and 3 weeks ahead of schedule, saving the state an additional \$20 million in bond interest. The building is named after former DGS employee May Lee, the longest-serving state employee in California state history, learn more about her in GovOps' ["GotAMinute?" video](#).





## Expanding Sustainability

In 2024, DGS' Office of Sustainability completed 10 megawatts of clean energy projects at state owned facilities. It also launched a microgrid development program by onboarding two engineering firms to perform assessment, feasibility, design, and engineering services for microgrid deployment at state facilities. This program has more than 10 assessments underway which will join the pipeline of new renewable energy projects. The Clean Energy Unit also issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to establish a pool of Energy Service Providers to develop large scale renewable energy and storage installations on surplus or underutilized state-owned property to advance the state's clean energy goals. The pilot project for this effort is the former McCain Valley Conservation Camp, a 400+ acre property in the San Diego area capable of hosting between 50 – 80 megawatts of wind and solar generation.



DGS' Office of Fleet and Asset Management (OFAM) continues to spearhead the state's fleet sustainability efforts to achieve the 50 percent light-duty (LD) zero emission vehicle (ZEV) purchasing by fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 goal outlined in the state's 2016 ZEV Action Plan as well as the 100 percent fleet electrification by 2040 goal under the ZEV

Pledge for Public Fleets. The state fleet exceeded the FY 2023-24 LD ZEV Purchasing goal of 45 percent by 26 percent.

DGS' Office of Sustainability's Clean Transportation Unit installed 472 charging ports to serve fleet and/or employee charging needs and delivered 33 mobile, solar-powered EV Arc charging stations to state departments that each provide two Level 2 chargers and emergency power panels for use during power outages. These installations bring the total EV charging ports at state facilities above 3,500.



# Sustain Business Transformation

Build an agile and resilient government by streamlining processes, eliminating inefficient practices, and measuring key results in state operations.

## Leading with Objectives and Key Results

In 2023, GovOps led a pilot effort to implement Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) in State government. In 2024, CalHR and GovOps partnered with Unleashing Leaders to provide OKR training resources tailored to California State Government entities to support the development of an OKRs program. Building Effective OKRs is a highly interactive course that spans two days. The first day builds practical skills for facilitating the creation of clear, concise, and impactful OKRs. Participants then have a few weeks to apply the skills and draft OKRs for their respective organizations. On the second day, participants bring draft OKRs back to compare and refine their skills, and then expand on tracking, reporting, and integrating OKRs into their department's management systems. Working as a team for their respective departments helps them learn, apply, and support each other when implementing OKRs within their organizations. In class, participants will work both within their department team and across teams from other departments to learn different contexts and ways to scale OKRs.

## Cradle-to-Career Data System

After years of being one of only eight states to lack a robust data system, California is now considered a [model](#) for other states, due to the California Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Data System's inclusive governance and ambitious scope of information. For the first time, California has connected data from K-12 to higher education to jobs, workforce training, and health and human services, in an effort to shed light on the diverse pathways from cradle to career. The C2C Data System's first annual ingestion of data occurred in March 2024, just months after providers' initial submittal of historical data in October 2023. This innovative collaboration between interagency partners and C2C populates the [P20W data set](#), making previously disconnected and siloed data more valuable and actionable.

# Tax Shelter Initiative



In early 2024, the California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) concluded a tax shelter initiative that allowed taxpayers to unwind eligible and potentially abusive transactions – those designed to improperly avoid taxes – and receive a reduction in penalties in return. Benefits of the initiative include quick resolution of current FTB audits and disputes as well as hundreds of

taxpayers voluntarily correcting their tax liabilities. Participants saved time and money due to the streamlined process of resolving numerous tax years with one closing agreement, rather than filing multiple amended returns. To date FTB has received \$34 million in additional tax, interest, and penalties.

## Expanded Public Training Resources

The Office of Administrative Law (OAL) enhanced training opportunities and resources available not only to state agency staff, but to all Californians, by premiering the first of many instructional videos. These [videos](#) address some of the most frequent inquiries received regarding participation in the regulatory process and accessing regulatory law. Resources include an information session on the rulemaking process under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), how a member of the public can submit comments on proposed emergency regulations, and how to easily search the California Code of Regulations to find regulations that affect Californians and their businesses. This in-demand training directly engages the public in an effort to demystify the rulemaking process and encourage public participation.

Expanded access to these resources is anticipated to result in more robust public participation in the actions of government and makes government regulatory activity more accessible to all Californians.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) website. At the top is the OAL logo and a navigation bar with links: 'Rulemaking Process', 'Underground Regulations', 'Publications', 'Training', and 'Laws'. The main heading is 'Rulemaking Training and Resources'. Below this, a paragraph states: 'The Office of Administrative Law provides a variety of training opportunities and other resources to assist state agencies and the public in understanding and participating in the rulemaking process under the Administrative Procedure Act.' There are three sections: 'Training Opportunities:' with a link to 'Rulemaking Training Classes'; 'Rulemaking Resources and Information:' with a link to 'Rulemaking Resources and Information'; and 'Training Videos:' with a description of the videos. At the bottom, there is a video player thumbnail titled 'Tips for Searching the California Code of Regulations Online' with a 'Watch on YouTube' button.

# Transition to Electronic Submission Processes

In the last 5 years, the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) has successfully transitioned to an electronic submission process with widespread positive response from state agencies. The requirements of the California Administrative Procedure Act (APA) remained largely unchanged during the COVID-19 state of emergency in California, which meant that state agencies were still generally required to promulgate regulations pursuant to the APA. The APA requires state agencies to submit a variety of documents to OAL for review, and the transition to electronic submission has reduced processing time and burden for agencies. In 2024, electronic submissions surpassed 80 percent of all regulatory submissions to OAL. This innovation saves considerable state resources, maximizes state personnel efficiency, reduces waste, benefits the state's environment, and minimizes risks of adverse health consequences. OAL is dedicated to the continued expansion of this program to further maximize state resources, streamline processes, and be responsive to state agency needs.

## FI\$Cal Service Expansion

The Department of FISCAL's (FI\$Cal) vision of providing world-class customer service to more than 10,000 system users has been a guiding principle over the years. On July 1, 2024, FI\$Cal welcomed CDT and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) into the family of departments using the FI\$Cal system for their budget, accounting and procurement needs. This represents a multi-year effort to prepare the CDT and DOR and includes onboarding tasks, developing configurations, and training departments in test environments ahead of go live. CDT and DOR went live in FI\$Cal on the tenth anniversary of onboarding the first wave of departments to the system in 2014.

While the total number of departments in the FI\$Cal system fluctuates, the onboarding of CDT and DOR brings the current total number of departments in the system to 149. The FI\$Cal system eliminates the need for hundreds of independent legacy systems by combining the state's accounting, budgeting, cash management, and procurement operations into a single financial management system that functions transparently and efficiently.





# Cannabis Safety and Enforcement Through Operation Grab Bag

In July 2024, the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) led a unique and comprehensive enforcement operation focused on businesses selling contraband cannabis packaging in the Toy District of Los Angeles. The packages were illegally marked with the universal symbol of legal California cannabis, undermining the safety and integrity of the state's regulated cannabis industry. Much of the seized packaging resembled popular food and candy brands that could appeal to children, including items resembling Twinkies and Sweet Tarts, reinforcing California's commitment to protecting children from cannabis. CDTFA team members and partners from the Governor's Unified Cannabis Enforcement Taskforce focused on 11 storefronts in the Toy District, where numerous businesses were manufacturing and selling bulk packaging used in the illicit cannabis market to deceive customers and thwart state safety and quality regulations.

The team seized:

**2,279,900**  
contraband packages

**31** banker-sized boxes and garbage bags filled with illicit cannabis

**32** boxes and bags of illicit cigarettes and tobacco products



Cannabis goods must be labeled to ensure consumers are informed about what they are buying and to prevent unintended use, including through packaging that is child-resistant, tamper-evident, resealable, opaque if an edible cannabis product, and includes the universal symbol for cannabis.

# CalSTRS Pension Investments Exceed Expectations and Improve Efficiencies

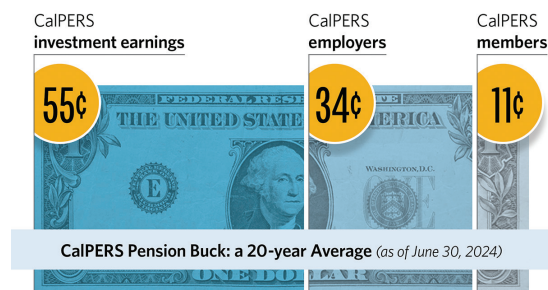
The California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) is the largest educator-only public pension fund in the world. As a global financial services institution and state agency, their unique organizational culture emphasizes customer service, leadership and respect for members and colleagues. As of June 30, 2024, the fund earned an 8.4 percent net return on investments and beat the total fund benchmark by 1 percent, ending at \$341.4 billion. The CalSTRS Funding Plan is on track and full funding is currently projected ahead of the June 30, 2046, target established in law.

The CalSTRS Collaborative Model is an investment strategy to manage more assets internally to reduce costs, control risks, and increase expected returns into operations. The Collaborative Model has saved \$1.6 billion in aggregate since 2017, with an average annual savings of \$273.5 million.

In 2024, the contact center maintained excellent service levels while reducing wait times on the 274,654 calls received last year. On average, calls were answered in 16 seconds, with a less than 1 percent call abandonment rate.

## CalPERS Strategic Investment Initiatives

The California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) reported a 9.3 percent investment return for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024, that outpaced its 6.8 percent discount rate. This is a notable improvement from the two most recent fiscal years, where investment returns were influenced by a variety of economic and geopolitical challenges.



The pension fund ended the fiscal year strong with \$506.6 billion in net assets, an increase of almost \$42 billion, or 9.1 percent, from the previous fiscal year. The returns increased CalPERS' funded status to 75 percent from 71.4 percent the previous fiscal year.

To advance its strategic investment objectives, CalPERS:

- Announced a \$100 billion Climate Action Plan, an effort that will double its investments in climate solutions by the end of 2030 and help move its investment portfolio to net zero by 2050.
- Produced its first retirement planning basics class in Spanish for members whose first language is not English.
- California-based investments totaled \$53.7 billion or 12.1 percent of the total fund and supported an estimated 157,920 jobs.

# Advance Equity

Lead state government in embedding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in state operations in support of a California for all.

## Broadband for All

Broadband for All is California's commitment to closing the digital divide by advancing the state's \$6 billion effort to build the largest open-access broadband infrastructure network in the nation. The Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative (MMBI) is a partnership between CDT and its Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy overseeing the acquisition and management of contracts for the development, construction, maintenance and operation of the network. The MMBI is building the largest open-access broadband network in the U.S., spanning over 8,000 miles to connect unserved and underserved communities. Recently, a key 256-mile segment broke ground that will link San Jose to Carson City, Nevada. The MMBI project is progressing quickly, with over 65 percent of the network's construction milestones already met—putting it 14 months ahead of schedule. This makes California the national leader in broadband infrastructure, unmatched in scale and investment by any other state. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) \$70.2 million Digital Equity Capacity Grant is a critical element of the overall Broadband for All effort that will support digital literacy, device distribution, and local digital equity plans—all designed to bridge California's digital divide and ensure residents have access to high-speed internet regardless of their location or income.





*"We're working in real-time to realize our bold vision of ensuring all Californians have access to high-speed internet, no matter where they come from or how much they make. The Middle Mile Broadband Network is about more than technology — we're connecting local communities that have for too long been left off the digital map."* -**California Governor Gavin Newsom.**

*"As California continues to make progress on this once-in-a-lifetime infrastructure project, the Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative stands as a testament to collaborative partnerships. Together with urban, rural, and tribal communities across California, we're ensuring a robust fiber infrastructure network that connects and unites our state."* - **Amy Tong, Secretary, California Government Operations Agency**

*"We continue to advance on our mission to deliver broadband connectivity across California. Through this historic investment, we are ensuring that more Californians will have access to affordable and reliable internet — a critical component in closing the digital divide."* - **Liana Bailey-Crimmins, State Chief Information Officer and Director, California Department of Technology**

## Plain Language Training

Beginning in February 2024, the Office of Data and Innovation (ODI) in collaboration with GovOps, developed two Plain Language training courses – a strategic initiative aimed at enhancing clarity, accessibility, and effectiveness of state government communications. Since then, over 3,000 state staff have completed these two training courses. Both the first course, Introduction to plain language for the public sector, and the second course, building better services with plain language, will be available as on-demand eLearning courses in January 2025. All training is offered to state staff at no cost.

This training is critical to ensuring that information provided to the public is understandable and actionable, regardless of the audience's literacy levels or language proficiency. The training delivered measurable outcomes, including improved consistency in messaging, increased public comprehension and trust, and heightened staff proficiency in producing accessible content. These results directly support broader equity initiatives by fostering equitable access to critical information and services.

# Statewide Disability Employment Parity

The statewide workforce disability employment parity rate increased from 7.7 to 8.4 percent from December 2023 to September 2024. Strategic efforts included:

- Promotion of diversity and inclusive culture through department Disability Advisory Committees, equity communities of practices, and targeted events, such as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) celebration in October.
- Promoting the use of the Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP) for recruitment and hiring of Persons with Disabilities.
- Partnerships between CalHR, Department of Rehabilitation, Association of California State Employees with Disabilities (ACSED), and Statewide Disability Advisory Council (SDAC).
- Developing the Reasonable Accommodations Model Policy.
- Consistent outreach and communications on the importance of filling out the Change in Disability Status Survey.

The intended outcome of increasing the parity rate is to close the employment gap for individuals with disabilities, enhance organizational culture through diverse perspectives, and demonstrate the state's commitment to equity and accessibility. These outcomes support broader equity objectives while improving overall employee engagement and satisfaction.

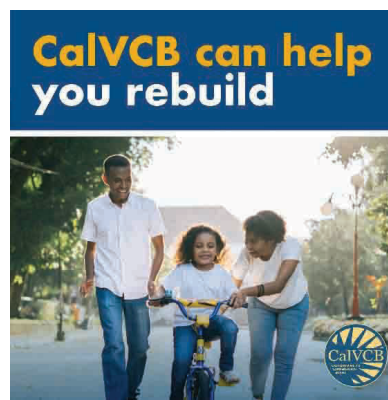
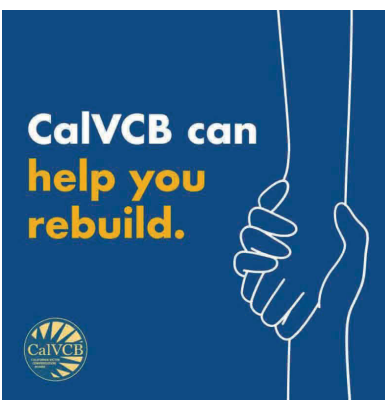
## Revolutionizing People-Centered Design through Public Engagement

C2C is listening to the public first, and then building data tools based on what Californians say they need. The public has joined 160 public meetings from the initial planning stage to the system build. C2C does this to ensure its data tools are useful and will be used by Californians. C2C's nation-leading inclusive governance structure provides the people of California a seat at the table and a vote. In 2024, C2C implemented a [public proposal process](#) to give Californians a direct path to elevate their ideas for shaping the Data System's work to the Data and Tools Advisory Board or Community Engagement Advisory Board. C2C received five public proposals and 12 member proposals this year. Providing access for the public advances equity by making space for all voices to be heard.



## CalVCB Outreach Campaign to Underserved Communities

The California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) launched a multimedia outreach campaign to reach underserved communities throughout the state in April 2024. CalVCB Can Help You Rebuild is increasing awareness to those in economically disadvantaged, rural, and racially diverse communities using digital, social media, and radio advertising as well as strategically placed billboards. The outreach materials are available in English and Spanish with images and phrases that encourage victims of crime to apply for assistance and ask for help. CalVCB has already seen an increase in applications, website traffic, and social media engagement.



## Increased Access to Mental Health Resources

In June 2024, CalVCB nearly doubled the initial mental health session limits for victims making it easier for them to access services. Prior to this change, mental health providers had to submit additional treatment plans before victims could receive care beyond the initial mental health session limits. CalVCB reviewed seven years of data and found that the average number of paid sessions exceeded the initial session limit in every category. This data was presented to CalVCB's three-member board, and they approved the recommendation to increase initial session limits.

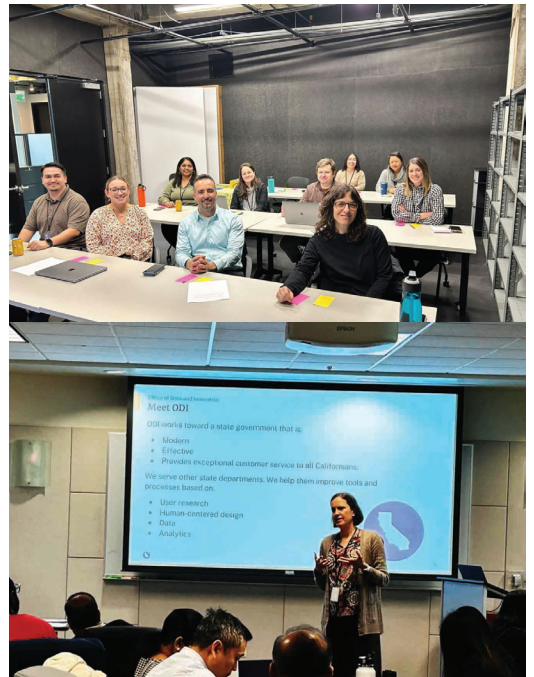
This change makes it easier for victims to access services without unnecessary delays, reduces administrative requirements for mental health providers, and increased efficiency for CalVCB.





# Using Data to Streamline Housing Development

ODI partners with other government departments to help them make data-driven decisions to improve service delivery. ODI partnered with the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to build a housing intelligence tool to more accurately track the housing development pipeline across 539 jurisdictions. HCD has a legislative mandate to review reports and request and make any needed corrections within 90 days, which required significant manual review. Through this partnership, HCD developed a tool that automates analyses of housing data and presents information in a data dashboard, giving HCD staff in-depth insights into the state of housing in California and saving an estimated 2,000 hours of staff time. This should enable California to build more housing, faster.



# Forecasting Drought in Community Water System Outages



ODI worked with the California State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW) to improve a data science model that forecasts which water systems will be affected by drought. The DDW monitors 2,866 community water systems across California. Most years, a small fraction of these water systems run out of water which causes a major public health emergency for the communities served by these systems. In some

cases, communities run out of water and the DDW provides funding for deliveries of bottled or hauled water. DDW wanted to take a proactive approach by developing a model to forecast drought-impacted water systems and worked with ODI to improve and streamline the modeling process. The ODI model could be run more frequently with minimal staff involvement, improving efficiency by 84 percent and saving 80 staff hours each year, ensuring the State Water Resources Control Board can identify timely interventions during drought to ensure Californians have access to drinking water. DDW now has a tool that helps them make sense of a large amount of information that will run each spring, designed to identify issues that may arise during drier seasons. It gives them a proactive approach to mitigating drought impacts.

# Lifting Californians' Voices in Toxic Substance Project Decisions

Public participation and comments around toxic hazard contamination events are critical to the decision-making process. ODI collaborated with the Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC) to improve community awareness of toxic substance projects in communities across California. Through discovery and research, ODI helped DTSC create a plain language, mobile-friendly template that increases awareness of their communities.

The findings enable DTSC to use data and increased public participation to inform decisions that better serve Californians. DTSC is now able to target specific geographic and demographic areas using a social media outreach approach. Improved public access to information, including receiving real-time notifications, regarding toxic substance issues is equitable and makes communities safer.



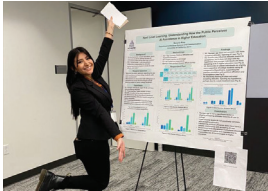
## FTB Local Assistance and Disaster Recovery Centers



The California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) assisted over 1,000 survivors at 15 Local Assistance Centers (LACs) and Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) throughout California in 2024. The centers provide disaster survivors with a central location to receive information and resources from various federal, state, local and non-profit organizations. FTB assisted survivors by providing copies of their tax returns, changing their mailing address, providing information on how to claim a disaster loss on their tax return, and answering account related questions. In 2024, to improve the ability to report quickly, efficiently, and accurately on this important work, FTB enhanced an internal reporting tool to consolidate LAC/DRC information.

# GovOps Interns and Fellows

GovOps is pleased to mentor and inspire the next generation of public servants through participation in various fellowship and internship programs. This year we were excited to host the interns below:



**Melanie Pino**, Pre-Law student at University of California, Davis was a UCCS undergraduate intern with GovOps in Winter 2024 with an interest in GenAI's effects on workforce and equity of services. Melanie is now completing her senior year at UC Davis and is furthering her public sector experience as a HOPE College Leadership Fellow.



**Isabella Marshall**, Master of Public Policy student at University of California, Los Angeles, was a graduate intern with GovOps in Summer and Fall 2024 with an interest in GenAI's effects on the workforce. Isabella is now completing her master's program and participating in a graduate capstone project with GovOps in Spring 2025.



**Jaylynn Lopez**, Political Science and Public Service student at University of California, Riverside, was a UCCS undergraduate intern with GovOps in Summer 2024 with an interest in public policy and legislative affairs. Jaylynn is now completing her degree at UC Riverside and was awarded an internship at the Riverside County Office of Education, supporting school districts in areas such as child welfare and foster youth services.



**Abigail O'Branovich**, Journalism and Public Relations student at CalPoly San Luis Obispo, was an undergraduate intern with GovOps in Summer 2024 with an interest in public sector communications and event planning. Abigail is now completing her senior year at CalPoly SLO and continues to take student leadership roles on campus with goals to become a communications and event planning professional after graduation.



**Willa Reed**, Political Science student at University of California, Los Angeles, is currently an undergraduate intern with GovOps for Fall 2024 with an interest in GenAI impacts to society and public sector communications strategies. After the internship, Willa is interested in pursuing a position with the State of California.





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