LUMEN®

Clear Paths to Buying Technology for Government and Education

Straightforward options for technology acquisition across state and local government, public safety, schools, higher ed, utilities and transportation.



Getting started with our how-to-buy guide

Technology modernization can feel overwhelming, especially when balancing budget constraints, cybersecurity requirements, aging infrastructure and evolving service expectations. This guide is designed to help public sector organizations simplify the buying process by connecting modernization priorities with purchasing options and solution areas.

Use it to:

- Identify modernization priorities that align with your organization's needs
- Explore contract vehicles and cooperative purchasing programs available to eligible public sector organizations
- Compare purchasing paths that may help accelerate acquisition timelines
- Understand how technology can support citizen services, student outcomes, community resilience and operational efficiency
- Discover solution areas commonly associated with modernization initiatives
- Connect with Lumen specialists for planning support and procurement guidance

- Tip: You don't need to start with a specific technology solution. Begin with the outcome you're trying to achieve, then use this guide to explore the purchasing paths and technologies that may help support that goal

Technology Acquisition Should Support Outcomes, Not Create Obstacles

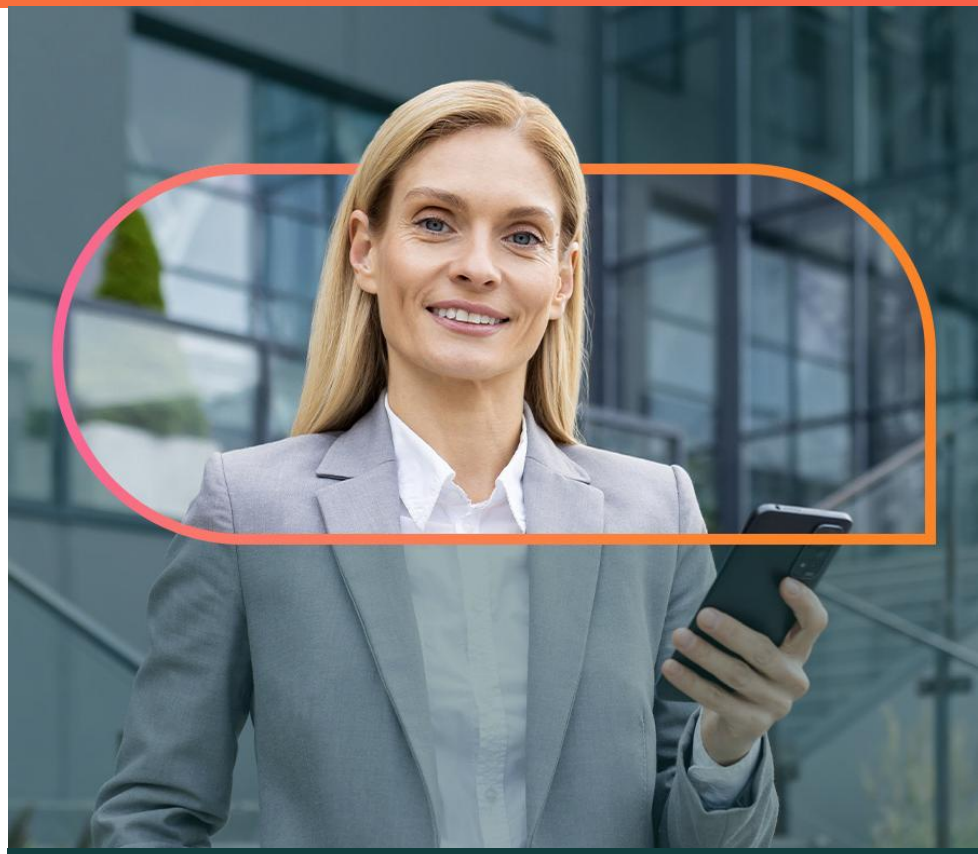
Every year you're being asked to do more — better digital services, stronger cybersecurity, updating aging systems that need attention — often with the same budget and the same size team. Procurement requirements can make those projects even harder to get moving.

Whether your organization is:

- Improving community services
- Supporting student success
- Modernizing public safety communications
- Strengthening cybersecurity
- Replacing aging infrastructure
- Preparing for AI and advanced analytics
- Expanding broadband and connectivity
- Improving operational efficiency

Buying technology should move your work forward, not add another hurdle.

The good news: cooperative purchasing programs and established contract vehicles can help you acquire technology through a straightforward process that's designed to support your compliance requirements along the way.



"As AI workloads scale, the question leaders have to ask is whether their network is actually ready. If you can't move large volumes of data quickly and predictably between data centers, clouds and compute environments, AI outcomes will be constrained no matter how much compute you deploy."
— Jim Fowler, EVP and Chief Technology & Product Officer, Lumen

Artificial intelligence ranked the No. 1 state CIO priority for 2026, ending cybersecurity's 12-year run at the top.[1]

How to align modernization priorities with community outcomes

Modernization rarely happens in one big project. More often you're juggling several at once — provide reliable public services, improving cybersecurity, aging infrastructure, discerning what AI could do and making every dollar count. Here are the outcomes we hear most often, and how Lumen can help.

What State and Local Organizations are Solving For

Reliable access to public and education services
Deliver dependable digital services and applications that residents, students, educators, employees and community partners rely on every day.

Modernizing aging infrastructure
Reduce the operational burden and complexity of legacy environments that consume resources and limit the ability to respond to changing needs.

Continuity of essential community operations
Maintain access to critical services and communications during planned and unplanned disruptions.

Strengthening cybersecurity and resilience
Help protect users, applications and data while improving the ability to anticipate, respond to and recover from cyberthreats.

Preparing for AI and data-driven services
Support analytics, automation and emerging AI use cases with infrastructure that can move, access and manage growing volumes of data.

Responsible use of public funding and resources
Maximize the value of available funding while supporting long-term modernization, operational and community priorities.

How Lumen Supports State and Local Outcomes

Deliver reliable digital experiences
Enable dependable access to the applications, services and information that support residents, students, educators, employees and community stakeholders.

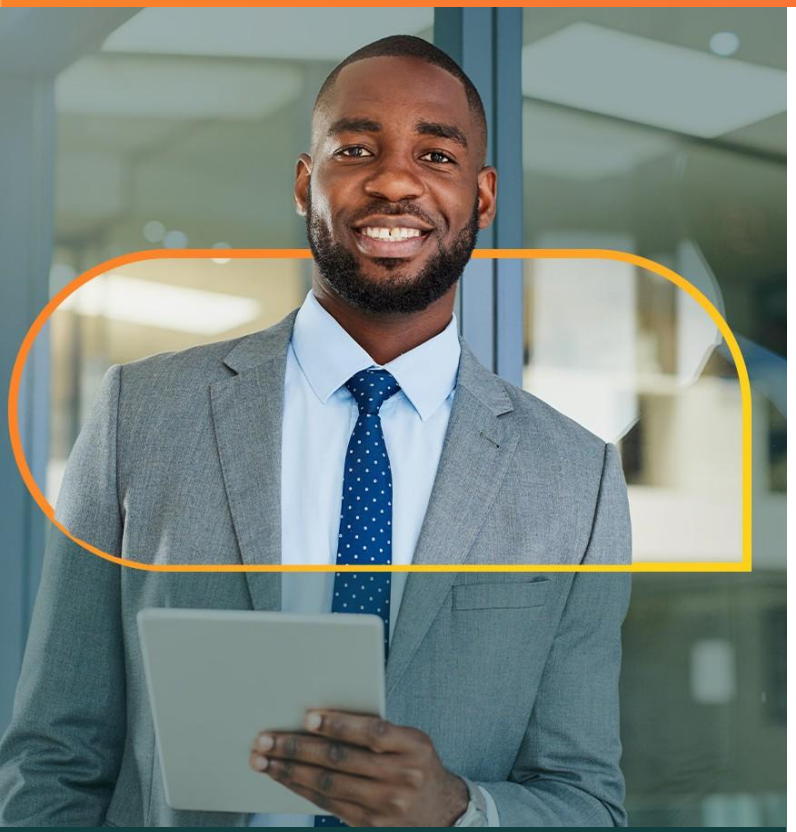
Modernize at the pace of your organization
Help transform legacy environments with scalable connectivity, security and infrastructure while supporting ongoing operations.

Strengthen operational resilience
Support essential government, education, public safety, transportation, utilities and community services with resilient network infrastructure.

Advance cyber resilience
Support security strategies designed to improve visibility, help protect users, applications and data, and strengthen organizational resilience.

Build a foundation for AI-enabled services
Provide scalable connectivity that helps organizations move and access data across increasingly distributed environments.

Help maximize public value from technology investments
Help simplify modernization and align technology resources with operational, education and community priorities.



Modernization decisions are rarely about technology alone. They are about improving services, strengthening resilience, enabling innovation and making the most of available resources. This guide can help connect those priorities to solution areas, technologies and purchasing paths to explore.

Decision Guide: Matching Organizational Needs to Solutions and Purchasing Paths

Choosing technology means weighing what your community needs, what your systems require, what you can fund and how you're able to buy. Use this guide to connect the outcome you're after with the solutions and purchasing paths that can get you there.

If your organization needs…	Lumen solution areas to explore	Products and services to consider	Common purchasing options
Improve access to digital government, education and community services	Connectivity, network modernization, SD-WAN, managed network services	Dedicated Internet Access, Ethernet, IP VPN, SD-WAN, Cloud Connect	Sourcewell; state contracts; GSA MAS; NPPGov
Modernize infrastructure and prepare for AI-enabled services	Infrastructure, high-capacity connectivity, data transport, cloud connectivity	Wavelengths, Encrypted Wavelengths, Dark Fiber, Ethernet, Cloud Connect, Dedicated Internet Access	Sourcewell; State Contracts; GSA MAS; NPPGov
Improve operational resilience and continuity during disruptions	Data transport, cloud connectivity, AI-ready infrastructure, digital service enablement	NaaS, Cloud Connect, Internet On-Demand, Wavelengths	Sourcewell; GSA MAS; NPPGov
Strengthen cybersecurity and improve visibility across distributed environments	Managed network services, managed security services, operational support	Managed Network Services, Managed Security Services, Professional Services	MiCTA; NPPGov; Sourcewell; GSA MAS;
Support public safety, utilities and other essential community operations	Secure connectivity, resilient infrastructure, operational resilience	Wavelengths, Encrypted Wavelengths, Dark Fiber, Ethernet, Dedicated Internet Access, Managed Security Services	Sourcewell; NPPGov; State Contracts
Connect K-12, higher education and research environments	Internet access, fiber connectivity, cloud access, research networking	Dedicated Internet Access, Ethernet, Wavelengths, Dark Fiber, Cloud Connect	E-Rate; The Quilt; Internet2; MiCTA; State Contracts

Why Lumen?

For more than 60 years, Lumen has helped public sector organizations build and operate the network and communications infrastructure their missions depend on. We own and invest in our network, which is designed to support secure, reliable connectivity for the essential services communities count on.

We work with state and local governments, school districts, universities, public safety agencies, utilities and transportation authorities. We know the requirements you work within, the procurement rules you follow and the compliance obligations you answer to — and that shapes how we design, deploy and support what we build for you.

Our goal is simple: keep you focused on your mission, not on managing technology.

82%

using GenAI now

in their employees' daily work, as reported by state CIOs[3]

#1

Artificial intelligence

ranked the No. 1 state CIO priority for 2026, ending cybersecurity's 12-year run at the top.[1]

68%

budget gap

of state, local and tribal organizations lack cyber budget.[4]

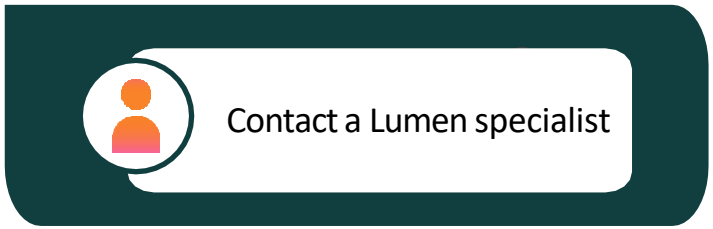
74%

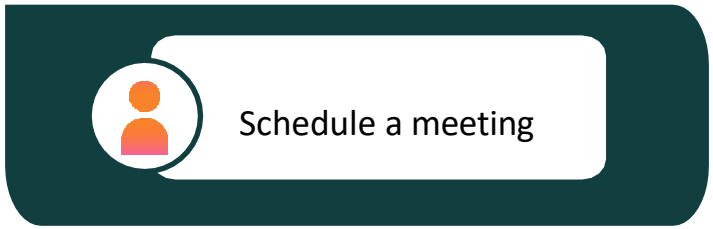
E-Rate reliant

of districts foresee major impact if E-Rate funding ends.[5]

Budget, cost control and fiscal management climbed to the No. 3 state CIO priority for 2026, up from sixth the year before.[2]

Get Started with Lumen





Whether you're early in the planning process or actively evaluating procurement options, Lumen's SLED specialists can help you understand available contract vehicles, discuss solution requirements and support acquisition planning conversations.

For more information, contact Lumen's SLED Procurement Team or visit our public sector page today.

1. NASCIO, State CIO Top Ten Policy and Technology Priorities for 2026, December 2025. https://www.nascio.org/resource/state-cio-top-ten-policy-and-technology-priorities-for-2026/
2. NASCIO, State CIO Top Ten Policy and Technology Priorities for 2026, December 2025. https://www.nascio.org/resource/state-cio-top-ten-policy-and-technology-priorities-for-2026/
3. NASCIO, 2025 State CIO Survey: Leading Change Through Uncertain Times, October 2025. https://www.nascio.org/resources/
4. Center for Internet Security, MS-ISAC, "Strengthening Critical Infrastructure: SLTT Progress & Priorities, Volume 2," August 2025. https://www.cisecurity.org/about-us/media/press-release/new-ms-isac-report-reveals-growing-cyber-threats-to-local-infrastructure-amid-budget-cuts
5. CoSN, 2025 State of EdTech District Leadership, 2025. https://www.cosn.org/tools-and-resources/resource/2025-state-of-edtech-district-leadership/

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