

Frequently Asked Questions About



NATIONAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE MODEL

What is NIEM?

A national initiative supported by the federal government, NIEM is a framework for connecting communities of people who share a common need to exchange information in order to advance their missions.

What is NIEM's mission?

NIEM's mission is to provide a commonly understood way to connect data that improves government decision-making for the greater good.

What is NIEM's vision?

The vision of the NIEM community is that it will become the go-to data framework, by choice, for intergovernmental information exchange.

What problem does NIEM seek to solve?

NIEM breaks down interagency stovepipes and connects agencies so that they may develop innovative, data-driven, mission-focused standards by eliminating debate around data standards.

How can NIEM benefit my organization?

- NIEM saves time and money and enhances operational efficiency by eliminating debate around data standards and shortening the time frame for information exchange development.
- NIEM quickly puts actionable information in the hands of decision makers so that they may advance their missions and improve the quality of their service to the public.
- Because NIEM components and artifacts are reusable, NIEM allows you to do more with less and achieve greater return on investment.

Who is currently participating in NIEM?

NIEM currently incorporates many domains, including Biometrics; Child, Youth, and Family Services; Cyber; Justice; Emergency Management; Infrastructure Protection; Information Assurance; Immigration; Intelligence; International Trade; Maritime; and Screening.

Who can get involved in NIEM?

Stakeholders from all levels and branches of government are invited to learn more about NIEM and get involved, as can private sector solution providers.

Will NIEM replace my existing hardware, databases, or software?

NIEM is non-intrusive to existing systems, and does not require new or different hardware. As a result, NIEM allows organizations to move information quickly and effectively without replacing or rebuilding systems. NIEM is built on Extensible Markup Language (XML), which is platform-independent.

Are data exchanges through NIEM secure and private?

NIEM is simply the translator of the message in the data layer; the IT systems sending and receiving that message have security built into them based on organizational security and privacy practices. Further, NIEM allows you to exchange only the information you want to exchange.

How is NIEM managed/governed?

NIEM is a government-wide, federally supported initiative. Intergovernmental committees and an Executive Steering Council representing key stakeholders play an important role in creating and sustaining NIEM.

How does NIEM work with external standards?

NIEM can link to or wrap around existing information exchange standards without replacing them. Rather than reinventing the wheel, NIEM allows separately maintained standards to work together, simplifying integration.

What is a domain?

A domain is a business enterprise that broadly reflects the agencies, units of government, operational functions, services, and information systems that are organized or affiliated to meet common objectives.

What is a community of interest (COI)?

A community of interest (COI) is a group of people who collectively represent their respective missions. A COI could span a single domain or multiple domains. In addition, a COI does not need to be aligned to a formal NIEM domain to use NIEM, i.e., universal elements are applicable to many or all. Representatives from all relevant COIs at all levels of government can participate in NIEM.

What is a data component?

The fundamental building block of NIEM is a data component. Data components are the basic business data items that describe common concepts used in general business activities.



What is an IEPD?

An Information Exchange Package Documentation, or IEPD, is a specification for a data exchange and defines a particular data exchange.

How do I use NIEM to build IEPDs?

NIEM is a mature, governed, proven model that includes a six-step lifecycle that enables information exchange interoperability.

Can NIEM IEPDs be reused?

Existing IEPDs, after publication, can be reused to create new IEPDs. This helps to decrease the time and costs associated with development time and increase consistency of data definitions.

What resources are available to me as a NIEM user?

NIEM is a comprehensive resource for organizations to successfully exchange information. NIEM provides tools, help, training, governance, and an active community of users.