

E-Governance

The application of information technology and communication for the purpose of governance is commonly known as e-governance. Through e-governance, information can be made distributed to the public in a transparent manner. Electronic governance or e-governance can be defined as the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by the government to provide and facilitate government services, exchange of information, communication transactions and integration of various stand-alone systems and services. Through e-governance, government services are made available to citizens and businesses in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. Examples of e-governance include Digital India initiative, National Portal of India, Prime Minister of India portal, Aadhar, filing and payment of taxes online, digital land management systems, Common Entrance Test etc.

Types Of E-Governance

E-governance can take place in four major types of interactions:

1. **Government to Government (G2G)** where information is exchanged within the government i.e. either, between the central government, state government and local governments or between different branches of the same government.
2. **Government to Citizen (G2C)** where the citizens have a platform through which they can interact with the government and get access to the variety of public services offered by the Government.
3. **Government to Businesses (G2B)** where businesses are able to interact with the government seamlessly with respect to the services of the government offered to businesses
4. **Government to Employees (G2E)** where interaction between the government and its employees occurs in an efficient and speedy manner.

The objective of E-governance

The objectives of e-governance can be stated as follows:

- To support and simplify governance for government, citizens, and businesses.
- To make government administration more transparent and accountable while addressing the society's needs and expectations through efficient public services and effective interaction between the people, businesses, and government
- To reduce corruption in the government.

- To ensure speedy administration of services and information
- To reduce difficulties for business, provide immediate information and enable digital communication by e-business.

To facilitate e-governance, the Information Technology Act contains the following provisions:

1. Legal Recognition of Electronic Records
2. Legal Recognition of Electronic Signatures
3. Use of electronic records and electronic signatures in Governments and its agencies
4. Delivery of services through electronic means by services providers
5. Retention of electronic records
6. Publications of rules, regulations, orders, etc., in electronic gazette

Chapter 3 of IT Act emphasizes upon following

Legal recognition of electronic records.

Whenever any information is required in print, typewritten or written format , and the same information is available in electronic form. The information will be considered as valid form of authentication.

Legal recognition of digital signatures.

If the law requires that the information should be authenticated by person's signature then digital signature can also be taken as a valid signature.i.e. the law recognizes digital signature as valid form of authentication.

Use of electronic records and digital signatures in Government and its agencies.

Any application, documents required by any government , slips, licenses, permits or payment of receipts issued by Government, can be valid in electronic form as well.

Retention of electronic records.

This section deals with the retention of electronic records. The records should be retained for future references, and establishing identity.

Publication of rule, regulation, etc., in Electronic Gazette.

If any rule, notification or bye-law is to be published in official Gazette can be published in Electronic Gazette as well.

Power to make rules by Central Government in respect of digital signature.

The central government can make rules for digital signature, the manner in which digital signatures are affixed or the manner in which identity of person is fixed.