DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS

AI Strategic Planning Roadmap

June 2025

Executive Summary

The District of Columbia Courts established the Artificial Intelligence Task Force in March 2024 to proactively address the opportunities and challenges posed by the integration of AI technologies into court operations. The Task Force was created in response to the rapid advancement of AI and its potential impact on justice system processes. Its goals include developing a strategic approach to the use of AI within the DC Courts, advising on governance frameworks to ensure responsible and ethical use, identifying areas where AI can improve court services, and promoting transparency, fairness, and accountability in AI deployment.

Building on this effort, in June 2024, the District of Columbia Courts launched a strategic initiative—in partnership with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and with partial funding from the State Justice Institute (SJI)—to further explore the responsible integration of AI into court operations. This initiative aims to support the Task Force's goals by developing a comprehensive AI Strategy and Roadmap to guide the Courts in adopting AI technologies in ways that enhance operational efficiency, improve access to justice, and uphold public trust.

Over the course of a year, the NCSC engaged in a series of structured activities to build internal capacity, gather insights, and develop a forward-looking strategy. Key tasks included:

1. Delivered ten educational sessions to the AI Task Force, covering foundational AI concepts, ethical considerations, real-world applications, and future trends.
2. Conducted three rounds of focus groups with judicial officers, staff, and Division leaders to understand attitudes toward AI, identify operational pain points, and surface potential use cases.
3. Completed a comprehensive review of IT systems, including structured interviews with various IT branches to document key processes and identify automation opportunities.
4. Developed a strategic AI Roadmap, including guiding principles, a governance structure with five dedicated committees, and an internal AI Use Policy.
5. Compiled insights from focus groups and system reviews to inform recommendations for initial AI use cases across both IT and court operations.
6. Presented findings to court leadership, including an in-person presentation to the District of Columbia Courts and this Final Report.

The resulting AI Roadmap outlines a phased approach to AI adoption, beginning with low-risk, high-impact internal use cases and scaling over time. It emphasizes ethical use, transparency, and continuous improvement, supported by governance and workforce training.

Recommended use cases include examples such as automating service desk ticket classification in IT, streamlining document intake in the Probate Division, and improving data request workflows in Strategic Management. These are illustrative starting points—each selected for their feasibility, impact, and scalability. The roadmap is designed to be adaptable, enabling the Court to identify, evaluate, and implement AI projects not only in other Divisions but also within judicial functions and chambers operations as needs and opportunities evolve.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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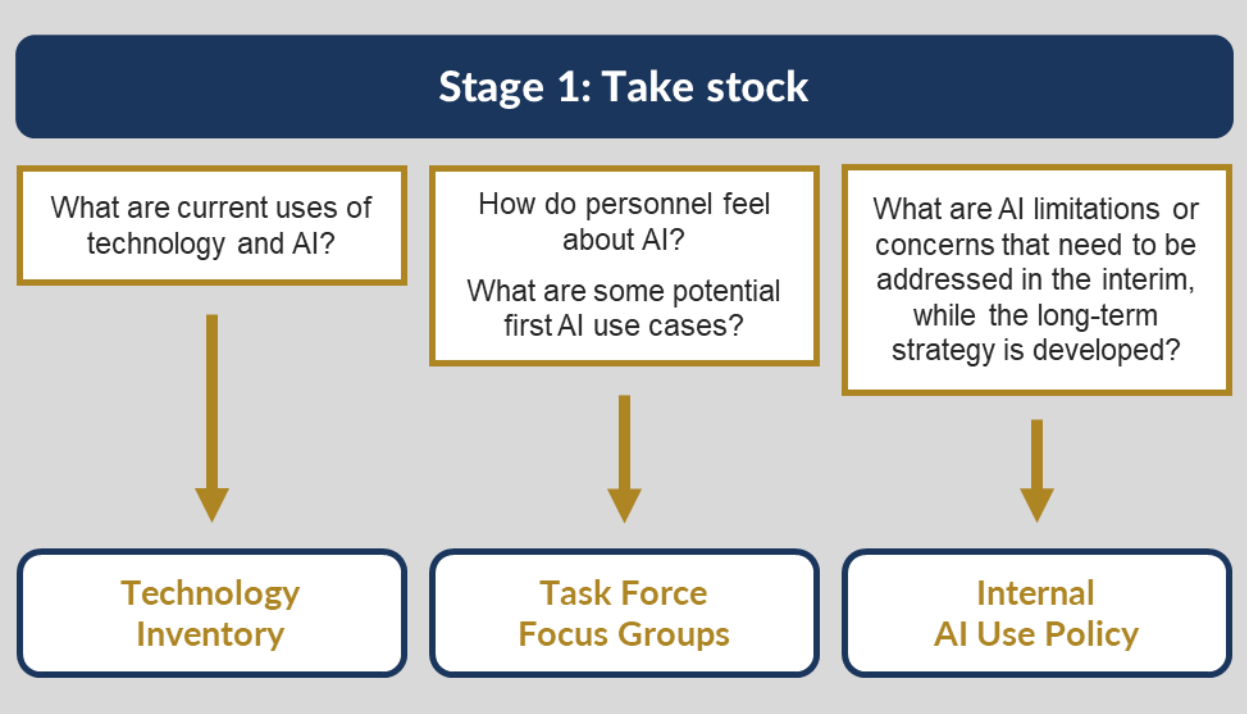
INTRODUCTION

In June 2024, the District of Columbia Courts partnered with NCSC to develop a strategic planning roadmap for AI in the Courts. NCSC worked with the Courts' AI Task Force to provide educational materials on AI, inventory the Courts' technology systems, engage court personnel in focused conversations about AI, and develop a strategic planning roadmap. This introduction provides a brief overview of the roadmap development process.

Stage 1: Take stock

NCSC began the process by taking stock of the current role of technology in the Courts. The goal at this stage was to answer a set of initial questions that would provide scope and direction for the roadmap.



Technology Inventory

One of the initial questions was how the Courts currently use technology, including AI. NCSC held a series of conversations with the Courts' IT team and conducted a technology inventory.

Task Force Focus Groups

Another set of initial questions related to the Courts' priorities, concerns, and goals for AI. In order to answer these questions, NCSC conducted focus groups with members of the AI

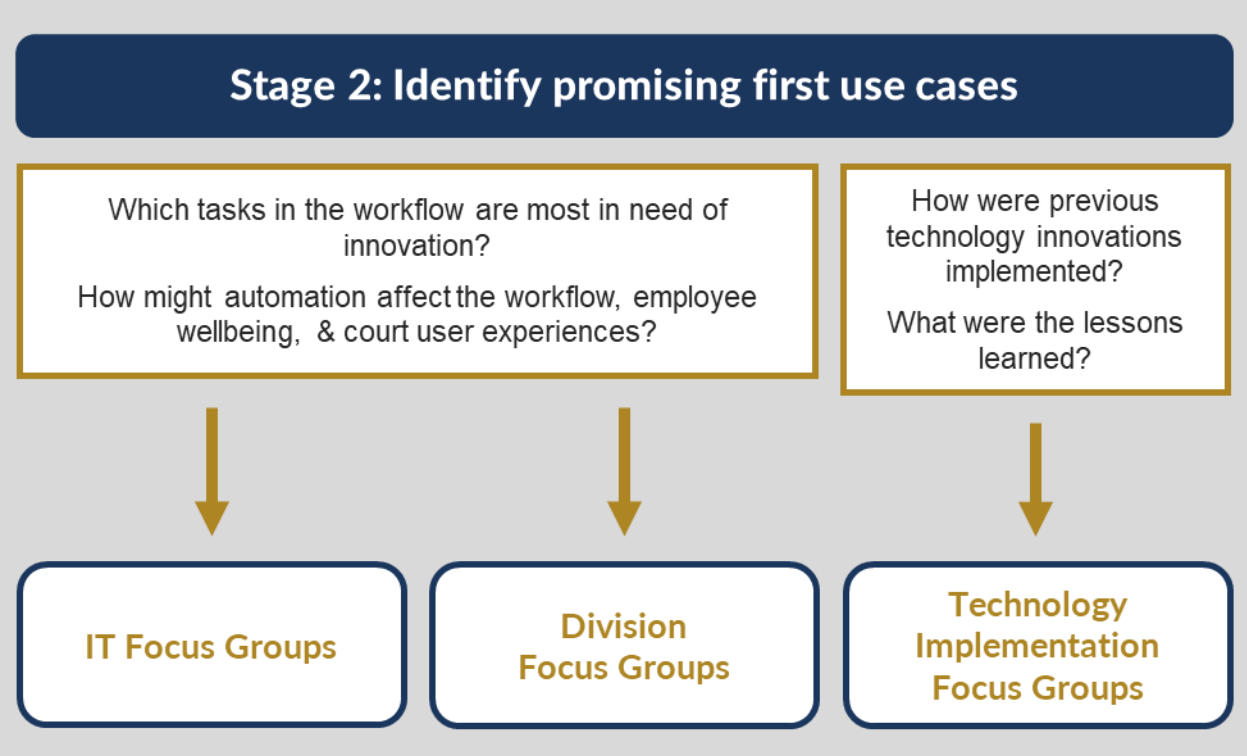
Task Force. One goal of these conversations was to understand how personnel feel about the potential for AI integration in the Courts. Understanding the current climate of hopes and fears would help court leaders communicate effectively with personnel. It would also help ensure that the priorities and concerns of Task Force members were addressed in the Strategic Plan. A second goal of these conversations was to identify potential use cases for AI that might be promising as first projects for the Courts. Focus group participants identified areas of the Courts' work that were most in need of innovation.

Internal AI Use Policy

The final goal of this initial stage of the project was to draft an internal AI use policy that would put protections in place to facilitate learning and initial safe use of AI while the long-term Strategic Plan was being developed. A subcommittee of the AI Task Force developed the policy in consultation with NCSC.

Stage 2: Identify promising first use cases for AI

The next phase of the project focused on identifying promising areas for the Courts' first implementations of AI. One part of this process involved learning more about current business processes and workflows to identify areas where innovation may be beneficial. Another part of this process involved learning more about the Courts' past experiences with technology implementation projects.



IT and Division Focus Groups

NCSC conducted a series of conversations with IT to understand what aspects of the IT workflow might benefit most from AI innovation. The NCSC also held a series of conversations with the Strategic Management and Probate Divisions to follow up on the first round of focus groups. These conversations reflect a human-centric approach-considered a best practice in responsible AI implementation-by prioritizing staff insights and operational needs to gain a more detailed understanding of how AI might improve operations and what its potential impacts might be.

Technology Implementation Interviews

The first round of focus groups also revealed two recent technology implementation projects in the Courts. First, the Budget and Finance Division implemented a new program in 2019 to automate the process of paying vendors. Second, the Court began implementing a new case management system (CMS) in 2022, and the rollout of the new system is currently underway. The NCSC conducted interviews with personnel involved in each of these projects to map out how these technologies were implemented and what lessons the Courts learned along the way.

Stage 3: Develop the Roadmap

The final stage of this project involved synthesizing the information gathered throughout the year and developing a roadmap for the AI in the Courts. The remainer of this report lays out the AI Strategic Planning Roadmap.

AI TASK FORCE EDUCATIONAL SERIES

Over a 10-month period, the NCSC supported the District of Columbia Courts' Artificial Intelligence Task Force by attending recurring meetings and delivering monthly presentations. The goal of this effort was to provide structured education and expert guidance on a broad range of AI-related topics relevant to judicial systems. Each session was designed to introduce foundational knowledge, explore real-world applications, and engage Task Force members in forward-looking discussions about AI's potential and challenges.

The educational series focused on key themes such as emerging technologies and their practical use in courts, ethical and legal considerations in adopting AI, strategies for managing implementation risks, and lessons learned from AI use in other jurisdictions. The sessions also shared up-to-date research on AI outcomes in court environments, helping Task Force members make informed decisions as they plan for responsible and effective AI integration.

August 2024: Introduction to AI / AI 101

The presentation provided an overview of fundamental AI concepts relevant to court operations. It explained the difference between Narrow AI (focused on specific tasks) and Generative AI (creating new content like text and images). Key technologies discussed included Machine Learning (pattern recognition through data), Natural Language Processing (understanding human language), and Large Language Models (text generation based on training data).

The session also covered Robotic Process Automation (RPA) as a tool for automating routine tasks and highlighted challenges with AI, such as bias, hallucinations, and data quality issues.

Finally, it emphasized the importance of courts preparing for AI-driven changes to maintain public trust, increase efficiency, improve access to justice, and adapt to evolving customer expectations.

September 2024: Understanding Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

This presentation explained Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and its role in automating repetitive, rule-based tasks within court operations. It clarified that RPA replicates human actions across systems but is not intelligent decision-making technology.

Key topics included how RPA works (process identification, robot development, deployment, and monitoring) and the types of RPA (attended, unattended, and intelligent process automation).

The session highlighted benefits such as increased efficiency, cost reduction, enhanced accuracy, and better staff resource allocation. It also addressed potential challenges like technical limitations, change management, and solution provider lock-in.

Court-specific examples from Palm Beach County, FL, and Tarrant County, TX, highlighted successful RPA applications, leading to faster processing times, cost savings, and quality improvements.

October 2024: AI Policy, Governance, and Platform Considerations

This presentation focused on the importance of developing clear AI policies, governance structures, and platform considerations for court operations. It emphasized the risks of unregulated AI use, including data privacy concerns, ethical dilemmas, and misuse, and outlined the need for clear definitions of permissible and prohibited AI use cases.

Key policy considerations included bias mitigation, fairness, transparency, accountability, and maintaining human-centered AI. The session also introduced AI data governance concepts, such as data classification, access controls, data privacy, and security measures.

AI platform selection criteria were discussed, highlighting scalability, integration with existing systems, security, and cost-effectiveness. Finally, the presentation stressed the importance of ongoing training, centralized monitoring, policy enforcement, and the consequences of non-compliance, such as legal and reputational risks.

November 2024: Understanding Generative AI

This presentation explained the fundamentals of Generative AI — a type of artificial intelligence capable of creating new content like text, images, and music based on patterns in existing data. It covered how techniques like neural networks, Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs), and Variational Autoencoders (VAEs) enable machines to generate realistic outputs.

Applications were discussed across industries, including marketing, healthcare, finance, product design, and customer service. Ethical concerns were a major focus, including bias and fairness in AI outputs, copyright and intellectual property issues, and the risks of misinformation and deepfakes.

The session emphasized the need to balance innovation with responsible use, noting that Generative AI can drive efficiency, personalization, and creativity if thoughtfully integrated into business and court processes.

December 2024: Ethics of GenAI – A Guide for Judges and Legal Professionals

This presentation was from a recording from the September 2024 Thomas Reuters/National Center for State Courts AI Policy Consortium for Law and Courts webinar series. It aimed to equip judges and legal professionals with a foundational understanding of GenAI technologies and the ethical challenges they present. Key topics included the definition and capabilities of GenAI, potential ethical dilemmas such as bias, transparency, and accountability, and the necessity for human oversight. The session also explored existing legal frameworks and discusses the need for new guidelines to address AI-related issues. Practical tools exist to assist legal professionals in navigating the complexities of GenAI.

January 2025: AI Case Studies – Use in the Courts

This presentation explored real-world examples of how courts across the U.S. are using AI to improve operations, reduce delays, and increase efficiency. It addressed key judicial system challenges such as case backlogs, staffing constraints, and complex legal research.

Use cases included chatbots for public assistance and staff training, invoice and e-filing automation, transcription services, and legal research tools powered by generative AI. Examples came from diverse courts including Palm Beach County, Seminole County, Michigan's 44th Circuit, and the DC Courts' own invoice processing bot.

The session emphasized that AI doesn't replace human judgment but enhances court functions by automating routine tasks. Common themes included high-value, low-risk applications focused on internal operations, error reduction, and scalability — with careful attention to fairness, transparency, and compliance.

February 2025: Future Trends in AI

This presentation examined emerging trends shaping the future of AI, with a focus on their implications for courts. It began with a historical review of AI development and explored current technologies including machine learning, natural language processing, and computer vision.

Key future trends included the continued expansion of large language models, multimodal AI (combining text, images, and speech), and the potential impact of quantum computing on AI performance and data security. The session also highlighted global efforts to regulate AI, the challenges of enforcement, and the need to balance innovation with responsible governance.

Court-specific projections included predictive analytics for sentencing, enhanced legal research, automated transcription, language services, and virtual hearings. The presentation concluded by emphasizing the importance of fairness, transparency, and public trust in any future court use of AI.

March 2025: Impact of AI on Workforce and People

This presentation focused on how AI is transforming the nature of work, with specific emphasis on its effects within the judicial system. It highlighted how AI is reshaping workflows, automating routine tasks, and shifting job roles — especially in court administration and legal support.

Key impacts included reduced demand for certain roles (like legal clerks and entry-level court staff), increased need for AI oversight positions, and the emergence of hybrid roles combining legal knowledge with AI proficiency. The session also addressed broader societal issues such as job displacement, the importance of reskilling, and ethical concerns like privacy, bias in hiring algorithms, and fairness in AI-assisted legal decisions.

The overall message emphasized AI as a partner — not a replacement — for human workers, and called for proactive upskilling, and careful management of the workforce transition.

April 2025: Human-Centered Design in AI and Its Application in US Courts

This presentation explored the principles of human-centered design (HCD) and how they apply to AI in court systems. HCD emphasizes understanding user needs, promoting usability, and building trust in AI systems through empathy, transparency, and iterative feedback.

The session explained how user-focused design can lead to more intuitive, accessible, and fair AI tools. It also discussed the challenges of implementing HCD, including the complexity of human behavior, data privacy concerns, and the need to balance automation with human oversight.

Applications in the courts included AI-enhanced case management, legal research, predictive analytics, and document analysis — all designed to improve efficiency and access to justice while reducing bias. The presentation concluded with a call for ongoing collaboration between legal professionals and technologists, and the need for continuous improvement through feedback and best practices.

May 2025: AI Maturity Models – General Overview and Application in Courts

This presentation introduced AI Maturity Models as structured frameworks that help organizations, including courts, assess their current AI capabilities and develop roadmaps for ethical and effective AI integration. It outlined common models such as those from Gartner and Deloitte and emphasized their value in strategic planning, resource allocation, and performance benchmarking.

Key components included evaluating technology, data management, organizational culture, and governance. The session highlighted how AI maturity is typically categorized into stages (e.g., Initial, Developing, Established, Leading) and can be assessed through surveys, interviews, and performance metrics.

The presentation also addressed how AI Maturity Models can be adapted specifically for courts, focusing on legal compliance, data privacy, case management efficiency, and ethical considerations. Implementation strategies included readiness assessments, roadmap development, stakeholder alignment, and continuous monitoring to guide sustainable AI adoption in judicial systems.

FOCUS GROUPS

NCSC conducted a series of focus groups with DC Courts personnel from December 2024 through February 2025. The first round of conversations included members of the AI Task Force. The second and third rounds of conversations focused on specific divisions that were identified in the first round for follow-up. These included the Probate, Strategic Management, and Budget and Finance Divisions. This section provides an overview of these conversations and the insights they generated.

First Round: AI Task Force

For the first round of focus group conversations, members of the AI Task Force were divided into small groups, corresponding to their court roles. One group included judges, two groups included individuals in administration and leadership, one group included clerks and those who have worked with clerks, and one group included individuals whose staff interact regularly with court users.

The primary goals of these conversations were:

- Understand current attitudes about potential AI integration in the Courts and ensure that the priorities and concerns of Task Force members are addressed in the Strategic Plan.
- Learn how court personnel are currently using AI.
- Identify potential use cases for AI that might be promising as first projects for the Courts.

The remainder of this section lays out the primary questions that each group discussed, along with a summary of the responses.

When it comes to AI in the Courts, what are you most excited about?

The most frequent response to this question in every group was the potential for AI to increase access to justice and the quality of services provided to the public. Participants were enthusiastic about opportunities to improve services, innovate methods for navigating the courts, and increase the Courts' capacity to be nimble and responsive to the public. Participants provided examples such as resources for self-represented litigants, real-time translation and interpretation services, and easier and faster access to court records and trial transcripts.

Another frequent response that arose in every group was the potential for AI to improve internal business practices and operations. Participants expressed excitement about opportunities to innovate processes, both to address budget shortfalls and short staffing and to make work experiences better for staff. Specific examples raised by participants included

making internal processes more efficient, using AI to train staff more quickly and at a higher level, and making better use of the Courts' data.

Finally, some participants said they were excited about the possibility of using AI to improve legal research and the ability to analyze information across cases.

When it comes to AI in the Courts, what are you most worried about?

Participants' concerns fell into four broad categories. First, some expressed concerns related to the limitations of AI technologies themselves, such as AI bias and data security.

Second, some participants said they had concerns about overall attitudes relating to AI. Examples included unrealistic expectations for how much AI can do, fears about AI preventing innovation, and negative impacts of AI on public trust and confidence in the courts.

Third, some participants described potentially negative impacts on the court workforce. Specific examples of concerns included the possibility of job loss, changing the nature of jobs in ways that make them unfulfilling, difficulties attracting and retaining staff with the necessary technology expertise, challenges in understanding and vetting claims by technology solution providers, and determining precisely where the court should begin innovating first.

Finally, some participants discussed concerns related to external court users' interactions with AI in the courts. Specific examples included concerns about deepfakes and other evidentiary issues, self-represented litigants using AI to generate arguments that they don't understand, and the risk of worsening the digital divide so that the quality of court services depends on a court users' own technology skills or access.

Which aspects of the Courts' workflow might benefit most from innovation?

Participants were asked a series of specific questions about their work and the overall business processes of the Courts. These questions were designed to help the research team identify tasks or processes that have the most potential to benefit from innovation, including AI integration. The specific questions that participants considered were as follows:

- Which aspects of the Courts' work …
    - … are inefficient or labor-intensive?
    - … are most stressful for staff?
    - … are error-prone?
    - … cause the most inconvenience for court users?
    - … create disproportionate burdens on court users from marginalized groups?

- If there was one task you could take off your staff's plate by automating it, what would it be?

Many of the tasks and processes that participants provided arose repeatedly, suggesting that there are some clear contenders for potential AI use cases in the DC Courts. Responses generally fell into two broad categories.

The first category of responses included aspects of the Courts' workflow that are visible to external court users. These "front-of-house" tasks were raised by participants because they created both stress and inefficiencies for court personnel and barriers or inconvenience for court users. Specific responses in this category included the following:

- Receiving and processing new case filings. Participants said that there are many inefficient steps involved in receiving new case filings, entering them into the system, and triaging them for the right docket or case management pathway.
- Training staff to give information to the public. Participants shared that it can take up to a year for new staff to be proficient at providing information to the public and explaining rules and processes in plain language.
- Answering questions and giving status updates. Participants shared that clerks spend a lot of their time answering the same types of questions from court users. Some of that work might be reduced if there was an automated way to triage calls and if courts users could find information more easily online. Giving status updates on the phone for copy requests and other types of requests also takes a lot of time and is done manually.
- Case monitoring and auditing. Participants shared that the auditing process in probate cases is slow and labor-intensive. Similarly, guardianship monitoring remains a largely manual process, and participants noted that the Courts are working to build the capacity needed to meet new legislative requirements for annual reporting.
- Writing and revising boilerplate documents. Although documents such as orders and settlement agreements use relatively standardized formats, participants said that they spend a lot of time manually drafting new versions for each case. Some participants mentioned that there are templates for some kinds of orders, but they are not automatically updated when new style guidelines are released.
- Contract review and paying contractors. Contract management involves manual review processes that may be automatable, such as identifying provisions that the Courts cannot agree to and provisions that must be included in every contract. For individual contractors who work on large numbers of cases, such as mediators and court appointed counsel, there are many steps and many offices involved in making sure these individuals are paid.

- Processing data requests. Processing and responding to external requests for data involves a lot of manual labor, and the volume of requests is too high for the Courts' current capacity.

The second category of responses included aspects of the Courts' workflows that generally do not involve interactions with court users. These "back-of-house" tasks were raised by participants because they involved inefficiencies or manual labor and they tended to be error-prone. Although these aspects of the Courts' work are usually not visible to external court users, delays and errors in completing these tasks have a negative impact on the quality of services provided to court users. Specific responses in this category included the following:

- Docket management and calendar preparation (e.g., mailing, printing, assembling documents, reviewing files from previous hearings, tracking judges' recusals and calendar conflicts). Participants shared that a large portion of chambers staff time is devoted to docket management, and many of the tasks are done manually.
- Manual case processing tasks. Many participants shared examples of case processing tasks that involve significant manual labor. Examples included tracking case deadlines, entering data after each case event, and sending emails when an opinion is issued.
- Data entry, cleaning, and processing. Many data tasks in the case management system are done manually, leading to errors, missing data, delays in case processing, and limitations on the Courts' ability to analyze its data for insights. Specific examples that participants raised include: flagging and tracking self-represented litigants in the system, identifying the attorneys on each case, determining whether notice was issued correctly, creating case files for mediation and transferring the results back to the Courts' main CMS, identity management and linking duplicate entries, and transforming data from formats such as PDFs.
- Preparing reports. Participants shared that much of the information gathering that is needed to compile regular reports is manual. A lot of time is spent gathering information that is tracked by individual staff and kept in dispersed spreadsheets.

Second Round: Division Deep Dives

For the second round of focus group conversations, NCSC identified two divisions for follow-up from the Task Force focus groups. Probate was selected as an example division that has a large volume of court user interactions and a lot of case management tasks. Strategic Management was selected as an example division whose work is largely operational. Note that the Courts can apply this same focus group process to examine the workflow in other divisions and for judges and their chambers.

The main goal of these conversations was to do a deeper dive into which aspects of the Courts' work might benefit most from AI integration. Participants started by considering the

same questions listed above regarding tasks that are inefficient, error-prone, and burdensome for court users.

Probate Division

NCSC spoke with four members of the Probate Division who work in a variety of roles. Throughout the course of the conversation, the following tasks were identified as the biggest pain points in the workflow and most in need of innovation:

- Processing and logging incoming mail
- Triaging phone calls and directing them to the right offices
- Initiating petitions (manually entering data for a subject or decedent)
- Reviewing filings for administrative and procedural requirements (e.g., missing dates or other required information, correcting misspellings, deciphering why a court user sent a certain form and what case it relates to)
- Gathering data and activity reports from staff to produce reports (for example, in response to a question from the Clerk's Office)
- Retrieving documents from the archives center and scanning them

Participants also considered what they'd be able to do with more time if some of these tasks were automated. The following are two examples of how participants would like to reallocate their time:

- A clerk who spends a lot of time answering court users' questions said that the work would be less stressful, and customers would receive better assistance if the volume of calls was smaller and clerks could focus more of their time on the more challenging questions or situations. They'd also be able to provide better services for court users with limited English proficiency, because bilingual clerks would be more readily available and the Language Line would not need to be used as often.
- An employee in the Guardianship Assistance Program said that if less time were spent reviewing filings for administrative and procedural requirements, staff could focus more on the substantive parts of the review—such as assessing the quality of the guardian's care and ensuring that the ward's needs are being met.

Strategic Management Division

NCSC spoke with five members of the Strategic Management Division who work in a variety of roles. Throughout the course of the conversation, the following tasks were identified as the biggest pain points in the workflow and most in need of innovation:

- Responding to external data requests:
    - Identifying whether the Court has the data being requested

    - Routing the request through multiple executives for approval
    - Working with IT to determine how information is captured and structured; extracting the data from the data warehouse
    - Cleaning and formatting the data
    - Identifying errors and missing data and coordinating with Divisions to fix these data quality issues in the main CMS
- Grant Management
    - Contacting individuals working on funded projects to collect progress information
    - Setting up and maintaining spreadsheets to manually track deadlines, milestones, and tasks
    - Writing progress reports and adhering to funders' reporting requirements and deadlines

Participants also considered what they'd be able to do with more time if some of these tasks were automated. The following are two examples of how participants would like to reallocate their time:

- Enhancing efficiencies around responding to external data requests could allow staff to devote more time to internal research efforts—such as conducting analyses to support Divisions and court leadership or performing substantive evaluations of court processes, outcomes, and performance.
- Enhancing efficiencies in grant management—particularly around progress tracking and reporting—could free up more time to pursue new funding opportunities. Currently, there is limited time available to explore funding opportunities for all the project ideas proposed by Court personnel.

Third Round: Technology Implementation Case Studies

For the third round of focus group conversations, NCSC identified two recent technology implementation projects that can serve as case studies for the Courts. One project was the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP) BOT in the Budget and Finance Division. The second project was the transition to a new case management system.

The main goal of these conversations was to document the processes involved in each of these projects, learn what approaches worked well and where there was room for improvement, and gather lessons learned for future AI implementation projects.

Budget and Finance IPP BOT

The Budget and Finance Division implemented the IPP BOT in 2019. The following is a summary of the steps that Budget and Finance took to implement the IPP BOT:

- Task Identification and Design: Budget & Finance consulted with the solution provider, to identify tasks that would benefit from automation. They selected two pilot projects: invoice processing and reporting. The solution provider held many meetings with court staff, including line staff who are experts in the specific tasks that were being automated. Participants in the focus group conversations shared that this high level of staff input in the design stage helped ensure that the technology met the needs of the Division. The solution provider then built the IPP BOT and documented the BOT's design, business processes, and standard operating procedures. Participants said that the solution provider was able to complete these tasks with very little involvement from court personnel, which meant that the project was minimally disruptive to normal business operations.
- Change management: Change management during the early stages of the project largely consisted of communicating with staff about their concerns and providing reassurance that the project would not lead to job loss.
- Testing: Budget and Finance launched the IPP BOT with a limited set of staff members for testing. They provided training and troubleshooting as staff learned the new system. Participants shared that because the system was well-designed and documented, they did not need to make adjustments to the technology itself during this phase. Troubleshooting essentially meant teaching the staff how to respond to different types of error messages.
- Rollout and change management: After the IPP BOT was implemented, change management largely involved helping staff identify and develop new ways to spend the time that they gained. The Division reconfigured how tasks are assigned to staff as well as the process of onboarding new staff.
- Maintenance: The Court has a maintenance contract with the solution provider, who retains control over the configuration of the BOT. The advantage of this approach is that the Courts do not need to devote staff time to maintaining the technology. However, the drawback is that the Courts also lack control over reconfiguration. If Budget and Finance changes business processes (for example, a recent Treasury mandate to implement 2-factor authentication), the Courts must pay the solution provider to update the technology.

The IPP BOT has been a very successful example of technology implementation in the Courts, and Budget and Finance Division members shared their excitement about potential opportunities to automate more tasks. The project has led to three major categories of positive outcomes.

First, invoice processing is more efficient. Where this work once took about 8 hours of staff time per day, it now takes about 1–2 hours. Payments are more consistent, and there are fewer errors. Staff in other Divisions also spend less time on invoices now that the process requires fewer manual communications, approvals, and corrections from them. And because more invoices are processed on time, the Court is saving money on late fees and interest.

Second, Budget and Finance staff have more time for other kinds of work now that fewer hours are spent on invoice processing. So far, they have been able to devote more attention to customer support, data analysis, reporting, and CMS training.

Third, because the IPP BOT was implemented before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division was able to adapt to remote work relatively easily. There was much less time and expense involved in continuing operations during lockdowns than other Divisions experienced. This adaptability has continued to be beneficial when other unexpected disruptions happen, such as weather emergencies or staff illness.

The New Case Management System

Throughout the course of the focus group conversations, many participants mentioned the new CMS rollout in the context of discussing their workflow. Some of these comments were positive, but many staff in different kinds of roles pointed to challenges they've experienced during the implementation process. NCSC conducted a series of conversations to get a more detailed understanding of the implementation process for this project and specific successes and challenges that staff have experienced so far.

The following is a summary of the steps that the Courts have taken to implement the new CMS:

- Design: The Courts went through a requirements-gathering process for about a year, identifying both operational and informational needs. Staff from IT led the process of identifying specific data elements that need to be captured in the CMS, as well as the Courts' ongoing data access needs for operations and reporting. Once the solution provider was selected, Subject Matter Experts were identified from each Division to learn how to configure the system.
- Testing: Initial testing was done by creating a test environment (i.e., a test data warehouse) and pulling in data from the old system. Court staff ran reports in the test environment to determine whether it was meeting informational needs.
- Rollout and change management: The new system is being rolled out in stages. As new case types are implemented, Division SMEs are attending trainings to learn the configuration process and troubleshooting issues as they arise.

Because the Courts' new case management system is still mid-implementation, it is too soon to evaluate its outcomes. However, the experiences that staff have shared so far provide some useful insights.

One of the positive aspects of the project that multiple participants shared was that staff were heavily involved in the information-gathering and design phase. Participants said that they felt their feedback was taken into account in design decisions. Some participants also appreciated that the testing process gave them a chance to start learning how to use the new system before it was launched. Another positive aspect of the implementation is that the Court has control over the configuration of the CMS and the ability to reconfigure it as needed in the future. Participants said that it will be important for the Court to be more agile than it was with the old system as its data needs evolve.

Some of the challenges that participants shared relate to the amount of work that has gone into the implementation. Multiple participants shared that the staff who were identified as SMEs from the Divisions have spent a lot of time getting the new system configured. Some participants felt that the mandatory training sessions interrupted their normal business, and it was hard to retain information from the training when they had not yet had a chance to use the system in their day-to-day work.

Another set of challenges that participants raised relate to the need to standardize data definitions and practices across the Courts. For example, some participants in the Probate Division noted that, due to the distinct caseflow needs of probate cases compared to other case types, certain customizations or adaptations were needed. In some instances, staff have developed interim workarounds to align the system with their specific workflow requirements. Some participants in Strategic Management shared concerns that there has been resistance to data standardization from some Divisions, and more change management strategies may be needed to align data practices across the Courts. Because there are so many individuals with the ability to make changes in the system's configurations, some are concerned from a data security perspective that there are more opportunities for people to make changes in the system that have unintended impacts on everyone else. This dispersed access to the system's configuration also makes it unclear who will be responsible for new configurations in the future (for example, if a new case type is created by legislation).

A third set of challenges shared by participants relates to expectations about the capabilities of the new CMS. Some participants anticipated that the system would fully automate the caseflow process and eliminate the need for paper documentation. However, it became clear during implementation that certain manual processes and paper-based workflows would continue, at least in the near term. This highlights the importance of the Courts managing expectations and clearly communicating the system's initial capabilities and limitations. Additionally, participants noted that some informational needs remain unmet, in part because the Courts are still in the process of updating the supporting business intelligence tools needed to effectively analyze and use the data generated by the new system.

Technology Implementation Lessons Learned

Taken together, the conversations surrounding these two technology implementation projects provide some useful insights for future AI projects in the Courts. The following are some key lessons learned:

- There seems to be a “sweet spot” for the amount of staff involvement in implementing a new technology. The Courts should aim to maximize participant-centered design but minimize disruptions to normal business during the rollout.
- There may also a “sweet spot” for the extent of the solution provider’s role in a project. Ideally, the solution provider takes on as much of the design, testing, and rollout process as possible to minimize disruptions to staff. Conversely, the more ownership and access to the technology and data that the Courts retain, the less the Courts depend on the solution provider long-term for updates, reconfiguration, and maintenance.
- A project goes more smoothly if data and business processes are well documented and standardized before implementation.
- Careful attention to change management and staff experiences throughout the process is vital.
- It is also important to give careful attention to how staff time and skills will be reallocated after specific tasks are automated. The Courts should consider how downstream tasks in the workflow will be affected by the new technology, as well as how staff will spend any time that they gain.

IT SYSTEMS REVIEW

To better understand the potential scope and implications of an AI Roadmap, the NCSC performed an inventory of the current systems within the DC Courts. The system's inventory consisted of:

- IT Security
- PMO
- Applications Branch
- Customer Service Branch
- Courtroom Tech and Central Resources
- Production Support Branch
- Network and Telecom Branch
- Server and Storage Branch
- Business Analysis Branch

Identification of Manual and Repetitive Tasks

To better assess how AI and automation could be applied to real-time business needs, the NCSC divided the DC IT and Infrastructure team into five core functional areas: Server Management, Backup Management, Storage Oversight, Application Monitoring, and Incident Response. This effort aimed to identify inefficiencies, repetitive tasks, and manual workflows where AI integration could deliver practical improvements in business processes.

The NCSC conducted a series of interviews and working sessions with service line managers and subject matter experts within the IT Division. Interviews included roundtable discussions for stakeholders to highlight areas where they believed AI integration could benefit overall business processes.

These structured interviews and roundtable discussions allowed for specific talking points and more open exploration of key issues. Sessions began by asking participants to describe their team's core responsibilities, current tools, and day-to-day workflows. From there, the conversation would evolve to focus on specific operational challenges, recurring manual tasks, and identifying systematic inefficiencies. The NCSC encouraged participants to share not only current pain points but also ideas for how AI integration or automation could streamline workflows. Through these stakeholder interviews, the NCSC gathered both technical details and specific use cases to form a more comprehensive view of each area's need for AI-driven transformation.

Through the interviews conducted across infrastructure, database, application, and support teams, numerous manual and repetitive tasks were identified that contribute to operational delays. The NCSC also identified various labor-intensive processes for system monitoring, data validation, and issue response.

Examples include server and storage teams performing manual cluster health checks, storage capacity reviews, and backup validations, which require repeated logins, data pulls, and email tracking. The absence of optimization tools for clustered server and Virtual Desktop issues often results in time-consuming diagnostic work.

Similarly, application and database teams face repetitive tasks like regression testing and log monitoring. The service desk and incident response team also identified manual tasks with tickets manually classified and routed without consistent logic or rules-based automation.

The cumulative effect of these manual processes across teams underscores the need for intelligent automation solutions to streamline operations, reduce redundancy, and improve overall service reliability.

Potential AI Automation Opportunities

Following a detailed review of the DC Courts' internal operations and the identification of manual and repetitive tasks across the IT environment, the NCSC identified key areas where AI and automation can streamline processes, reduce human error, and enhance system resilience.

Server Team

The server team is responsible for the operational capabilities of the organization's server infrastructure; this work makes sure that systems and applications have stable, secure, and high-performing environments for the courts to operate in. Areas that could have possible AI/Automation integration include:

- Anomaly Detection and Compliance Checks: Implement AI-driven automation to regularly monitor and detect unusual patterns in the memory of CPU usage
- Predictive Health Analysis and Resource Scaling: Use machine learning to analyze historical usage and predict future demand, allowing automated resource allocation to prevent future performance bottlenecks
- Provisioning Scripts: Automate the deployment of standard server configurations to address common issues (Memory Balancing, Disk Space cleanup, etc.)

Backup Management

Backup validation, logging, and error remediation are also manual processes. Implementing AI and Automation tools can enhance these processes' reliability and efficiency.

- Automated Backup Verification: Deploy AI tools to perform real-time monitoring to verify backup systems' structural integrity and functionality
- Failure Pattern Detection: Use machine learning models to detect backup failures before they occur by analyzing logs and error codes

Storage Oversight

Storage utilization and performance monitoring rely on frequent data extraction, manual report generation, and ongoing coordinating efforts across cross-functional teams.

- Predictive Capacity Planning: Implement AI Models to forecast storage growth trends and recommend proactive expansion
- Automated Tiering Decisions: Use AI to analyze usage patterns and allocate files between storage tiers to optimize performance and cost
- Anomaly Detection: Automate the identification of anomalous behavior in storage systems (sudden spikes in memory, performance degradations) to enable faster root cause analysis

Application Monitoring

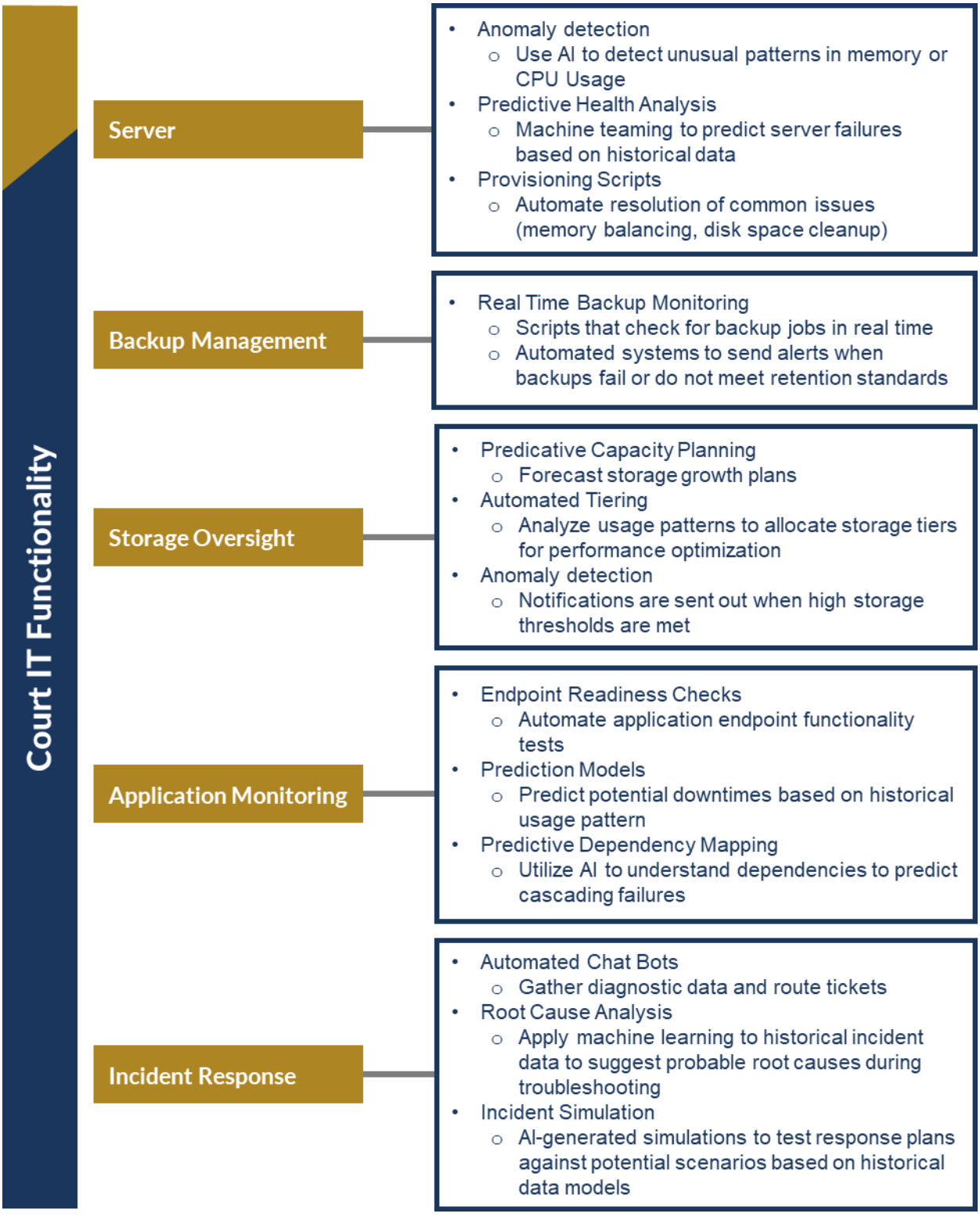
Monitoring functionality and availability across all applications involves aggregating data from multiple sources and reacting to real-time alerts by the internal IT team. Methods for mitigating risk and enhancing the efficiency of this process can include:

- Endpoint Readiness Checks: Automate application endpoint functionality tests
- AI-Driven Observation: Utilize automated scripts and AIOps platforms to analyze system logs and other metrics for early detection of application performance issues (Predictive Dependency Mapping, Prediction Models)

Incident Response

The incident response team is responsible for identifying, managing, and resolving unplanned disruptions to IT services. Current workflows rely on manual ticket classification, diagnostics, and routing, which can lead to delayed response times and inconsistent handling. Opportunities to incorporate AI and automation to streamline this process can include:

- Automated Chat Bots: Integration of AI chatbots to gather diagnostic data and route tickets to the correct support group based on issue characteristics
- Root Cause Analysis: Apply machine learning to historical incident data to suggest probable root causes during troubleshooting and investigations
- Incident Simulation: AI-generated simulations to test response plans against potential scenarios based on historical models


Court IT Functionality
Server
Anomaly detection
Use AI to detect unusual patterns in memory or CPU Usage
Predictive Health Analysis
Machine teaming to predict server failures based on historical data
Provisioning Scripts
Automate resolution of common issues (memory balancing, disk space cleanup)
Backup Management
Real Time Backup Monitoring
Scripts that check for backup jobs in real time
Automated systems to send alerts when backups fail or do not meet retention standards
Storage Oversight
Predicative Capacity Planning
Forecast storage growth plans
Automated Tiering
Analyze usage patterns to allocate storage tiers for performance optimization
Anomaly detection
Notifications are sent out when high storage thresholds are met
Application Monitoring
Endpoint Readiness Checks
Automate application endpoint functionality tests
Prediction Models
Predict potential downtimes based on historical usage pattern
Predictive Dependency Mapping
Utilize AI to understand dependencies to predict cascading failures
Incident Response
Automated Chat Bots
Gather diagnostic data and route tickets
Root Cause Analysis
Apply machine learning to historical incident data to suggest probable root causes during troubleshooting
Incident Simulation
AI-generated simulations to test response plans against potential scenarios based on historical data models

AI STRATEGY AND ROADMAP

Based on the information gathered from court personnel over the course of this project, NCSC put together a roadmap with recommended next steps for AI implementation in the Courts. This section provides an overview of the roadmap, along with additional resources.

A. Guiding Principles

The first step in the development of an AI strategy is to articulate the Courts' guiding principles for the use of AI. Identifying core principles for AI usage and implementation is essential to ensure that AI technologies are selected, developed, and deployed responsibly, ethically, and effectively. As AI becomes more integrated into critical systems, clear core principles help prevent misuse, mitigate risks, and maintain public trust. As technologies evolve and unforeseen questions arise, the guiding principles serve as a guidepost to help the Courts ensure that its ongoing decisions continue to align with its values and priorities.

In consultation with NCSC, the AI Task Force developed a set of guiding principles and adopted them in February 2025. **Appendix A** provides these guiding principles in full.

B. AI Governance

An important early step in AI implementation is to establish a governance structure within the Courts. A well-defined governance framework provides a structured approach to managing and identifying risks, setting standards, and maintaining public trust. Effective AI governance includes clear policies, safeguards against unintended consequences, and mechanisms for ongoing oversight.

Governance can take various forms, including an AI governance committee to oversee adoption, ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards, and address emerging challenges proactively. However, governance also extends to judicial training, staff education, and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that those interacting with AI understand its capabilities and limitations. By implementing robust governance mechanisms, courts can improve their operations, mitigate risks, and ensure AI supports, rather than disrupts, the administration of justice.

The AI Task Force established a set of five governance committees that will focus on policy and practice, ethics and compliance, infrastructure development, workforce development, and engagement and transparency. Charters have been established for each committee.

C. Internal AI Use Policy

Another important early task for the Courts is developing a policy for internal AI use. This policy is meant to provide guardrails that promote safe AI use during the transition period while the Court establishes its AI governance and strategy.

The AI Task Force drafted its internal use policy in consultation with NCSC, and the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration approved it in May 2025.

D. AI Literacy

AI literacy refers to the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed to effectively interact with, critically evaluate, and responsibly use artificial intelligence systems. The Courts should develop a plan for building AI literacy in the workforce. The goal of AI literacy is to empower individuals to navigate an increasingly AI-driven world with confidence and discernment.

Promoting AI literacy in the court workforce will be an ongoing process, beginning with the recruitment and onboarding of new personnel and continuing with ongoing education and training as business processes evolve and technologies advance.

Generally, AI literacy includes the following components:

- Understanding AI Basics: Knowing how AI systems work, including concepts like machine learning, data training, and algorithms.
- Critical Evaluation: Assessing the reliability, biases, and ethical implications of AI applications.
- Practical Skills: Using AI tools and technologies effectively, whether for communication, analysis, or creative tasks.
- Awareness of Limitations: Recognizing the boundaries of AI capabilities and when human judgment is necessary.
- Use Cases: Awareness of appropriate use cases, ability to scale, sustainability, and capacity of AI to meet strategic business needs.
- Ethical Awareness: Understanding the societal, legal, and moral considerations surrounding AI development and usage.

For each specific role in the court workforce, the Courts should consider what each of these components means in practice. For example, the practical skills a clerk needs to use AI-based technologies may differ from the practical skills a judge needs. Ensuring that all court personnel receive relevant training to build and sustain AI literacy is critical for the successful implementation of AI in the Courts.

E. Selecting the First AI Use Cases

The next important step in the Courts' implementation of AI is the identification of the first AI project. It is important to choose early AI projects thoughtfully, as implementing AI for the first time can be daunting due to concerns about risk, cost, and stakeholder trust. By

starting with a well-chosen project, courts can build confidence, demonstrate value, and lay the foundation for future AI initiatives.

The Courts have already made significant progress on this task through the conversations and focus groups involved in this project. **Section 7** below provides an overview of the use cases that NCSC identified in conversations with IT, Probate, and Strategic Management, as well as more detailed guidance on how to evaluate and select a project from this candidate list. Note that when the Courts are interested in exploring use cases in other divisions or use cases for judges and their chambers, the same process that is illustrated here can be followed.

F. Project Resource Assessment and Procurement Strategy

Once a potential first project is identified, the next step is to refine the scope of the project and develop a procurement strategy. This process involves the following steps:

Refine the Scope of the Project

Project scope includes identifying the specific tasks that the AI system will perform, such as automating scheduling or summarizing documents, and clearly stating the expected outputs. Understanding whether the AI is replacing tasks or augmenting human capabilities is critical to accurately estimating both the costs and benefits. Establish specific metrics for project success and develop a plan for how success will be measured. Develop an initial desired timeline for project development, testing, and rollout.

Estimate Project Costs and Benefits

Estimate the resources required to implement the project. Costs are grouped into three broad categories. Direct costs are relatively straightforward to identify and include infrastructure investments, software licensing, personnel training, and costs involved in maintaining new systems. Indirect costs, such as increased security requirements, compliance measures, and system integration, are often harder to estimate but can significantly impact overall project feasibility. The third category, intangible costs, includes less tangible factors like the time required for staff to adapt, changes in work culture or behavior, and unforeseen consequences of automation.

Benefits from AI implementation can take various forms. One approach is to define the benefits in terms of productivity gains. Many court systems expect increased productivity as AI handles routine and repetitive tasks. This may also lead to improved service delivery, especially for underserved populations, and allow for operations to scale without a corresponding increase in resources. In these cases, benefits could be quantified as reductions in cost per case or increases in capacity. Another approach is to define the benefits in terms of cost savings, quantifying reductions in the amount of staff time that is spent on training and onboarding or reductions in the amount of staff time required to perform the specific tasks being automated.

Decide whether to Build or Buy

Determine whether the Courts should build the technology solution in-house or contract with a solution provider to develop the technology. Factors affecting this decision include:

- Whether the use case involves generalist or specialist AI tasks
- Whether a solution provider product already exists for this use case and the extent to which existing solutions would need to be customized
- The extent to which the Courts needs control over the underlying code, the ability to make ongoing updates over time, or access to the data
- The Courts' personnel capacity and expertise to build and maintain the technology and secure the relevant data
- Ethical, legal, and constitutional factors, such as whether the tool's role needs to be explainable and defensible to the public or who will be accountable if the tool causes harm

Develop a Plan for Vetting and Negotiating with Solution Providers

If the Courts will be working with solution providers for any portion of the project, develop a plan for vetting and negotiating terms. The vetting and negotiation process must reflect the Courts' technical requirements and its legal, ethical, and operational mandates.

When courts evaluate AI solution providers, it is essential to look beyond marketing claims and focus on the structural features that will determine long-term success. The Courts should involve legal counsel and IT teams early in the procurement process and consider using structured evaluation scorecards to compare solution providers across these dimensions:

- Solution Provider Expertise. Experience matters, especially in complex, high-stakes environments like the judiciary. Prioritize solution providers with legal domain knowledge, experience with public-sector clients, and a proven ability to translate abstract AI capabilities into practical tools. Request references, case studies, or pilot program results. Ask for references from other courts or public-sector clients and evaluate whether the solution provider offers role-based training for judges, clerks, and IT staff.

- Security & Compliance. In the court context, AI systems must meet high standards for data protection and legal compliance. Request specific documentation such as encryption standards, system architecture diagrams, integration case studies, and a software build of materials (SBOM) that lists all underlying software and applications to support the solution. Ask for third-party audit results or compliance attestations such as a copy of the solution provider's SOC 2 report.

- Customizability & Integration. Courts vary widely in their workflows, and AI systems must be able to accommodate this variation without requiring the court to redesign its operations. Tools that cannot integrate with case management systems or internal

platforms may create silos or duplication. Favor modular systems with secure open APIs, and request demonstrations of past integrations with public-sector or legal environments.

- Scalability & Performance. A court's AI needs may expand over time and systems must be able to grow accordingly. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that guarantee uptime, support response times, technical performance benchmarks, security benchmarks and disclosures are essential. Discuss benchmarks for load handling, latency, and system responsiveness, along with a roadmap for product updates. Ask for performance metrics from jurisdictions of comparable size or complexity. Include penalty clauses or remedies in case SLAs are not met and consider requiring that disaster recovery tests be performed on an annual basis.
- Transparency & Explainability. Any AI system used in a court context must be explainable to its human users, to the extent that it is possible. This is critical for accountability, auditing, and trust. Require model documentation, audit logs, and a mechanism to challenge or verify system outputs. Avoid solution providers that demonstrate a lack of transparency about how the AI system works, what data it was trained on, or how outputs can be explained.
- Validation & Measurable Outcomes. Claims of accuracy, efficiency, or time savings must be backed by data. Measurable outcomes help courts evaluate whether the tool is achieving its intended purpose and justify its continued use. Request baseline metrics, pre-deployment testing, and regular performance reporting.
- Ongoing Development & Innovation Commitment. Courts must ensure that AI solutions remain current, secure, and functional in a rapidly evolving technology environment. Require a clear development roadmap, regular version updates, and a demonstrated commitment to improving product capabilities over time. Ask solution providers to commit in writing to ongoing development efforts, including updates to address emerging threats, evolving legal standards, and new technological opportunities.
- Support & Engagement. A solution provider's commitment to long-term support is as important as the technology itself. Courts need dependable partners who provide ongoing training and system maintenance. Ask for onboarding tailored to different user roles, 24/7 technical support if necessary, and regular updates that include performance and security improvements. Assess responsiveness during the vetting process and include support terms in the contract.
- Cost Transparency. AI contracts can hide complexity in subscription tiers, usage-based pricing, or support add-ons. Ask for full cost breakdowns, including licensing, storage, training, and support. Consider negotiating 'not to exceed' amounts, multi-year pricing, and discounts to help ensure savings and predictability. Ask for Return on Investment (ROI) estimation tools and require a fixed trial period before full commitment.

When the Courts have vetted and selected a solution provider, it is important to negotiate contract terms carefully to protect court data, operations, and legal interests. In addition to the considerations listed above, the following are some especially important terms to negotiate with care:

- Data Ownership and Use: Court data includes sensitive, often sealed information subject to strict confidentiality rules. Courts should retain full ownership of all data provided to or generated by the AI system. Solution providers must not use this data for model training, resale, or analytics without express, written permission. Consideration should also be given to retention schedules as well as data that is expunged or sealed after inclusion in a data set.
- Intellectual Property (IP) Rights: Any outputs or customizations developed specifically for the court should be clearly owned or licensable by the court. This prevents solution providers from monetizing court-specific workflows or data insights.
- Compiled and Source Code: Contracts should specify the ownership and access rights to both compiled and source code developed for the court. Courts should have the ability to access, review, and modify the source code as needed. Having access to the source code ensures that the court can maintain, update, and customize the AI system independently, reducing reliance on the solution provider and enhancing security and control.
- Termination, Audit, and Exit Provisions: Contracts should include the right to terminate for cause or convenience, rights to audit solution provider compliance (especially regarding data handling), and solution provider obligations to support smooth data migration upon contract end. Courts should identify how and in what format they want their data exported and include that within the terms and conditions of the contract. Provisions should also include how data is removed and permanently deleted from solution provider systems. This ensures the court can retain control and minimize disruption if the relationship ends.
- Model Drift and Change Management: Unannounced changes could introduce bias, degrade performance, or violate legal constraints. Solution providers must commit to disclosing any planned model changes (e.g., retraining, algorithm updates) in advance and allow courts to test such changes.

G. Change Management Strategy

As discussed above in relation to the technology implementation lessons learned, change management is essential to successful innovation. It begins well before the actual integration of the new solution and continues beyond deployment. Change management includes a deep understanding of the needs of different stakeholders who will use or interact with the new technology, clear and open communication, training and support, careful attention to fears and resistance, and performance measurement.

In the process of preparing for a new technology implementation, the Courts should develop a change management strategy that includes the following components:

- Assess Readiness, Risk, and Impact:
    - Identify key stakeholders, including court personnel, court users, and the public. This includes both stakeholders that will use and interact with the new technology directly and those who may experience an indirect impact.
    - Engage personnel early to clarify AI's role, address job concerns, and emphasize AI as an enhancement to human expertise rather than a replacement. Conduct a change readiness assessment across affected court departments, focusing on personnel concerns and ideas. Foster an open dialogue with employees and stakeholders to ensure AI meets their needs. Analyze potential resistance from employees and others that might engage in or be impacted by the new process.
- Develop Communication Strategy and Use Participatory Design:
    - Define key messages emphasizing the goals of the project and AI's role in supporting, not replacing, human decision-making. Conduct initial briefings for stakeholders on the purpose, benefits, and expected challenges of AI integration to align expectations and address concerns about AI's role.
    - Establish dedicated communication channels (e.g., email updates, webinars, intranet portal) for providing updates and receiving feedback. Choose communication channels based on how stakeholders prefer to send and receive information.
    - Ensure that stakeholders have ongoing input into the design of the new technology and that all design decisions are made in consultation with those who will use the new technology in practice.
- Develop Phased Implementation Plan:
    - Establish a phased rollout plan, starting with limited implementation before expanding system-wide. Ensure a human oversight mechanism to validate AI-generated outcomes. During rollout, collect feedback from relevant stakeholders on usability, fairness, accessibility, and other metrics of success. Refine the technology as needed before scaling up.
    - During rollout, assess skill gaps related to the new technology. Develop and refine training resources tailored to different roles. Where possible, provide access to on-demand learning resources and real-time troubleshooting.
    - As the implementation is expanded and scaled up, continue to measure success metrics and continue to seek feedback from stakeholders to monitor for unintended impacts. Continue to provide and update ongoing support and troubleshooting resources. Collect data on costs associated with or relevant

to the changes in process that can be compared to data from pre-change cost analysis.

- Develop Continuous Improvement & Optimization Strategy:
    - Once full rollout is complete, continue to monitor success metrics and stakeholder feedback.
    - Conduct a new business process analysis to determine whether integrating the technology has created or highlighted any new pain points in the workflow. Identify any unforeseen or unaddressed impacts on personnel, such as the need to reallocate their time to new types of tasks.

Note that although the change management strategy is developed at the beginning of the project, it will likely need to be updated and refined as the project proceeds and the Courts gain new insights. The Courts should identify specific time intervals or milestones at which the change management strategy will be re-examined and updated as needed.

H. Post-Project Feedback Cycle

Once the Courts have successfully implemented its first AI project, the next step is to incorporate the resulting changes and lessons learned back into the broader organization. The Courts should consider whether the following policies and practices need updating, based on the new workflow and insights that have resulted from the AI integration:

- AI guiding principles, governance structure, and internal use policy
- Data governance policies and practices
- IT infrastructure and policies
- Case management system configurations based on any AI integration from the solution provider
- Job descriptions and recruitment strategies for new staff openings
- Training and AI education for personnel
- Communications and resources for court users
- Procurement policies and solution provider contract templates

The final step in the AI Roadmap is to repeat the cycle of identifying and implementing new AI integrations. As the Courts gains experience implementing AI projects and fine-tunes its approach to change management, it will gradually become equipped to take on AI integrations with greater potential impacts (and greater potential risks). The following chart illustrates how the steps outlined above are repeated and iterated with each new AI innovation:

AI Innovation Cycle

Select AI Use Cases
- Analyze business processes and identify workflow pain points
- Evaluate candidate tasks and choose the next AI implementation project

Project Resources and Procurement Strategy
- Refine project scope and assess resources, costs, and benefits
- Develop procurement strategy

Develop change management strategy

Implement project
- Implement change management strategy
- Design and test new technology
- Implement phased rollout, evaluate performance, and refine technology

Implement post-project feedback cycle
- Implement ongoing performance monitoring and maintenance
- Incorporate changes and insights into organizational policies and practices

AI USE CASE RECOMMENDATIONS

As described above in Section 6, selecting a good use case for AI integration is an important part of successful implementation. This section provides an overview of NCSC's recommended AI use cases for the DC Courts, based on the insights gained throughout this project.

Use Cases for IT

The NCSC has proposed a phased implementation plan for integrating AI and automation into IT operations. This plan takes a multi-dimensional approach, organizing implementation steps based on the anticipated level of institutional effort and the potential impact on existing IT operations.

Phase 1: Quick Start Enhancements (Low Disruption)

The initial phase focuses on implementing high-impact, low-disruption solutions that deliver immediate operational benefits with minimal change management. These enhancements target routine and repetitive tasks that currently consume valuable staff time. Key initiatives include:

- AI Service Ticket Classification and Routing: Automating the intake of support tickets based on content and keywords to ensure faster resolution and accurate assignment.
- Backup and Storage Monitoring Automation: Utilizing machine learning, implementing real-time alerts and automated checks to streamline monitoring of backup jobs and storage thresholds.
- Endpoint Readiness Checks: Utilize automation scripts and adaptive monitoring for regular health checks on application endpoints to proactively detect and address system issues
- Automated Data Pipeline for Internal Court Reporting: CSV files that will be automatically placed in a designated location, where they will be transformed into the required format for seamless integration with the interactive dashboards. An example would be Budget and Finance reporting.

Phase 2: System Enhancements (Moderate Disruption)

Phase two introduces more advanced automation capabilities that may require temporary process adjustments or system upgrades. These enhancements are designed to improve operational resilience and provide predictive insights. This phase includes:

- Predictive Server Health Monitoring: Leveraging AI and machine learning to analyze server data (CPU Usage, Memory Utilization, error logs, etc.) over time to identify patterns and anticipate server failures.
- Incident Simulation: Running simulated incident scenarios to test response plans and improve organizational preparedness.
- Application Dependency Mapping: Using traffic analysis and service logs to diagram how systems interact, helping to predict cascading failures and improve architecture planning.
- Predictive Capacity Planning: Use AI and machine learning to forecast storage needs based on historical data and operational capacity to alert to potential memory issues proactively.
- Root Cause Analysis Automation: Use machine learning to automatically analyze past system issues (incidents) and their outcomes to identify the most probable cause of a current problem.

Phase 3: Strategic Optimization and Scalability (High Impact, Long-Term Focus)

The final phase focuses on embedding AI into strategic IT functions, enabling long-term optimization and scalability. These efforts support continuous improvement, greater self-healing capabilities, and more responsive service delivery.

- Ethical AI Guidelines and User Training Manuals: Develop and distribute clear policies and user training resources to promote responsible, secure, and transparent use of AI tools across teams.
- Predictive Analytics Dashboards: Transition from manual IT monitoring of activities such as server memory, CPU usage, detection of unusual or anomalous activity, etc., to dashboards that provide real-time forecasting and insight-driven metrics.
- Document Management Automation: Use AI to streamline the intake, classification, and routing of internal and external documents, reduce manual handling, improve consistency, and accelerate processing.
- AI-Driven Data Cleanup Tools: Implement machine learning algorithms to detect anomalies, identify duplicate records, and automate remediation to improve system data quality.

Use Cases for Caseflow and Court Business Processes

As described above in Section 4, NCSC's focus group conversations generated a list of court tasks that are most in need of innovation in two divisions. Innovation may include automation or enhancement with AI technologies, as well as other approaches like process simplification and standardization. In the Probate Division, these tasks include:

- Processing and logging incoming mail
- Triaging phone calls and directing them to the right offices
- Initiating petitions (manually entering data for a subject or decedent)
- Reviewing filings for administrative and procedural requirements (e.g., missing dates or other required information, correcting misspellings, deciphering why a court user sent a certain form and what case it relates to)
- Gathering data and activity reports from staff to produce reports (for example, in response to a question from the Clerk's Office)
- Retrieving documents from the archives center and scanning them

In the Strategic Management Division, these tasks include:

- Responding to external data requests:
    - Identifying whether the Courts have the data being requested
    - Routing the request through multiple executives for approval
    - Working with IT to determine how information is captured and structured; extracting the data from the data warehouse
    - Cleaning and formatting the data
    - Identifying errors and missing data and coordinating with Divisions to fix these data quality issues in the main CMS
- Grant Management:
    - Contacting individuals working on funded projects to collect progress information
    - Setting up and maintaining spreadsheets to manually track deadlines, milestones, and tasks

As the Court begins to narrow down potential AI use cases that may serve as good "first projects," it may be beneficial to begin in the Probate and Strategic Management Divisions as test cases for the rest of the Courts. The remainder of this section outlines a recommended approach for selecting a first project among this list of candidates and developing an implementation plan. This guidance is adapted from NCSC's AI Readiness for the State Courts project, which is currently underway. When the Courts are interested in exploring potential use cases in other divisions or use cases for judges and their chambers, the same process that is illustrated here can be applied in those cases.

Steps for Identifying and Selecting a First AI Project

- Step 1: Define Goals and Constraints
    - Identify the Courts' top priorities for the project (e.g., efficiency, backlog reduction, cost savings).
    - Identify pain points in the workflow and specific tasks that are most in need of innovation. Assess data availability and quality related to each of these tasks.
    - Identify limitations and constraints that the Courts currently face, such as budget, staff capacity, data availability, and regulatory requirements.
- Step 2: Evaluate Candidate Tasks
    - Take the list of candidate tasks from Step 1 and evaluate each against the features of a good project (see **Appendix B** for a sample scoring matrix). These features are listed below.

Features of a Good First AI Project	
1. Low-Risk	**Not Public-Facing**: Avoid projects that directly impact litigants, attorneys, or the public, as errors or biases could erode trust. Instead, focus on internal, back-office processes.
	Low Legal and Ethical Risk: Avoid projects involving sensitive decisions (e.g., sentencing, case outcomes) that could raise ethical or legal concerns.
	Minimal Data Privacy Concerns: Use non-sensitive or anonymized data to reduce privacy risks.
2. Addresses Repetitive & Manual Tasks	**High Manual Effort:** Target tasks that require significant staff time and are prone to human error.
	Repetitive and Rule-Based: Focus on processes with clear, consistent rules that AI can easily learn.
3. Manageable Scope	**Small Scale:** Start with a pilot project that can be implemented in a single department or for a specific task.
	Limited Integration Needs: Avoid projects requiring extensive integration with legacy systems, which can increase complexity and cost.

	Short Timeline: Aim for projects that can be implemented and evaluated within 6-12 months.
4. Measurable Impact	**Clear Success Metrics:** Choose projects with quantifiable outcomes (e.g., time saved, error reduction, cost savings).
	High ROI Potential: Focus on projects that deliver significant value relative to cost and effort.
5. Stakeholder Buy-In	**Addresses Pain Points:** Select projects that solve well-known challenges for staff, judges, or administrators.
	Low Resistance to Change: Avoid projects that require significant cultural or operational shifts.
6. Scalable & Reusable	**Potential for Expansion:** Choose projects that can be scaled or adapted for other use cases in the future.
	Reusable Technology: Use AI tools or models that can be repurposed for future projects.

- Step 3: Select Pilot Use Case
  - Review the top-ranked processes with stakeholders.
  - Validate data availability and technology feasibility.
  - Choose one process for the first AI project, ensuring it meets the criteria for a good first project.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The District of Columbia Courts have taken a significant and groundbreaking step in developing a comprehensive AI Strategy and Roadmap. Through a year-long process of education, engagement, and analysis, the Courts have laid a strong foundation for responsible and effective AI integration. This initiative has not only built internal capacity and awareness but also identified practical opportunities to enhance operations, improve service delivery, and uphold the Courts' mission of fair and timely justice.

The roadmap provides a clear, phased approach to AI adoption—beginning with low-risk, high-impact internal use cases and scaling toward more complex applications. With guiding principles, governance structures, and an internal use policy already in place, the Courts are well-positioned to move from planning to implementation.

Recommended Next Steps

To build on this momentum, the following next steps are recommended:

1. **Invest in AI Literacy and Training**
   Begin developing role-specific training programs to build AI literacy across the workforce. Ensure that staff are equipped to use, evaluate, and oversee AI tools effectively.
2. **Select and Launch a Pilot AI Project**
   Choose a first use case from the recommended list—such as automating ticket classification in IT or streamlining document intake in the Probate Division—based on feasibility, impact, and stakeholder readiness.
3. **Develop a Detailed Implementation Plan**
   Define the project scope, success metrics, resource needs, and timeline. Determine whether to build in-house or procure a solution provider product and initiate the procurement process if needed.
4. **Develop a Change Management and Communication Strategy**
   Engage stakeholders early and often. Develop a communication strategy that emphasizes transparency, addresses concerns, and highlights the benefits of AI as a tool to support—not replace—human expertise.
5. **Monitor, Evaluate, and Iterate**
   Establish mechanisms for continuous feedback and performance monitoring. Use lessons learned from the pilot to refine governance policies, update training, and inform future projects.
6. **Scale Strategically**
   As confidence and capacity grow, expand AI integration to additional divisions and

use cases. Use the roadmap as a living document to guide ongoing innovation while maintaining ethical and operational safeguards.

By following these steps, the DC Courts can continue to lead with integrity and innovation, ensuring that AI serves as a powerful ally in delivering justice that is accessible, efficient, and equitable.

APPENDIX A: GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

The following principles and actions have been adopted by the District of Columbia Courts' AI Task Force to guide our work and efforts.

Guiding Principles

1. Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence: AI where implemented shall be done so with the highest ethical standards, ensuring the integrity of court processes, accuracy of data, protection of confidentiality and preservation of public trust and confidence.
2. Fair and Timely Administration of Justice: AI should support the core mission of the courts by facilitating peaceful, fair and timely case resolution.
3. Accessibility and Equity: AI should be leveraged to improve access to court services for all, particularly for underserved communities.

Actions

1. Transparency, Education, and Accountability: The Task Force will promote transparency by ensuring clear communication with judicial officers, court staff, contractors, justice partners, and the public regarding the use of AI.
2. Collaboration and Continuous Learning: The Task Force will collaborate with internal court stakeholders, partners and external experts, to continually learn and adopt best practices.
3. Continuous Monitoring and Improvement: The Task Force will establish an infrastructure for AI technologies and related processes to be regularly evaluated and improved upon whenever possible.
4. Promote Innovation Through AI: The Task Force should actively encourage the prudent exploration and adoption of innovative AI solutions within the District of Columbia Courts.
5. Manage AI Risk: The Task Force will implement frameworks for assessing and managing risks associated with AI deployment.

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE SCORING MATRIX FOR POTENTIAL AI PROJECTS

Ranking Criteria and Scoring
The matrix uses the following criteria, aligned with the features of a good first AI project:

Criteria	Description	Scoring (1-5)
Risk Level	How risky is the project in terms of public impact, legal/ethical concerns, and data privacy?	5 = Very low risk (e.g., internal, non-sensitive data)
		1 = Very high risk (e.g., public-facing, sensitive decisions)
Effort & Time Savings	Does the process involve repetitive, time-consuming tasks that AI can automate?	5 = High effort/time savings (e.g., manual task taking hours daily)
		1 = Low savings (e.g., minimal manual effort)
Scope & Feasibility	Is the project manageable in terms of scale, integration needs, and timeline?	5 = Very feasible (e.g., small scale, standalone, 6-12 months)
		1 = Not feasible (e.g., complex integration, >12 months)
Measurable Impact	Can the project deliver quantifiable outcomes (e.g., time saved, error reduction)?	5 = High impact (e.g., clear metrics, high ROI)
		1 = Low impact (e.g., unclear or minimal benefits)
Stakeholder Buy-In	Will the project address pain points and gain support from staff, judges, and administrators?	5 = Strong buy-in (e.g., solves major pain point, low resistance)
		1 = Low buy-in (e.g., high resistance)
Scalability & Reusability	Can the project be scaled or adapted for future use cases?	5 = Highly scalable/reusable (e.g., adaptable AI tools)
		1 = Not scalable (e.g., one-off solution)

Example Blank Matrix:

Candidate Project	Risk Level	Effort & Time Savings	Scope & Feasibility	Measurable Impact	Stakeholder Buy-in	Scalability & Reusability	Total Score