

AI for Municipal Paralegals – Attendee Handouts

Print-ready attendee materials aligned to "AI in Government Offices: Practical Use Cases and Cautions."

1. Purpose and Scope of AI in Government Legal Support

- AI assists with drafting, summarizing, organizing, and structuring information; legal judgment remains with attorneys and staff.
- Users must ensure accuracy, confidentiality, ethical compliance, public records compliance, and appropriate review.
- Practical focus on municipal paralegal workflows, including sanitization, logging, review, escalation, and retention realities.

2. Two-Lane Model for AI Use

- SAFE LANE – Low-risk tasks using sanitized, non-sensitive content (e.g., outlines, public FAQs, formatting).
- CONTROLLED LANE – Higher-risk tasks involving sensitive facts or legal impact; requires approved tools, minimized inputs, verification, and escalation.
- Apply a hard stop if risks cannot be sufficiently mitigated.

3. Never Put Into AI

- Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
- Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) data
- Protected Health Information (PHI)
- Payment Card Information (PCI)
- FERPA-protected education records
- Credentials, passwords, or access tokens
- Privileged communications or pre-decisional legal matters
- Exceptions only in tightly managed, licensed, and approved environments with human review

4. Legal, Ethical, and Policy Frameworks

- Texas Responsible AI Governance Act (TRAIGA / HB 149)
- Texas Public Information Act (TPIA) – AI prompts and outputs may be public records
- HB 3512 – Texas DIR training and governance expectations

- ABA Formal Opinion 512 – competence, confidentiality, supervision, and communication
- OMB M-24-18 – risk-based AI use in government
- NIST AI Risk Management Framework – accountability and controls

5. Public Records and Retention Reality

- AI prompts and outputs may be discoverable or subject to public information requests.
- Retention schedules apply equally to AI-assisted work products.
- Attorneys remain accountable for final determinations and filings; drafts must be labeled clearly.

6. Five-Step Attorney AI Method

- Determine the lane (Safe or Controlled).
- Apply the never-put-in-AI list.
- Use structured prompt patterns.
- Verify accuracy and check sources for hallucinations.
- Document AI use and complete attorney review.

7. Prompting Framework and Best Practices

- Use CLEAR & SAFE prompting: context, format, scope, audience, safety rules, and verification.
- Request structured outputs (tables, bullet lists, summaries) rather than legal judgments.
- Ask for a "what to verify" checklist and iterate as needed.

8. AI Capabilities, Limits, and Hallucination Risk

- AI can produce confident but incorrect or fabricated information or citations.
- AI features are embedded in common tools such as Microsoft Word and Teams.
- Users are responsible for validating facts, citations, and currency.

9. Practical Use Cases

- SAFE USE: Sanitized outlines, public FAQ summaries, training and educational materials.
- CONTROLLED USE: Privileged memo summaries, litigation hold inventories, discovery preparation.
- AI must never make legal determinations or final decisions.

10. When in Doubt – Default Playbook

- Pause and assess the task.
- Classify and sanitize information.
- Use approved tools only.
- Ask AI for structure, not decisions.
- Label outputs as drafts and escalate to an attorney or IT when uncertain.

Optional Quick Reference – AI in Municipal Legal Work

- Which lane am I in – Safe or Controlled?
- Does this include anything on the never-put-in-AI list?
- Am I using an approved tool?
- Am I asking for structure rather than a legal decision?
- Have I planned for verification and attorney review?

One-Page Quick Reference: Attorney AI Safety Card

- AI is a productivity assistant, not legal counsel.
- Always apply the two-lane model (Safe vs. Controlled).
- Never input sensitive, confidential, or privileged information into AI.
- Verify accuracy and citations before relying on output.
- Label AI-assisted work as draft.
- Humans remain accountable — pause and escalate when uncertain.