

CITY OF HOUSTON
**INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**



AI Standard
June 18th, 2026

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IT Standard for AI Usage



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	Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy	
	Policy No.	
	Effective Date:	Date of CIO Signature
<p>1. POLICY STATEMENT</p> <p>1.1. The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents both opportunities and challenges in various sectors and there is a growing need for a structured and comprehensive policy framework to ensure the responsible, ethical, and effective use of AI. The establishment of clear AI policies will provide guidance on the deployment, governance, and oversight of AI systems, ensuring alignment with organizational values and legal requirements. This Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy forms an integral part of a broader series of AI policies, which will encompass governance, risk management, and operational best practices to support the responsible use of AI across the City of Houston ("CoH").</p> <p>1.2. Therefore, Houston Information Technology Services ("HITS") desires to set forth Employee (as defined below) user guidelines for the use of AI at the City of Houston under this Artificial Intelligence Usage Policy ("Policy"), promulgated under the authority of Executive Order 1-44 (Information Technology (IT) Governance).</p> <p>2. PURPOSE</p> <p>2.1. This Policy establishes guidelines for CoH Employees' (as defined below) use of AI technologies within, for, or on behalf of CoH. This Policy strives to align with confidentiality, data privacy, and security best practices.</p> <p>2.2. While AI technologies can enhance efficiency, they also pose potential risks to the CoH. These risks include, but are not limited to, intellectual property protection and ownership concerns, potential infringement issues, the compromise of CoH confidential information, biases and discrimination, inaccuracies or outdated outputs, risks of contractual breaches, and liabilities under federal and state privacy and AI laws and regulations.</p> <p>2.3. Therefore, HITS desires to inform users and provide guidelines for AI use.</p> <p>3. SCOPE</p> <p>3.1. This Policy applies to all CoH employees, contractors, vendors, and other third parties (collectively and singly, "Employees") using AI tools purchased or owned by CoH, or otherwise on behalf of CoH, and covers, without limitation, all AI applications, data inputs, outputs, associated processes, or otherwise use AI in relation to CoH operations or business.</p>		
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Purpose

- Give City employees a simple way to use AI tools securely in daily work.
- Align how we use AI with City values, laws, and existing IT governance



Scope

- Applies to City employees, contractors, and vendors when using AI for City business.
- Covers generative AI and any other AI features

Risks and Safeguards



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Risks

- Inaccurate or biased outputs
- Accidental exposure of information
- Vendor/third-party tool risks



Simple Rules

- Don't copy-paste or upload sensitive information into AI tools
- Verify outputs before use
- Get consent before using AI to transcribe meetings
- Use only City-approved tools (=> Copilot Chat)

Collaboration with ARA



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- This IT Standard is based on Executive Order 1-44 (Information Technology (IT) Governance)
- HITS is working in collaboration with ARA to develop a new IT standards policy which includes this IT Standard for AI Usage

HITS – Performance, Architecture, and Innovation (PAI)



HITS-PAI

- Created as part of the HITS reorganization approved in May 2026
- One of its mission is to accelerate the adoption of responsible AI
- PAI is recruiting a role to build the City's AI practice

Already in place

- Employees access to Copilot Chat
- Clear Guardrails
- A frameworks to evaluate use cases

PAI will bring

- Support for a network of AI Champion (Aug/Sept-2026)
- Engagement with City's departments (pending hiring)
- Technical expertise on AI initiatives (pending hiring)
- AI Strategy (Q1-2027)

M365 Copilot Pilot

Launch a focused pilot while keeping City data safe.

Readiness

- Licenses: procure M365 Copilot licenses and rollout to a representative pilot group.
- SharePoint: review and remediate broad access to reduce oversharing.
- Data Protection: advance sensitivity labels for critical information.
- Safety Controls: enable additional AI-related security settings.

Engagement

- Run workshops and events with our partners, tailored for leaders, and AI champions.
- Discover the “art of the possible” and personal-productivity use cases.
- Identify a high value use case and develop an initial prototype

Outcome

- Capture early wins
- Validate guardrails and refine settings based on pilot.
- Build a business case for responsible AI usage across the City.

