

The Rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence: NACo's AI Exploratory Committee

Developing Data Analytics Capabilities Conference – University of Georgia | March 19, 2025

Stronger Counties. Stronger America.

Our Mission

Strengthen America's Counties

Our Vision

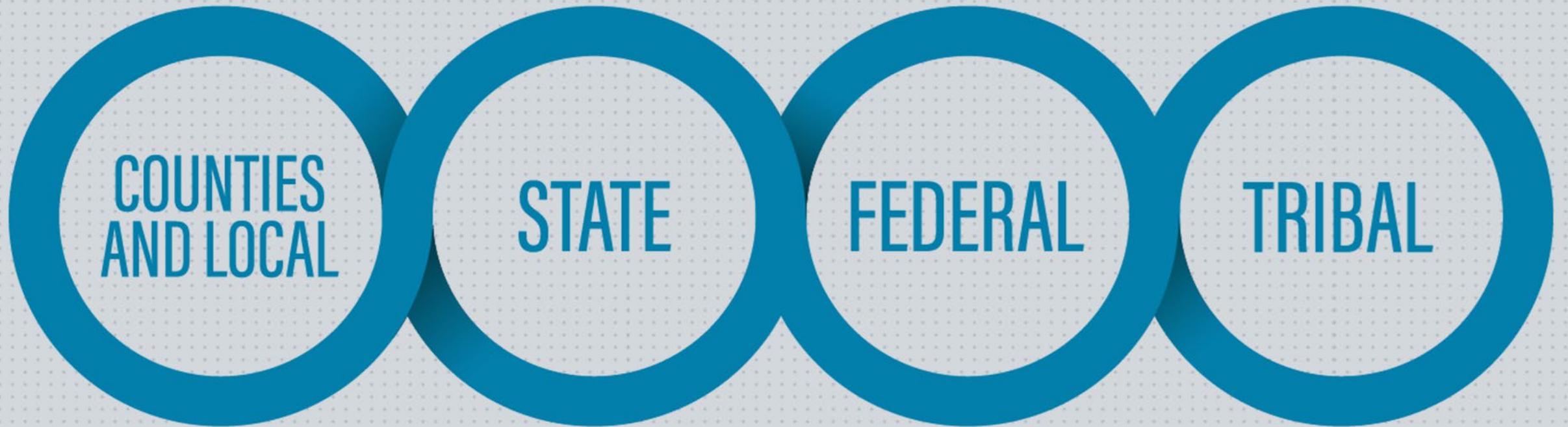
Healthy, safe and vibrant counties across America

Across America, there are:

- 3,069 counties, parishes and boroughs across the country
- 3.6 million county employees
- 319 million county residents
- 40,000 county elected officials



Role of NACo and America's Counties in our Intergovernmental System



Overview

County governments have vast opportunity, benefits, and challenges to address with generative artificial intelligence. We will cover three areas today:

1. Role and background of NACo's AI Exploratory Committee
2. Overview of NACo's AI County Compass
3. Insights from Counties on GenAI



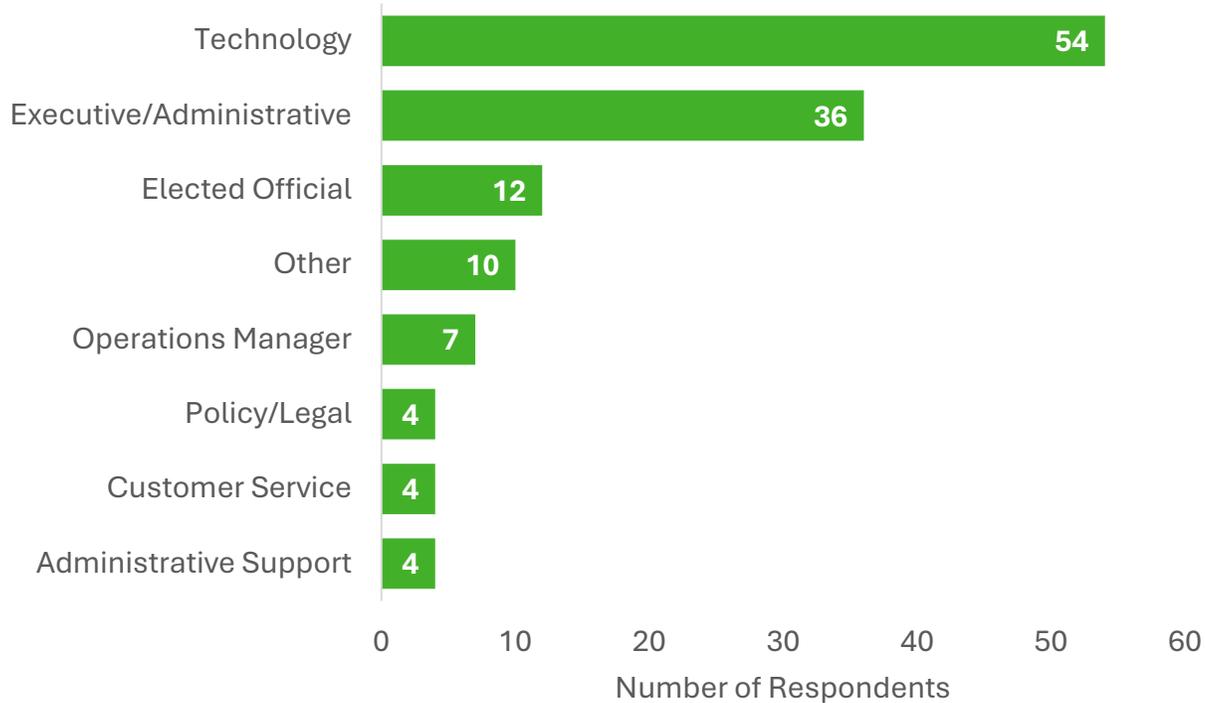
NACO'S ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE



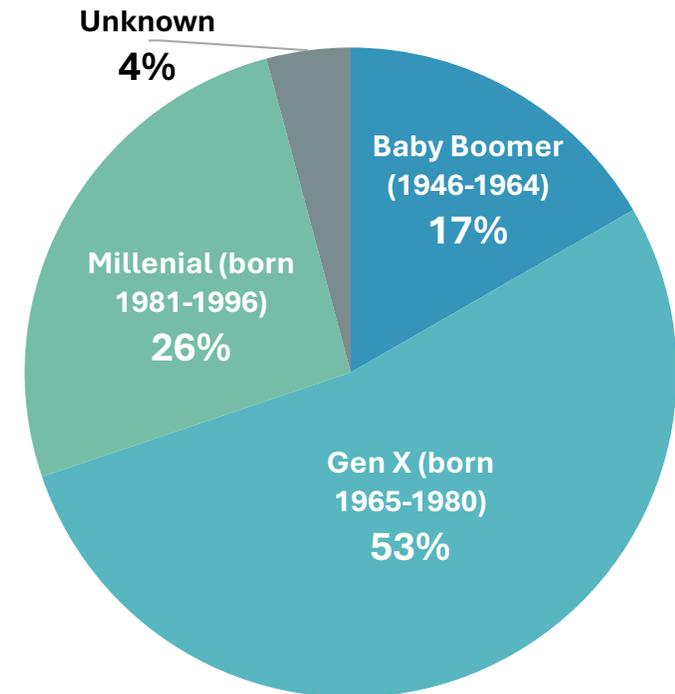
Data Representation | Overview

In January and February of 2024, NACo surveyed its membership on the topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The goal was to identify the current knowledge, use cases, and areas of concerns surrounding the utilization of GenAI for county operations and services. Data shows that most respondents served in Technology and/or Executive/Administrative roles and identified as Gen X (ages 43-59).

Distribution of Respondents' Roles Within County



Generational Breakdown

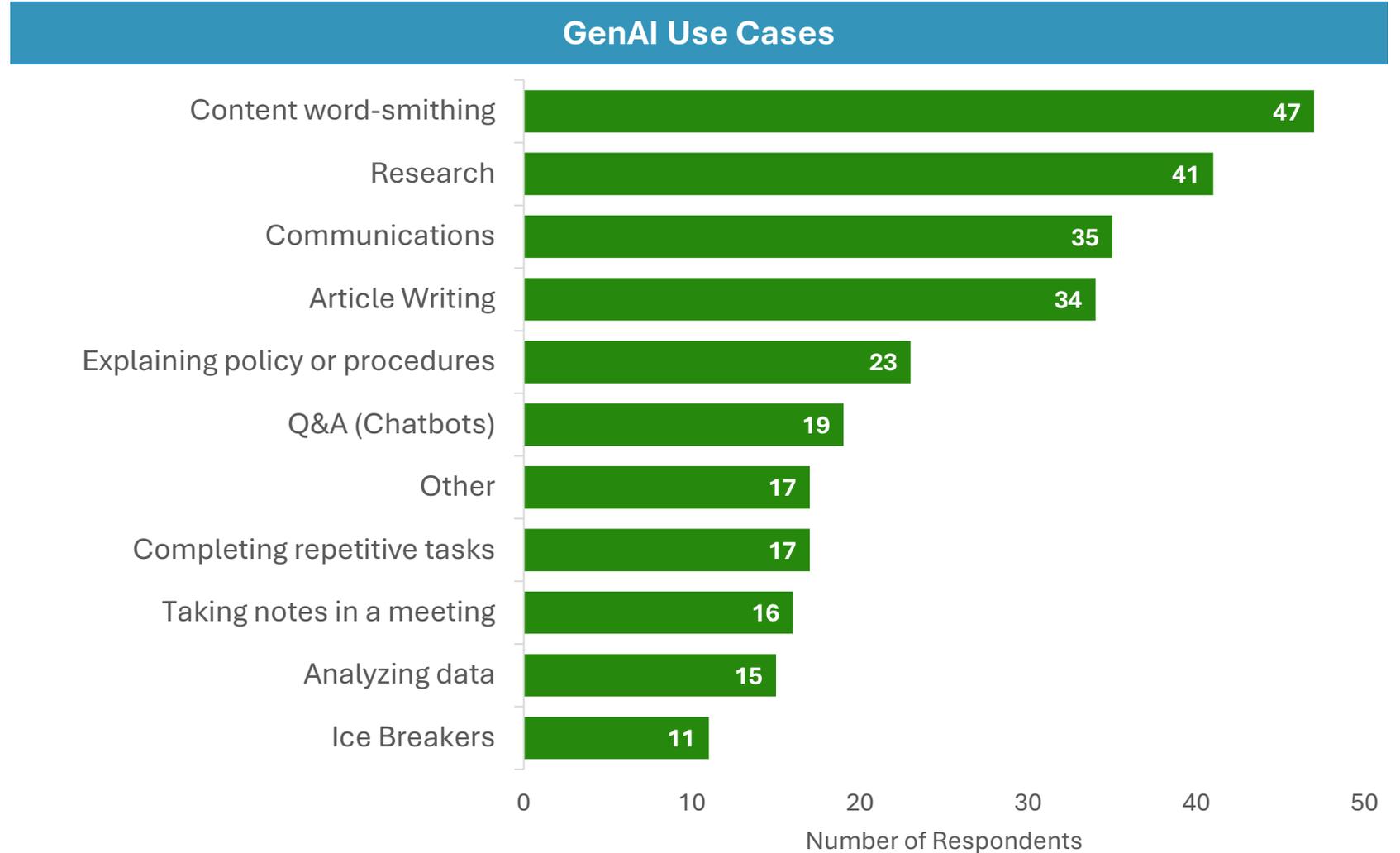


States Represented in Survey Responses (shown in blue)

States in gray are not represented in the data

GenAI Usage | Overview

This chart highlights the top use cases for GenAI as identified by respondents. Data shows that the top use cases were related to writing, research, and communications.



GenAI Implementation | Current Landscape

County respondents reported differing levels in which they have started to incorporate GenAI into their county operations, policy, and programs. Data shows that while most counties and states have taken little action in planning for the implementation of GenAI, some level of activity appears to be taking place currently at both levels.

GenAI Activity by the Numbers:



26%
of respondents indicated that their county had created a GenAI task force or study group.



12%
of respondents indicated that their county had enacted a policy around GenAI use.



32%
of respondents indicated that their county sees GenAI as a tool to address public sector workforce issues.



20%
of respondents indicated that their county planned to include GenAI in next year's technology budget.



20%
of respondents indicated that their state provided guidance on GenAI usage to local government officials.

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GenAI Activity by the Category:

Top Steps Counties Are Taking To Prepare For GenAI Usage:



Research benefits, risks, and considerations



Development of policy/guidance



Formation of committee/task force



Training/education opportunities about GenAI

Top Opportunities With County Workforce & Service Delivery:



Increase efficiencies within county operations



Improve recruitment and retention processes



Cost savings with automation of routine functions



Improve quality & accessibility of services

Top Ways States Are Providing Guidance Around GenAI:



Policy guidance/development around its usage



Formation of committee/task force

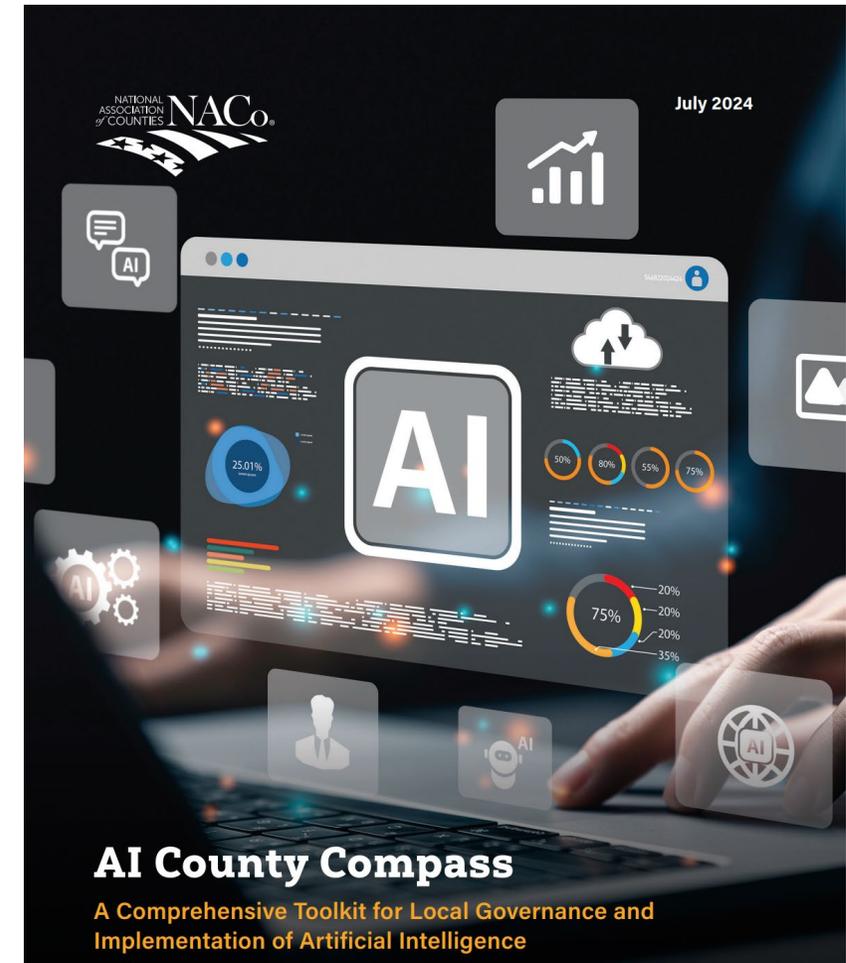


Sharing information and educational resources

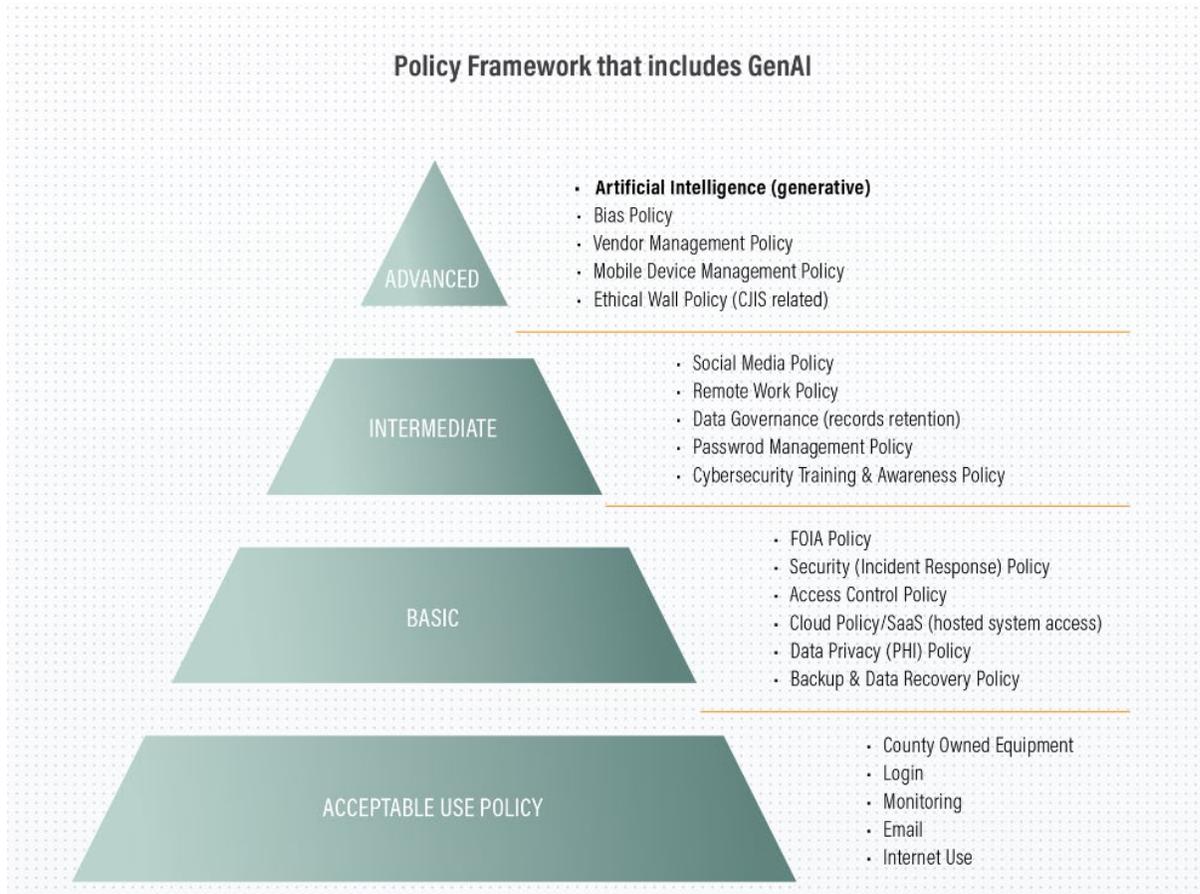
NACo's AI County Compass

A Comprehensive Toolkit for Local
Governance and Implementation of
Artificial Intelligence

1. Policy
2. Ethics
3. Applications
4. Workforce



Promote Policy Models



Build on existing policies and procedures, following IT policies internally and procurement and vendor selection criteria externally.

Craft a policy model that balances guidelines and guardrails, while acknowledging end-user utilization is inevitable

Messaging challenges becomes clarifying that IT policy does not equal “the culture of No”

Promote Policy Models

The AI policy provisions adopted by the Board on Sept. 19 include:

Data Privacy and Security – Staff must comply with all data privacy and security standards, including protecting personally identifiable information and protected health information.

Informed Consent – Members of the public should be informed when they are interacting with an AI and have an “opt out” alternative.

Responsible Use – AI tools and systems shall only be used in an ethical manner.

Avoiding Bias – AI practices should be monitored for bias and regularly reviewed to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Decision Making – AI tools should not be used to make impactful decisions.

Accountability – Employees are solely responsible for ensuring the quality, accuracy, and regulatory compliance of all AI-generated content utilized in the scope of employment.



Promote Policy Models

Utah County

Employee Policy for the Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Adopted 10th day of April 2024

1. Introduction

This Policy provides definitions and guidelines for responsible and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools by Utah County employees.

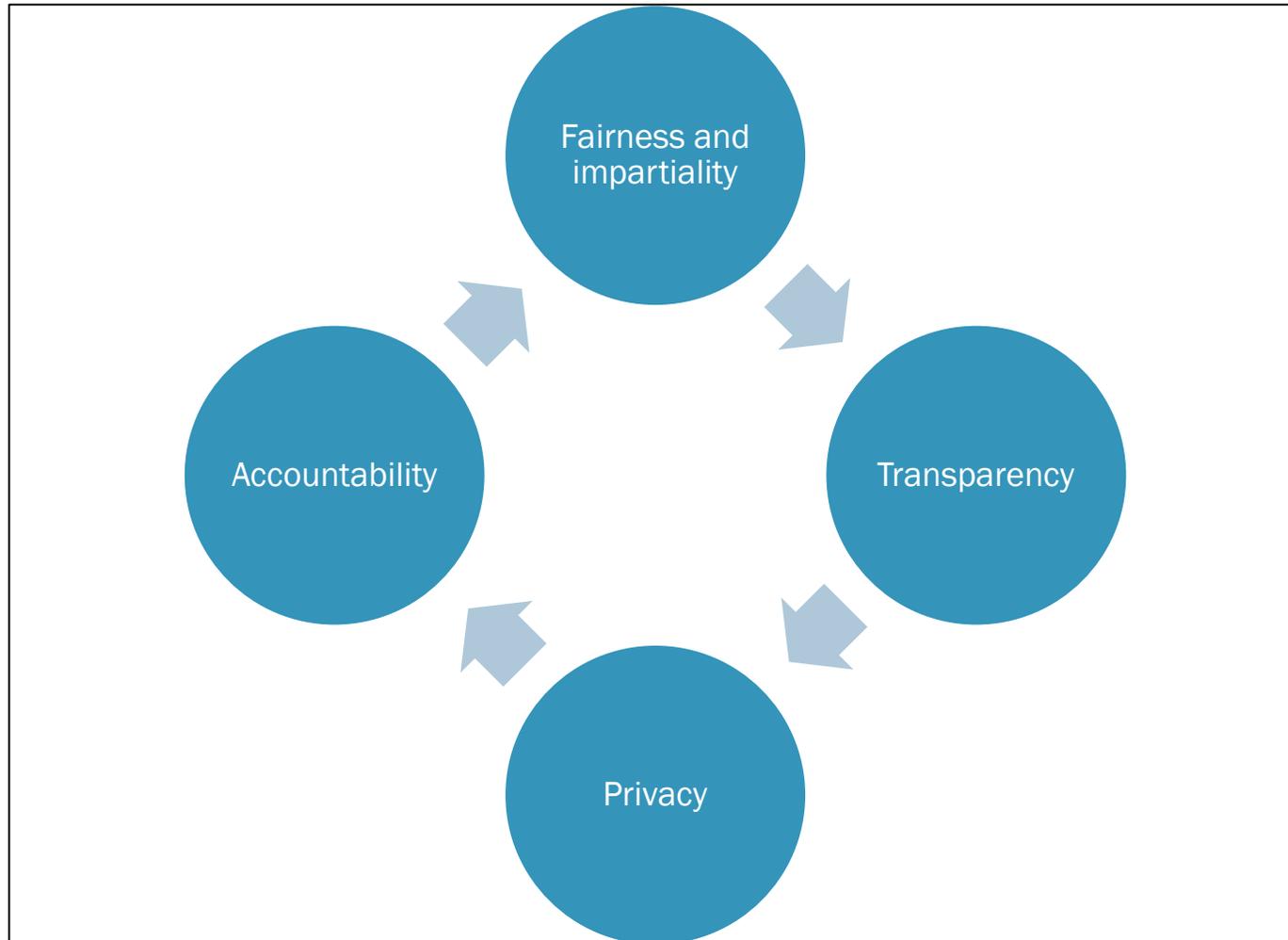
2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to address risks and responsibilities associated with utilizing AI in a government organization. It aims to establish guidelines that protect both employees and members of the public whose records and Personal Identifying Information are under County control.



Establish an Ethical Framework

- Outline principles and concepts
- Identify risk areas
- Utilize robust pilots to predict and analyze outcomes
- Emphasize transparency in public-facing use



Enable Responsible Applications

Review and evaluate use cases

Familiarize with federal resources

Practice robust data governance

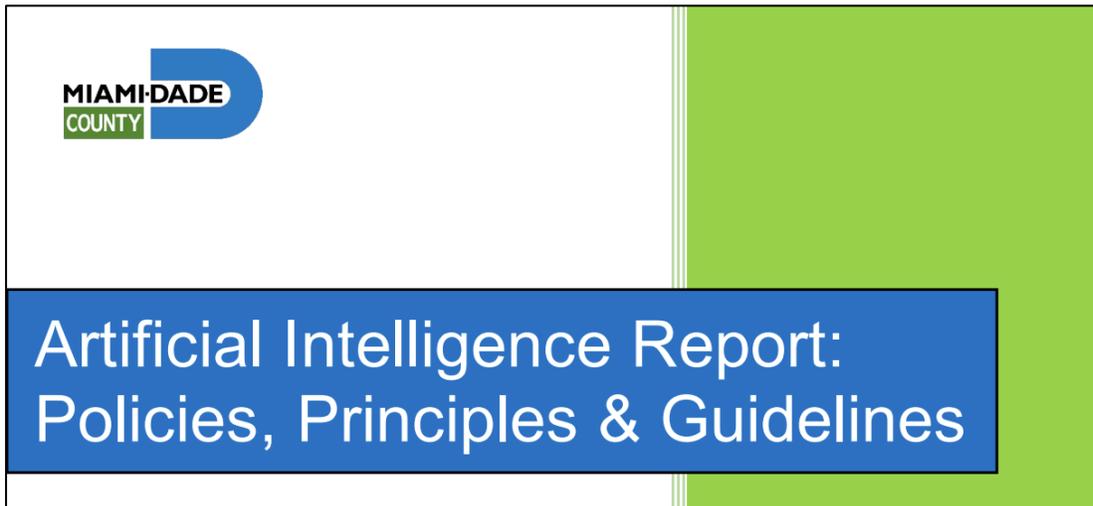
Regularly assess resources

Update cybersecurity measures

Design procedures for data training

Determine software, hardware, and procurement standards

Enable Responsible Applications



Preparing the Workforce

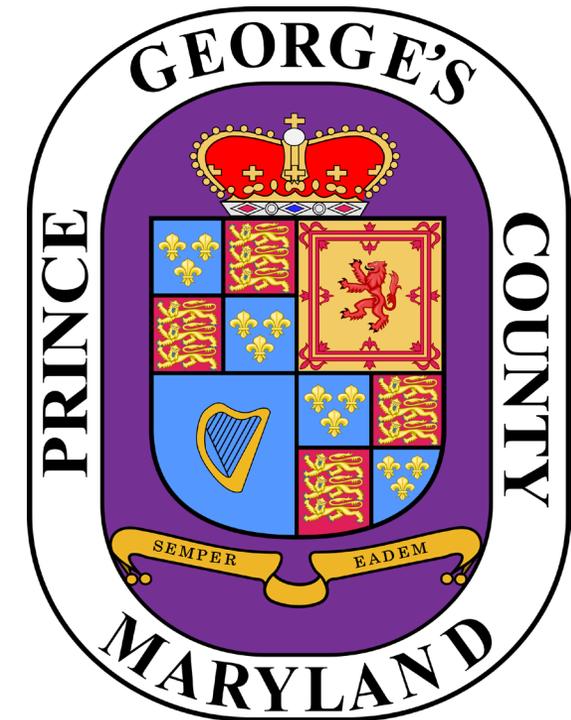
Focus on skills development and training

Consider skills acquisition options

Develop a multi-year workforce strategy

Inform and seek feedback from workforce

Preparing the Workforce

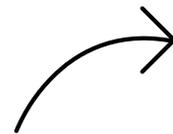


Preparing the Workforce



NACo's AI County Compass

NACo's AI Exploratory Committee homepage includes access to NACo AI County Compass, as well as sample county policies and other tools for county governments



Scan to learn more



Case #1: LA County and Homelessness

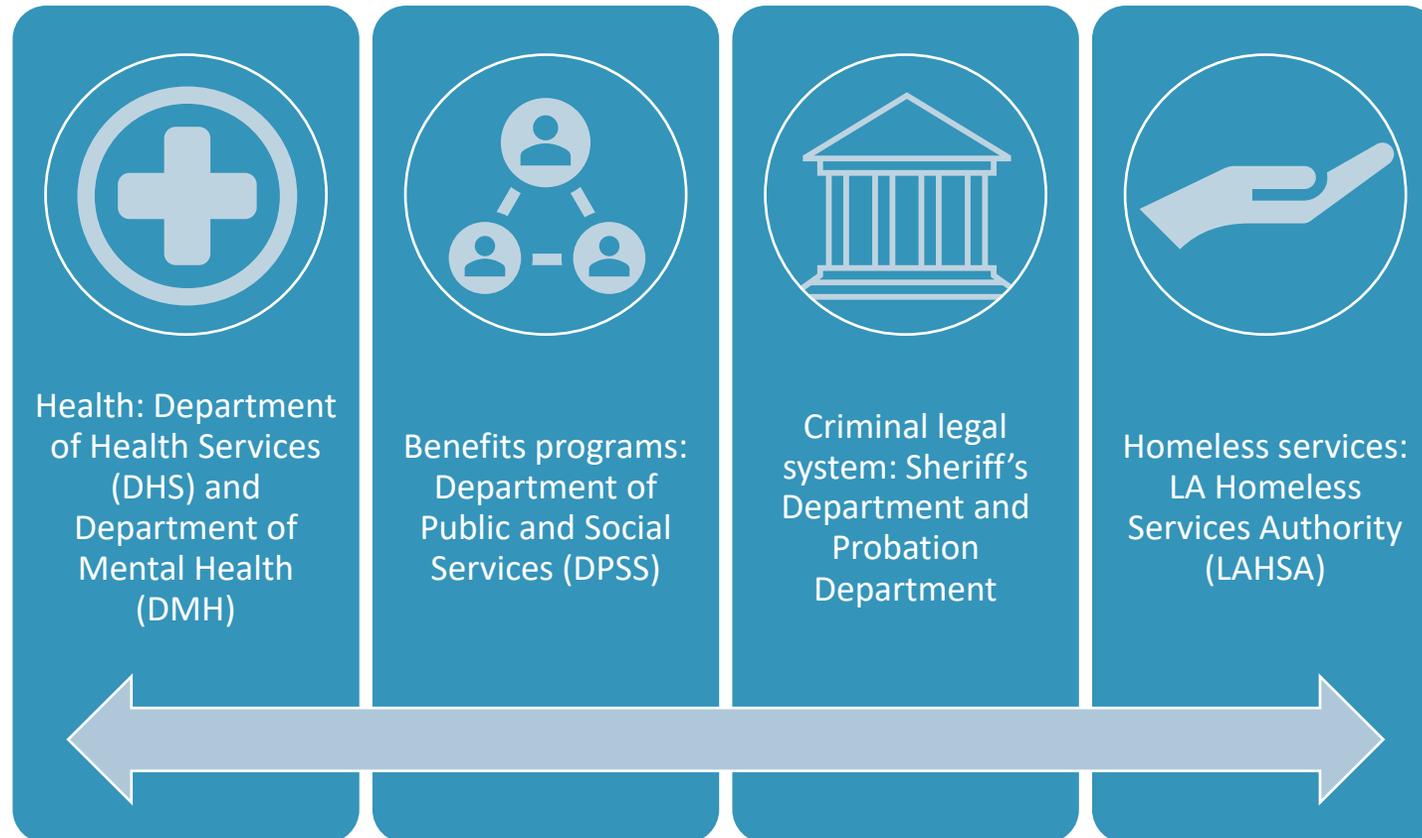
Problem: Unhoused population rises year over year, and county believes early intervention could prevent some from becoming unhoused

Method: Utilize predictive analytics on a series of county-held, de-identified data sources to determine risk factor for becoming unhoused

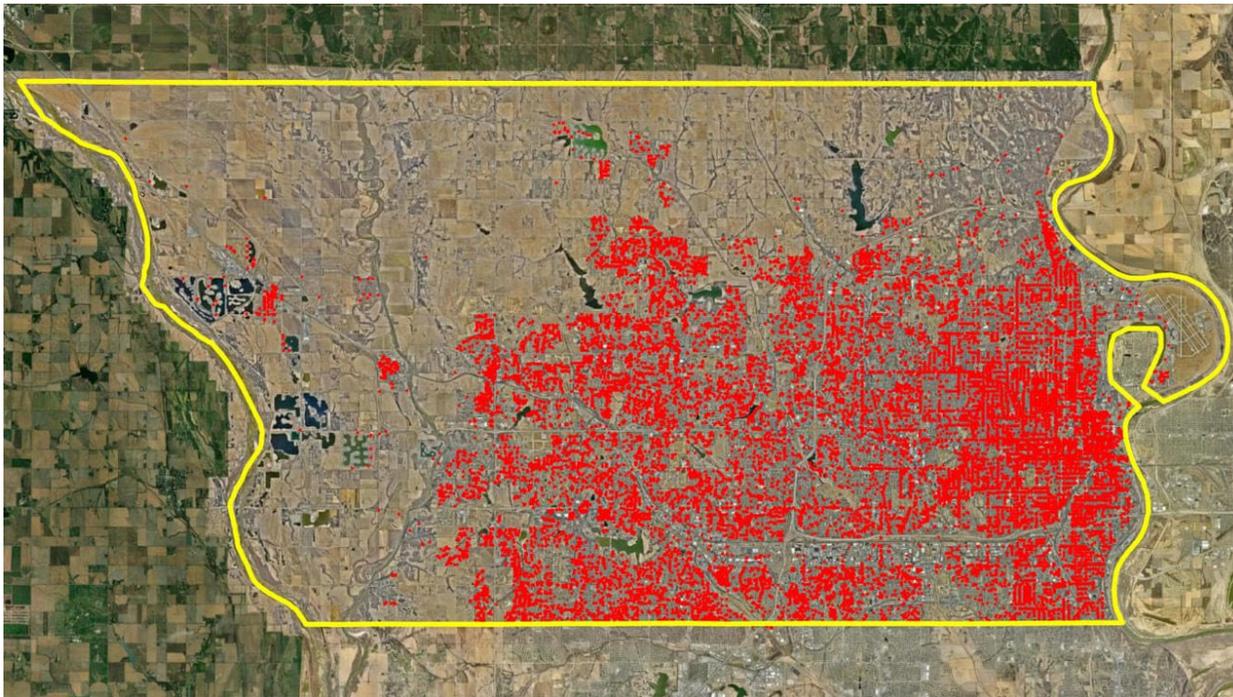
Results: High-risk individuals identified and entered into program for service



Case #1: LA County and Homelessness



Case #2: Douglas County and ADA Curb Ramps



Method: Deep learning model to assess aerial imagery and extract curb ramp features for analysis

Case #2: Douglas County and ADA Curb Ramps



Results: Number of curb ramps identified doubled (from 16,775 to 34,183)



Looking Forward: Key Focus Areas for Counties

Counties are beginning to see a broad application of GenAI to tools and resources, and focus areas for counties include:

- Vendor services procurement guidelines and vetting end user agreements
- Establishment of transparency policies in internal and external use
- “Red-teaming” new use case pilots prior to deployment
- Establishing AI use visibility amongst staff
- Creating new data governance and classification standards; i.e “bucketing” data
- Augmented analytics – moving unstructured data into practice

Looking Forward: Applications For Counties

Applications vary and include:

- Simple/mundane text and image analysis (routine, cross-department tasks, on an enterprise solution if approved by county)
- Novel text and image content production for varied use cases (graphical displays, presentation images)
- Public-facing service optimization, i.e. automated chatbot
- Expediting website tasks, i.e. transition to enhanced website accessibility standards
- Capacity—building for rural/small counties

Question & Answer



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