County of Sullivan
Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in County Operations

Policy Statement:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly evolving field of technology, and an increasing amount of AI tools are becoming available for public use, such as Microsoft's CoPilot and OpenAI's ChatGPT. While the County can realize benefits from the responsible use of AI, it is also important to understand the risks associated with this technology. This policy seeks to ensure that employees use AI technology to benefit the County and its citizens while upholding ethical considerations, transparency, and accountability. Artificial Intelligence is a relatively broad term with specific types of AI suitable for various purposes. This policy addresses general use of AI but is primarily targeted towards generative AI. Parts of this policy were created using OpenAI's ChatGPT with GPT 3.5. All generated content was reviewed and edited prior to inclusion in this policy.

Prohibition of Using Protected or Confidential Data

AI applications within Sullivan County shall not be utilized for processing or generating content that involves Protected or Confidential Data, including but not limited to Personal Identifiable Information (PII) such as social security numbers, home addresses, and birth dates, or medical records, financial information, and any data protected by applicable privacy laws, including HIPAA. Any violation of this prohibition will result in disciplinary action, legal consequences, or both.

References:

1. The Garces, S. (2023, May 18). *City of Boston Interim Guidelines for Using Generative AI.* Retrieved from City of Boston: https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2023/05/Guidelines-for-Using-Generative-AI-2023.pdf
2. Haisler, D. (n.d.). *Generative AI*. Retrieved from Dustin Haisler: https://www.dustinhaisler.com/generative-ai
3. IBM. (2023, August 30). *IBM Artificial Intelligence Pillars*. Retrieved from IBM: https://www.ibm.com/policy/ibm- artificial-intelligence-pillars/
4. Microsoft Corp. (2023, July 21). *Transparency Note for Azure OpenAI Service*. Retrieved from Microsoft Learn: https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/legal/cognitive-services/openai/transparency-note
5. Zong-Xian Huang, M. E. (2023, October 24). *Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Public Managers: Key Questions and Recommended Actions.* Retrieved from Center for Technology in Government - University at Albany - State University of New York: https://www.ctg.albany.edu/publications/CTG_AI_Report/

Definitions:

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) - The simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems.
2. Generative AI - Leverages large volumes of data along with machine learning (ML) techniques

to produce content based on inputs or prompts from users.

3. Artificial Intelligence Vendor - Any vendor selling an AI system or using AI within its systems.

Standards:

1. Ethical Considerations:
   A. Equity and fairness. The County must use AI in a manner that ensures equitable and fair treatment of all individuals in accordance with County policies, ensuring models and outcomes are impartial and avoid bias.
   B. Robustness. Staff must monitor the models utilized to see if data and accuracy drifts over time. The model should continue to deliver accurate and reliable output, and steps must be taken to protect the AI model from tampering and attacks.
   C. Privacy and data protection. AI applications must adhere to all applicable data protection and privacy laws, regulations, and policies. Proper controls must be implemented to ensure data is protected.
   D. Ability to explain output. Provide explanations to understand outcomes and decisions. A human should be able to understand why AI arrived at a conclusion and at which point it would have made a different prediction.
   E. Transparency. The development and use of AI should prioritize transparency, with clear statements that AI is used in the process and clear explanations of how decisions are made. Transparency also includes facts about the AI model and process, such as the product and model used, the version of the model, etc.
2. Decision Making and Accountability
   A. Human Oversight. Critical decisions affecting citizens, employees, or County operations must always involve human oversight. AI should be viewed as a tool to augment human decision making, not replace it.
   B. Ability to Explain Output. AI systems used for decision-making should be designed to provide understandable explanations of their outputs so the reasoning behind the automated decisions can be understood.
3. Procurement and Vendor Relations
   A. Vendor Selection. When acquiring AI systems from third-party vendors, the evaluation criteria must include the vendor's commitment to ethical AI practices. See the section on ethical considerations.
   B. Contractual Safeguards. Contracts with AI vendors must include provisions that ensure compliance with County policies, data protection standards, and appropriate support and maintenance.
4. Training and Education
   A. Personnel involved in AI-related projects must understand the risks involved in using AI, the responsible use of AI technology, and the laws and regulations applicable to the data they are working with.
   B. Personnel involved in AI-related projects or who use AI for work should complete AI awareness training to gain a foundational understanding of various AI technologies, along with their benefits and risks
5. Acceptable uses of AI in County business include:
   A. Improving administrative efficiency (e.g., automating routine tasks, such as data entry)

B. Assisting in data analysis for decision making, provided the quality of input data and output results are reviewed by humans.
C. Improving citizen engagement (e.g., using AI-powered chatbots to provide information, answer questions, and facilitate service requests)
D. Creating a summary of a longer non-confidential document for internal purposes only.
E. Creating data sets for development and testing.
F. Creating documentation or instructions.
G. Assisting employee training and development (e.g., creating scenarios for simulations)
H. Improving fraud detection (e.g., using AI to detect potentially fraudulent financial transactions)
I. Asking general-knowledge questions meant to enhance an employee's understanding of a work-related topic.
J. Generating a document that will be used by a human to build upon toward a final version (e.g., drafting a letter, job description, news release, or policy).
K. Drafting content in plain language or targeting a specific reading level.
L. Generating new creative ideas.
M. Conducting research (e.g., submitting test data for proof-of-concept projects).
N. Obtaining technical assistance (e.g., troubleshooting problems).

6. Unacceptable uses of AI in County business include:
A. Using Computer programs, code, or other instructions used in County computer systems without appropriate review, testing, documentation, and editing.
B. Creating malicious computer code or other malicious content.
C. Creating content to be shared with the public without appropriate review and editing by an authorized supervisor, department head, or commissioner.
D. Creating content that violates any federal, state, or local laws.
E. Creating content that violates other County policies.
F. Decision-making that could have a significant impact on humans, such as determining eligibility for employment or housing.
G. Implementing AI systems that exclude certain groups of citizens or create barriers to accessing government services.
H. Using AI for any malicious purposes, such as creating or spreading false information.

Procedures:

1. Consider AI ethics when designing, building, implementing, or using an AI system for County business.
A. AI systems may generate content or information that reflect cultural, economic, and social bias of the source materials used to train the AI. Employees shall carefully review any AI-generated content to ensure unintended bias is changed or removed.
B. Analyze the security of the AI system to reduce opportunities for attack and ensure the accuracy of the system will not be affected by exceptions.
C. Do not submit confidential information to an external AI tool or one controlled by a vendor, including personal, private, or sensitive information unless the appropriate legal agreements exist between the County and the vendor, and the appropriate controls are in place to ensure data privacy. Report any inadvertent submission or disclosure of such information to ITS immediately.
2. Review content before use or publication.
A. AI-generated content may be factually incorrect or obsolete. Employees must review AI-generated content for accuracy before using it for County business or publishing to the

public. This includes verifying AI-generated content against other reliable sources.

    B. Ensure that AI-generated language is inclusive and respectful.

    C. Employees shall remove any harmful or offensive material from AI-generated content.

    D. Content produced by AI may contain copyrighted material. Employees must exercise due diligence to ensure no copyrighted material is published on behalf of the County without proper attribution or without obtaining the necessary rights by the identified rights holder.

3. Transparency

    A. If AI-generated content is published to the public on behalf of the County, the content should be labeled as having been produced by AI technology. Include details on the material's review and editing, and include a reference to the product, model, and version used (e.g., ChatGPT by OpenAI; GPT v3.5). *For example: "Portions of this material were created with artificial intelligence, using Google's Gemini 1.5."*

    B. AI-generated content that results in the creation of a public record may be subject to records retention requirements or disclosure under FOIL. Consult the department records access officer or County Attorney's office for more information.

4. Governance

    A. Ensure your use of AI aligns with all County policies as well as federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

    B. Consult with the Division of Information Technology Services before procuring or implementing AI technology in a live/production environment.

    C. Reporting all use of AI to Division of Information Technology Services is mandatory so the County can maintain proper inventory/awareness of where AI is being implemented in County operations.

If you need help

For assistance with AI questions and implementation, contact the ITS Help Desk at x0110.

Document History

December 19, 2024   *Policy creation, adoption, and publication.*