

RESOLUTION 2025-553

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON:
IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING A BENTON COUNTY GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE (GENAI) POLICY FOR THE ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COUNTY
EMPLOYEES OF BENTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

WHEREAS, generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has become an innovative technology that offers a variety of opportunities to improve government; and

WHEREAS, with GenAI solutions such as using chatbot application ChatGPT, the County can experience many rewards while equally being exposed to potential risks; and

WHEREAS, while the Information Technology Department (IT) supports the use of GenAI, IT has created a Countywide GenAI policy that discusses the risks and adds a framework that Elected Officials and County employees can follow to increase ethical accountability, awareness, security, and transparency when using GenAI technology; and

WHEREAS, upon adoption of the GenAI Policy, the County will receive GenAI training via the County’s approved online training portal; and

WHEREAS, the Information Technology Director recommends the Board of County Commissioners, Benton County, Washington (WA) to approve the Benton County Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Policy that has been approved and signed by the Elected Officials of Benton County, WA; and

WHEREAS, the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, Civil Division has reviewed the policy and has approved to form; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Benton County Commissioners, Benton County, Washington, hereby concurs with the Information Technology Director’s recommendation and approves the Benton County Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Policy.

Dated this 23rd day of September, 2025

DocuSigned by:
Jerome Delmir
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Chairman of the Board

Commissioner Alvarez - Absent

Chairman Pro Tem

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Will McKay
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Commissioner

**Constituting the Board of County
Commissioners of Benton County,
Washington**

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Marilyn Flores
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Clerk of the Board

Attest: ..

BENTON COUNTY GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GENAI) POLICY

Approved September 9, 2025
Effective September 9, 2025

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1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Purpose

This policy is designed to establish acceptable use and responsible stewardship of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) technology while used to conduct County-authorized business. The County of Benton (County) authorizes the use of generative AI while users are conducting duties related to their jobs. Users must understand that the output from these tools may contain inaccuracies and will require human verification. All users of County computing and network resources must do so in an ethical, legal, and responsible manner. All use of technology resources must be consistent with all County policies. The purpose of this policy is to establish:

- a) Responsible, ethical, and transparent application use of AI; and
- b) Awareness that GenAI content may result in the creation of public records and that those records are subject to public records requests as defined under the Washington State Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW; and
- c) Guidelines that prohibit the use of GenAI systems for the following:
 - a. To generate content that violates privacy laws or regulations.
 - b. To generate content that is defamatory, discriminatory, false, or purposely misleading or illegal.
 - c. To impersonate individuals or organizations.
 - d. To engage in activities that could harm the County's reputation.
 - e. To generate personal or recreational content unrelated to County business.

1.2 Definitions

Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Artificial intelligence (AI) is the intelligence of machines or software, as opposed to the intelligence of humans or animals. AI is the subject of a field of study in computer science, which develops and studies intelligent machines. The term AI may also refer to the intelligent machines themselves.

Chatbot – A chatbot is a software application or web interface that aims to mimic human conversation through text or voice interactions. It may take the form of a virtual assistant and is sometimes integrated into a main application. Example: ChatGPT

AI Content – All output produced by a GenAI system including text, audio, imagery, video, software code, or any other material.

Generative AI (GenAI)– GenAI refers to a class of AI systems that can generate content, such as text, images, video, or audio based on a set of input data. GenAI models learn the patterns and structure of their input training data and then generate new data that has similar characteristics.

Machine Learning – a type of AI in which computers use data to learn task through algorithms.

Personal Information – Personal Information as defined in Washington State Law, RCW 19.255.010, includes attributes that, individually or in conjunction with others, can uniquely identify an individual, provide access to an individual's accounts, or enable identify theft.

1.3 Background

The County encourages innovation and the use of technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of County government services. However, the use of emerging technologies requires careful consideration of legal and operational risks to protect the public interest. GenAI is an

emergent and rapidly evolving field. Open questions remain within the industry regarding the sourcing of AI training data, ensuring of proper attribution of AI generated content, and the handling of sensitive or public data. Since use of GenAI systems can have unanticipated impacts, this policy is intended to mitigate issues that may arise from the use of this technology in Benton County.

1.4 Authorized Use of AI for County Business

The use of GenAI systems or services is subject to approval by the IT Department, per Resolution 2020-928, countywide technology purchases through the IT Department. IT approval to use GenAI includes, but is not limited, to Software as a Service (SaaS), web-based services, browser plug-ins, and smartphone apps. Employees that desire to use a GenAI service that is not already approved for countywide use must work with their Elected Official, department management, and IT to receive approval to use GenAI technology.

When considering the use of GenAI each elected office or County department shall develop internal processes and procedures to be followed when using GenAI that addresses all of the following:

Accountability: Individuals using GenAI are accountable for their actions and decisions involving AI services and tools as well as the content generated by their use of AI. They must comply with applicable laws, regulations, County policies, and best practices. Any issues or incidents involving GenAI must be reported to the elected official, County management, and the IT department.

Transparency: The use, purpose, function, and limitations of GenAI should be transparent to the public and stakeholders. Clear and understandable explanations of how AI works and its outputs are crucial.

Fairness: AI tools should be utilized in a fair and unbiased manner. Algorithmic bias and discriminatory results based on protected characteristics must be avoided. Regular monitoring and evaluation of GenAI performance and impact are essential to address potential unfairness.

Privacy: The privacy of individuals whose data may be used by GenAI must be respected. Internal office and department procedure controls must be implemented before collecting or processing personal or sensitive data. The confidentiality and security of such data are paramount and the sole responsibility of the elected office and county departments using AI technology

Quality: High-quality and accurate GenAI tools are crucial. Reliable data sources and effective testing and validation procedures are essential to ensure accurate and reliable outputs.

Human Oversight: No AI-generated content shall be released to the public without human review. This ensures factual accuracy, alignment with County values, and appropriate tone and language.

Risk of information breach: If the information exchanged with GenAI is released to an unintended audience, that information may cause potential harm. This can include entering personally identifiable information, sensitive records, or confidential business information into GenAI. Additionally, any information entered into GenAI may be subject to the Washington State Public Records Act, Chapter 46.52 RCW. If the information would not be shared in a public forum it should not be shared with GenAI.

County internal documentation: Once approved to use GenAI, elected offices and County departments are encouraged to document their internal processes and procedures used when using GenAI tools like chatbot application, ChatGPT.

2.0 Incident Reporting

Any issues or incidents involving AI must be reported to the elected official, department management, and the IT Department for investigation and appropriate action.

3.0 Training

Upon adoption of this policy, elected officials, County employees, and newly hired employees will receive a copy of this policy and will need to successfully complete online AI training from an approved County training resource. Risk Management Department will maintain an audit log and coordinate with the Elected Officials, County Administrator, and department heads to monitor AI training compliance. Failure to comply with this policy could lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Elected Officials and the County Administrator are responsible for the enforcement of this policy.

This policy is hereby approved and accepted by the undersigned Benton County Elected Officials.

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Bill Spencer
Assessor

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Chairman Pro Tem, Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Alvarez - Absent

Michael Alvarez
Member, Board of Commissioners

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