

Meeting Summary: St. Joseph County AI Steering Committee - 1/8/25

Key Topics Discussed:

1. Introduction and General Updates:

- Brief discussion about Julie's retirement (set for February 26th) and potential transition plans.
- Updates on county staff assignments and pending projects.

2. AI Steering Committee Updates:

- Recap of the ongoing AI initiatives in St. Joseph County, particularly around transparency, ethical use, and responsible decision-making.
- Introduction to a podcast tool designed for county meetings, aimed at improving communication by summarizing key agenda items.

3. AI Usage Policy Review:

- The committee reviewed the latest draft of the **AI Usage Policy (v3)**, which emphasizes:
 - Transparency and human accountability in AI decision-making.
 - Enhancement of employee efficiency without fully replacing human decision-making.
 - Guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable uses of AI, referencing existing IT and employee policies.

4. Ethical Standards and Transparency:

- Discussed the importance of explainability in AI decisions and the need for human oversight.
- Acknowledged the risk of AI systems being used inappropriately without proper safeguards.

5. Acceptable Use Discussion:

- Emphasized that AI technologies must align with existing county policies and laws.
- Proposed the creation of a vetted list of approved AI tools to mitigate risks associated with unauthorized or insecure platforms.
- Debated whether employees should disclose their use of AI for tasks and the necessity of disclaimers in AI-generated content.

6. Addressing Employee Concerns:

- Acknowledged concerns from staff about AI potentially replacing jobs.
- The policy aims to reassure employees by framing AI as a tool for enhancement, not job replacement.

7. Compliance and Monitoring:

- Regular audits to ensure adherence to the policy and identify potential misuse.
- Enforcement measures for policy violations, including disciplinary actions aligned with the Employee Handbook.

8. Prohibited Data Types:

- Specific data types like criminal justice and personal health information were highlighted as strictly prohibited for entry into AI systems to ensure compliance with data protection laws.

9. Next Steps:

- The AI Usage Policy will be finalized with minor wording adjustments and presented at the next meeting.
- Acceptable Use Policy revisions are expected to be finalized and integrated into the AI policy by February.

Action Items:

- Jerry will refine the policy language and circulate the revised draft for feedback.
- The committee will develop an approved list of vetted AI tools for county use.

Adjournment:

The meeting concluded with a consensus to finalize the policy for recommendation and a commitment to address outstanding questions at the next meeting.