



THE
PUBLIC GOOD
INSTITUTE

Learning in Service of Tomorrow.

CHECKLIST

Public Good AI Readiness Checklist

A practical readiness scan for organizations beginning to assess AI use, risk, staff literacy, governance, privacy, and oversight.

Prepared by The Public Good Institute

Learning in Service of Tomorrow

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How to Use This Checklist

Use this checklist as a first scan before adopting, procuring, piloting, or normalizing any AI tool in a public-serving organization. It can support board discussion, executive planning, team training, procurement review, and advisory conversations.

Scoring Guide

For each item, mark: ☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review. Any high-impact use involving people, eligibility, risk, service access, safety, identity, confidential data, or Indigenous/community data should trigger deeper review.

1. Purpose and Fit

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have identified the specific problem AI is meant to help solve.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have considered non-AI ways to solve the problem.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have defined what success looks like before choosing a tool.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have identified who may benefit and who may be harmed.

2. Data, Privacy and Confidentiality

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We know what data will be entered, uploaded, stored, processed, or generated.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have rules for personal, confidential, privileged, sensitive, or identifying information.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We know whether user prompts or uploaded content can be retained or used to train models.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have considered Indigenous data governance where relevant.

3. Human Oversight

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have identified which uses require human review before action is taken.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	Staff understand that AI outputs can be wrong, incomplete, biased, or fabricated.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have clear rules for when AI must not be used.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have a process to escalate uncertain or high-risk AI outputs.

4. Vendor and Procurement Readiness

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have asked vendors about data storage, retention, training, deletion, audit logs, and security.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We understand the tool limitations and the vendor terms of use.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We can explain how the tool works at a level appropriate for staff, boards, clients, and partners.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have a process for reviewing material changes to the tool or contract.

5. Equity, Accessibility and Bias

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have considered who may be disadvantaged by the tool or its outputs.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have considered racism, colonial assumptions, disability barriers, language barriers, gendered impacts, poverty, and digital exclusion.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have a way to test outputs against real-world service scenarios.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have considered whether affected people can understand, question, or challenge AI-supported outputs.

6. Documentation and Accountability

Status	Readiness Item
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have a simple way to record when AI was used in a meaningful process.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have guidance on what must be documented and what should not be over-documented.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We can identify who is accountable for final decisions.
☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ In place ☐ Needs review	We have an incident response process for AI-related errors, privacy concerns, or public trust issues.

Readiness Decision

If most answers are...	Recommended next step
Not started	Pause adoption. Complete an AI use inventory, risk screen, policy review, and leadership briefing.
In progress	Limit use to low-risk tasks while governance, training, and vendor review are completed.
In place	Proceed with a controlled pilot, quality assurance, documentation rules, and review dates.
Needs review	Escalate to privacy, legal, governance, Indigenous/community governance, procurement, or executive review as appropriate.

Source Notes

These Public Good Institute resources are original educational and implementation materials. They are informed by public policy, governance, workforce, digital government, and Indigenous data governance sources, including the following:

Government of Canada - AI Strategy for the Federal Public Service 2025-2027

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai/gc-ai-strategy-overview.html>

Canada - National Artificial Intelligence Strategy: AI for All

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/canadas-national-artificial-intelligence-strategy-ai-all>

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat - Directive on Automated Decision-Making

<https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32592>

Government of Canada - Guide on the use of generative artificial intelligence

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-government-innovations/responsible-use-ai/guide-use-generative-ai.html>

OECD - Governing with Artificial Intelligence

https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/governing-with-artificial-intelligence_795de142-en.html

FNIGC - The First Nations Principles of OCAP

<https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/>

Health Canada - Pan-Canadian AI for Health Guiding Principles

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/pan-canadian-ai-guiding-principles.html>

Health Canada - Reduced administrative burden: Nursing retention toolkit

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-care-system/health-human-resources/nursing-retention-toolkit-improving-working-lives-nurses/reduced-administrative-burden.html>

Imagine Canada - People First: A Portrait of Canada's Nonprofit Workforce

<https://imaginecanada.ca/en/research/people-first-canada-nonprofit-workforce>

Important Use Note

This resource is for learning, planning, governance, and implementation support. It is not legal advice, privacy advice, procurement advice, clinical advice, or a substitute for organization-specific professional review. Organizations should adapt all tools to their legal, regulatory, contractual, cultural, community, and operational context.