



AI Governance Starter Checklist

Put practical control around one AI-enabled workflow without creating a bureaucracy your small business cannot operate.

STRUCTURE - CLARITY - BETTER DECISIONS

Practical architecture for accountable AI-enabled work.

What this template is for

Use this checklist before a pilot, at approval, and during periodic review. It converts broad governance principles into operating decisions a small Canadian organization can assign, test, and evidence.

BEST USED WHEN

Teams using AI for customer service, client intake, hiring support, financial analysis, document preparation, operations, or internal knowledge work.

WHO SHOULD BE IN THE ROOM

Bring together the workflow owner, a subject-matter reviewer, the person responsible for privacy or risk, and the leader who can approve or pause the use.

CANADIAN CONTEXT

Confirm applicable federal, provincial, territorial, sector, professional, contractual, accessibility, and bilingual-service requirements. Use this workbook as operational preparation, not legal advice.

A five-step working rhythm

01

Purpose + owner

Name the approved business purpose, accountable owner, affected people, and expected value.

02

Information

Document permitted and prohibited information, access, retention, deletion, and vendor handling.

03

Authority

Separate drafts and recommendations from decisions, approvals, communications, and consequential actions.

04

Testing + failure

Test representative cases, known limits, bias, uncertainty, unavailability, misuse, and recovery.

05

Evidence + review

Record what happened, who reviewed it, what changed, and when the use should be paused or retired.

Governance decision record

Capture the decisions required to approve, limit, monitor, or reject one AI-enabled workflow.

PROMPT	YOUR WORKING NOTES
01 Approved purpose, affected people, and accountable owner	
02 Permitted sources, prohibited data, access, and retention	
03 AI role, provider limits, and out-of-scope uses	
04 Human review, approval, challenge, and escalation	
05 Testing cases, quality threshold, and evidence required	
06 Failure response, manual fallback, and incident owner	
07 Approval decision, review date, change trigger, and approver	

Govern a customer-response assistant

STARTING FRICTION

A small team wants faster answers to routine questions but must avoid inventing allergy, pricing, availability, or policy information.

WORKFLOW MAP



AI-SUPPORTED ROLE

Draft from current, approved store information and flag questions outside the documented scope.

HUMAN AUTHORITY

Staff approve responses about allergens, complaints, refunds, large orders, or any commitment not found in the source material.

PILOT MEASURE

Response time, escalation rate, incorrect commitments, complaint resolution, and FAQ freshness.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What evidence would the reviewer need to trust, correct, reject, or escalate this output?

Govern client intake and matter summaries

STARTING FRICTION

Intake arrives through forms, calls, email, and documents; speed matters, but confidentiality, conflicts, deadlines, and professional judgement cannot be delegated.

WORKFLOW MAP



AI-SUPPORTED ROLE

Structure intake, draft a chronology, and identify unanswered questions using the authorized matter record.

HUMAN AUTHORITY

A lawyer controls conflict decisions, legal conclusions, deadlines, advice, privilege, and all client-facing output.

PILOT MEASURE

Intake completeness, review time, missed issues, corrections, and matters escalated outside scope.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What evidence would the reviewer need to trust, correct, reject, or escalate this output?

Govern policy and onboarding support

STARTING FRICTION

Managers need consistent answers, but employment context varies by province, workplace, collective agreement, and individual circumstance.

WORKFLOW MAP



AI-SUPPORTED ROLE

Retrieve current approved policy, draft plain-language guidance, and flag missing context or conflicting sources.

HUMAN AUTHORITY

HR owns interpretation, accommodation, discipline, hiring, termination, and any decision affecting an individual.

PILOT MEASURE

Policy retrieval time, outdated answers caught, escalations, corrections, and employee questions resolved.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What evidence would the reviewer need to trust, correct, reject, or escalate this output?

Before the pilot grows

Use these prompts to test whether the proposed workflow can operate responsibly in its Canadian business context.

01

Accountability stays with the organization

Name a human owner who can explain the approved purpose, evidence, limits, and decision path.

02

Privacy duties vary

Applicable Canadian privacy obligations depend on the organization, province, sector, activity, and information involved. Confirm the rules that apply.

03

Make purpose and data use visible

Document why information is needed, where it goes, whether a provider uses it for training, and when it is deleted.

04

Provide a challenge path

People affected by a significant decision need a practical route to ask questions, correct information, and request human review.

05

Test for real conditions

Use common, unusual, sensitive, bilingual, regional, incomplete, and adversarial cases before approval.

06

Govern changes, not just launch

Re-review after provider changes, new data, scope expansion, incidents, material errors, or changes in law or policy.

CANADIAN REFERENCE POINTS

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada - Privacy and artificial intelligence
priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/technology/artificial-intelligence/

Government of Canada - Artificial Intelligence guidance, principles, and policy
canada.ca/en/services/science/innovation/artificial-intelligence.html

General operational guidance only. Confirm applicable legal, privacy, cybersecurity, professional, contractual, and regulatory requirements with qualified advisors.