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Lindsey Smith, District Clerk
Panola County, Texas
by: Lora Brown
Lora Brown, Deputy Clerk

STANDING ORDER REGARDING USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW AND COUNTY COURT OF PANOLA COUNTY, TEXAS

This Standing Order of the County Court at Law and County Court of Panola County, Texas, applies to every case pending in the County Court at Law and County Court or filed hereafter and is binding on every attorney and self-represented litigant appearing in those courts. This order does not relieve any attorney or self-represented litigant of any legal or ethical obligation imposed by law, statute or rule, including rules of procedure, evidence, or the Texas Disciplinary rules of Professional Conduct.

NOTICE: ATTORNEYS AND SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY NOT RELY ON THE PRODUCT OF LEGAL RESEARCH PERFORMED USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLEGENCE THAT HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED AND CONFIRMED TO BE ACCURATE BY A HUMAN BEING

The use of Artificial Intelligence programs or apps (hereinafter sometimes referred to as "artificial intelligence" or simply "AI") such as ChatGPT, Harvey.AI, Claude, Google, Copilot, TensorFlow, OpenAI, Bing, Lexis+AI, Westlaw AI-Assisted Research, Ask Practical Law AI, and many others is becoming commonplace in courts and other judicial and legal settings. The capabilities of these systems vary widely depending on the application, version, underlying technology, and the questions posed by the individual users, but none of them is completely reliable. Artificial intelligence programs and apps are prone to bias and subject to what are often referred to as "Hallucinations." Hallucinations occur when in response to the user's prompts or questions, the artificial intelligence program provides information that is wholly or partially inaccurate or even completely false. For these reasons, it is essential that attorneys and self-represented litigants who chose to use AI in the preparation of pleadings or documents to be filed or submitted to the court carefully review those documents and personally confirm that all statements and citations of authority contained therein are true, correct and accurate.

PROHIBITED USES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLEGENCE

With the above and foregoing in mind this standing order prohibits the following uses of artificial intelligence in the County Court at Law and County Court of Panola County.

THE COURT ORDERS that attorneys and self-represented litigants be and they are hereby prohibited from filing pleadings that contain misstatements of law, misrepresentations of case law holdings, or citations to non-existent case law or statutes. It shall be the duty of each attorney or self-represented litigant filing any pleading, motion or other document into a case filed in this court to personally read and review all citations of authority contained therein and confirm none of them misstates the law, misrepresents case law holdings, and is in fact an existent case or statute. It is a violation of this Standing Order if an attorney or self-represented litigant uses artificial intelligence in their work product, research, or drafting of a pleading and the pleading misstates the law, misrepresents case law holdings, or cites non-existent case law or statutes.

THE COURT FURTHER ORDERS that attorneys and self-represented litigants be and they are hereby prohibited from entering any sensitive or confidential information relating to any person involved in the case into an AI program or app. It is a violation of this Standing Order if an attorney or self-represented litigant enters sensitive or confidential information relating to any person involved in the case into any AI program or app.

THE COURT FURTHER ORDERS that attorneys and self-represented litigants be and they are hereby prohibited from filing pleadings that contain a person's sensitive, confidential information. It is a violation of this Standing Order if an attorney or self-represented litigant uses AI in its work-product, research, or drafting of pleadings, and that pleading contains sensitive, confidential information from anyone involved in the case.

THE COURT FURTHER ORDERS that attorneys and self-represented litigants be and they are hereby prohibited from using AI to create, edit, enhance, or alter evidence to be admitted in any contested hearing – whether oral and in person or by submission – or trial. It is a violation of this standing order if any attorney or self-represented litigant offers to admit or attach evidence in any contested hearing or trial that has been created, edited, enhanced or altered by AI.

THE COURT FURTHER ORDERS that attorneys and self-represented litigants be and they are hereby prohibited from using an expert that relies on AI programs or apps in their methodology and work product in forming opinions to be admitted as evidence during hearing or trial. It is a violation of this Standing Order if any attorney or self-represented litigant offers to admit or attach evidence in any contested hearing or trial that was generated by an expert that relied on AI in forming their opinions.

SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THIS STANDING ORDER

Any attorney or self-represented litigant who is found to have violated any portion of this Standing Order will be subject to any and all possible sanctions available under the law after a duly noticed show cause hearing. Sanctions can include – but are not limited to – fines and/or striking the offending party's pleadings. Sanctions imposed pursuant to this Standing Order are cumulative, and not in place of any sanctions imposed pursuant to other provisions of law. In appropriate cases, the matter may be referred to law enforcement or the State Bar of Texas for further investigation and enforcement.

FINALLY, IT IS ORDERED AND DECREED THAT EVERY ATTORNEY OR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANT, before, or contemporaneously with the filing of their initial pleadings or other appearance in a case filed in the County Court at Law and County Court of Panola County, shall read and familiarize himself or herself with the terms and provisions of this standing order, shall sign the certification below and file it into the case.

DATED: 8/20/26

Rick McPherson
Judge, County Court at Law, Panola County

Rodger G. McLane
County Judge, Panola County

Verification Regarding Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

My name is _____. I swear under penalties of perjury that the statements contained in this verification are true and correct and based on my personal knowledge. I have read and thoroughly familiarized myself with the terms and provisions of the STANDING ORDER REGARDING USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW AND COUNTY COURT OF PANOLA COUNTY, TEXAS. I fully understand all of the terms and provisions of that order, and I agree to comply with each and every one of them. I understand I may be sanctioned for my failure to do so.

So sworn on _____, 20____

_____
Affiant/Filer

_____
Printed Name of Affiant/Filer