AI in Public Defense

A Practical Workbook Guide

for Public Defender Offices

ALAMEDA COUNTY
PUBLIC DEFENDERS

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January 26, 2026

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Introduction

Today's public defense profession stands at an inflection point in technology adoption. OpenAI introduced the first versions of ChatGPT nearly three years ago. Today, it is being used, sometimes *securely*, sometimes *less so* by public defenders. While full adoption has yet to occur, it is only a matter of time.

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT are rapidly changing how legal work gets done. The question is no longer *whether* public defenders should use AI, but *how far behind will you be if you don't*. This handout is a basic guide for public defender teams to understand and deploy AI in everyday practice.

It is structured as a light reference guide, suitable for public defenders with mixed levels of AI experience. The goal is to demystify some key AI concepts, illustrate ChatGPT's core capabilities through defender specific use cases, and provide example prompts. This also covers prompt engineering basics and ethical secure uses of AI (grounded in California's Rules of Professional Conduct).

The goal is to make AI less intimidating and more actionable. By the end, you should have a roadmap for responsibly incorporating AI tools in a way that augments your skills, rather than replacing your judgment. In short, *the north star remains the same*: using every tool available, including AI, to be the most effective advocate for our clients.

Advisement: *Consumer* AI systems vs. *Enterprise* AI systems

AI Large Language Model tools generally fall into two broad categories:

- **Consumer AI** systems are publicly available tools intended for general use. Generally, they may be used in criminal defense and public defender work for general legal concepts, background information, training, brainstorming, or issue spotting, so long as no attorney-client privileged, confidential, or case-specific information is entered. These systems are not configured to meet the security, privacy, retention, audit, or compliance requirements necessary to protect confidential defense information.

- **Enterprise AI** systems are deployed, managed, or contractually governed for organizational use. When approved by your organization for criminal defense or public defender work, they may include safeguards such as administrative oversight, access management, enhanced data-handling protections, and policies aligned with legal and ethical obligations – including the duty to protect client confidentiality, preserve attorney-client privilege, and comply with professional responsibility requirements.

This workbook and accompanying presentation walk through a range of AI use cases and techniques; however, not all use cases are appropriate for Consumer AI systems, particularly when they involve confidential, sensitive, or attorney-client privileged information.

AI Fundamentals for Legal Practice

Before diving into *use cases*, let's clarify some core concepts about AI, especially as they relate to tools like ChatGPT.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** In general, AI means computers doing tasks that normally require human intelligence – for example understanding language, recognizing patterns, or making decisions. Modern AI includes subfields like machine learning and deep learning.

- **Machine Learning (ML):** Machine learning is a subset of AI where algorithms improve through data exposure. Rather than being explicitly programmed for every scenario, ML models *learn* from examples. Over time and training, they get better at tasks like classifying information or predicting outcomes.

- **Generative AI:** AI systems that **create new content** (text, images, audio, etc.) based on the patterns learned from training data are Generative AI. ChatGPT is a prime example of generative AI – it generates human-like text responses. In legal practice, generative AI can draft documents, summarize transcripts, translate passages, and more. Generative AI and the use of Large Language Models (LLMs) is the focus of this talk today.

- **Large Language Models (LLMs):** These are very large neural network models trained on vast amounts of text (and sometimes other data) to predict and produce language. ChatGPT's underlying models (GPT-4, GPT-5, etc.) are LLMs. An LLM doesn't "know" facts like a database, but it statistically predicts likely words and sentences based on its training. Because of this predictive nature, *how you prompt or ask questions will heavily influence the output.*

- **Hallucination:** A hallucination in AI is when the model produces an answer that is **plausible sounding but false or made-up**. For example, citing a court case that doesn't exist or fabricating a fact. Hallucinations are a known issue – even the best systems still sometimes generate incorrect information confidently. As lawyers, it's critical to double-check AI outputs (especially factual references and citations) before in any way relying on them. OpenAI and others acknowledge that *some level of hallucination is mathematically inevitable* given how these models work. Later sections on ethics will address how to mitigate this risk.

- **Cognitive Offloading:** This term refers to relying on an external tool (like ChatGPT) to handle mental tasks we'd normally do in our head, such as recalling information, drafting text, or solving a problem. AI enables a form of cognitive offloading – for instance, instead of manually summarizing a 50-page report, you might ask ChatGPT to do it. Offloading tedious work can free up your time for strategy and client interaction. **However**, over-reliance on AI can lead to a "death of critical thinking" if lawyers stop engaging with the material entirely. Always use AI as an assistant to amplify (not replace) your own analysis.

- **Agentic AI:** Agentic AI refers to AI systems (often composed of multiple sub-agents) that can **act autonomously** toward goals with minimal human supervision. Unlike a single ChatGPT response which is reactive to each prompt, an *agentic AI* might carry out multistep tasks or use tools on its own. In practice, agentic AI might involve using Large Language Models with added capabilities to search databases, execute code, or orchestrate complex workflows automatically. AI will increasingly be able to chain together actions without needing a prompt for each step. Nevertheless, *human oversight remains crucial* – AI agents should operate under clear guardrails set by an attorney.

- **Chain-of-Thought Prompting:** This is a technique where you prompt the model to "think step-by-step" or otherwise break down a reasoning process, so that the solution is more transparent and logical. Essentially, you encourage the AI to outline its thought process. In practice, you might instruct ChatGPT: *"List the steps you will take to analyze this evidence and then proceed step-by-step."* By making the chain-of-thought explicit, you can often get more reliable and interpretable answers, especially for complex problems. Note that ChatGPT's newer models internally do a lot of reasoning ("*Thinking*" mode for GPT-5) even if they don't show it, but you can still ask for structured reasoning or intermediate steps in the response.

AI and the Practice of Law: It's normal to feel some fear that using AI could erode our skills or the "essence" of lawyering. Similar fears arose when we moved from books to *Westlaw* online, or from handwritten long division to calculators. However, it has now become cliché to say that the reality is that *AI won't replace lawyers, but lawyers who use AI may replace those who don't.* While that may be somewhat of an overstatement, the reality is that embracing or engaging with AI is now part of competent representation – as long as we stay rooted in our mission of serving clients, these tools can be adopted without sacrificing ethics or quality. Think of AI as the next evolution of legal technology that can handle rote tasks, surface insights in mountains of data, and assist our decision-making. The lawyer's *human judgment* is still in the driver's seat.

ChatGPT's Core Capabilities for Public Defenders

ChatGPT is a versatile **conversational AI assistant** that can help with a wide range of legal tasks. It works by taking in your prompt (instruction or question) and generating a textual response. Beyond simple Q&A, modern ChatGPT (especially with GPT 5/5.2 models) has expanded features that are highly relevant to a busy public defender's workflow.

General Abilities of ChatGPT: At its core, ChatGPT can:

- **Answer questions and explain concepts:** You can ask it to clarify terminology or explain practically any topic, and it will attempt to provide a clear explanation. This is like having a research assistant who is an "expert" in *everything* (law, medical terminology, technology, etc.) – though remember that it may sometimes *sound* confident while being wrong, so always verify critical info. I often use it as a starting point to explain medical terminology, forensic DNA terminology or concepts, or other issues that come up in cases.

- **Draft, rewrite, or summarize text:** ChatGPT (or any LLM) can generate drafts of emails, motions, letters, and more. It can rewrite a rough draft in a more polished style or different tone. It also excels at summarizing long texts (discovery documents, transcripts, treatises, etc.) into key points. For example, you can paste (or upload) a verbose legal treatise and ask for a concise bullet-point summary. This would never be a replacement for actually reviewing the document but can serve as a new starting point in getting organized or having a preliminary grasp of what is contained in a document or documents.

- **Provide creative suggestions:** Need a compelling analogy for a closing argument? Or alternative wording for a sensitive letter to a client? ChatGPT can offer creative ideas or brainstorm scenarios to help you find the best approach.

- **Assist with legal reasoning:** The model can analyze a described situation and help break down a problem. For instance, it might outline potential defenses based on a given fact pattern, or spot issues in a scenario by applying legal principles. (Always verify its legal reasoning, but GPT-4/5/5.2 are much better at following complex instructions and multistep logic than earlier models.) It can also perform analogical reasoning or suggest how a court might respond to an argument – useful as a brainstorming partner. *Westlaw* or *Lexis* are still the obvious go-to for legal research. I find ChatGPT to be a good assistant when I am trying to understand the reasoning of a case or reformat a legal argument. Additionally, I find that by providing the model with the specific cases, code, or treatise that I am looking at, it can assist in digesting and applying that information.

- **Remember context and conversation history:** In a chat session, ChatGPT remembers what has been said earlier and can incorporate that into later answers. This means you can have a back-and-forth conversation refining a draft or analyzing a series of documents, and it will keep track of the context (up to a limit). This contextual memory makes it feel like a true dialogue or an ongoing consultation.

In addition to these general abilities, OpenAI's platform (and similar AI platforms) have introduced **special tools and features** that extend ChatGPT's usefulness:

- **Web Browsing ("Search"):** ChatGPT can search the web for up-to-date information when enabled. This means if you need current data (like recent case filings or news stories), the AI can fetch and cite that information. *Example:* "Find any recent pending California legislation dealing with the criminal legal system." The browsing tool would let ChatGPT find and quote relevant sources. (Always double-check cites.) Another *example* might have ChatGPT conduct a search for recent a recent RJA bill on the California governor's desk.

- **File Uploads:** You can upload PDFs, Word docs, or images for ChatGPT to analyze. You could upload a police report, a transcript, or a DNA lab *written* report and ask ChatGPT questions about it or get a summary. There are three main ways ChatGPT handles files: **synthesis** (combining info from multiple files, like comparing two witness statements), **transformation** (converting a document, like summarizing a long brief in plain English), and **extraction** (pulling specific info, like "List all phone numbers

mentioned in these records"). *Supported file types include* text, Word, PDF, Excel/CSV, images, etc.

- **Image Analysis (Vision):** With newer multimodal models, ChatGPT can analyze images. In practice, this means you could give it a photo (say of a crime scene or a diagram) and ask questions.

- **Voice Interaction:** On certain platforms (including the mobile app), you can have spoken conversations with ChatGPT. This allows you to *talk* through a case on your commute – "ChatGPT, let's discuss tomorrow's 995 arguments…" – and hear it respond. This feature can also be used to practice cross-examinations with specific witnesses, to practice voir-dire, or to practice a 995 argument and hear the court or district attorney's counterarguments demonstrated. I find this particularly useful in preparing for arguments. I upload motions (in an enterprise system) and prepare for arguments and counterarguments.

- **Canvas (Interactive Workspace):** Canvas is a feature that provides an **interactive workspace for co-writing or editing documents** with ChatGPT. Think of it as a collaborative editor: instead of just a chat box, you have a canvas where you and ChatGPT can work on a document together in real-time. You can paste in a draft motion and use Canvas tools to have the AI suggest edits, reorganize sections, adjust tone, etc. – all while you see the document as a whole. This keeps everything in one place without switching between chat and a separate Word document. Canvas allows inline suggestions and even some formatting controls. It's great for longer drafting sessions where you want to systematically polish a document (e.g. edit one section while leaving others untouched, or use a "reformat" function to standardize headings).

  - *How to use Canvas:* You typically start it by typing /canvas in a chat or clicking the Canvas icon. Then you can **add content** – e.g. paste your notes, a deposition transcript, or an outline – as the starting point. From there, you can ask ChatGPT to help write or edit within that space. For instance, highlight a paragraph and ask for simplification, or use a command to "adjust reading level" or "add polish". The key benefit is you're working in a single environment with ChatGPT as a writing partner. (In our training, we watched a demo of Canvas where an attorney and ChatGPT co-edited a section of a brief live.)

- **Memory:** ChatGPT has an optional **persistent memory** feature. When turned on, the AI can remember useful facts you tell it *across sessions*, to personalize future responses. For example, you could instruct it with, "My jurisdiction is Alameda County, and we prefer motions in a very conversational tone," and it will remember that preference in later chats. You can view or edit these stored "memories" and delete them anytime. There are two types of memory: *general memory* (applies to all chats) and *project-specific memory* (more below). For confidentiality reasons, you might keep general memory turned off and rely on project-specific contexts instead (since anything in general memory potentially could be applied broadly).

- **Projects:** Projects are like **smart workspaces** to organize all your chats, files, and context for a particular case or topic. Within a Project, you can group related chats and

file uploads and even set a custom instruction that applies to all chats in that project. For example, you might create a project called "*State v. John Coffee* – Case File" and move all your chats about that case into it, upload discovery files, and set an instruction like "You are a legal assistant helping on a murder case; you know the case file and prior discussions." Now, when you work *inside that project*, ChatGPT will recall details from any chat or file in the project (but it will *not* have access to anything outside that project). This **project-specific memory** keeps each case separate and secure. It's extremely useful for long-running cases – you don't have to re-upload or re-explain from scratch each time, because the project retains context.

- o *Using Projects:* Click "+" and name a new Project (e.g. *John Coffee 187 Case*). You can then move existing chats into it, upload relevant files (police reports, transcripts, etc.), and set project instructions. Choose whether to have "project-only" memory (to confine context within that project). When you want to work on that case, switch into the project and chat normally – ChatGPT will remember the uploaded materials and prior chats. (This was demonstrated with a "Largemont Coffee Notebook" project where the entire case file was loaded in, so the AI had persistent context on the case.)

- **Scheduled Tasks:** A newer or lesser-known feature is the ability to schedule tasks or reminders with ChatGPT. For example, you could ask it to *"Every Monday at 8 am, search all California legislative materials and provide a weekly report on anything that affects the criminal legal system".* This can be one time or recurring. This feature is not heavily used yet in our work, but it shows how AI might serve as an assistant that keeps working for you in the background. (It may require specific access or plugins and of course use caution with scheduling anything that accesses external data regularly.)

- **Custom GPTs (Personalized GPTs):** This feature allows you to **build a tailored AI assistant** with a specific focus, personality, or knowledge base. Essentially, you can create your own version of ChatGPT for a particular purpose. For example, one could create a "**Statement of Facts Summarizer**" where the Custom GPT would follow specific formatting instructions and develop a SOF from a transcript. The result is a particularly good starting point with references to transcript page numbers – example: *(R.T. 1:7.)*.

Everyday Uses in Public Defense: Drawing from our training materials and early adopters' experiences, here are core areas where ChatGPT (or similar LLMs) can add value immediately:

- **Document Summaries:** ChatGPT excels at reading lengthy documents and pulling out key points. You can feed it police reports, preliminary hearing transcripts, forensic lab reports, witness interviews, etc., and get concise summaries or bullet-point chronologies. This is a boon when you have a huge discovery dump – in an enterprise system (approved by your agency) the AI can summarize each item, saving you hours. *Example: "Summarize the attached 100-page expert report, focusing on the expert's main conclusions regarding the location of the firearm."*

- **Email and Correspondence Drafting:** ChatGPT can draft responses or even initial emails for you. It can also rewrite your draft in a clearer or more professional tone.

- **Scheduling and Task Management:** While not a calendar app, ChatGPT can help generate task lists, deadlines, or schedule outlines if you describe what needs to be done.

- **Drafting Motions and Briefs:** This is one of the most powerful uses. ChatGPT can produce initial draft motion language (from scratch or based on a template you provide) for common filings. It can also suggest legal arguments or structures for more complex motions. ChatGPT will attempt a coherent motion draft, complete with an introduction, argument headings, and a conclusion. **Important:** Always verify the legal citations and refine the arguments, but this can dramatically speed up your writing process. In this context ChatGPT is the place to go to try to refine and rephrase motions and briefs, whereas *Westlaw* or *Lexis* are the place to go when we are focused on the legal authority to make up the brief.

- **Legal Research Support:** While in no way a replacement for *Westlaw*/*Lexis*, ChatGPT can summarize statutes or cases if you provide the text. It can also suggest arguments. One useful angle is having it explain a case you paste in: "Explain the holding of the attached case in one paragraph and how it might apply to a theft charge." This can be like having a newer attorney to discuss cases with. ChatGPT is a go to when I actually know the correct legal answer but cannot remember the correct code section, rule, or case name. It gives me the opportunity to describe the issue and then I am able to more easily find the answer (and then confirm on *Westlaw*).

- **Transcripts and Evidence Review:** ChatGPT can highlight key testimony in transcripts or inconsistencies between evidence. I find that it works better with portions of a preliminary hearing transcript (one witness at a time). For example, you can upload a transcript pdf or could paste a transcript excerpt and ask, "What statements here could be used to impeach the witness's earlier statement in the police report?" It will compare and point out contradictions if any. In terms of transcript generation, Microsoft provides some transcripts within the Office 365 universe in Microsoft Word; they also generate video transcripts in OneDrive through Microsoft Stream. There are private transcription services including *Rev* and *Otter*. There are also specialized tools (like **JusticeText**, **Whisper**, etc.) to get transcripts from audio/video, which you can then analyze with ChatGPT.

- **Jury Selection Prep (Voir Dire):** In the appropriate technical setting, AI can help by reviewing juror questionnaire data and summarizing each juror's profile or flagging bias indicators. For instance, if you have a spreadsheet of jurors' answers, ChatGPT (via Data Analysis tool) can highlight those who strongly favor law enforcement or have certain experiences that matter and even suggest follow-up voir dire questions. It can also generate *sample voir dire questions* tailored to issues in your case: "Give me five voir dire questions to uncover potential bias about cross-racial eyewitness identifications," for example. In training, we saw ChatGPT create charts from handwritten jury questionnaires; practically, you might have it create a table: juror vs. key attitudes. Again, this is an aid, not a substitute for your own reading of the jurors, but it augments your capacity when time is short.

- **Client Communication & Translation:** ChatGPT can help write **letters to clients** – e.g., explaining the next court steps in plain language, or help a first pass at translating a document.

- **Brainstorming and Strategy:** Sometimes you just need an idea or to bounce thoughts. ChatGPT can serve as a sounding board. You might ask, "What are possible defense theories for a case where…[facts]…?" It might list angles you have not considered. Or, "Here are the weaknesses I see in my case – am I missing anything?" Fresh "eyes" (even AI "eyes") on a problem can surface new perspectives. Some defenders even use it to practice oral arguments or witness examinations – essentially doing a **"moot argument"** with ChatGPT. For example, "I will argue a motion to suppress, I'll type my argument, you play the judge and raise questions." The AI can simulate a judge's questions, helping you prepare.

- **Cross-Examination Practice:** A particularly innovative use is having ChatGPT *pretend to be a witness* so you can practice cross-examination. You feed in the witness's statement or known facts and instruct the AI to answer as that witness would. You can then pose your cross questions and see how the AI (as the witness) responds. For instance: *"You are Officer Jane Doe, who wrote the police report. I am the defense attorney and will cross-examine you. Answer as Officer Doe truthfully based on the report."* This lets you rehearse and find what questions lead to useful answers or which don't. Our training demo included a prompt for *"Brooke Robinson"* on cross – where the attorney said, *"please play Brooke Robinson and answer as if you are Ms. Robinson; I (the attorney) will ask questions."* The AI then responds in character. This kind of practice can't fully replicate a human witness, but it's valuable to organize your questions and see potential answers. It's like having a mock witness available 24/7.

- **Case File Organization:** ChatGPT can also help organize information. For example, you could list out all pieces of discovery and ask it to create an index or summary table. Or give it a timeline of events and have it check consistency or find dates. With the **Projects** feature mentioned, you can keep an ongoing summary of a case that you update, and ChatGPT will remember the details in context. While not a replacement for e-discovery tools, creative uses of ChatGPT can make sense of unstructured data.

In summary, ChatGPT's capabilities span from the mundane (scheduling and emails) to the sophisticated (assisting in drafting arguments). **Table 1** below summarizes some key use cases and example prompts:

Use Case	Example Prompt	What ChatGPT Does
Summarizing Discovery	"Summarize the attached (uploaded) 30-page police report, focusing on the timeline of events and any inconsistencies. Cite to page numbers."	Returns a concise bullet-point summary of the report, highlighting chronology and discrepancies.
Drafting a Motion	"You are a public defender. Using the template format, draft a motion to dismiss based on pre-accusation delay	Produces a draft motion with an introduction, background facts, argument sections citing example

Use Case	Example Prompt	What ChatGPT Does
	from an event in 2022, citing only to the relevant case law included in the template."	cases, and a conclusion. (Attorney must verify and edit.)
Cross-Exam Practice	"Pretend you are **Officer A**, who wrote the police report (attached). I am the defense attorney. Let me cross-examine you about the inconsistent statements regarding the suspect's location. Answer in an adversarial way."	AI responds as the officer with plausible answers. The attorney can refine questions. This helps test cross-exam strategies in a low-stakes setting.
Jury Selection Analysis	"Here are summaries of juror questionnaires for Jurors 1-5 (attached file). Identify 1) any jurors who mention negative beliefs about defense attorneys, 2) any who have close family in law enforcement, and 3) those expressing strong opinions on mental health defenses."	Scans the data and lists jurors in each category. May output a table of juror numbers with notes (e.g., Juror 7: brother is a police officer; Juror 12: stated 'lenient on mental illness' etc.). Facilitates targeted voir dire.
Brainstorming Defenses	"The facts are: [FACTS]. Brainstorm possible legal defenses or motions we should consider. List each with a brief rationale."	Returns a list: e.g., "1. **Mistaken Identity** – because witness descriptions conflict. 2. **Illegal Search** – evidence found without a warrant in trunk...", giving you a starting checklist to investigate.
Preparing a Draft Sentencing Memo	"Draft a **sentencing memorandum** for John Doe who pled to felony grand theft (Penal Code 487). Include: background (young age 19, no priors), rehabilitation plan (enrolled in drug counseling), supportive letters (from employer and family attached), and legal argument for a probation sentence under California law. Format as a formal court document."	Produces a structured memo: intro, offender background, mitigating factors (age, no priors), plan (treatment, community support), law (probation eligibility, case examples if known), and conclusion requesting probation. It will incorporate the tone of character letters if provided, highlighting quotes (e.g., "Employer: 'John is reliable and remorseful'"). Attorney can then fine-tune specifics.

Table 1: Key ChatGPT Use Cases in Public Defense, with example prompts and expected outcomes. (Note: Always review and edit AI outputs before use.)

These examples scratch the surface – as you become comfortable, you'll discover more ways an AI assistant can save time or improve your work product. The next section will show **full prompt demonstrations** for several high-value scenarios, with guidance on how to structure your inputs to get the best results.

Prompt Engineering 101: Getting the Best from ChatGPT

Using ChatGPT effectively can be somewhat of an art, often called **prompt engineering**. A *prompt* is simply the instruction or question you give to the AI. How you phrase your prompt can dramatically affect the usefulness and accuracy of the answer. Think of it like talking to a very literal colleague: you sometimes have to try a few ways of asking before you get what you need. Here are some tips and techniques:

General Principles

1. **Be Clear and Specific:** State exactly what you want. Vague prompts lead to vague answers. Outline the task, the context, and the desired output.

2. **Provide Context or Data:** If the question relates to specific facts or text, give those to the model. You can paste in an excerpt, upload related documents, or summarize the background. *Context helps ChatGPT understand your problem.* For example, before asking for a bail argument, you might share: "Client is 19, no priors, strong community ties, charged with robbery." This way the response will be tailored to those facts. The GPT-5/5.2 model is better at handling longer, complex prompts and can integrate more information at once, so feel free to include details.

3. **Describe Your Ideal Output:** Tell ChatGPT the format or tone you want. Do you need bullet points? A formal letter? A table? If you want a list of questions, say "List the questions as bullet points." If you want a chart or Word or Excel or some structured form, ask for it – the model can output structured text if instructed. Specifying the role and audience also helps: e.g. "Explain like I'm a law student" vs "Explain like I'm a 10-year-old" yield different detail levels.

4. **Break Complex Tasks into Steps:** If your request has many parts, you can ask the model to break down the solution. For example, "First, outline the legal issues in the fact pattern. Then for each issue, give the strongest argument for defense and for prosecution." This guides ChatGPT to produce an organized response. You can even do this interactively: after an initial answer, you can say "Now develop argument #2 in more detail." However, GPT-5/5.2 is good at multistep prompts in one go – you can often consolidate instructions into one prompt and get a coherent multi-part answer.

5. **Iterate and Refine:** Don't expect the perfect answer on the first try. Treat it as a conversation, a *chat*. If the answer is slightly off, clarify your prompt in a follow-up message: "Actually, focus more on X and less on Y." ChatGPT will use the context of the prior answer to adjust. This iterative process is normal. You can also ask the model to fix or improve its output: "Please format the above argument into a numbered list with headings."

6. **Ask for Multiple Options:** If you need creativity or choices (say for phrasing or strategies), you can prompt: "Give me three different versions of a compassionate opening statement." The AI can then list Option 1, 2, 3. This way you have options to pick or combine.

7. **Set Priorities or Emphasize Qualities:** If certain aspects matter more (accuracy vs speed, formal tone vs casual, etc.), mention it. For example, "It's critical the summary is accurate and uses neutral tone (no advocacy)." I frequently am telling the model to be defense-focused but accurate. The model then knows what "success" looks like to you.

8. **Use *Personas*:** Sometimes it helps to explicitly tell ChatGPT to act as someone. "You are a law professor explaining hearsay exceptions" or "You are a public defender preparing a suppression motion," or "You are an expert on forensic DNA transfer." This can influence the style and content. The model will attempt to adopt that perspective or expertise.

9. **Provide Examples (Few-Shot Prompting):** If you want a specific format or style, you can show an example in your prompt. E.g., include a short sample output ("Here's an example of the style I want: [sample]"). This is called *few-shot prompting*. If you give one example, that's *one-shot*. A few examples, *few-shot*. Zero examples is *zero-shot*. The more examples, the more the model can infer the pattern you want. The training analogy: zero-shot is like telling a player to take a penalty kick without demo; one-shot is showing one example kick; few-shot is showing a few – the more shown, the better the player knows what technique to use. In practice, you might paste a well-written paragraph from a past motion and say "write the next paragraph in a similar style."

10. **Maintain Control:** Remember you can always direct the conversation. If the answer is too long or off topic, you can say "Please give a shorter answer focused only on X." If it uses language you don't like, e.g. too much legalese, you can instruct "Rewrite the above in plain English." You are in the driver's seat – keep steering until you get a satisfactory output.

Prompt Engineering Examples

To solidify these principles, here is an example showing how a prompt can be structured and refined:

- **Scenario:** You have a dense police report, and you want a summary for a motion.

  Basic prompt (could be better): "Summarize this police report." *(Likely too generic, the AI might not know what focus you need.)*

  Improved prompt with steps and format: *"You are a legal assistant helping draft a summary of the discovery. Step 1: Read the attached police report and preliminary hearing transcript. Step 2: Identify any contradictions or unclear points in the officer's account. Step 3: Rewrite the facts as bullet points that highlight these issues. Step 4: Provide 2-3 talking points for oral arguments about why the account is unreliable. Step 5: Also generate an Excel table listing each contradiction with page references."*

  Why this works: We've given a role, context (discovery summary), a multistep instruction, and even a desired format (bullet points and an Excel-style table). The AI is far more likely to produce an organized, useful output following this roadmap.

Zero-shot, One-shot, Few-shot Prompting

As mentioned, showing examples can help. If you have specific *language* or a *template*, use it. For instance, before asking for a misdemeanor diversion motion, you might say: "Here is a template structure from a similar case [paste outline]. Now draft the diversion motion for our case using that structure and the following facts…". By doing so, you've given a mini one-shot example that guides the model.

If you do not have an example, you can still get great results – GPT-5/5.2 is very capable zero-shot for many tasks. But if outputs aren't in the style you want, that's when giving an example or two can realign it.

Use Cases & Prompt Demonstrations

Now let's dive into specific public defender scenarios. For each use case, we'll describe why it's useful, walk through an example prompt, and discuss what kind of answer to expect. We'll also note any pitfalls and tips. These examples scratch the surface, but they should spark ideas for how you can leverage AI in your practice.

1. Factual Summaries of Evidence

Use Case: Quickly summarizing large volumes of discovery – police reports, transcripts, witness statements, etc. – to identify key facts and inconsistencies for motions or trial prep. This is not a replacement for *thorough* review, but it's a great way to get an initial sense of the case and pinpoint where to dig deeper.

Why: Summaries help zero in on what matters (and what might be useful on cross). For example, a 50-page police report might take hours to read in full, but an AI summary can give you the *gist* in minutes – highlighting things like timelines and contradictory details. You can then review the original more efficiently with those pointers in mind.

Example Prompt: Let's say you have a 50-page police report, and you need a summary for a suppression motion, focusing on contradictions in the officer's narrative. You could prompt ChatGPT as follows:

> *You are an assistant preparing for a preliminary hearing with a motion to suppress.*
> **Task:** *Summarize the key facts from the attached police report (50 pages), with emphasis on details that seem inconsistent or suspicious.*
> *- Identify any contradictions or changes in the officer's story.*
> *- List important events in chronological order (with timestamps if available).*
> *- Highlight any evidence that could be challenged (e.g. statements or physical evidence).*
> *- Keep the tone factual, but oriented to details the defense would find useful.*
> **Format:** 1. *Bullet points for the timeline of events.* 2. *A short paragraph at the end labeled "Potential Issues" explaining any contradictions or reliability concerns. (Attached: PoliceReport.pdf).*

In this prompt, we set the role (assistant for a motion), clearly list what to include, and specify the format (bullet points + a "Potential Issues" paragraph). We also imagine attaching the report.

What to expect: ChatGPT would output a series of bullet points like: *"14:35 – Officer Smith reports seeing John Doe enter the store. 14:50 – 911 call is logged reporting a theft..."* in chronological order. Then a paragraph such as: *"Potential Issues: Officer Smith's report initially says the suspect was wearing a red shirt but later describes a blue shirt. There's also a 15-minute gap in the timeline with no explanation… These inconsistencies could be used to challenge the officer's credibility."* This provides a quick-reference summary for your motion.

Pitfalls: You **must verify** that the AI's summary is accurate. It might omit nuances or, worse, subtly misstate facts (hallucinate connections that are not there). Always cross-check bullet points against the actual report. Generally, if you provide the text (or a large chunk of it), ChatGPT will stick to it, but you should confirm important details like times, dates, descriptions. It's helpful to ask for page or line references in the summary (e.g. *"include page numbers for each fact"*); the model can do this as long as the text is provided, since it can then quote those references.

Pro Tip: For **transcripts**, you can ask the AI not just to summarize content, but to note things like **tone** or **indicators of uncertainty**. For example: *"Summarize this witness's testimony and note any signs of uncertainty (e.g. 'I guess', 'not sure') or contradictions with other evidence."* The output could highlight: *"Witness frequently said she was 'pretty sure' (showing uncertainty), and her timeline conflicts with Officer Smith's testimony on the time of the incident."* These insights can guide your cross-examination strategy (e.g. knowing the witness is uncertain about timing, you might press that issue in court).

2. Cross-Examination Preparation

Use Case: Practicing a cross-examination by having ChatGPT play the role of a witness, or using it to generate potential cross-exam questions based on a witness's statement. For background, I would upload all known documents related to this witness.

Why: Formulating effective cross questions and anticipating answers is time-consuming. AI can simulate how a witness *might* respond or help refine your questions to be more pointed. It's like a sparring partner for your cross-letting you test out angles in a low-stakes environment.

Example Prompt: Suppose you have a key eyewitness, **Brooke Robinson**, who gave a statement that she saw your client at the scene. You want to practice questioning her. You could prompt:

> *You are now playing the role of Brooke Robinson, a witness in a murder case.*
> **Witness Background (information for you to use):**
> *– Brooke claims she saw the defendant at 9 PM from about 30 feet away in a dimly lit parking lot.*
> *– In her statement, she admitted it was dark and she was not wearing her glasses.*
> *– She thinks the person wore a hoodie but isn't 100% sure.*
> *– She identified the defendant in a lineup two weeks later, but said "it happened so fast."*
> *I am the defense attorney and will ask you questions. Stay in character as Brooke and*

answer as honestly as possible based on her statement and what a cautious witness would say. If you don't know something, say "I'm not sure."

After setting this up, you (the attorney) would then start asking your cross-exam questions one by one in the chat, and ChatGPT will respond *in character* as Brooke.

This interactive simulation helps reveal how a line of questioning might play out. In our training, we used a similar prompt to role-play a witness, and ChatGPT even added natural touches of hesitation or uncertainty, which was useful.

Alternate Use – Generating Cross Questions: You can have ChatGPT suggest a list of cross-examination questions. For instance: *"Here is the witness's statement [paste text or upload document]. Generate 20 cross-exam questions that a defense lawyer could ask to challenge her observations and memory."* The output might include questions like *"Isn't it true that the streetlight on the corner was not working?"* or *"You weren't wearing your glasses, correct?"* and so on. You can then pick the best questions and refine them.

What to expect: When role-playing, the AI (as the witness) will generally stick to the facts you provided, often giving answers that are **consistent with those facts but also realistic in terms of a cautious witness**. It might say things like *"I remember he had a hood on, but I was nervous, and it was hard to be sure"* – reflecting uncertainty if that's in the info. This can help you practice follow-up questions (e.g., "So *you're not entirely sure it was him?"*) or prepare for dodgy answers.

Pitfalls: Remember, ChatGPT is not actually psychic – it doesn't *truly* know how a real witness will answer. The role-play is only as good as the info you feed in. Do not assume a real witness will answer like the AI does, especially on critical points. However, it's great for brainstorming possible answers and preparing responses.

3. Motion Drafting and Editing

Use Case: Drafting legal motions, memoranda, or briefs – from more routine motions (bail, discovery, etc.) to more complex briefs – using ChatGPT to produce initial drafts or to improve your own drafts.

Why: For standard or repetitive motions, AI can produce a decent first draft that you can then edit, saving you time. It is also useful for editing and polishing. ChatGPT can generate the basic structure which you then customize with case-specific facts and law. Or if you've written a draft, it can suggest revisions for clarity or conciseness.

Using AI to Edit/Improve: One safe way to use ChatGPT is as an editor. Let's say you've drafted a motion and want to refine it. You can copy your text and prompt: *"Edit the following for clarity and conciseness, but do not change any legal meanings or citations. Preserve the formal tone. If any sentences are overly complex, break them into simpler sentences."* Then paste your draft. ChatGPT will return a more polished version of your text – often catching awkward phrasing or unnecessary wordiness. You remain in control by reviewing every change.

Using AI to Draft: For an initial draft, you could instruct: *"You are a defense attorney. Draft a motion to dismiss for pre-accusation delay (Due Process violation) based on these facts: [provide facts]. Include an introduction, background, an argument section citing at least one*

relevant case, and a conclusion." The AI will attempt a full motion. It might come back with a well-structured draft: introduction stating what is being requested, a factual background, an argument that weaves in a case like *Serna* (if you provided it), and a conclusion.

What to expect: The AI's draft will usually be coherent and well-organized, often with formal language. It's good at producing the *format* of a motion (point headings, etc.). Many attorneys find this to be an excellent "ugly first draft" – something to start with instead of a blank page. *However*, always verify any law it cites. **Do not trust case quotes or references until you check them.** ChatGPT may hallucinate a case or misquote it. A best practice is to supply the cases or statutes yourself (e.g., give it a snippet of a relevant case to use).

Pitfalls: The biggest risk here is someone **relying on AI generated materials without verification**. Treat anything it produces as a draft that *must be edited and cite-checked by you*.

Tip: If the AI's draft is missing something or you want to add a point, you don't have to start over. Use a follow-up prompt to modify the draft. For example: *"Add a paragraph arguing that the delay was prejudicial because key defense witnesses died during the delay."* Or *"Insert a citation to California Constitution Article I, Section 15 regarding due process rights."* ChatGPT will modify its draft accordingly. This iterative refining is often faster than writing from scratch.

4. Jury Selection and Analysis

Use Case: Using AI to analyze juror questionnaires, suggest voir dire questions, and identify potential biases or noteworthy juror experiences.

Why: Jury selection is crucial and often fast-paced. We usually have limited time to assist in reviewing juror questionnaires or notes. AI can quickly assist in scanning and summarizing juror data to flag issues (e.g. a juror's strong opinions on something relevant) and even brainstorm questions to uncover bias.

Example Prompt (Questionnaire Analysis): Imagine you have summaries of answers from 20 juror questionnaires in a shooting case. You might prompt ChatGPT with a task like:

> *We have prospective jurors' questionnaire responses for a case involving self-defense.*
> **Task:** *Review each juror's summary (attached) and:*
> *1. Flag any juror who mentioned owning firearms or strong opinions on gun control.*
> *2. Flag any who have a family member or close friend who was a victim of violent crime.*
> *3. Flag any with law enforcement connections (e.g. "my brother is a cop").*
> *4. For each flagged juror, list their juror number and what they said.*
> *5. Suggest a follow-up voir dire question for each flagged juror to probe that area.*
> *(Attached: JurorSummaries.txt).*

What to expect: ChatGPT will scan the text and produce something like:

- *Juror 8 – "I own two handguns for personal protection."* **Follow-up:** *"Juror 8, would your experience as a gun owner affect how you judge someone's actions in a self-defense situation?"*

- *Juror 17 – "My cousin was killed in a robbery last year."* **Follow-up:** *"Juror 17, given that personal tragedy, do you feel it might be difficult to remain impartial in a case involving a violent crime?"*

The suggested follow-up questions might not be exactly how you would phrase them, but they give a starting point. You, as counsel, would refine the wording and tone.

Pitfalls: AI can miss subtle cues that a human might catch (tone of a written answer, irony, etc.), so use its output as a supplement, not a replacement for your own review. Also, ensure any attachment of juror data is handled securely/anonymously (no full names if possible). And remember the human element: AI does not know how a juror *sounds* or their body language – your in-person impressions can outweigh what's on paper.

5. Video/Audio Evidence Analysis and Transcription

Use Case: Handling hours of body-worn camera (BWC) footage, 911 call recordings, interrogation videos, etc., by using AI to **transcribe**, **summarize**, and **flag key moments or discrepancies**. Currently, ChatGPT alone cannot transcribe audio or video.

Why: Reviewing audio/video evidence is incredibly time-consuming. Instead of watching a 3-hour bodycam video end-to-end multiple times, you can have it transcribed and let AI summarize it or compare it to reports. This can quickly surface important details (e.g., "when exactly was Miranda given?" or "did the suspect actually lunge as the officer wrote in his report?").

Workflow: First, get the audio or video transcribed into text. There are various tools for this (more on transcription tools in a later section). For example, you might use **OpenAI's Whisper** model to transcribe an MP4 file, or (if approved) a service like **Rev** or **Otter.ai** to get a transcript. Once you have the transcript text, you can do a lot with ChatGPT:

- **Find Discrepancies:** If you also have the police report of the incident, you can ask the AI to compare them. *"Compare this transcript to the officer's written report (attached). List any inconsistencies between what the report says happened and what the transcript says."* The output might be: *"Report says Miranda was given immediately upon arrest, but transcript shows Miranda at ~15:00, well after arrest."* These are useful points for cross-exam or a suppression motion, found in minutes rather than hours.

- **Extract Quotes or Details:** You could also prompt: *"Identify any notable quotes or statements by the suspect or officer, especially anything relevant to a defense (e.g. suspect asking for a lawyer, officer making accusatory statements)."* The AI can list out key quotes with timestamps.

Tip: If it's a crucial video, you can have ChatGPT generate a more formal *"transcript analysis report." For example:* "Produce a report on the attached interview transcript, including: who are the participants, a summary of the content, any notable quotes, any signs of coercion or inconsistency." The AI might catch patterns like the detective repeating a question 10 times (possible coercion) or the suspect frequently saying "I guess so" (indicating uncertainty). These patterns could inform your strategy.

Pitfalls: Currently, ChatGPT itself cannot directly *watch* a video or *listen* to audio, so you do need a transcript as the intermediate. Ensure the transcription is accurate (automated tools occasionally get words wrong, especially legal terms or slang). When comparing transcripts to reports, remember the AI might not perfectly align events if timestamps differ – double-check critical points in the actual video.

6. DNA and Forensic Evidence Review

Use Case: Understanding complex forensic reports (DNA, ballistics, cell tower records, etc.) and crafting arguments or questions around them. This can range from simplifying technical jargon for a jury to actually drafting motions that challenge the evidence.

Why: Forensic evidence can be *highly technical*. AI can help *preliminarily* translate that jargon into plain English and even help formulate legal challenges to the evidence.

Example Prompt (Explaining a Lab Report): Suppose you have a DNA lab *written* report where the findings indicate a mixture of DNA from multiple people on an object (say, a jacket). You could prompt:

> *The following is an excerpt from a DNA lab report (attached). Explain its findings in plain English so a jury could understand:*
> *- What part of the jacket was tested and what were the results (DNA was found, etc.)?*
> *- Does the report indicate it was a mixture of DNA on the jacket? If, so, does it say how many potential contributors on the jacket?*
> *- Were any serology tests (blood, etc.) done, and what were the results?*
> *- What is the "stochastic threshold" mentioned, and what does it mean here?*
> *- Explain any technical terms like "allele" or "peak height ratio" in simple terms.*
> *- Note any limitations or cautions the lab mentioned (e.g. degradation, low quantity).*

ChatGPT (with a prompt like that) will produce a structured memo that covers those points. In training, we gave a similar prompt regarding DNA transfer and got an output with sections roughly like:

- **Introduction:** Stating the issue (DNA was found on the jacket) and our argument that it could be from secondary transfer.

- **Background on DNA Transfer:** An explanation of primary vs secondary vs tertiary transfer, and how DNA can get somewhere without direct contact (e.g. via innocent means or handling).

- **Application to This Case:** It would say something like, "Only a tiny amount of the defendant's DNA was on the jacket *e.g. 9 cells*, which is extremely low. The jacket was stored next to the defendant's own clothing after his arrest, so secondary transfer is very possible. Also, the defendant lived with the victim before, so his DNA could be on her clothes from daily life."

- **Scientific Support:** The AI might include a sentence like, "Studies (e.g., Smith et al. 2020) note that low-level DNA is prone to transfer and contamination. For example, DNA transfer during evidence packaging is documented in forensic literature." (Be

cautious: ChatGPT might *invent* a study name if you don't supply one. You would replace or verify any such references.)

- **Conclusion:** Summarizing that because of the transfer risk, the DNA on the jacket should be given little weight due to reasonable questions as to how the DNA was deposited on the jacket.

This output gives you a starting draft to work from. You would then add citations (actual studies or experts from discovery or case law), adjust the facts as needed, and modify the tone.

Using AI for Cross-Exam of Forensic Experts: Another great use is to help formulate cross-examination questions for a prosecution forensic expert. For example: *"I will be cross-examining the DNA analyst who handled this evidence. Generate a list of cross-exam questions that highlight the possibility of lab error or DNA transfer. Include questions about collection and handling procedures, potential contamination, mixture interpretation issues, and the limits of what the DNA can prove (e.g., it can't tell when the DNA was deposited)."*

Pitfalls: The science must be accurate. AI may miss, oversimplify, or misstate scientific concepts. Always run any AI generated explanation or argument by a human. Use AI as a supplement to, not a substitute for, consulting with your DNA expert.

7. Diversion, Mental Health, and Mitigation Strategies

Use Case: Drafting petitions for **diversion** (misdemeanor diversion) or writing mitigation-focused documents (like sentencing memos that highlight a client's background), using AI to integrate legal criteria with a compelling personal narrative.

Why: Diversion motions and mitigation arguments require blending legal criteria with the client's personal story and rehabilitative plan. They are holistic: you must show the person's background, the law's requirements, and why this individual merits an alternative outcome. AI can help weave these pieces together coherently and persuasively. It can also help generate a structured argument following known templates (e.g., statutory requirements for diversion).

Example Prompt (Misdemeanor Diversion Petition): Suppose you want to prepare a misdemeanor diversion request under PC §1001.95 for a 19-year-old client charged with petty theft. You have a lot of info about the client's background and letters of support. You might prompt:

You are a public defender drafting a Misdemeanor Diversion Petition for our client, John Doe.
Facts:
– John is 19 years old, charged with misdemeanor petty theft (Penal Code §484) for allegedly stealing $500 of merchandise from Target.
– He has no prior criminal history.
– Incident details: It's alleged he pushed a security guard while fleeing (no injury, and it's NOT charged as robbery).
– John's background: lifelong resident, currently in community college, works part-time, active in church, and volunteers coaching youth soccer.
– We have character letters from his mother, employer, and coach all saying he is

responsible and remorseful
– John has proactively enrolled in a theft awareness counseling program.
Petition Requirements: *Follow the structure of a standard diversion petition:*
- Introduction stating the request under PC §1001.95.
- Factual summary of the case (presented favorably towards John).
- John's personal background and circumstances (to show he's a good candidate).
- The diversion plan (courses, community service, etc. he will do).
- Conclusion requesting the court to grant diversion with appropriate conditions, and dismiss upon completion.
Output format: *Formal petition style, but clear and readable. Use bullet points or subheadings where appropriate (e.g., "Background", "Proposed Plan").*

This prompt gives a lot of detail and a clear structure.

What to expect: ChatGPT will produce a nicely organized petition, maybe with sections like:

- **Introduction:** "Pursuant to Penal Code §1001.95, Defendant John Doe respectfully petitions for misdemeanor diversion…" (citing the statute and summarizing the request).

- **Summary of Alleged Offense:** A brief, defense-favorable recap: "John is accused of a onetime mistake, attempting to steal items valued at $500. There was a minor scuffle with a store employee, but no injuries occurred."

- **Background:** It will likely use the facts given: "John is 19 with no prior record, a lifelong resident of the community. He's in college and working part-time at a café. He volunteers coaching youth soccer and is active in his church…" – establishing him as a good candidate.

- **Supportive Letters:** "Attached are character letters from family and community members attesting to John's responsibility and community activities (e.g., his employer notes he is reliable)."

- **Diversion Plan:** "If diversion is granted, John will… (1) continue the theft awareness counseling program he has enrolled in; (2) perform 25 hours of community service; (3) obey all laws and court orders during the diversion period… etc. These conditions will ensure accountability while allowing John to avoid a harmful conviction." It will incorporate details like he's already enrolled in counseling, which shows initiative.

- **Legal Criteria:** It might explicitly state: "John meets all criteria of §1001.95: eligible offense, no disqualifying priors, and this is exactly the type of case the diversion statute was designed for – a young offender who will benefit from rehabilitation over punishment."

- **Conclusion:** "For these reasons, we respectfully request the Court grant diversion under PC §1001.95. Upon John's successful completion of the program and conditions, we ask that the case be dismissed in the interests of justice."

Overall, you get a draft that hits the major points: eligibility, personal story, plan, and why the court should agree.

This kind of AI-assisted drafting shines for mitigation narratives too – for example, a section of a sentencing memo that tells the story of a client's childhood trauma and path to rehabilitation. You can feed a series of bullet points about the client's life and let the AI turn it into a cohesive narrative paragraph. Many attorneys find that the AI can produce a *first draft* of a life story that is quite moving; of course you then tailor it to be 100% accurate and in line with evidence.

8. Bail Advocacy

Use Case: Writing **bail reduction** motions or oral argument scripts that incorporate a client's background and the legal standards (for example, applying *In re Humphrey* in California), or summarizing factors for bail hearings.

Why: Bail arguments need to be succinct yet persuasive, balancing court concerns with the client's rights. We have to emphasize ties to the community, lack of flight risk, inability to pay, etc., often in a short time. ChatGPT can draft arguments that hit these points and ensure nothing is missed, including referencing key precedents like *Humphrey* for California cases.

Example Prompt (Bail Argument): Let's say you have a client charged with robbery, with bail set at $100,000. You want to argue for release on own recognizance (OR) referencing *In re Humphrey*. You could prompt:

> *"Draft a bail hearing argument for defendant John Doe, charged with armed robbery, currently held on $100,000 bail. Argue that he should be released OR (or bail drastically reduced) under California's In re Humphrey decision.*
> *Include:*
> *– John's personal details: 19 years old, no prior record.*
> *– Strong community ties (lifelong resident, family present in court, job waiting for him).*
> *– Hardship: family cannot afford any significant bail (they've tried and cannot raise more than $5k).*
> *– Public safety mitigators: the offense, while serious, did not involve physical injury; no allegations of firearm use (it was "armed" with a fake gun, e.g.). John is not a danger if supervised.*
> *– Reference Humphrey: bail must be individualized and consider ability to pay and alternatives.*
> *– Propose alternatives: GPS monitoring, daily check-ins, etc., as conditions.*
> *– Tone: passionate advocacy but fact-based (not just emotional plea)."*

What to expect: The AI will likely produce a coherent argument hitting something like:

- "**Under *In re Humphrey*,** bail must be set based on ability to pay and only as a last resort to ensure appearance and public safety. Here, $100,000 is effectively a no-bail for John, an indigent 19-year-old, which Humphrey prohibits if less restrictive means can address any risk.

- **Flight Risk:** John has *zero* history of missing court – in fact, he turned himself in when he learned of the warrant. Lifelong resident of this county, living with his parents, who are here in court today. He's enrolled in community college and has a part-time job waiting for him; these ties ensure he will return to court.

- **Public Safety:** The incident, while serious, resulted in no physical harm. According to the police report, the "weapon" was a toy, not a real gun (for example). John has no prior violent behavior. We are proposing strict conditions that will mitigate any risk: GPS monitoring, a nightly curfew, stay-away order from the incident location, and supervision by Pretrial Services. These are far more tailored and fair than a $100k bail that he cannot pay.

- **Ability to Pay:** John and his family cannot afford $100k. Under *Humphrey*, keeping bail at an unattainable amount is the same as ordering detention without the required due process findings. He is exactly the kind of individual for whom non-monetary conditions are intended.

- **Proposal:** Release John on his own recognizance with conditions.

Pitfalls: The AI might not automatically know about *Humphrey*, so we included it. Always include key case names or standards in your prompt if you want them in the output. And double-check that any case references (like quoting *Humphrey*) are accurate – best to verify the language yourself. Also, ensure the argument aligns with local bail statutes or court rules.

Integrating Supporting Documents: If you have character letters or a pretrial report, you can feed snippets of those into the prompt (or simply tell the AI their content). *"John's mother's letter says he is the sole caretaker for his grandmother…"* etc. The AI can incorporate those humanizing details: *"His mother writes that John cares for his sick grandmother daily, showing his sense of responsibility."* This adds weight to your argument.

Finally, use AI-suggested arguments as a supplement to your own judgment. Bail hearings can be unpredictable, and humanizing the client in person is key. But AI can ensure you did not forget a point (like emphasizing no prior record or suggesting specific alternatives like GPS monitoring).

Having walked through these use cases, you can see how ChatGPT can assist in drafting, brainstorming, and analyzing various aspects of public defense work.

Next, we'll turn to the critical considerations that must accompany any use of AI in legal practice: ethics, confidentiality, and sound professional judgment.

Best Practices for Ethical and Secure AI Use in Legal Settings

While AI tools like ChatGPT can be incredibly helpful, they also pose **ethical and security challenges** for lawyers. As public defenders, we must integrate AI in a way that upholds our professional responsibilities: protecting client confidentiality, providing competent representation, and exercising proper supervision over any tool or nonlawyer assistance (which includes AI). This section outlines best practices to ensure we use AI **responsibly and ethically**.

Confidentiality & Privacy

- **Protect Client Information**: Never paste confidential client information into a public AI service. This includes names, contact info, case identifiers, or any facts that could identify the client or case. Many AI platforms (including public ChatGPT) store user

inputs to further train models. This could violate duties under **Rule 1.6 – Confidential Information of a Client.**

- **Use Secure Platforms:** Use AI tools that are **enterprise-level** (or a system your office has approved) which assure data privacy. For instance, if your office IT provides a secure AI tool where data is not shared beyond your organization, use that. There are versions of LLMs that can run locally or within a private cloud. *Public AI tools should be treated like a public space* – you would not discuss client confidential information loudly in a café, so similarly don't blurt them to cloud AI. Also be mindful of **PHI (Protected Health Information)**: if your case involves medical/mental health info, HIPAA and California state law may apply.

- **Read the Terms of Use:** Check what the AI provider says about data. Use tools that promise **no retention or sharing of inputs** for training or with third parties. **Even if the LLM does not train on your data, it does not mean it is secure for confidential or attorney client information.**

Competence & Supervision

- **Understand the Tool's Limits:** Under **Rule 1.1 – Competence**, lawyers must understand the benefits and risks of relevant technology. This means you should know generally how ChatGPT works and what its weaknesses are. It's not magic; it's a language predictor prone to errors. Using AI **competently** means critically evaluating its output, just as you would an intern's work. The California Bar has emphasized that lawyers using generative AI need to do so with diligence and prudence.

- **Always Review AI Output:** *Never* file or act on AI generated content without a thorough review and confirmation. Never file purely AI- generated content. If ChatGPT drafts a motion, read every line, verify citations, and confirm it's accurate. The duty of **candor (Rule 3.3)** means we cannot submit false or fabricated information to the court. If an AI output provided a case quote, find that quote in the actual case to ensure it is real and in context.

- **Maintain Your Own Judgment:** Competence includes not outsourcing your legal reasoning entirely to an AI. Use AI to augment, not replace, your thought process. For example, AI might give a perfectly structured argument, but you might spot a nuance it missed or a strategic angle to tweak. Do not skip that human part. Over-reliance could potentially violate competence if you fail to spot an AI's mistake that a reasonable lawyer would catch.

- **Train and Supervise Your Team:** If you're a supervisor ensure your team is trained on proper AI use. This ties to **Rule 5.1 and 5.3 – Responsibilities of managerial attorneys and supervision of nonlawyer assistants**. Set office policies on what is acceptable. Supervisors should also caution newer attorneys not to blindly trust outputs and to be aware of confidentiality issues. Our materials suggest having clear policies and training on AI ethics and practical pitfalls.

Internal Transparency

- **Labeling AI generated Work (Internally):** For internal work product, it's good practice to mark or save drafts with some note if they were *purely* AI-generated.

Professional Responsibility Rules – Quick References

- **California Business and Professions Code 6068(e)**

- **California Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.1 (Competence)**

- **California Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.3 (Diligence)**

- **California Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.6 (Confidentiality)**

- **California Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 5.3 (Nonlawyer Assistants)**

- **California Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 5.1 & 5.2 (Supervision and Subordinate Lawyers)**

- **New Court Rules/Opinions:** California's Judicial Council recently adopted a guideline (Rule 10.430) for the court's use of AI. While clearly not binding on attorneys, it signals that the legal system acknowledges AI use but rightly expects basic compliance with ethics.

Transcription Tools

Managing audio and video evidence – like bodycam footage, interrogation videos, jail calls, etc. – often requires transcribing them to make the content easily searchable and citable. Several AI-driven transcription tools are available, each with pros and cons. Here we **compare** some popular options and give recommendations on what to use in different situations. (Accuracy and security are key factors here.)

- **Rev (rev.com):** *Overview:* A well-known service offering both AI generated transcripts and human reviewed transcripts.

- **Otter.ai:** *Overview:* An AI-powered transcription and collaboration platform (no human transcribers).

- **JusticeText:** *Overview:* A platform specifically designed for public defenders to manage video/audio evidence and transcripts. **Advantages:** Built *for legal workflows*. You can ingest bodycam, dashcam, jail calls, etc., and it will generate transcripts and sync them to the video. It has tools for searching transcripts, tagging important moments, and creating clips – all very useful for case prep.

- **Axon (Evidence.com with Axon Transcription):** *Overview:* Axon is known for police bodycams and tasers; with certain subscriptions their cloud (Evidence.com) now offers

automatic transcription for videos uploaded there. It was originally designed for police and prosecutors.

- **OpenAI Whisper:** *Overview:* Whisper is an open-source speech to text model released by OpenAI. You can run it yourself (if you have the technical setup) or use it via some services.

- **Transcription options from Microsoft (Word and Stream).**

  o **Microsoft 365 AI transcription (Audio)**
    - Logon to office 365 (same credentials as computer login)
    - Select word
    - Create blank document
    - On the Home tab – click on the arrow below the Dictate button
    - Select Transcribe
    - Click Upload Audio
    - Generally, it will transcribe up to 300 minutes per user per month

  o **STREAM (Video)**
    - In OneDrive folder
    - Right click on the file
    - Go down to OneDrive option
    - Click View online
    - On the right click video settings
    - Click Transcript and Captions, Click Generate

Each of these systems runs the same security risk (described throughout this document) when using a public version of these transcription platforms. Policy should be set around the use of these services.

Speech recognition is getting better and cheaper. The gap between AI and human transcription has narrowed. But **human review remains gold standard** for critical pieces. A sensible approach is AI-first (to save time) and human corrected for final accuracy.

Resources

OpenAI Academy

https://academy.openai.com/

ChatGPT for executives

https://academy.openai.com/public/clubs/work-users-ynjqu/resources/use-cases-executives

ChatGPT for managers

https://academy.openai.com/public/clubs/work-users-ynjqu/resources/use-cases-for-managers

ChatGPT Prompt engineering

https://platform.openai.com/docs/guides/prompt-engineering

ChatGPT Realtime Prompting Guide

https://cookbook.openai.com/examples/realtime_prompting_guide

Prompting Guide 101 (Gemini for Google Workspace)

https://services.google.com/fh/files/misc/gemini-for-google-workspace-prompting-guide-101.pdf

Claude Prompt Library

https://docs.claude.com/en/resources/prompt-library/library

Claude Prompt Engineering Overview

https://docs.claude.com/en/docs/build-with-claude/prompt-engineering/overview

Claude Core Techniques

https://claude.ai/public/artifacts/290cf5e5-3f06-497d-a6f6-8a03031decf5

How People Use ChatGPT

https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w34255/w34255.pdf

California Rules of Court, Standard 10.80: Use of generative artificial intelligence by judicial officers

https://courts.ca.gov/cms/rules/index/standards/Standard10_80

California State Bar – Practical Artificial Intelligence in the Practice of Law

https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Portals/0/documents/ethics/Generative-AI-Practical-Guidance.pdf

ABA - Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools

https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/professional_responsibility/ethics-opinions/aba-formal-opinion-512.pdf

Appendix: Public Defender Prompt Library Examples and Resources

I. Introduction

Prompts are the primary mechanism through which users communicate intent, constraints, and expectations to large language models (LLMs). While prompts are often treated as static instructions, effective use of LLMs is rarely a onetime effort. In practice, high quality results emerge through iteration-refining language, clarifying goals, and adjusting constraints based on the outputs received. ChatGPT and similar tools are particularly effective in this iterative role, as they can assist not only with producing content, but with improving the prompts themselves.

The truth is that users do not need to write a perfect prompt at the outset. Instead, LLMs can be used as collaborators to help design, optimize, and refine prompts over time. The meta prompt below demonstrates this approach by instructing the model to act as a prompt engineer, producing structured, reusable prompts that can be iterated on as needs evolve.

> Meta Prompt: Prompt Generator
>
> Act as an expert prompt engineer and generate a high quality, ready to use ChatGPT prompt for the following task: [describe the task]. The objective is (desired outcome), for the intended audience (who the output is for), with the following constraints (tone, length, format, tools, rules, style) and context (background information, examples, assumptions). Specify the output behavior as follows: ask clarifying questions (yes / no), prompt detail level (concise / standard / detailed), reasoning style (step-by-step / high level / hidden), output format (plain text / bullets / numbered steps / table / PDF / *Word* / *Excel* document), and number of prompt variants (1 / 2 / 3). Deliver a clearly labeled, optimized prompt that can be pasted directly into ChatGPT, and if multiple variants are requested, briefly explain when to use each one.

Nevertheless, while meta prompting is a powerful technique, many users benefit from concrete, task specific examples. For that reason, this document also provides a curated set of example prompts tailored to Public Defender related workflows, the purpose of which is more to have the user think about ways we can prompt, rather than necessarily using these specific prompts. In addition, these examples assume use within an enterprise or government approved LLM system. They must be reviewed and modified as appropriate to comply with ethical obligations, data privacy requirements, and restrictions on confidential, privileged, or protected information. No prompt should include case specific facts, client identifiers, or sensitive materials unless explicitly permitted by policy and system design.

The following sections apply these principles in practice. They present specific, role aligned prompts designed to support common Public Defender tasks such as legal analysis, writing, issue spotting, policy review, and training support. Each prompt is intended as a starting point not a final product and should be adapted through iteration to meet the needs of the user, the constraints of the system, and the ethical responsibilities of public defense work.

II. Written Advocacy, Tone, and Professional Communication

A. Memo to File and Internal Documentation

1) Call Notes to Memo Conversion
Prompt: I have rough notes from a phone call/meeting. Please convert these notes into a formal internal memo with a neutral, professional tone. Begin with the date/time and participants. State the purpose of the call. Then present key points or statements (using quotes for significant statements), organized logically or by topic. Conclude with any action items or follow-up tasks and deadlines. Raw notes: [PASTE].

2) Converting Notes to Memo
Prompt: Take these raw notes (which may be from an attorney's legal pad or a call log) and transform them into an internal formal memo or summary. The memo should have a date and subject line if appropriate, and be organized by topics. Ensure the final text is clear and complete – if the notes say, "witness saw 2 ppl" you'd write "Witness X stated she saw two people...". Do not guess unclear acronyms; flag them or leave [??] if unsure for the attorney to fill in. Keep the tone neutral and professional. Notes: [PASTE].

B. Email Drafting and Refinement

3) Professional Email Rewrite (Record Preserving)
Prompt: I need to send a professional email about a case issue. Here is my rough, blunt draft. Please rewrite it into a clear, calm, and persuasive email that preserves the record, avoids unnecessary conflict, and uses a respectful tone appropriate for [judge / DA / supervisor / investigator / expert]. Keep it concise but firm. Include a subject line and a short closing. Here is the rough draft: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Rewrite the email below to the DA in a professional tone. I want to request missing discovery, note that it is overdue, and set a reasonable timeline. Keep it factual and record preserving and include a clear ask. Draft: [PASTE].

C. Rewriting and Alternative Phrasing (Motions / Filings)

4) Argument Clarity Revision and Alternatives
Prompt: Rewrite the following argument paragraph to make it clearer and persuasive for a court filing. Keep the substance the same, but improve the flow, precision of language, and logical structure. Then, provide three alternative versions of this revised argument: (1) a more direct and succinct version, (2) a more diplomatic version, and (3) a more forceful version. Identify any ambiguous or weak wording in the original that I should fix. Original text: [PASTE ARGUMENT].

5) Concerns Anticipation Rewrite
Prompt: Take this paragraph from my motion and revise it to preempt the likely counterpoints. Add one or two sentences that address potential questions or skepticism the court might have. Paragraph: [PASTE].

6) Court-Filing Rewrite and Alternatives (Version of the same idea)
Example prompt: Rewrite the following argument so it reads more clearly and persuasively for a court filing. Keep the meaning the same, but improve flow, precision, and logical structure. Then provide three alternative versions: (1) more direct, (2) more diplomatic, and (3) more forceful but still professional. Text: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Give me four alternative phrasings of this sentence for a motion, each with slightly different emphasis: "The police failed to investigate obvious leads that would have undermined probable cause." Also point out any ambiguity or weak wording I should tighten.

III. Litigation Strategy and Substantive Legal Analysis

A. Theory of the Case and Narrative Development

7) Case Theory Brainstorm (Defense vs. Prosecution)
Prompt: Using the facts provided (assume they are accurate), generate a strategy memo covering: (1) the strongest overall defense theory of the case, (2) two alternative defense theories I could argue in the alternative, (3) the prosecution's likely narrative or theory of the case, (4) the best counterarguments the prosecution will make against each of my defense theories, and (5) the top vulnerabilities or weaknesses in my case that I should address before filing any motions or going to trial. Present this in a clear, organized format with headings for each section. Facts: [PASTE FACT SUMMARY].

8) Theory Generator (Bullet Facts Version)
Prompt: key facts in neutral bullet points: [PASTE]. Please generate: (1) my strongest defense theory, (2) two alternative theories, (3) the prosecution's likely theory, (4) the best counterarguments to my positions, and (5) the vulnerabilities I should address before filing anything.

Demo prompt: Facts: The officer stopped my client for a cracked taillight, searched the car after saying he smelled marijuana, and found a baggie in the center console. Client denies knowledge. Please brainstorm defenses, suppression angles, and the prosecution's best responses, then tell me what facts I need to investigate to strengthen a motion.

B. Elements, Proof, and Issue Mapping

9) Element by Element Proof Chart
Prompt: For each charge [LIST CHARGES / UPLOAD SPECIFIC CALCRIM] against my client, create a table or matrix breaking down: each legal element of the offense, what evidence the prosecution will cite to prove that element, what evidence or arguments we have to contradict or cast doubt on that element, and what further investigation or evidence could strengthen our defense on that element. Conclude by listing the three strong themes for the defense and the three most problematic facts that we need to handle. Case facts/discovery summary: [PASTE].

C. Pressure-Testing Arguments (Opposition / Reply)

10) "Opposition in My Head" (Pressure Test My Argument)
Prompt: Act as a prosecutor and write the strongest opposition argument responding to the position/argument I have pasted below. Use a confident, professional tone and make the best case for the prosecution on each point. Then, switch roles and write my reply argument, addressing each of those prosecution points directly and rebutting them. Keep the tone of my reply focused on the law and facts. Position/argument to challenge: [PASTE]. Key facts to consider: [PASTE].

11) Pressure Test Prompt
Example prompt: Pressure test this position as if you were opposing counsel. Write the strongest opposition argument you can, then write my reply addressing each point. Position: [PASTE].

D. Trial Themes

12) Themes and Story Arc for Jury
Prompt: Generate three possible defense themes for trial and outline a coherent story arc for each that I could use from voir dire through closing. Each theme should include: a one sentence tagline or slogan, three supporting points or facts from the case that reinforce the theme, and a note about how the prosecution might try to rebut that theme with their narrative, plus how I can respond to that rebuttal. Facts of the case: [PASTE].

IV. Motions, Hearings, and Oral Advocacy

A. Motion Drafting, Organization, and Revision

13) Reorganize Motion with Headings
Prompt: Take the following draft motion section and reorganize it into a structure with clear headings and subheadings that it is easy to read. Ensure each major point has a descriptive heading. Then, rewrite the text for clarity and logical flow, without changing any citation placeholders (leave references like "[CITE]" or "[RT ____]" as they are). Do not introduce new facts. Focus on making the argument easy to follow. Motion text: [PASTE].

14) Motion Tightening
Example prompt: I am drafting a motion and I want it tighter and more persuasive. Please reorganize the argument into a clean structure with headings that a judge can scan. Then rewrite the text to improve clarity, reduce repetition, and strengthen logic while keeping my citation placeholders intact. Motion text: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Turn this into an outline with headings and short bullet points for oral argument: "The stop was unlawful, and everything after it must be suppressed. The officer lacked reasonable suspicion because the alleged traffic violation is not supported by the video. Even if the stop was lawful, the search exceeded the scope of any prosecution argument of consent."

B. Oral Argument Tools

15) Motion to Oral Argument Conversion
Prompt: Convert the written argument below into three formats for oral advocacy: (1) a 3-minute scripted argument I could practice or deliver, hitting all key points clearly and succinctly; (2) a one page bullet point outline of the argument suitable for quick reference or notes; and (3) a list of 8 potential questions the judge might interject with, along with suggested concise answers for each. Keep the tone conversational but authoritative and avoid exaggeration. Written argument text: [PASTE].

16) Motion Section: Script / Outline / Bench Questions
Example prompt: Convert this motion section into (1) a 3-minute oral script, (2) a 1-page bullet outline, and (3) a list of five anticipated questions from the bench with suggested answers. Text: [PASTE].

17) Hearing "One Sheet" Prep
Prompt: Create a one page hearing outline ("one sheet") that I can use at the podium for an upcoming hearing. It should include: the issue at hand (in one sentence, e.g., "Motion to Suppress – whether the stop was lawful"), the legal standard (with a placeholder or short quote from a key case/statute), 3 main points of my argument (each with a concise bullet or phrase), up to 3 concessions or narrow interpretations I can offer (to show reasonableness or limit the ruling in our favor), and 5-6 short, quotable sound bites or phrases I can drop during argument that succinctly hit my points or policy themes. Keep it very organized and easy to read at a glance. Hearing type: [PASTE]. Relevant facts or record citations for reference: [PASTE].

C. Reply Briefing

18) Reply Brief Outline (Point by Point)
Prompt: Draft an outline for a reply brief that directly addresses an opposition brief's arguments point by point. For each argument raised in the opposition (I will paste the relevant sections), provide: a brief summary of the opposition's point, followed by my rebuttal argument. Structure the outline to mirror the opposition's structure for easy comparison. Where applicable, include placeholders for record citations or exhibits (e.g., "[RT]" for transcript cites or "[EX]" for exhibits). Opposition excerpts: [PASTE]. My supporting facts/record citations: [PASTE].

D. Bail / Detention / Conditions

19) Bail/Detention Hearing Argument
Prompt: Draft a persuasive oral argument for a bail hearing. The argument should: (1) state the legal standard for release vs. detention (e.g., under California law - *Humphrey*) (UPLOAD TREATISE OR CASE LAW), (2) weave the client's facts into a narrative that shows they are neither a flight risk nor a danger to the community, organized under clear points, (3) address public safety and flight risk concerns by highlighting specific protective conditions or supervision that mitigate any risk, and (4) pre-empt and respond to the prosecution's main arguments for high bail or detention. Finally, list 5 concrete, less restrictive conditions you could

propose (e.g., GPS monitoring, treatment programs, daily check-ins) tailored to the client's situation. Client facts: [PASTE]. Possible conditions brainstorm: [PASTE].

20) Bail Argument Structure
Prompt fragment you included: that (1) states the legal standard, (2) organizes the facts into a compelling narrative, (3) addresses public safety and flight risk with specific alternatives, and (4) anticipates the prosecution's main points. Facts: [PASTE]. Proposed conditions: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Draft a short oral argument for a *Humphrey* hearing. Facts: client has stable housing, works full time, no prior failures to appear, and the allegation is non-violent theft. The DA will argue "repeat offender" based on two old priors and many failures to appear. Please frame the argument around least restrictive conditions and ability to pay and propose five concrete conditions.

E. Diversion

21) Misdemeanor Diversion Petition
Example prompt: Draft a misdemeanor diversion petition using the facts below. Keep it statutory and defense friendly, and include a short factual summary, eligibility points, and why diversion serves justice. Facts: [PASTE].

F. Preliminary Hearing

22) Preliminary Hearing Argument (Insufficient Evidence)
Example prompt: Help me write a preliminary hearing argument focused on insufficient evidence. I will paste testimony excerpts and key facts. Please (1) identify the elements the prosecution must show, (2) map each element to the evidence (or lack of evidence), (3) craft a concise sufficiency argument, and (4) add credibility points where appropriate. Testimony: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Prelim issue: ID is weak. Witness saw the suspect at night for "a few seconds," admits fear, and originally said the suspect had facial hair but my client does not. Draft a prelim argument attacking probable cause and credibility without overstating and give me three sound bites I can use orally.

23) Preliminary Hearing Closing (Element by Element)
Example prompt: Turn these notes into a preliminary hearing closing that is organized, element by element, and includes the strongest credibility attacks supported by the record. Notes: [PASTE].

V. Witness Work, Cross-Examination, and Voir Dire

A. Cross-Examination Core Tools

24) Cross Outline Builder (General)
Example prompt: I am preparing a cross-examination of a [lay witness/expert/officer]. Here are the key facts and prior statements. Please generate a cross outline with: (1) goals and themes, (2) short leading questions in logical sequence, (3) impeachment points with the exact statement I should confront the witness with, and (4) suggested transitions. Materials: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Cross an officer on a report inconsistency. Report says the suspect "ran," body cam shows a walk. Create a sequence of leading questions to lock the officer into the report, confirm they wrote it, confirm accuracy matters, and then impeach with the video. Keep questions short, topic organized, and courtroom usable.

25) Cross Question Rewrite (Pacing & Control)
Example prompt: Rewrite these cross questions to improve pacing and control. Make each question one fact only, remove compound questions, and keep the tone professional but firm. Questions: [PASTE].

B. Specific Cross Templates

26) Percipient Witness Cross – Perception & Memory
Prompt: Draft a cross-examination outline for a lay eyewitness focusing on testing their perception and memory. Emphasize factors like lighting, distance, duration of observation, stress or distraction, influence of other witnesses or police, and any inconsistencies over time. Provide: (1) a brief statement of the cross theme (e.g., "memory is unreliable, especially under stress"), (2) a logical sequence of short leading questions under each area (visibility, duration, distance, emotional state, time since event, etc.), and (3) about 10 simple "control" questions that the witness is likely to agree with (obvious truths that bolster our theme, e.g., "It was dark that night, correct?"). Witness statement summary: [PASTE key points from their testimony or report].

27) Expert Witness Cross – Methodology & Limits
Prompt: Draft a cross-examination for an expert witness that probes their methodology, assumptions, and the limits of their conclusions. Focus on areas such as the steps they took (and did not take), any uncertainties or error margins in their analysis, alternative explanations they may have ignored, and any credentials or bias issues if applicable. Provide about 25 short leading questions covering these points in a logical order. Also suggest 5 potential demonstrative analogies or simple examples I could use to illustrate complex points to the jury (without being unfair). Expert's opinion/topic excerpt: [PASTE the key conclusion or methodology from their report/testimony].

C. Direct Examination

28) Defense Witness Direct Exam (Friendly Witness)
Prompt: Outline a direct examination for a defense witness (either a lay witness supporting our

case or an expert for the defense). Ensure it builds the witness's credibility and avoids objections. Include: (1) a short introduction establishing who the witness is (background, how they relate to the case) with only necessary foundation questions, (2) the core story or opinions the witness will provide, broken into logical subtopics, with open-ended questions that elicit narrative responses, (3) anticipate likely cross-exam attacks and include a couple of questions to preempt or explain those weaknesses, and (4) five concise "anchor" questions or phrases you can use in closing to remind the jury of this witness's key testimony. Witness info and expected testimony: [PASTE].

D. Voice Practice and Voir Dire

29) Rehearse Cross Orally (Voice Script Variations)
Example prompt: I want to rehearse cross orally. Please convert the outline below into a spoken script with natural phrasing and built-in pauses. Then give me a shorter version that is faster and tighter, and a third version that is slower and more juror friendly. Outline: [PASTE].

30) Voir Dire Voice Practice (Presumption of Innocence)
Demo prompt: Create a voice practice script for voir dire on the presumption of innocence. It should include an opening statement, two open ended questions, likely juror answers, and three follow-up questions that respectfully probe bias. Keep it conversational and realistic.

31) Voir Dire Topics and Questions (Theme + Issue)
Example prompt: My case theme is [THEME]. Please propose voir dire topics, open-ended questions, and follow-ups designed to uncover bias tied to [ISSUE]. Also draft two short mini speeches I can use to frame the topic without arguing the case.

VI. Discovery, Evidence, and Case Organization

A. Police Report Review and Timeline Building

32) Chronological Timeline from Police Report
Prompt: Turn the following police report or incident narrative into a detailed chronological timeline. For each event, include the timestamp (or approximate time) if given or can be inferred, and a brief description of what happened in order. Then provide an "Assumptions vs. Observations" audit: identify any statements in the report that sound like conclusions or assumptions by the officer rather than factual observations (flag words like "appeared," "suspect intended," etc.). Finally, list 15 targeted follow-up questions this report raises (e.g., inconsistencies to check, additional evidence to seek, questions for cross-exam or investigation). Report text: [PASTE].

33) Police Report Timeline & Assumption Check
Prompt: Review the police report(s) and create a chronological timeline of events with any times noted. Identify any statements by officers that sound like assumptions or conclusions rather than observed facts (e.g., "the suspect appeared nervous" – the word "appeared" indicates an assumption). Output the timeline and list those assumption statements. Then list any questions

these raise for investigation (e.g., "Was there video of the traffic stop?" or "Confirm if the store was open at that hour"). Report text: [PASTE relevant excerpts].

34) Police Report "Full Pass"
Example prompt: I will upload a police report. Please produce (1) a chronological timeline, (2) an issue-based summary organized by elements and defenses, and (3) a list of inconsistencies, omissions, and follow-up questions for investigation. Report: [PASTE].

B. Discovery Indexing and Navigation

35) Discovery Index with Descriptions
Prompt: Create a "discovery index" for the case. For each discovery item or document, list: a short identifier (e.g., "Police Report 1 – Officer Smith"), the date or date range (if applicable), the source (which agency or person produced it), the page numbers or Bates range, and a 1-2 sentence description of what it is and why it matters. Organize the list in a sensible order (by date of incident, by type of document, or chronological by when received). The goal is to be a quick reference I can use to find information fast. Produce an Excel spreadsheet. Discovery excerpts/notes: [PASTE].

36) Discovery Index and Summary
Prompt: Go through the provided discovery (police reports, statements, etc.) and create an index in Excel for quick reference. For each item, list: Date and type of document (e.g., "2025-01-01 Police Report by Officer A"), page numbers or Bates range, and a brief description highlighting key information (e.g., "Officer A's report of arrest – mentions surveillance footage and co-defendant's statements"). Explain in one sentence why this item matters (e.g., "important for timeline of arrest" or "contains conflicting witness description"). Output this as a clean list, organized by date or by type (police reports together, then lab reports, etc.). If the discovery text is provided out of order, do your best to categorize. Discovery text/notes: [PASTE portions or list of items].

C. Witness Lists and Categorization

37) Witness List Grouped by Role (From Discovery Summary)
Example prompt: Based on the discovery summary below, generate a witness list grouped by role (percipient, law enforcement, experts, custodians). Summary: [PASTE].

38) Witness List and Contact Sheet
Prompt: Prepare a format for a master witness list with contact info and role of witness. For each witness (including police, civilians, experts): have columns for Name, Role/Who they are (e.g., victim, eyewitness, arresting officer, lab analyst), Contact Info, etc.

D. Technical / Medical / Science Translation for Court

39) Explain Medical/Technical Term (Two Layers)
Example prompt: Explain this medical or technical term in two layers: first in plain English for

me, then in courtroom ready language suitable for a cross or argument. Term or excerpt: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Explain "subdural hematoma" and "diffuse axonal injury" in plain language, then give me five short cross questions to clarify timing and causation without sounding like I am testifying.

40) Translate Scientific Explanation for Jurors + Analogies
Example prompt: Translate the following scientific explanation into a juror friendly narrative, then propose three analogies that are accurate and not overstated. Text: [PASTE].

VII. Investigation and Case Development

41) Witness Location & Interview Strategy
Prompt: List all individuals mentioned in the reports or by the client who might have information (percipient witnesses, bystanders, etc.). For each person, outline a strategy to locate and interview them: include where to find contact info (e.g., mention if an address or phone is in the report, or if we need to do a database search or canvass), how to approach them (any considerations like language, hostility, age), and key questions or topics to cover in the interview. Also note any credibility concerns or if we need to get a written statement or recording. If some witnesses are completely unknown (e.g., "guy in red shirt at scene"), list steps to identify them (like canvassing neighborhood or social media). Witness info from case: [PASTE].

42) Investigation Plan Demo (History and Cameras)
Demo prompt: Client says the complainant has a history of making similar accusations and there were cameras in the hallway. Build an investigation plan: what records to request, who to interview, what third-party sources might exist, and how to phrase requests so they are specific and usable.

43) Alternative Narratives (Record Consistent)
Example prompt: Given incomplete records, help me generate alternative factual narratives that remain consistent with what we know, and list what evidence would confirm or disprove each narrative. Record: [PASTE].

VIII. Sentencing and Mitigation

44) Mitigation Narrative from Notes
Prompt: Take the following raw notes about the client's background and positive attributes and turn them into a coherent narrative for the mitigation section of a sentencing memo. The narrative should be story like, highlighting themes of rehabilitation, hardship, or growth, and showing causality (but without making excuses) – for example, how trauma or circumstances influenced the client's actions, and how they've worked to overcome. It should be compassionate yet tied to legal relevance (why this context matters for sentencing). After the narrative, extract: (1) the key mitigation themes (e.g., "Childhood instability leading to substance abuse"), (2) supporting facts for each theme (e.g., "in foster care from ages X to Y; first used substances at Z

age to cope"), (3) a list of proposed attachments or exhibits to corroborate the mitigation (e.g., treatment records, character letters, awards), and (4) any language to be careful about (areas where we shouldn't overstate or that could backfire). Raw notes: [PASTE].

45) Social History Narrative (from Notes)
Prompt: Take the following notes about the client's background (family, upbringing, trauma, education, etc.) and craft a narrative in full paragraphs that could be used in a memo or report. The narrative should connect the client's experiences to how they ended up in the criminal legal system, in a sympathetic but not exaggerated way. It should highlight any struggles (abuse, addiction, poverty, mental health) in a factual, respectful manner, and also any positive steps or achievements of the client. Keep the language relevant to what the court cares about (rehabilitation, low risk of reoffending with support, etc.). Then, after the narrative, list the key themes we can emphasize (like "Stable housing was never available, leading to chronic homelessness"), with bullet points of facts under each theme that support it. Also list any documents or records that could back up those facts (school records, medical records, etc.). Notes: [PASTE].

46) Raw Mitigation Notes → Narrative + Themes + Exhibits
Example prompt: I will paste raw mitigation notes. Please produce a coherent social history narrative in paragraph form that is trauma informed but legally relevant. Then extract (1) key mitigation themes, (2) supporting facts for each theme, and (3) proposed attachments or exhibits to substantiate the claims. Notes: [PASTE].

Demo prompt: Draft a sentencing memo section (two to three paragraphs) that presents the client's entire circumstance, links background to rehabilitation, and proposes a concrete plan. Facts: client supports family, has untreated depression, began treatment after arrest, has letters of support, and wants counseling and job training. Make it persuasive.

47) Sentencing Memo Outline (From Bullets)
Example prompt: Turn these bullet notes into a sentencing memorandum outline with headings, proposed exhibits, and a short conclusion paragraph I can adapt. Notes: [PASTE].

IX. Workflow, Data Handling, and Office Productivity

48) Spreadsheet Structure + Folder Structure
Example prompt: Design a simple spreadsheet structure for [case tracking/witness list/issue matrix]. Describe the columns, what goes in each, and give me an example row. Then suggest a consistent folder/subfolder structure for a case file that matches the spreadsheet, so the workflow stays organized.

IX. Advanced and Emerging Uses

A. Image / Multimodal Review

49) Image Evidence Description (Neutral & Legal Focused)
Prompt: I have an image (photo or screenshot, e.g., of a document, injury, scene diagram). Provide a neutral, detailed description of what is visible in the image without making any legal conclusions or medical diagnoses. Note specifics like dates, timestamps, signage, physical characteristics ("The photo shows a room with a broken window and a chair turned over," etc.). Then list key details that could have legal significance (e.g., "the timestamp reads 10:34 PM which is 2 hours before the 911 call"; "the injury is a deep cut approximately 2 inches long on the left forearm"). Image context/description: [PASTE or describe image].

B. Accuracy Guardrails (Anti-Hallucination)

50) Hallucination Guardrails for Drafting
Prompt: When helping draft legal documents, follow these guardrails: (1) do not fabricate facts not provided, (2) do not fabricate quotes or evidence (only use what is given), (3) if referencing evidence or transcript, use a placeholder cite (e.g., "[RT p. X]"), (4) if a statement seems to need support and none is provided, flag it (e.g., "[Source?]"). Now, rewrite the following text according to those rules – ensuring everything is grounded in provided material and marking any potentially unsupported claims. Text: [PASTE draft segment].

Quick "Starter Block" You Can Paste Before Any Prompt

(These guardrails do not alter the underlying prompt. They are intended to reduce unsafe or speculative outputs, but they do not eliminate the possibility of errors, assumptions, or inaccurate information.)

Record-only starter (optional):
Use only the facts I provide below. Do not assume missing facts. Do not invent quotes. If you need a cite, leave a placeholder. If anything is unclear, ask me a narrow question instead of guessing.

Minimal guardrail:
Use only the information I provide. Do not assume missing details. If something is unclear, ask a single clarifying question instead of guessing.

Record-only / fact-locked mode:
Use only the facts provided below. Do not add, infer, or assume any information not explicitly stated. Do not create names, dates, quotes, or sources. If a citation is required but missing, flag it explicitly. If anything is unclear, ask a narrow clarification question before continuing.

Hallucination guardrail:
Do not fabricate information. If you are unsure whether something is correct, say so explicitly. Do not guess or fill gaps. Clearly flag any assumptions before using them.

Strict scope control:
Answer only what is directly asked. Do not add background, context, or recommendations unless explicitly requested.

Uncertainty handling:
If multiple interpretations are possible, list them briefly and ask which one to proceed with.

Source discipline:
If a claim depends on external knowledge, state that explicitly and request a source before continuing.