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Centralizing Texas' AI Evaluation Processes

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Executive Summary

This project recommends that the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) adopt a step by step guide for public institutions to review artificial intelligence (AI) accessibility, cybersecurity, and governance before approving and adopting new AI tools. Texas is expanding its AI use across state agencies, but the State does not have a centralized process for resolving different AI evaluation recommendations across departments, guidelines, and institutions. By identifying final decisionmakers, coordinating evaluation findings, and setting approval standards, this project aims to ensure that AI tools adopted by Texas government agencies are accessible and beneficial to its residents.

Problem

Texas state government agencies are increasingly using AI tools, but the State has not yet adopted an integrated process to evaluate these tools. Currently, independent teams at Texas public institutions review AI accessibility, cybersecurity, and governance according to different rules, which can lead to miscommunications and conflicting recommendations. Given that government agencies exclusively operate public services like Social Security benefits, public education systems, and license issuing, government-used AI tools must be accessible to ensure that everyone, including Texans living with disabilities, can access public services and resources. To strengthen its AI governance, Texas recently adopted new assessment requirements for state agencies when they consider adopting AI systems, but gaps remain in AI accessibility and cybersecurity testing and evaluation.

To learn more about this project, visit aspenpolicyacademy.org. Please note that all author's opinions published here are their own. This publication does not reflect the views of the Aspen Policy Academy or the Aspen Institute.

Solution

This project proposes that DIR should adopt the Coordinated AI Requirements (CAIR) Playbook to centralize and coordinate AI evaluation processes across state agencies and strengthen AI accessibility, cybersecurity, and governance. The CAIR Playbook includes 3 resources: an implementation guide, a readiness assessment, and an evaluation guide. Together, these resources would help officials resolve conflicting findings when reviewing AI tools, standardize evaluation metrics, identify final decisionmakers, and set standard approval conditions across agencies. This project specifically recommends that DIR conduct a 12-month pilot to test the CAIR Playbook on a real AI tool that Texas state agencies are considering adopting. When implemented, this playbook would ensure that Texas comprehensively reviews AI technologies and adopts accessible and secure AI tools across its agencies.

> *"Innovation and regulation can coexist. Policy must always come back to the people first."*
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> **Tiffani Martin**

If you'd like to learn more, see the full project at aspenpolicyacademy.org/project/texas-ai-evaluation-2026.

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