

Machine Learning Lead/Lead AI Engineer

Phoenix, AZ | Hybrid (2 days onsite) | Full-time | Department: Claims Automation

Reports to	VP Engineering	Team	Claims AI
Level	Lead	Travel	Up to 20%
Posting date	February 24, 2026	Start window	Next 8-14 weeks

About the company

Zenith Insurance builds digital claims and risk automation products. Our teams ship software frequently, measure outcomes, and invest in reliability and security. You will lead a team building models and assistants that reduce cycle time in claims while maintaining auditability and compliance.

Role summary

Lead a team delivering ML and AI capabilities for multiple product lines. You will guide technical strategy, coach engineers, and partner with leaders to deliver outcomes on schedule.

What you will do

- Own technical strategy and roadmap for ML/AI in your domain
- Lead design reviews and drive alignment across engineering, data, product, and security
- Manage execution risks: scoping, dependencies, quality gates, and reliability plans
- Coach and mentor engineers; set expectations and feedback loops for growth
- Establish platform standards for data quality, model evaluation, and MLOps practices
- Represent the team in leadership forums; communicate progress, trade-offs, and decisions

What we are looking for

Required

- 8+ years of experience in ML/AI engineering with 2+ years leading projects or teams
- Experience shipping and operating ML systems in production at meaningful scale
- Strong systems design and ability to balance speed, quality, and safety
- Track record mentoring engineers and building high-trust collaborations
- Excellent written and verbal communication

Preferred

- Experience with platform teams (shared services) and multi-tenant ML infrastructure
- Experience implementing governance for model risk and compliance

- Experience hiring and developing ML engineers

Tech stack (typical)

Python, ML platform stack, Kubernetes, Data platforms, Model serving, Monitoring; Document AI, workflow orchestration, governance tooling

Success looks like (first 90 days)

- Align stakeholders on a 6-12 month roadmap with milestones, risks, and success metrics
- Deliver a cross-team launch (data, modeling, serving) with clear quality gates and rollout plan
- Reduce cycle time for model iteration through platform/process improvements
- Coach engineers and establish operating rhythms (reviews, postmortems, metrics)

Compensation & benefits

Base salary range: \$210,000 - \$275,000 per year. Includes eligibility for bonus/equity depending on level. Final offer depends on experience, skills, and location.

- Competitive salary and annual bonus or equity (role dependent)
- Medical, dental, and vision coverage
- 401(k) or local retirement plan with employer match (where applicable)
- Flexible PTO and paid holidays
- Learning budget for courses, conferences, and books
- Home-office/remote-work stipend (where applicable)
- Expanded parental leave and caregiver benefits

Interview process

- Intro call with Talent Partner (20-30 min)
- Technical screen (coding + ML/system fundamentals)
- Onsite/virtual loop (2-4 interviews: ML, systems, product, collaboration)
- Final conversation with hiring manager

We are an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

If you require an accommodation during the application or interview process, please let us know. We will work with you to meet your needs.