

Executive Brief: AI Platform Strategy and Investment Plan

Overview

DHCS has made a significant investment in AI-enabled capabilities to improve efficiency, consistency, and scalability across the organization. To ensure this investment delivers long-term value, leadership requires clear visibility into what is being built, why it matters, and how platform funding will be intentionally used. This brief outlines the plan to develop a reusable AI platform that is understandable, governable, and owned by the State, not dependent on individual vendors or contributors.

- Establish clarity and transparency for leadership and investors
 - Move from ad hoc AI efforts to a deliberate platform strategy
 - Ensure long-term sustainability and government ownership
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What We Are Building

The AI platform is a shared foundation that enables DHCS teams to build, operate, and maintain AI-enabled applications in a consistent and responsible way. It provides common capabilities, standards, and documentation rather than a single product or model implementation. The platform is designed to support multiple use cases over time while preserving human oversight and existing governance structures.

- A reusable platform, not a one-off solution
 - Shared tooling, patterns, and documentation for AI development
 - Built to support multiple business units and future use cases
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What the Platform Is Not

The AI platform does not automate eligibility, benefits, or final decisions, nor does it replace human judgment. It is not tied to a single product, contractor, or proprietary approach. These boundaries are intentional and ensure the platform aligns with DHCS governance, compliance, and risk management expectations.

- Not an automated decision-making system
- Not limited to a single project or product
- Not dependent on contractor-specific knowledge

Why This Investment Is Needed

While DHCS has successfully delivered AI-enabled functionality quickly, much of that progress occurred without a formal platform plan. As a result, leadership lacks a consolidated view of how AI is being developed, governed, and funded. This investment addresses that gap by establishing clarity, consistency, and accountability across AI efforts.

- Provide leadership visibility into AI strategy and spend
- Reduce duplication and fragmentation across teams
- Enable responsible scaling of AI capabilities

How We Plan to Use the Platform Funding

The funds for the platform allocation will be used intentionally across phases, with a focus on planning first, followed by architectural decisions and long-term operational readiness. The immediate priority is defining and documenting the plan itself so leadership can clearly see where funding will be applied and why.

- Near-term: platform plan, timelines, milestones, and budget intent
- Mid-term: architectural assessment and technology selection criteria
- Long-term: documentation, onboarding, and operational support

Execution Approach

The platform will be developed incrementally, with each phase producing tangible, reviewable artifacts. Documentation will be treated as core infrastructure and centralized within the AI Hub to ensure accessibility, searchability, and long-term maintainability. Existing materials will be simplified and consolidated rather than duplicated.

- Phased delivery with clear milestones
- Centralized documentation and AI Hub ownership
- Continuous feedback and refinement

Governance and Ownership

A key objective of this effort is to ensure DHCS retains full ownership and understanding of the AI platform over time. Documentation will be written so that future teams can maintain, rebuild, or extend the platform without relying on tribal knowledge or external vendors.

- Clear ownership within DHCS

- Documentation designed for knowledge transfer
 - Platform maintainable even with team turnover
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What Success Looks Like

Success means leadership can confidently explain what the AI platform is, how funding is being used, and how DHCS will sustain and grow AI capabilities responsibly. It also means new teams can adopt the platform with minimal friction and without requiring deep AI expertise.

- Leadership confidence in strategy and investment
- Reduced onboarding time for new teams
- A reusable, governed AI foundation for DHCS