

A NEW ERA OF LEGAL PRACTICE

AI AND THE CHANGING LEGAL LANDSCAPE

A Lawyer's Field Guide

TRAVIS M. KEIL · KEIL DEFENSE · SECOND CHAIR SOLUTIONS



THIS IS ALREADY HAPPENING.

69%

of legal professionals
use GenAI — up from 31% in one year

Legal Industry Report, 2026

~700

Baker McKenzie support cuts
AI cited as factor

Feb 2026

57%

of clients want their
lawyers using it

Thomson Reuters, 2025



FIVE QUESTIONS WE'LL ANSWER TODAY.

1

What is AI actually — and what isn't it?

2

What does competence require — in both directions?

3

What's the plan for client confidentiality?

4

Who's accountable when AI gets it wrong?

5

Where is this headed — and what's my first step?



FOR 100 YEARS, KNOWLEDGE WAS THE MOAT.

Memorize the rule. Cite the case. Bill the hour.

That moat just dried up.

But judgment never was. AI doesn't replace what makes lawyers irreplaceable — judgment, strategy, creativity, the human relationships at the core of the work. It amplifies it.



A FAMILY MEMBER.
EIGHT YEARS OF SYMPTOMS.
SIX SPECIALISTS. NO ANSWER.

Uploaded the records. 90 seconds. "Thyroid."

It was thyroid.

REVOLUTIONS USED TO TAKE GENERATIONS.

Industrial Revolution



100 years

Personal Computer



30 years

Smartphone



10 years

Generative AI



36 months

Each wave arrived faster than the last. Whatever your timeline is — shorten it.

WHAT IT IS.

A machine that has read
essentially everything ever written.

Ask it a question in plain English.
It writes you an answer in plain English.

That's it.



THE VOCABULARY.

Every word we'll use today — so nothing sounds like a foreign language.

PROMPT

what you ask it to do

TOKEN

a piece of a word — how it reads and is priced

CONTEXT WINDOW

how much it can hold at once

MODEL

the engine — Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini

HALLUCINATION

when it states something false as fact

LLM

large language model — the engine underneath

MULTIMODAL

reads text, images, audio — not just words

OPEN vs. CLOSED

can you run it yourself, or only rent it?

RAG

it looks your files up before it answers

FINE-TUNING

training the engine on a specific job

AGENT

it doesn't just answer — it does the task

AGENTIC

working in steps, checking itself, until done

LOOP

it works, checks itself, and repeats

GRAPH

many agents, coordinated on one case



HALLUCINATION ISN'T JUST THE TOOL.

It's also the operator.

A law clerk who invents a case is a bad law clerk.

The cure is supervision — not abolition.



AI ISN'T A TOOL.
IT'S A MULTIPLIER.

50%

of professional work hours could transform in the next 3–5 years

McKinsey Global Institute, 2025 · Today's tech could already automate 57% of U.S. work hours



THE PYRAMID IS COMPRESSING.

86%

of large firms growing
associate ranks
through 2027

35%

growing
first-year
classes

Citi Global Wealth at Work / Hildebrandt Consulting, 2025



*"If more and more of that work
that trains junior associates is being automated,
then there's no real material
for them to train on."*

NIK GUGGENBERGER · UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER



THE BIGGEST FIRMS AREN'T HIRING.
THEY'RE BUILDING.

\$500M

Kirkland & Ellis is spending it to build its own AI — not to expand its associate ranks.

Financial Times, May 2026. When the largest firm in the country builds instead of hires, that's the signal.



*"For those who cannot afford a lawyer,
AI can help."*

— CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN G. ROBERTS, JR. · 2023 YEAR-END REPORT

**AI IS ACCESS TO JUSTICE.
LEARN IT FIRST. DELIVER IT FIRST.**

*"We all have a basic requirement to competency...
understand the broad concepts of how these tools work."*

— U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE NICHOLAS MIZELL · M.D. FLA., 2026

COMPETENCE IS NO LONGER OPTIONAL.



DAILY USERS DON'T FEAR IT.
THEY DEPEND ON IT.

92%

of daily GenAI users say it has tangibly benefited their productivity.

A majority say it has improved their job security and salary.

PwC Hopes & Fears Survey, 2025



YOUR CLIENTS ALREADY WANT THIS.

57%

of corporate clients want
their firms using GenAI

64%

of in-house teams expect to rely
less on outside counsel

That gap is your competitor's next pitch meeting.

Thomson Reuters, 2025 · ACC/Everlaw, 2026



THE RULES ALREADY REQUIRE THIS.

MRPC 1.1, COMMENT 8

Competence includes "the benefits and risks associated with relevant technology."

ABA FORMAL OPINION 512 • JULY 2024

Generative AI is "relevant technology."

300+ judges now have standing AI orders. Keeping up is not optional.

WHAT THE RULE ACTUALLY DEMANDS.

*"A lawyer must have a reasonable understanding
of the capabilities and limitations
of the specific tools they use."*

— ABA FORMAL OP. 512



WHERE MINNESOTA STANDS.

NO RULE

— no formal opinion yet. But a de facto standard of care already applies.

RULE 1.6(c)

Per OLPR guidance, AI informed-consent is an affirmative duty — boilerplate won't do.

Malpractice coverage gaps for unverified AI work are an open risk.

OLPR Director, Bench & Bar (Sept. 2024) · MSBA AI Working Group (2024)



*"She was using Grok.
It's like citing Mad Magazine in your briefs."*

— JUDGE DAVID LANGHAM · ON FEDERAL SANCTIONS, N.D. MISS., 2026

**\$145K IN Q1 2026 SANCTIONS. TEN COURTS IN ONE
DAY.**

COMPETENCE PREVENTS THIS. KNOW YOUR TOOLS.

*An AI expert, in a case about AI,
filed AI hallucinations. "The irony," the court said.*

— KOHLS v. ELLISON · D. MINN. 2025, AFF'D 8TH CIR. 2026

THE MINNESOTA AG' S OWN EXPERT
DECLARATION — STRUCK.
YOU HAVE A PERSONAL, NONDELEGABLE DUTY TO VERIFY.

Whose name is on the filing?

TWO RULES YOU HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT.

1.5

You can't bill three hours
for what AI did in fifteen minutes.

8.3

You may have to report the lawyer
who files fabricated AI citations.

The duty doesn't stop at your own filing.

MRPC 1.5 (Fees) · MRPC 8.3 (Reporting Misconduct)



HOW TO HANDLE CLIENT DATA.



Free public chatbots.

Don't paste client data here. Period.



Written client consent.

Disclose AI use in your engagement letter.



Enterprise accounts.

Contractually no training. Read the terms.



Local inference.

Open-source models on your own hardware.



THREE COURTS. THREE MONTHS. NO CONSENSUS.

HEPPNER · S.D.N.Y.

Criminal defendant's

Claude chats:

Not privileged.

Not work product.

AI is not a lawyer.

*Convicted May 2026 —
chats were evidence.*

WARNER · E.D. MICH.

Pro se litigant's

ChatGPT chats:

*Protected work
product.*

No waiver.

*AI is a tool,
not a person.*

ASSINI · N.Y.

Pro se litigant's

ChatGPT chats:

*Protected work
product.*

Subpoena quashed.

*Reasonable
expectation of privacy.*

Three courts, three months, no consensus. Practice as if Heppner is the rule.



*The court left open whether attorney-directed AI use,
or use of enterprise tools, gets work product protection.*

WHAT HEPPNER DIDN'T DECIDE · S.D.N.Y., FEB 2026

**TELL YOUR CLIENTS.
DO NOT PASTE CASE FACTS INTO AI.**

THE LAWYER'S BUYING GUIDE.

CHATGPT BUSINESS

workable, 2-seat minimum

CLAUDE

5-seat min — use the API instead

M365 + WORKSPACE

one seat — best fit for solos

API + ZDR

strongest privacy — full chart in the kit



RUN IT ON YOUR OWN MACHINE.

Local models never send a word to the cloud. The strongest answer to Rule 1.6.

LAPTOP

MacBook / RTX laptop

7B – 20B models

Draft, summarize, redline. Runs on hardware you already own.

WORKSTATION

~\$3–5K · 128GB unified

70B – 120B models

Full case analysis. A local inference box under the desk.

THE POINT

No subscription tier

Data never leaves

No terms of service. No training on your files. No third party.

The tools that run these locally are here now — and about to get much easier.



WHAT IT GIVES BACK.



Intake

First-draft client summaries and adaptive intake forms that flag urgent matters.



Drafting

The 70% first draft of a motion, letter, or demand package — you finish the last 30%.



Review

Two hundred pages of discovery or medical records, read and summarized in minutes.



Depositions

Outlines going in. Summaries coming out. The prep and the cleanup, both faster.



Billing

Automated time capture — the billable hours that quietly leak away every week.



THREE DOWN. TWO TO GO.

- 1 *What is AI actually — and what isn't it?* ✓
- 2 *What does competence require — in both directions?* ✓
- 3 *What's the plan for client confidentiality?* ✓
- 4 *Who's accountable when AI gets it wrong?* →
- 5 *Where is this headed — and what's my first step?*

*The AI doesn't answer to the Board.
You do.*

MRPC 5.3 · SUPERVISION OF NONLAWYER ASSISTANCE

YOU SUPERVISE IT LIKE A PARALEGAL.

*Yesterday's AI answered your questions.
Today's AI does the work — and you supervise.*

AI AGENTS · RULE 5.3 SUPERVISION APPLIES · 2026

**THEY'RE ALREADY HERE.
THAT'S THE NEXT CONVERSATION.**

THE AGENT IS COMING TO YOUR DESK.

NVIDIA + Microsoft, announced June 2026. Shipping this fall.

RTX SPARK

“From tool to teammate.” A 1-petaflop AI superchip in a Windows laptop.

→ *128GB unified memory — runs 120-billion-parameter models locally, on the machine in front of you.*

→ *Dell, HP, Lenovo, ASUS, MSI, Microsoft Surface — all shipping this fall.*

→ *Built with secure sandboxes to run AI agents — like the ones on the next slide — without the cloud.*

Local AI stops being a project. It becomes a laptop you buy.

YOU PICK THE MODEL FOR EACH JOB.

Open agent frameworks let you assign a different AI to every task in the loop.

OPENCLAW

100,000+ GitHub stars

Connects AI to your inbox, files, and browser — and takes action.

—
Example: an intake agent reads new client emails, drafts a first response, and flags the urgent ones — you approve before anything sends.

HERMES

Nous Research · open-source

Learns as it works. Builds a reusable skill the first time, then reuses it.

—
Example: walk it through your motion-to-suppress workflow once; it saves the steps and runs them on the next case — under your review.

The judgment still routes to you. Rule 5.3 supervision doesn't change.



HOW YOU WORK WITH AI IS CHANGING.



The skill is no longer the prompt. It's the supervision.

WHAT A DEFENSE GRAPH LOOKS LIKE.

Four specialist agents pressure-test one case — on a loop.

DEFENSE AGENT

Builds the strongest viable defense theory.

PROSECUTOR AGENT

Attacks that theory as hard as the State would.

EVIDENCE AGENT

Checks which arguments the discovery actually supports.

LEGAL AGENT

Finds the statutes, cases, and rules in play.

DEFENSE AGENT

Revises the strategy — then the loop runs again.

→ ATTORNEY REVIEW

Every conclusion routes to you. The judgment stays yours. (Rule 5.3)



*repeats until
it stops
improving*



THE WHOLE SYSTEM, ONE CASE.

How a client matter flows through a case built around agents — every stage feeding one record.

CORE REASONING LOOP — the agents pressure-test each other



1 INTAKE · conflict check, matter opened

2 DISCOVERY · read, tag, timeline

3 MOTIONS · suppress, dismiss, draft


**ONE CASE.
ONE SYSTEM.**

4 TRIAL PREP · cross, direct, voir dire

5 TRIAL · live prep, impeachment

6 POST-DISPOSITION · appeal

THE MATTER LIFECYCLE

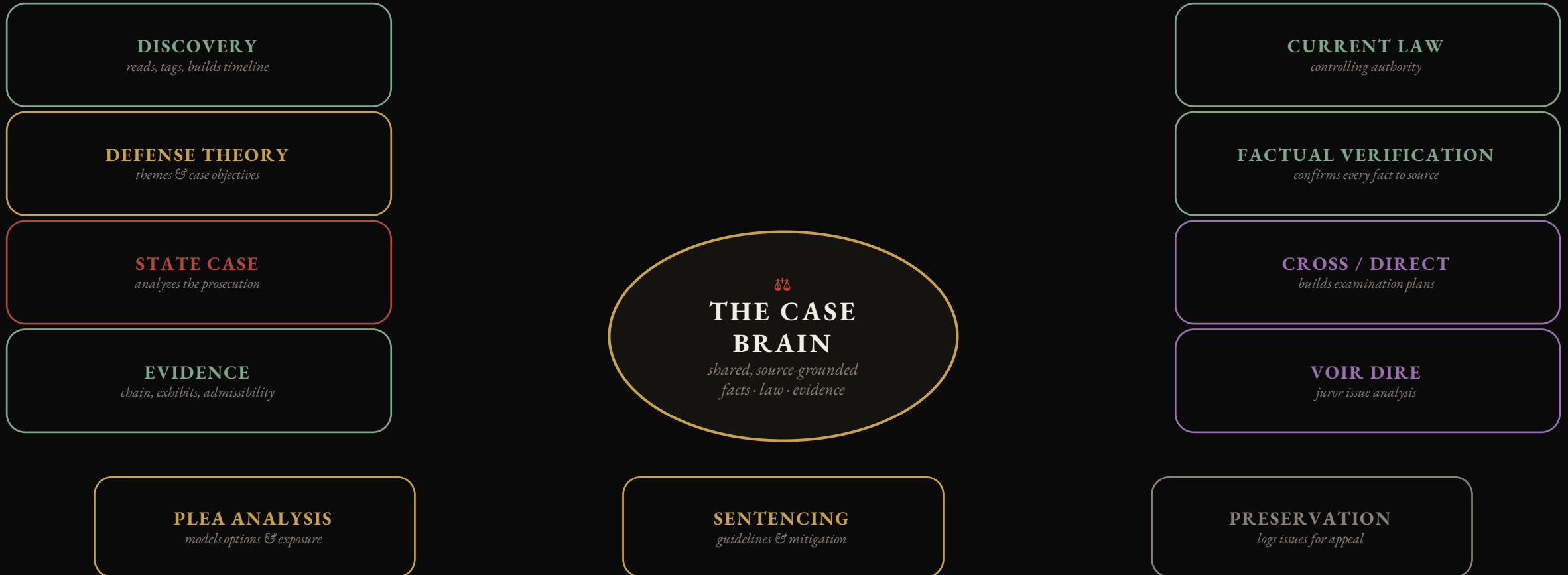
DAILY BRIEF & ALERTS 7/3/1-day deadlines · new discovery · what needs a court appearance · *the decisions that need you*

Every stage writes to one record. The system surfaces what moves; you decide what happens next.



WHAT AN AGENTIC SYSTEM LOOKS LIKE.

Not one general AI doing everything - specialized agents around one source-grounded record.



Each agent has a narrow role and strict boundaries. They exchange only what the shared record allows.



WHO IS STILL IN CHARGE.

The agents prepare and recommend. The lawyer decides and acts. That line never moves.

THE AGENTS

prepare & recommend

- identify issues & inconsistencies
- verify facts to source
- prepare analysis & draft work
- track coverage of the whole matter

They do not decide. They do not act.

THE ATTORNEY

decides & acts

- files documents & motions
- examines & objects in court
- exercises jury strikes
- negotiates & advises the client
- owns every strategic call

Rule 5.3 supervision, by design.

WHAT KEEPS IT HONEST

SOURCE-GROUNDED *ties to a source* • **VERSIONED** *never overwritten* • **FIREWALLED** *work protected* • **AUDITABLE** *fully logged*



TWO LAWYERS. SAME CASELOAD. ONE USES AI.

WITHOUT

Same hours.

Same caseload.

Friday-night discovery review.

Drowning.

*Watching the other lawyer
pull away.*

WITH

240 hours back per year.

Thomson Reuters, Future of Professionals 2025

More capacity for new matters.

Lower overhead.

Every plausible defense explored.

Nothing missed in discovery.

Time to teach a CLE.

In twelve months, they are not in the same profession.



IN MY OWN PRACTICE.

I spend more time learning AI than practicing law.

The hours come back. The work gets sharper.

I've watched this happen in another industry I work in — vacation rentals.

The pattern is the same.

— Travis Keil · Keil Defense · Second Chair Solutions



TOMORROW MORNING.

1

Pick the most repetitive task on your calendar.

30 minutes, every day. The boring one.

2

Spend 15 minutes asking AI to do it faster.

Claude or ChatGPT. One session.

3

Do it this way for thirty days.

Then judge.

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Want to talk about applying any of this to your practice?

Email me, or grab 20 minutes: keildefense.com/cle



QUESTIONS.

