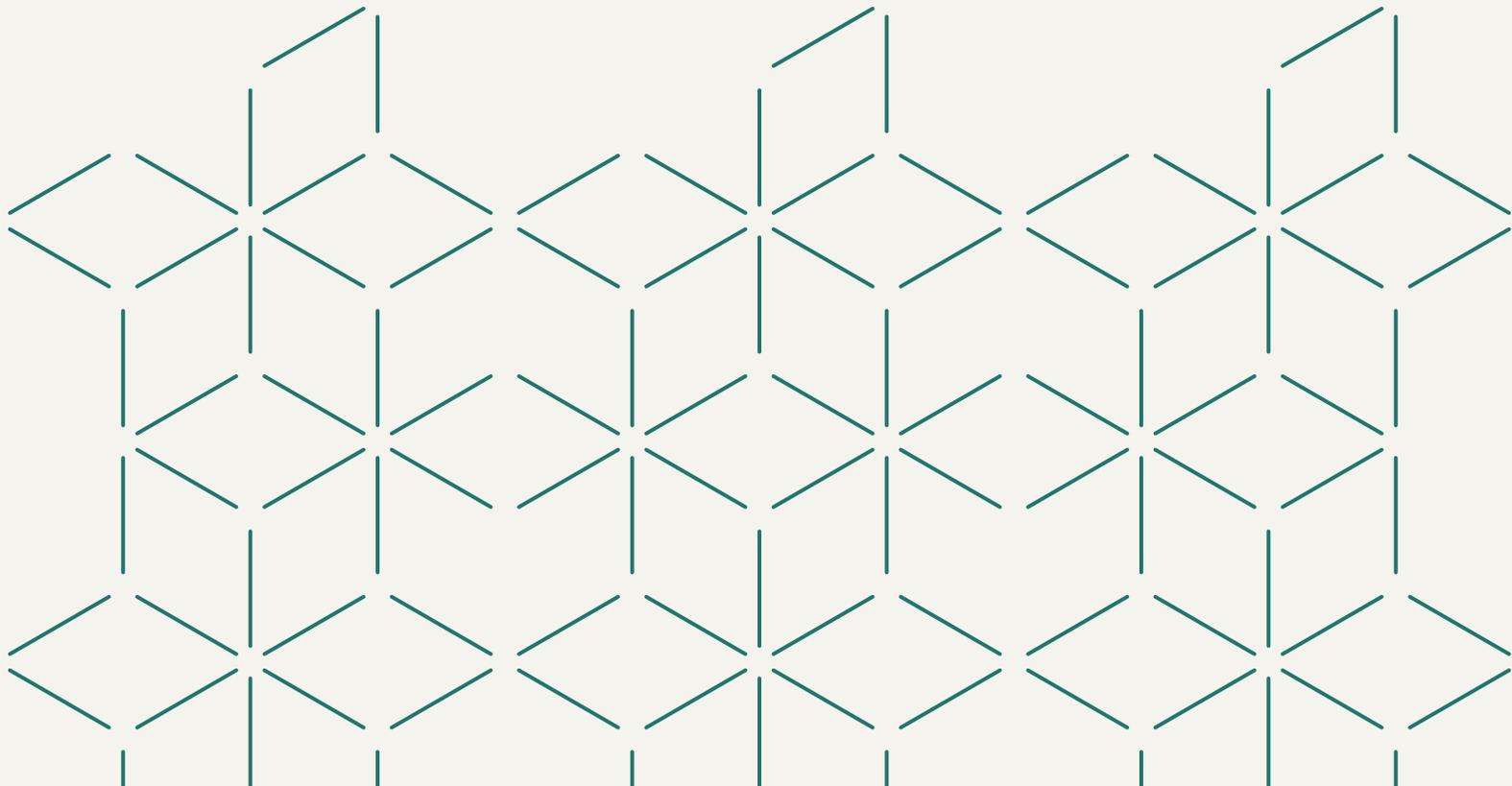


The AI Advantage

How Technology Can Help Bridge the Justice Gap



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For legal aid and access to justice organizations, AI offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the justice gap. It has the potential to create wholesale change that impacts not just their work, but the lives of their clients and their families.

But will it?

Certainly, the need is stark:

- / 92% of [civil legal problems](#) encountered by low-income Americans get no or inadequate legal help.
- / The U.S. ranks [107th of 142 countries](#) in affordability and accessibility of civil justice.
- / Nearly [one out of every two people](#) who qualify for legal aid are turned away due to a lack of resources.

As AI continues to make waves in the legal industry, experts have flagged that it has the potential to widen the justice gap, if only firms and organizations with the largest resources get access to expensive AI technology.

To discover answers to these questions and more, and to better understand the immense potential of this moment, Everlaw conducted a survey in May 2025 in partnership with National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA), Paladin, and LawSites, of 112 legal aid professionals. Respondents answered questions about their use of AI, whether they believed AI has the potential to improve and scale access to justice to support critical legal work for underserved communities, and how AI may help their organizations better serve people facing eviction, custody battles, employment discrimination, and other pressing legal issues.

Their answers, detailed below, reveal that AI is already paying dividends for legal aid organizations — and that it promises to dramatically improve the work they do and the numbers of clients they can serve. The results provide a glimpse into a future where legal aid is more accessible, more efficient, and more equitable for everyone.

Legal Aid Organizations Show AI Adoption at 2X the Rate of the Wider Legal Profession

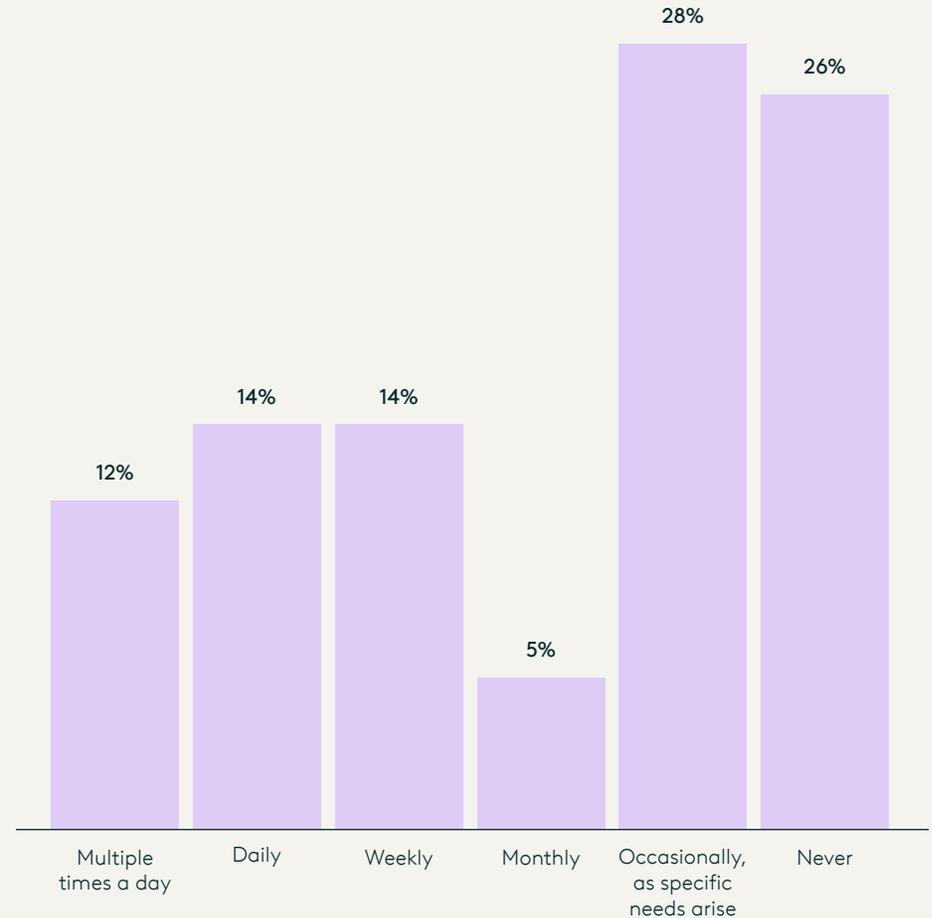
The conversation around artificial intelligence in the legal field is no longer a debate about the future—it’s a story of its present. Rather than waiting for a single, large-scale technological shift, legal professionals are already quietly weaving these new tools into the fabric of their daily work.

Although AI has been present in daily life for years now, the legal profession has been cautious about adoption. According to Everlaw’s [2025 Ediscovery Innovation Report](#), across a survey of 299 legal professionals, 37% reported actively using generative AI in their work. However, perhaps due to the overwhelming opportunity—and even necessity—this technology presents, and with the demand for legal aid services far outpacing the supply, access to justice organizations are adopting AI at a far greater rate.

Our results show that 74% of legal aid professionals report that they are already using AI in their work. Additionally, 40% of those respondents say they use AI at least every week. Tasks like document summarization and analysis, translations, legal research, and development work were listed as some of the more frequent use cases for AI, demonstrating that there are a range of different environments where it can be effective.

How frequently do you, personally, use AI in your legal or operational work?

Fig. 1

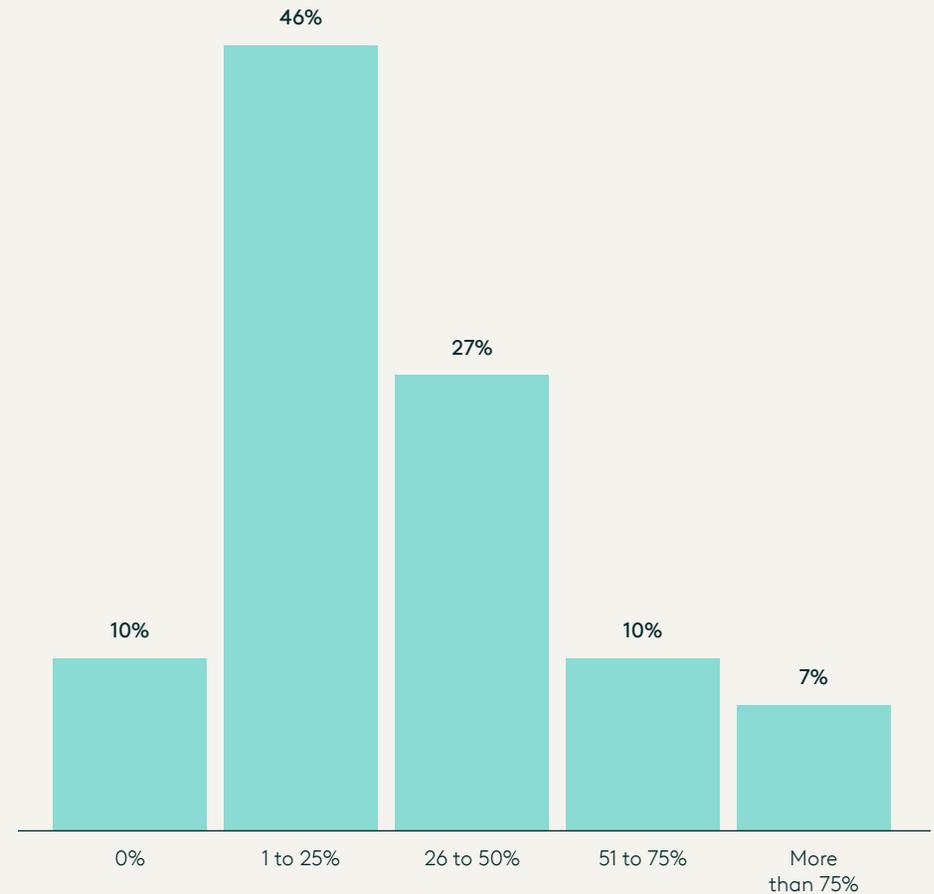


AI Can Help Organizations Serve Clients They Aren't Currently Able to Reach

Many access to justice organizations are under-funded and under-resourced, and therefore are not able to serve all of their potential clients. According to our results, 90% of respondents say that if they were using AI to its full potential to speed time-consuming tasks, they'd be able to serve more people. Additionally, 17% report that AI would help them better serve over 50% more clients.

Looking ahead, if you were using AI to its full potential to speed time-consuming tasks, how many more clients percentage-wise do you estimate your organization could serve?

Fig. 2



Expert Perspectives



AI presents a generational opportunity to fundamentally expand who has access to justice, but it's not a foregone conclusion. By empowering these critical legal organizations with AI tools, we can make a real difference in the lives of millions.

Joanne Sprague
Head of Everlaw for Good
Everlaw

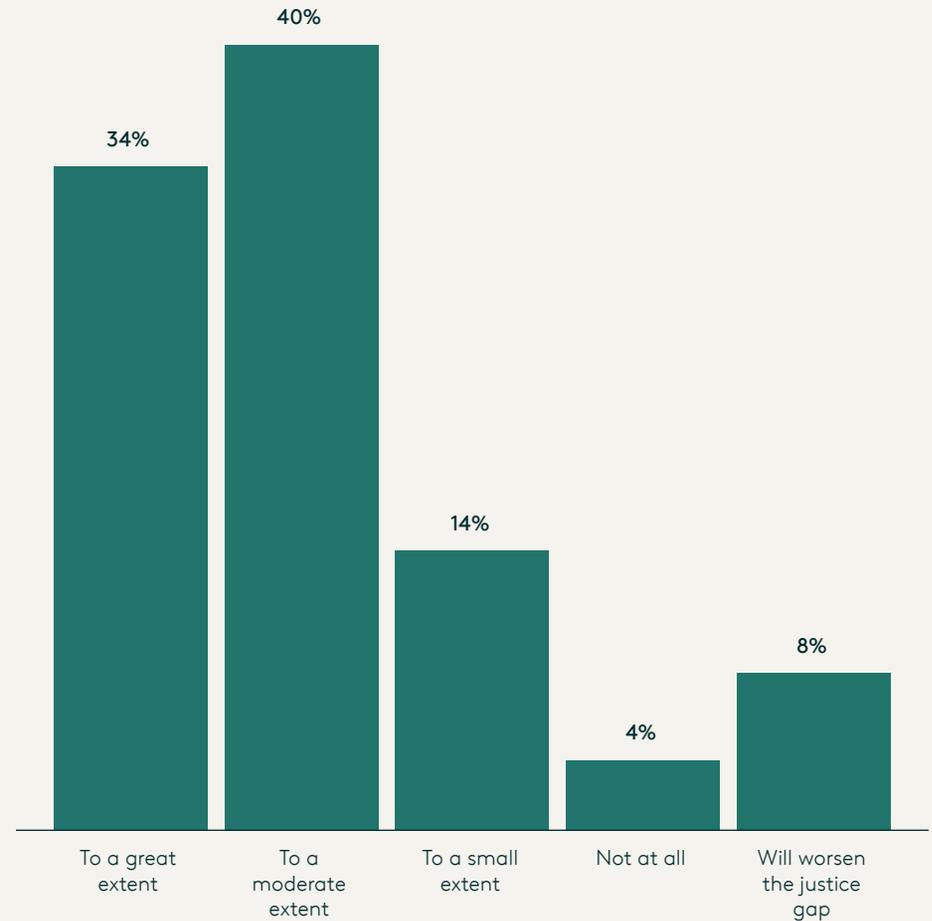


Strong Belief that AI Will Address Justice Gap

Addressing the justice gap is the primary goal of legal aid organizations, and an area in which AI can provide a major boost. In the current legal landscape, as lawyers' hourly fees continue to grow exponentially larger, the disparity between those who can and cannot afford the price of legal services has grown as well. Yet AI offers hope. An overwhelming 88% of respondents say AI promises to have an overall positive impact on addressing the access to justice gap, demonstrating the strong belief that this technology will help improve the legal system.

To what extent do you believe AI can help address the access to justice gap?

Fig. 3





This survey reveals that AI adoption is not just happening in well-funded BigLaw firms – it is being driven by organizations serving our most vulnerable populations. When 88% of legal aid professionals see AI as a tool to address the justice gap, that underscores its potential to fundamentally democratize access to legal services.

Bob Ambrogi
Founder
LawSites



Obstacles Remain

While legal aid professionals overwhelmingly believe in the potential of AI to address the justice gap, they also recognize that it is not a cure-all. The report reveals that significant obstacles remain for organizations looking to fully incorporate AI into their work.

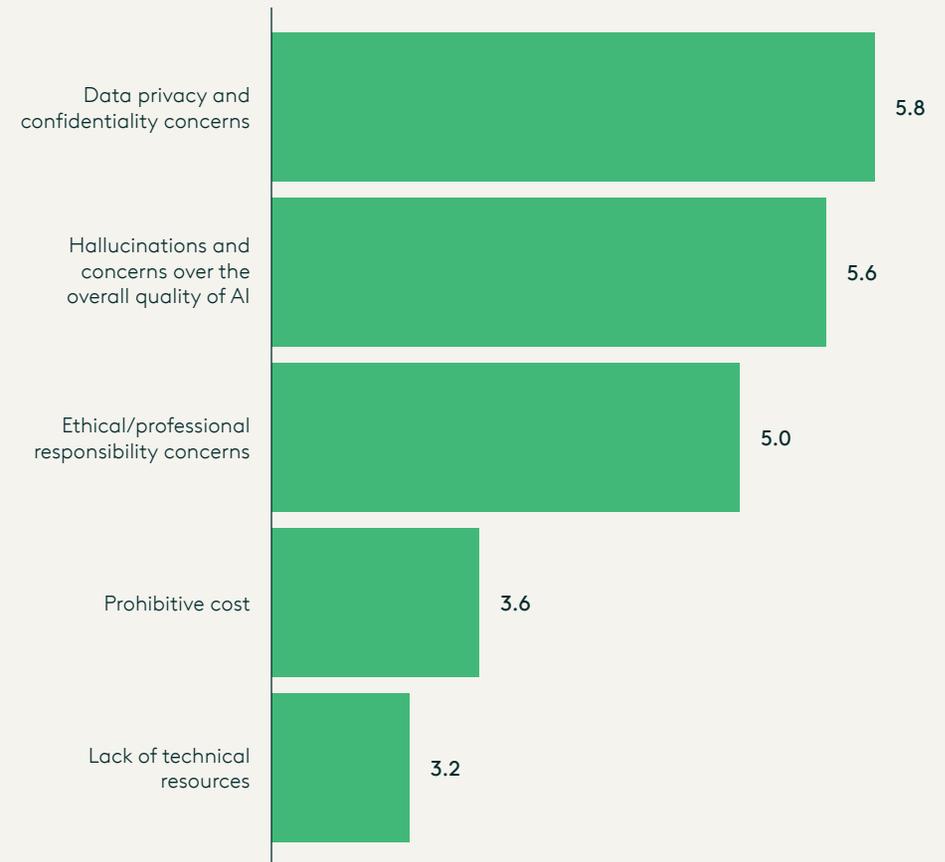
The top concern among respondents is data privacy and confidentiality, a critical issue given the sensitive nature of the information handled by legal aid professionals. Concerns over hallucinations and the overall quality of AI-generated work also rank high, highlighting the need for reliable and accurate tools.

Other major hurdles include ethical and professional responsibility concerns, which are particularly relevant in a field dedicated to client advocacy. Furthermore, the prohibitive cost of AI technology and a lack of necessary technical resources were also cited as key barriers to adoption.

These challenges underscore the fact that while the potential for AI is immense, its widespread, equitable implementation will require addressing these practical and ethical considerations to ensure the technology truly serves those most in need.

What obstacles, if any, are holding your organization back from incorporating AI into its work? Rank these from most concerning to least concerning.

Fig. 4



Note: Participants were asked to rank responses from most concerning to least concerning on a scale of one to ten.

Expert Perspectives



Generative AI offers a rare chance to address this crisis: it can democratize legal information, simplify processes, and offer meaningful legal tools at scale.

Kristen Sondag
Co-Founder and CEO
Paladin



Spotlight on AI

Legal Aid of North Carolina

Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC), the state's largest non-profit law firm, is leveraging AI to address the overwhelming demand for legal services, particularly for low-income residents facing issues like domestic violence and unlawful eviction. With 300,000 people seeking help each year, the intake process became a bottleneck to qualify, prioritize and direct people to the right services.

LANC is testing a new AI-powered voice agent for initial intake, which handles multiple languages and operates 24/7, making it a convenient tool for clients in rural areas or those with transportation issues. By automating this foundational step, LANC's staff, including its 200 statewide attorneys, can dedicate their time to high-value work, such as court appearances and client advocacy.

"We will never be able to 'lawyer ourselves' out of this access-to-justice crisis," said LANC's Chief Innovation Officer Scheree Gilchrist. "AI is a force multiplier to scale our services."



We will never be able to 'lawyer ourselves' out of this access-to-justice crisis. AI is a force multiplier to scale our services.

Scheree Gilchrist
Chief Innovation Officer
Legal Aid of North Carolina



The Future of Access to Justice Is Now

One of the most compelling aspects of AI for legal aid organizations is the widespread conviction that it can help lead to a more equitable legal system. Professionals across the access to justice community are embracing this technology as a crucial ally in the long-term fight to close the persistent justice gap. This isn't about automating jobs or taking work away from lawyers; it's about equipping advocates with a powerful new instrument to manage complex caseloads, streamline tasks, and supercharge their capacity to serve more clients more effectively.



About Everlaw

Everlaw helps legal teams navigate the increasingly complex ediscovery landscape to chart a straighter path to the truth. Trusted by Fortune 100 corporate counsel, 91 of the Am Law 200, and all 50 state attorneys general, Everlaw's combination of intuitive experience, advanced technology, and partnership with customers empowers organizations to tackle the most pressing technological challenges—and transform their approach to discovery and litigation in the process. Founded in 2010 and based in Oakland, California, Everlaw is funded by top-tier investors, including Andreessen Horowitz, CapitalG, HIG Growth Partners, K9 Ventures, Menlo Ventures, and TPG Growth. Everlaw provides complimentary access to its world-class litigation and investigative software to qualified nonprofits, educators, pro bono practices and investigative journalists through its Everlaw for Good program.

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National Legal Aid & Defender Association

NLADA is the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit association devoted to excellence in the delivery of legal services to those who cannot afford counsel.

Paladin

Paladin is a platform that helps legal teams, law schools, and corporations manage and expand their pro bono work to improve access to justice.

LawSites

LawSites is an influential blog and media platform founded by Robert Ambrogi dedicated to covering legal technology, innovation and the business of law.



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