

Information Technology (IT) Standards Adoption Process  
Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT)

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Information Technology (IT) Standards Adoption Process

The Judicial Committee on Information Technology (JCIT) will use the process described herein to identify, research, develop, document, evaluate, approve, and adopt statewide information technology (IT) standards for application across the judiciary in Texas.

**A. Identification of Required IT Standards**

The JCIT, through the JCIT Standards Subcommittee (JSS), will identify the requirement for specific IT standards through an annual submission process, with input from affected stakeholders and interested parties. The need for new or modified IT standards may be driven by:

- Changes in state and federal regulations that affect the courts,
- Expanded use of automation by the courts, or
- Changes in the IT environment of the courts

In order to identify the need for specific IT standards, the JSS will survey a representative sample of the judiciary annually, requesting their requirements for new or modified standards. JSS and OCA staff will also review standards requirements identified by other organizations, such as the Department of Information Resources, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), the Office of Court Administration (OCA), and other state and federal government agencies.

**B. Research and Development of IT Standard Alternatives**

Once an IT standard requirement has been identified, the OCA staff will coordinate the research and development of the proposed standard for consideration and approval by the JCIT. Normally, a minimum of two alternatives will be developed for each proposed standard, to provide the JCIT a range of options to consider. National standards may be presented without alternatives. The OCA staff, or third party consultants, will perform any necessary research and development regarding the proposed standard alternatives. The proposed standard alternatives will be developed based on identified best practices from IT standards sources including, but not limited to, the DIR, NIST, and NCSC.

The proposed standard alternatives must comply with statewide IT standards adopted by DIR. If no DIR standard exists, the new/modified standard must be consistent with other DIR-based IT standards, unless explicitly noted and properly justified within the documentation provided.

**C. Identification and Documentation of IT Standard Alternatives Risks**

The OCA staff will identify the recommended standard alternative based upon a risk assessment or cost-benefit analysis, performed by the OCA staff or third party consultants. For each standard alternative, the OCA staff will identify and document associated risks. The risks will be evaluated quantitatively (total dollars impacted, number of individuals impacted, etc.) or qualitatively (high, medium, low). The OCA staff will determine the appropriate risk evaluations (quantitative or qualitative) to be used based upon the nature of the standard being considered. The cost of implementing an IT standard should be compared to the impact of not having the control in place to determine whether such an IT standard should be recommended.

**D. Evaluation and Ranking of Recommended IT Standard Alternatives**

The OCA staff will review and evaluate all proposed standard alternatives submitted by third party consultants and either accept them, modify them, return them to the third party consultant for further research or modification, or reject them. If funding is available, the OCA staff may request third party consultants perform pilot implementations of proposed standard alternatives, where appropriate, to help determine their applicability and functionality.

The OCA staff will document the final ranking of the proposed standard alternatives, and provide the ranking and documentation to a representative sample of stakeholders for review. The stakeholders will have 60 days to provide comments to OCA on the recommendation. The OCA staff will use feedback from the stakeholders to support or modify its final ranking and recommendation of standard alternatives.

The OCA staff will provide the JSS with ranked standard alternatives for consideration, along with the OCA staff's recommendation and supporting documentation.

**E. Consideration & Adoption of Recommended IT Standards**

After final review, the JSS will provide the JCIT with ranked standard alternatives for consideration, along with the JSS recommendation and supporting documentation.

The JCIT will consider the requirement, the evaluation, and the OCA recommendation in determining whether to adopt the recommended standard. Based upon their consideration, the JCIT will adopt the IT standard, modify it, return it to the OCA for further work, or reject it.

**F. Documentation and Distribution of Adopted IT Standards**

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A newly adopted standard will be documented and distributed through the JCIT website and other appropriate means, for implementation by the OCA and the judiciary. The JCIT will determine how to document the various standards based upon the nature of the adopted IT standard. Vehicles available for documenting and distributing new standards include Supreme Court Rules, biennial reports, JCIT website, newsletters, and memoranda.

**G. Process for Implementation of Adopted IT Standards**

Voluntary compliance is encouraged; however, the Texas judiciary must comply with adopted standards to meet JCIT funding requirements. The OCA staff will designate a point-of-contact to answer questions related to the implementation of the adopted standards by the courts or stakeholders. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and appropriate answers regarding implementation of the IT standards will be posted on the JCIT website. If the adopted standards require a significant implementation effort, then standards-related training may be coordinated by the OCA.

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**Roles Matrix**

The Roles Matrix shows parties with roles at each required step:

	OCA	JCIT	Stakeholders	Third Party Consultants	Courts
Step A. Identification of Required IT Standards	X	X	X	X	X
Step B. Research and Development of IT Standard Alternatives	X		X	X	
Step C. Identification and Documentation of IT Standard Alternatives Risks	X			X	
Step D. Evaluation and Ranking of Recommended IT Standard Alternatives	X		X	X	X
Step E. Consideration & Adoption of Recommended IT Standards		X			
Step F. Documentation and Distribution of Adopted IT Standards	X	X			
Step G. Process for Implementation of Adopted IT Standards	X	X	X		X

**Adoption Process Flowchart**

The adoption process is depicted in the following flowchart.

# IT Standard Adoption Process

