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The Supreme Court's draft AI regulations, 2026: what they propose

A summary of the draft Regulations for Use of Artificial Intelligence in Courts, 2026, and what they could mean for judges, court staff and lawyers.

In June 2026 the Supreme Court's committee on artificial intelligence released draft Regulations for Use of Artificial Intelligence in Courts, 2026 and invited public comment. It is the first attempt at a common framework for AI across India's judiciary.

Why regulations now

Courts were already using AI for translation and research support. Judges, staff and lawyers were also using general-purpose tools on their own initiative. Without a policy there was no common answer to basic questions: which tools are approved, what may be entered into them, and who is responsible for the output.

What the draft proposes

As released for consultation, the draft:

- is intended to apply across the judicial system: the Supreme Court, High Courts, subordinate courts and tribunals;
- would come into effect for each court on notification by the Chief Justice concerned;
- provides for AI committees for the Supreme Court and each High Court, supported by secretariats;
- contemplates a central body to evaluate tools and track developments;
- distinguishes between permitted supporting uses and judicial decision-making, which remains with the judge;
- addresses disclosure, confidentiality and human oversight.

Readers should check the final text when it is notified, as provisions may change after consultation.

The principles underneath

Human decision. AI may assist with administrative and research tasks. It does not decide cases.

Approved tools. Only tools that have been evaluated should be used for court work.

Verification. Any AI output must be checked by a person who takes responsibility for it.

Protection of data. Confidential and personal information must not be placed in tools that are not secure.

Transparency.

How it compares

The approach is close to that of other major systems, which treat the use of AI in the administration of justice as high-risk and requiring safeguards. India's draft addresses the same concern through institutional rules made by the judiciary itself.

What it means for lawyers

Although the draft is directed at courts, it signals what will be expected of the Bar.

- Expect questions about how a document was prepared.
- Check every authority. A fabricated citation is the lawyer's responsibility.
- Do not upload client papers to open tools.
- Follow each High Court's notifications.

What firms should do now

Adopt a written AI policy that mirrors these principles: approved tools, permitted uses, mandatory verification, confidentiality and training. Firms that align early will find compliance easy.

A measured path

India has chosen neither to ban AI in courts nor to embrace it without limits. Clear rules, made after consultation, are the right way to gain the benefits while protecting what matters.

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