PART 4

AN INTERIM EVALUATION OF UTAH'S LEGAL REGULATORY SANDBOX

Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis

IAALS INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM

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IAALS, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, is a national, independent research organization that innovates and advances solutions that make our civil justice system more just.

Founded in 2006 at the University of Denver, IAALS believes that justice for all must be a reality for everyone. When innovation is rooted in finding common ground, questioning the status quo, and centering the people, we begin to craft solutions that transform our civil justice system. IAALS' unique approach depends on purposeful research, deep collaboration, and diversity of perspective, followed by evidence-based recommendations that take hold in courts and legal institutions across the country—jumpstarting the groundbreaking and achievable solutions that will clear a path to justice for everyone. Because justice for all will never be a reality if those seeking justice cannot access the system designed to deliver it.

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Our ability to better the civil justice system soars when it is backed by consistent, ongoing research and evaluation. We must continue to invest in collaborative research agendas that will allow us to fully see the challenges facing the system and what people need from it. Only then can we create evidence-based change.

At IAALS, our unique approach depends on deep collaboration and diversity of perspective, followed by evidence-based recommendations that take hold in courts and legal institutions across the country. Our gratitude to the many people and organizations that were a part of this process and made this interim evaluation possible.

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We also extend our sincere appreciation to the entities that have applied to participate in Utah's Legal Regulatory Sandbox. Their willingness to innovate, adapt, and navigate a novel regulatory environment has been central to advancing this effort and to informing the lessons captured in this evaluation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the fall of 2020, the Utah Supreme Court launched the nation's first legal regulatory sandbox (the Sandbox), allowing nontraditional legal service providers and business structures—including entities with nonlawyer ownership or nonlawyer legal practitioners—to offer legal services under a novel regulatory approach. The stated objective of this new regulatory framework is "to ensure consumers have access to a well-developed, high-quality, innovative, affordable, and competitive market for legal services." Utah's Sandbox is built largely on the model IAALS developed and published in 2019.[1]

The Sandbox was developed in response to long-standing challenges in the legal profession, specifically the widespread gap in access to affordable legal services and the limitations in traditional legal regulatory structures that permit only lawyer-owned and lawyer-delivered legal solutions. In the Sandbox, entities can test models that would otherwise violate unauthorized practice of law (UPL) or ethics rules. Since the launch of the Sandbox, a few additional states have proposed a legal regulatory sandbox and many others have proposed or launched other regulatory innovation initiatives that involve waiving UPL or ethics rules.

From the outset, the leaders involved in the launch of the Sandbox recognized that rigorous data collection and evaluation would be critical in understanding whether the Sandbox was meeting its stated goals. To that end, IAALS is conducting a robust evaluation throughout the pilot phase of the Sandbox, which is set to end in 2027. This series of reports presents findings from our interim evaluation, conducted over the first five years of Sandbox operations. We will publish updated evaluation findings once the pilot phase has concluded.

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[1] GILLIAN HADFIELD & LUCY RICCA, INST. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AM. LEGAL SYS., INDEPENDENT REGULATOR OF LEGAL SERVICES POLICY OUTLINE (2019), https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/iaals_independent_regulator_of_legal_services_policy_outline.pdf.

This interim evaluation report series consists of four separate publications:

- **Part 1 — Sandbox Background and Evaluation Design Overview**

  Presents important background and contextual information about the Sandbox along with an overview of the purpose and evaluative approaches used.

- **Part 2 — Process Evaluation**

  Provides a detailed examination of how the Sandbox is designed and implemented, including a fully articulated logic model and a comprehensive review of changes to Sandbox policy to date.

- **Part 3 — Outcomes Evaluation**

  Presents findings related to the outcomes and intended impacts of the Sandbox, including the entity authorizations, types of entities operating in the Sandbox, services provided, the quality of those services, the objectives of Sandbox entities, and additional insights gathered from their experiences.

- **Part 4 — Social Return on Investment (SROI) Analysis**

  Provides empirically driven insights into the value the Sandbox has generated—including social value—in comparison with the amount invested.

This is the final report in our four-part series: *An Interim Evaluation of Utah's Legal Regulatory Sandbox: Part 4 — Social Return on Investment Analysis*. Our analysis finds that, during the first three years of Sandbox operations, the program generated an estimated $1.17 to $1.71 in social value for every $1.00 invested. Because SROI ratios greater than 1.0 indicate that the value created exceeds the resources required to support a program, these findings suggest that the Sandbox has produced measurable economic benefits relative to its cost.

These results should be interpreted in the context of the Sandbox's early stage of development. Returns from new initiatives are typically modest during initial implementation, when program development and oversight costs are highest and impacts accumulate gradually as participation grows and service models mature. In addition, the estimates presented here reflect only the subset of outcomes that can be reliably quantified at this stage of the program. Potential longer-term benefits—such as sustained innovation in

legal service delivery, expanded access to legal help, and broader downstream impacts associated with resolving legal problems—are not reflected in these calculations. As the Sandbox continues to evolve and additional data become available, future analyses will be able to provide a more complete picture of its long-term social return.

Download the other reports in this series:

https://iaals.du.edu/projects/unlocking-legal-regulation/utah-evaluation

- **Part 1 — Sandbox Background and Evaluation Design**
- **Part 2 — Process Evaluation**
- **Part 3 — Outcomes Evaluation**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Utah Supreme Court launched its legal regulatory sandbox (the Sandbox) in August 2020 as an experimental framework to test new models of legal service delivery. The Sandbox allows nontraditional legal service providers and business structures—including entities with nonlawyer ownership or nonlawyer legal practitioners—to offer legal services under a risk-based regulatory approach. By allowing new models of service delivery while monitoring for consumer harm, the Sandbox seeks to balance innovation and public protection in legal service regulation. The Sandbox was developed in response to long-standing challenges facing the legal profession, particularly the widespread gap in access to legal services and the limitations traditional legal regulatory structures have in closing that gap. The pilot period for the Sandbox will expire in 2027, at which point the Court will make determinations about the future of these regulatory innovations in Utah.[2]

By being among the first states in the nation to implement its Sandbox—along with other regulatory reforms[3]—Utah has positioned itself at the forefront of innovative efforts to expand the ways that legal services can be delivered to the people who need them. Utah's experience has already served as a foundation for similar efforts in other jurisdictions, evidencing widespread confidence in such reforms. Still, given the ambitious nature of the Sandbox, Utah's Supreme Court and other stakeholders have been vocal about the need for rigorous empirical study to understand the degree to which the Sandbox is achieving its intended goals.

To meet that need, IAALS is conducting an extensive evaluation of the Sandbox that will provide crucial data to inform the future of these innovations in Utah, as well as similar

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[2] The original term for the Sandbox was two years. In May 2021, the Utah Supreme Court extended the term to seven years to allow for a longer period during which the impact of the regulatory reforms could be realized and assessed. The Utah Supreme Court has also established an Ad Hoc Committee on Regulatory Reform, which includes four subgroups examining different aspects of potential regulatory changes related to the Sandbox and broader legal service delivery reforms.

[3] *See, e.g.*, UTAH ST. B., LICENSED PARALEGAL PRACTITIONER PROGRAM, https://www.utahbar.org/licensed-paralegal-practitioner/ (last visited September 19, 2025).

innovations across the country. Our interim evaluation—findings for which are presented in this series of reports—covers August 2020 through February 2025. We will publish findings for the full pilot period of the Sandbox once it has concluded.

This interim evaluation report series consists of four separate publications, each of which is dedicated to a different component of the evaluation.

Part 1	**Part 2**	**Part 3**	**Part 4**
Sandbox Background and Evaluation Design Overview	Process Evaluation	Outcomes Evaluation	Social Return on Investment

This is the final report in our interim evaluation series, covering our social return on investment analysis. Social return on investment (SROI) analysis is the component of program evaluation that estimates the social and economic value generated by a program relative to the resources invested.

Because SROI analysis aims to estimate the full value of resources devoted to a program, the input estimates presented in this report include both direct expenditures and the value of professional time contributed by judges, court staff, and other participants involved in Sandbox oversight and implementation. These estimates should therefore be understood as reflecting the broader institutional capacity required to operate the Sandbox rather than incremental budgetary spending alone. While some of these contributions occur as part of existing roles within the court system, assigning a value to that time helps ensure that the analysis captures the full scope of public resources devoted to the initiative and allows those inputs to be compared consistently with the estimated social impacts generated by the program.

The sections that follow detail this SROI analysis. The SROI Analysis Design section situates SROI within the broader evaluation framework and presents the relevant evaluation questions. The How SROI is Calculated section describes the process for calculating SROI ratios. The Methods section describes the data sources and analytic approach used. The Elements of the SROI section details the valuation of Sandbox inputs and outcomes. The Interpretations and Discussion section presents findings relating to estimated investments, estimated value, and the resulting SROI ratio.

II. SROI ANALYSIS DESIGN

SROI is an evaluation framework designed to capture the social value generated by a program, policy, or intervention.[4] *Social value* in this context refers to "measuring social impacts, outcomes, and outputs through the lens of cost."[5] Unlike traditional return on investment (ROI) analyses—which compare financial inputs to financial returns—SROI analyses seek to quantify the broader social benefits generated by a program, providing an estimate of how much value is created relative to the resources invested.

SROI analyses have been widely used in public policy and program evaluation, particularly by governments, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic institutions seeking to assess the value of programs designed to achieve public benefits. Because many public-interest interventions are intended to generate outcomes that do not appear in traditional financial accounting, such as improved well-being, reduced burdens on public systems, or increased access to essential services, SROI provides a structured approach for translating those outcomes into monetary terms. This allows evaluators and decision-makers to compare investments and outcomes using a consistent metric, supporting greater accountability and more informed resource allocation.

This approach is particularly relevant in the context of Utah's legal regulatory Sandbox. The Sandbox is intended to improve access to high-quality, innovative, and affordable legal services, and many of the potential benefits associated with achieving these goals—such as

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[4] *See, e.g.,* VOLKER THEN, CHRISTIAN SCHOBER, OLIVIA RAUSCHER, & KONSTANTIN KEHL, SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS: MEASURING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL INVESTMENT (2017); Ross Millar & Kelly Hall, *Social Return on Investment and Performance Measurement: The Opportunities and Barriers for Social Enterprises in Health and Social Care,* 15 Public Management Rev. 923 (2012), https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2012.698857; Luigi Corvo, Lavinia Pastore, Marco Mastrodascio, & Denita Cepiku, *The Social Return on Investment Model: A Systematic Literature Review*, 30 MEDITARI ACCOUNTANCY RES. 49 (2022), https://doi.org/10.1108/MEDAR-05-2021-1307.

[5] MELINDA T. TUAN, MEASURING AND/OR ESTIMATING SOCIAL VALUE CREATION: INSIGHTS INTO EIGHT INTEGRATED COST APPROACHES (2008), https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/documents/wwl-report-measuring-estimating-social-value-creation.pdf.

reduced demands on court resources, reduced consumer costs, and improved resolution of legal issues—may not be fully captured through traditional financial measures. By estimating the economic value associated with these types of outcomes, SROI provides an additional lens through which to assess the Sandbox's performance and the extent to which its outcomes align with its regulatory objectives.

At the same time, SROI analysis requires careful attention to transparency and analytical conservatism. Because social outcomes are rarely attributable to a single intervention and cannot always be directly observed or priced, SROI relies on proxies, or reasonable estimates used to assign monetary value to outcomes based on the best available data. Throughout this report, we document the assumptions and data sources used to generate these proxy values and employ lower- and upper-bound estimates to reflect uncertainty and avoid overstating impact. As a result, the SROI findings presented here should be understood as plausible estimates of the value generated during the study period, rather than precise or comprehensive measures of all impacts associated with the Sandbox.

Figure 1 summarizes the three components of the Sandbox interim evaluation framework—process evaluation, outcomes evaluation, and social return on investment—and provides working definitions used throughout this report.

Figure 1: Definitions for Components of the Sandbox Interim Evaluation

Process Evaluation	Outcomes Evaluation	Social Return on Investment (SROI)
Process evaluation focuses on the program processes and implementation. It examines the degree to which the activities and operations of a program are being conducted as planned and aims to understand the mechanisms, procedures, and contextual factors that influence the Sandbox's operation.	Outcomes evaluation examines the results and impacts of programs on various stakeholders and systems. It aims to measure the effectiveness of programs in achieving their intended objectives.	SROI is an evaluation framework for estimating the social and economic value created by a program, relative to the investments made. Its goal is to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based estimate of impact that supports better decision-making, resource allocation, and accountability.

Clearly articulating and defining a set of evaluation questions is a critical first step in any evaluative process.[6] These questions serve as guideposts for designing an evaluation that is fine-tuned to target the relevant data and information. For this study, we identified three questions for each of the three components of our evaluative framework, for a total of nine evaluation questions. Figure 2 presents our evaluation questions for the SROI analysis alongside the evaluation questions for other components of the evaluation.

Figure 2: Evaluation Questions for the Sandbox Interim Evaluation

Process Evaluation	Outcomes Evaluation	Social Return on Investment (SROI)
What are the inputs, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes associated with operating the Sandbox? What successes and challenges has the Sandbox encountered so far with respect to its implementation and operations? What insights have been gained for the future of the Sandbox and other regulatory reform efforts?	To what degree have Sandbox activities resulted in the intended outcomes? What goals do Sandbox entities have when entering the Sandbox and to what degree do they view those as having been achieved? To what degree do entity goals align with the intended outcomes of the Sandbox?	What has been the total estimated investment in the Sandbox, including monetary and non-monetary investments? What is the total estimated value that the Sandbox has created, including both social and economic value? What does comparing these estimates reveal about the value the Sandbox has created relative to investments made?

[6] *See, e.g.,* PETER H. ROSSI, MARK W. LIPSEY, & GARY T. HENRY, EVALUATION: A SYSTEMIC APPROACH (8th ed. 2019); E. JANE DAVIDSON, EVALUATION METHODOLOGY BASICS: THE NUTS & BOLTS OF SOUND EVALUATION (2005).

III. HOW SROI IS CALCULATED

Conceptually, SROI is a simple, straightforward calculation that expresses how much social value is generated for every dollar invested in a program:

$$\textbf{SROI} = \frac{\textbf{Estimated Value of Outcomes}}{\textbf{Estimated Value of Inputs}}$$

In practice, however, arriving at defensible monetary value estimates for outcomes and inputs is a complex proposition that entails multiple phases of data collection and analysis. These phases typically include defining the scope of relevant inputs and outcomes, identifying appropriate data sources, selecting valuation approaches that align with available evidence, and applying assumptions that balance analytical rigor with transparency and caution.

As reflected throughout this analysis, particular care is taken to bound estimates, document assumptions, and avoid overstating effects—ensuring that the resulting SROI ratio provides a credible and policy-relevant summary of the social value plausibly associated with the Sandbox.

Assigning monetary values to social outcomes requires the use of proxies—reasonable stand-ins that translate observed or anticipated changes into dollar terms. In an SROI analysis, proxies are not intended to represent precise or individualized costs or savings. Rather, they provide a consistent and transparent way to approximate the economic value of outcomes using the best available data, such as published salary information, average service costs, or population-level benchmarks.

In this analysis, proxies were selected based on three guiding principles: relevance, credibility, and analytical restraint. Where possible, valuation inputs were drawn from publicly available administrative data, existing research, or widely cited secondary sources. When direct measures were not available, proxies were chosen to estimate typical or average values rather than extreme or best-case scenarios. Throughout this report, all proxy choices and underlying assumptions are documented alongside each calculation to ensure transparency and replicability.

Because social outcomes are rarely attributable to a single intervention, SROI analyses also require careful consideration of concepts such as deadweight, attribution, and displacement. Deadweight refers to the portion of an outcome that would likely have occurred even in the absence of the program. Attribution reflects the extent to which observed outcomes can reasonably be associated with the program rather than other external factors. Displacement considers whether a benefit in one area may come at the expense of a loss elsewhere. Rather than attempting to estimate these factors directly—often a speculative exercise—this analysis incorporates them implicitly through deliberate scoping decisions and estimates, bounded assumptions, and the exclusion of outcomes that cannot be credibly linked to Sandbox activity.

To further address uncertainty, the analysis employs sensitivity analysis, generating lower- and upper-bound estimates for each major calculation. This approach allows key assumptions—such as the proportion of cases affected, time spent on relevant activities, or typical costs avoided—to vary within defined ranges. The resulting bounds are carried forward through subsequent steps, producing SROI estimates that reflect a plausible range of outcomes rather than a single point estimate. This strategy is designed to transparently convey uncertainty and to prevent over-interpretation of the magnitude or precision of Sandbox-associated impacts.

IV. METHODS

This SROI analysis reflects investments and outcomes associated with the first three years of Sandbox operations, spanning August 2020 through July 2023.[7] The analysis follows a standard SROI framework that compares the estimated monetary value of selected outcomes to the estimated monetary value of inputs required to support the Sandbox. Consistent with the evaluation's focus on the value generated by the Court's investments, inputs and outcomes associated with Sandbox entities themselves are not included in the SROI

[7] Because SROI relies on aligned input and outcome data, the timeframe for this analysis differs slightly from other components of the interim evaluation.

calculation. All calculations are conducted using lower- and upper-bound assumptions to reflect uncertainty and to avoid overstating impacts.

Outcomes were selected based on relevance to the Sandbox's regulatory objectives, availability of defensible data, and the feasibility of applying transparent valuation methods. Outcomes that could not be credibly linked to Sandbox activity or valued using reliable data were excluded from monetization.

In addition, the inputs and outcomes we consider as part of this SROI analysis represent only those relevant to the Court and legal services consumers. It does not include inputs and outcomes related to the Sandbox entities themselves.

The analysis draws on numerous data sources, including administrative data reported by the Utah Supreme Court and the Sandbox Innovation Office, publicly available court statistics, published salary and compensation information, and findings from national survey research related to legal needs and access to justice. When direct data were unavailable, secondary sources and published benchmarks were used to inform reasonable proxy values. All assumptions, proxy values, and calculation steps are documented throughout the report to promote transparency and replicability.

V. ELEMENTS OF THE SANDBOX SROI

This section presents each component of the SROI analysis for the Utah Legal Regulatory Sandbox. It is organized into three primary components. First, the analysis identifies and values the key inputs required to implement and operate the Sandbox during the study period, including public investments and associated institutional resources. Second, it evaluates and values selected outcomes plausibly associated with Sandbox services, focusing on impacts for both the court system and Utah legal consumers that can be credibly quantified using available data and conservative assumptions. Finally, the analysis brings these elements together to calculate the SROI ratio, which summarizes the relationship between the estimated value of impacts and the estimated value of inputs.

A. Valuate Inputs

This section describes how inputs to the Sandbox were identified and valued for the purposes of the SROI analysis. Inputs represent the resources required to design, implement, operate, and oversee the Sandbox during the interim evaluation period, which spans August 2020 through July 2023. Consistent with the analytical framework described above, inputs are examined across the Innovation Office operating costs, judicial and court staff time, and Legal Services Innovation (LSI) Committee volunteer time.

Innovation Office Operating Costs. These costs represent the primary direct financial investment made by the Court in support of the Sandbox during the SROI analysis period. These costs reflect the resources required to administer the Sandbox, including staffing, oversight, and maintenance of the systems and processes necessary for entity authorization and ongoing monitoring. Figure 3 presents the calculation used to estimate total Innovation Office operating costs during the SROI analysis period. These costs are calculated by multiplying the Court's reported annual operating cost by the length of the study period. The resulting estimate indicates that total operating costs were approximately $1.12 million during the analysis period.

Figure 3: Innovation Office Operating Costs, Calculation and Variables

Annual Innovation Office Operating Costs		Years		TOTAL INNOVATION OFFICE OPERATING COSTS
$384,000	x	2.92	=	**$1,121,280**

Variable	Source/Rationale
Annual Innovation Office Operating Costs	March 2023 Letter[8]
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

[8] Letter from the Supreme Court of Utah to the Utah State Bar (March 28, 2023), at 5 [hereinafter March 2023 Letter], https://utahinnovationoffice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/3.-Letter-to-Utah-State-Bar-3.28.23.pdf.

Judicial and court staff time. In addition to direct operating expenditures, the Court invested judicial and staff time in activities necessary to establish and oversee the Sandbox during the SROI analysis period. These activities included reviewing and voting on entity applications, participating in meetings, providing administrative oversight, and engaging in policy development related to Sandbox operations.

Figure 4 presents the calculation used to estimate the dollar value of Utah Supreme Court Justice time associated with Sandbox-related activities during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the annual salary of a Utah Supreme Court Justice by the number of justices, the estimated percentage of each justice's time devoted to Sandbox activities, and the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that between approximately $65,000 and $165,000 in judicial time is attributable to Sandbox-related oversight during the study period.

Figure 4: Estimated Dollar Value of Utah Supreme Court Justice Time

	UT Supreme Court Justice Annual Salary		No. of Justices		% per Full Time Employee (FTE)		Years		**TOTAL COST FOR JUSTICE TIME**
LOWER BOUND	$224,050	x	5	x	2%	x	2.92	=	**$65,423**
UPPER BOUND	$224,050	x	5	x	5%	x	2.92	=	**$163,557**

Variable	Source/Rationale
Utah Supreme Court Justice Annual Salary	The Utah State Legislature sets salaries for Utah Supreme Court Justices. In 2023, justices' annual salaries were set at $224,050.[9]

[9] UTAH LEGISLATURE, JUDICIAL SALARIES FY 24 (n.d.) https://le.utah.gov/interim/2023/pdf/00003676.pdf (last visited April 3, 2026); Bridger Beal-Cvetko, *How Much Are Elected Officials and Judges in Utah Paid?,* KSL UTAH (August 28, 2023) https://www.ksl.com/article/50718625/how-much-are-elected-officials-and-judges-in-utah-paid

Number of Justices	Utah Code states that the Utah Supreme Court five justices sit on the Utah Supreme Court.[10] Estimates assume equal time spent by all five justices.
% per FTE	Estimated proportion of each Justice's time spent on Sandbox-related activities. Lower Bound: Estimated at 2%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 2% is equivalent to 3.5 hours per month. Upper Bound: Estimated at 5%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 5% is equivalent to 8.7 hours per month.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

Similarly, Figure 5 presents the calculation used to estimate the dollar value of Utah Supreme Court staff time associated with Sandbox-related activities during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the estimated annual salary for Supreme Court staff by the assumed percentage of one full-time equivalent devoted to Sandbox-related work and the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that between approximately $8,000 and $20,000 in staff time is plausibly associated with Sandbox-related activities during the study period.

Figure 5: Estimated Dollar Value of Utah Supreme Court Staff Time

	UT Supreme Court Staff Annual Salary		% FTE		Years		**TOTAL COST FOR STAFF TIME**
LOWER BOUND	$54,000	x	5%	x	2.92	=	**$7,884**
UPPER BOUND	$68,000	x	10%	x	2.92	=	**$19,856**

Variable	Source/Rationale
Utah Supreme Court Staff Annual Salary	Utah does not publish salary information for Supreme Court staff. Estimates are therefore based on data as reported by a prominent online source for salary information.

[10] Utah Code § 78A-3-101 (2025). https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title78A/Chapter3/78A-3-S101.html

	Lower bound: Median base salary for Judicial Assistants in Utah.[11] Upper bound: Median base salary for Judicial Law Clerks in Utah.[12]
% FTE	It is not possible to determine the total number of court staff who engaged in Sandbox-related work. Estimates are therefore calculated as a percentage of one FTE. Lower bound: Estimated at 5%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 5% is equivalent to 8.7 staff hours per month. Upper bound: Estimated at 10%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 10% is equivalent to 17.3 staff hours per month.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

Legal Services Innovation Committee volunteer time. The LSI Committee plays a central role in the Sandbox by reviewing applications, advising on policy changes, and supporting regulatory decision-making. Although LSI Committee members serve in a volunteer capacity and do not represent a direct financial investment by the courts, their time represents a real opportunity cost associated with oversight and governance of the Sandbox. Including this estimate provides a more complete picture of the total professional capacity devoted to Sandbox-related activities during the study period.

Figure 6 presents the calculation used to estimate the dollar value of LSI Committee volunteer time associated with Sandbox-related activities during the study period. The LSI Committee is composed primarily of attorneys, though some members hold other advanced professional or academic credentials. For purposes of this estimate, attorney compensation is used as a reasonable proxy for the professional value of committee members' time. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the estimated annual salary for Utah attorneys by the estimated number of committee members, the assumed percentage of each member's full-time equivalent devoted to Sandbox-related activities, and the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that between approximately $75,000 and $229,000

[11] GLASSDOOR, UTAH COURTS, JUDICIAL ASSISTANTS, https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Utah-Courts-Judicial-Assistant-Salaries-E43017_D_KO12,30.htm (last visited January 10, 2026).

[12] GLASSDOOR, UTAH COURTS, JUDICIAL LAW CLERKS, https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Utah-Courts-Judicial-Assistant-Salaries-E43017_D_KO12,30.htm (last visited January 10, 2026).

in volunteer time is plausibly associated with Sandbox-related oversight during the study period.

Figure 6: Estimated Dollar Value of LSI Committee Volunteer Time

	Utah Attorney Annual Salary		No. of Members		% per FTE		Years		**TOTAL COST FOR LSI TIME**
LOWER BOUND	$103,000	x	5	x	5	x	2.92	=	**$75,190**
UPPER BOUND	$157,000	x	5	x	10	x	2.92	=	**$229,220**

Variable	Source/Rationale
Utah Attorney Annual Salary	Available data on attorney salaries in Utah is limited. Estimates are therefore based on data as reported by a prominent online source of salary information. Lower bound: Low end of salary range for attorneys in Utah.[13] Upper bound: High end of salary range for attorneys in Utah.[14]
Number of Members	The exact number of seats on the LSI Committee during the study period is not documented; however, review of the LSI Committee meeting minutes indicates that there were approximately 5 members throughout the study period.[15]
% per FTE	Estimated proportion of each attorney's time spent on Sandbox-related activities. Lower Bound: Estimated at 5%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 5% is equivalent to 8.7 hours per month. Upper Bound: Estimated at 10%. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 10% is equivalent to 17.3 hours per month.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

[13] GLASSDOOR, UTAH ATTORNEY SALARY, https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/utah-attorney-salary-SRCH_IL.0,4_IS255_KO5,13.htm (last visited January 10, 2026).

[14] *Id.*

[15] Note that this number does not include participation from the Innovation Office Executive Director, who participates in Committee meetings but whose time is included in Innovation Office Operating Costs.

1. Summary of Sandbox Inputs

Table 1 summarizes the court- and governance-related inputs associated with implementation and oversight of the Sandbox during the study period. These inputs include Innovation Office operating costs, as well as the value of judicial, court staff, and volunteer attorney time plausibly associated with Sandbox-related activities. Estimated total inputs range from approximately $1.3 million to $1.5 million over the study period. Note that these figures reflect a combination of direct expenditures and opportunity costs and are intended to capture the full scope of professional and institutional capacity devoted to the Sandbox, rather than realized or incremental budgetary expenses.

Table 1: Lower- and Upper-Bound Estimates for All Sandbox Inputs

	Lower-Bound Estimate	**Upper-Bound Estimate**
Innovation Office Operating Costs†	$1,121,280	$1,121,280
Utah Supreme Court Justice Time	$65,423	$163,557
Utah Supreme Court Staff Time	$7,884	$19,856
LSI Committee Volunteer Time	$75,190	$229,220
Total Court Inputs	**$1,269,777**	**$1,533,913**

B. Evaluate and Valuate Outcomes

The Utah Supreme Court has clearly articulated the regulatory objective of the Sandbox: "To ensure consumers have access to a well-developed, high-quality, innovative, affordable, and competitive market for legal services."[16] Consistent with this framing, the outcomes examined in this SROI analysis focus on relevant changes during the study period that can be plausibly linked to Sandbox activities, including reduced demands on court resources associated with self-representation, the provision of legal services through Sandbox-authorized entities, and cost savings experienced by legal consumers.[17]

The sections that follow describe each monetized outcome included in the analysis, the rationale for its inclusion, and the approach used to estimate its value. Together, these outcomes form the basis for assessing the social value generated relative to the resources invested in the Sandbox during the SROI analysis period (August 2020 through July 2023).[18]

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[16] Utah Supreme Court Standing Ord. No. 15 (Aug. 14, 2020, Amended Sept. 21, 2022), at 7 [hereinafter Standing Ord. 15], https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-approved/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/08/FINAL-Utah-Supreme-Court-Standing-Order-No.-15.pdf

[17] Outcomes that extend beyond this defined scope—such as broader perceptions of fairness, long-term legal outcomes, or systemic impacts that cannot be reliably estimated during the study period—are not included in the SROI calculations and are discussed elsewhere in the interim evaluation report series. LOGAN CORNETT, JESSICAN BEDNARZ, & JAMES TEUFEL, INST. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AM. LEGAL SYS., AN INTERIM EVALUATION OF UTAH'S LEGAL REGULATORY SANDBOX - PART 2: PROCESS EVALUATION (2025), https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/utah_interim_process_evaluation.pdf; LOGAN CORNETT, JESSICAN BEDNARZ, & JAMES TEUFEL, INST. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AM. LEGAL SYS., AN INTERIM EVALUATION OF UTAH'S LEGAL REGULATORY SANDBOX - PART 3: OUTCOMES EVALUATION (2025), https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/utah_interim_outcomes_evaluation.pdf

[18] For the purposes of this analysis, outcomes are limited to those for which sufficient data are available to support transparent, conservative monetization.

1. Reduced Demand on Court Resources

It is well documented that courts devote substantial time and resources to assisting self-represented litigants as they navigate civil legal issues. [19] In the absence of legal representation, judges, court staff, and self-help staff often assume roles that extend beyond traditional adjudication and administration to ensure cases can proceed.

For judges, this assistance may include explaining court procedures and expectations during hearings, clarifying legal standards, managing cases, and taking additional time to guide proceedings involving self-represented parties.[20] Court staff similarly devote significant time to supporting self-represented litigants. This support can include answering procedural questions at clerk counters, reviewing filings for completeness, providing information about required forms or deadlines, and directing litigants to appropriate resources.[21] Although staff do not provide legal advice, these interactions are often time-intensive and recurrent, particularly in high-volume civil dockets. In addition, Utah's virtual self-help center staff play a direct role in assisting individuals who lack legal representation by providing information, guidance on court processes, and referrals to available resources. Demand for these services increases as the proportion of self-represented litigants rises, requiring dedicated staff time and capacity to meet consumer needs.

The Sandbox has the potential to reduce the volume and complexity of assistance needed from courts to support litigants through the civil legal process, particularly those who are self-represented. To the extent that Sandbox services provide support in matters that would otherwise be handled by self-represented litigants, courts are likely to experience corresponding reductions in judicial and staff time devoted to assisting self-represented

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[19] *See, e.g.,* NATALIE ANNE KNOWLTON, LOGAN CORNETT, CORINA D. GERETY, & JANET DROBINSKE, INST. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AM. LEGAL SYS., CASES WITHOUT COUNSEL: RESEARCH ON EXPERIENCES OF SELF-REPRESENTATION IN U.S. FAMILY COURT (2016), https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/cases_without_counsel_research_report.pdf

[20] *Id.*

[21] *Id.*

litigants. The following analysis estimates the value of these reduced demands on court resources during the SROI analysis period.

Estimating reductions in court resource use associated with the Sandbox requires translating changes in how legal issues are addressed into changes in court capacity—and estimating the economic value of those changes. This analysis relies on a structured, multi-step approach that combines available administrative data, published research, and conservative assumptions. These steps are designed to provide bounded estimates and avoid overstating the magnitude of Sandbox-associated effects.

Step 1: Estimate the number of relevant cases filed in Utah during the study period.

Using data reported by Utah courts, we first estimate the total number of civil and domestic relations cases—case types that correspond to the primary issue types addressed in the Sandbox—filed during the study period. This calculation is foundational to subsequent steps, as defining the scope of the civil docket is necessary for understanding the plausible magnitude of Sandbox impact on court resource usage (see Figure 9).

Figure 7 presents the calculation used to estimate the total number of civil and domestic relations cases filed in Utah during the study period. These estimates are calculated by adding the annual number of civil cases filed to the annual number of domestic relations cases filed and multiplying the combined total by the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that between approximately 335,000 and 425,000 civil and domestic relations cases were filed during the study period.

Figure 7: Estimated Number of Civil Cases Filed During the Analysis Period

	# Civil Cases Filed Annually		# DR Cases Filed Annually		Years		TOTAL # CIVIL/DR CASES FILED DURING STUDY PERIOD
LOWER BOUND	(90,270	+	24,291)	x	2.92	=	**334,518**
UPPER BOUND	(107,412	+	38,035)	x	2.92	=	**424,705**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Civil Cases Filed Annually	Estimates the total number of civil cases filed each year during the study period. Based on data reported by Utah to the National Center for State Courts.[22] Lower bound: Lowest reported count during the study period. Upper bound: Highest reported count during the study period.
# DR Cases Filed Annually	Estimates the total number of domestic relations filed each year during the study period. Based on data reported by Utah to the National Center for State Courts.[23] Lower bound: Lowest reported count during the study period. Upper bound: Highest reported count during the study period.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

Step 2: Estimate the proportion of court resource use plausibly affected by Sandbox services.

Not all Sandbox services are relevant to court resource demands. Accordingly, this step provides a bounded estimate of the subset of Sandbox-related legal issues that, in the absence of Sandbox services, could plausibly have involved interaction with the court system. Importantly, this step does not estimate causal impact or attempt to determine whether Sandbox services directly reduced court resource use in any individual case. Rather, it serves to limit subsequent calculations to those Sandbox-related issues for which court resource involvement is at least plausible.

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[22] NAT'L CTR. FOR ST. CTS., COURT STATISTICS PROJECT, https://www.ncsc.org/explore-court-caseload-data (last visited January 10, 2026).

[23] *Id.*

Figure 8 presents the calculation used to estimate the number of Sandbox-related issues plausibly involving court interaction during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the total number of legal issues addressed through Sandbox services during the study period by a conservative estimate of the proportion of those issues expected to require at least some court involvement. The resulting range indicates that between approximately 7,300 and 9,600 Sandbox-related issues could plausibly contribute to changes in court resource use during the study period.

Figure 8: Number of Issues Addressed by Sandbox Services During the Analysis Period Plausibly Contributing to Reduced Resource Use

	# Issues Addressed in the Sandbox		% Issues w/ Court Interaction		% Otherwise SRL		**# ISSUES PLAUSIBLY CONTRIBUTING TO REDUCED COURT RESOURCE USE**
LOWER BOUND	24,000	x	38%	x	80%	x	**7,296**
UPPER BOUND	24,000	x	49%	x	82%	x	**9,643**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Issues Addressed in the Sandbox	Estimates the number of legal issues addressed via Sandbox services throughout the SROI analysis period. Estimated as equivalent to the number of unique consumers that have received Sandbox services (i.e., assumes each consumer addressed one legal issue using Sandbox services).[24]
% Issues with Court Interaction	Estimates the proportion of issues addressed via Sandbox services expected to require at least some court involvement to address. Across the

[24] Office of Legal Services Innovation, Sandbox Monthly Activity Report: July 2023 [hereinafter July 2023 Activity Report] (on file with authors) (We considered constructing an upper bound using the total number of services provided within the Sandbox as of July 2023 (60,798). However, this would certainly have resulted in an over-estimation of the possible impact of the Sandbox given that some proportion of consumers who used more than one Sandbox service—an unknown but possibly large proportion—likely sought multiple services for a single legal issue, rather than each service representing a unique legal issue for the consumer).

	study period, the most prevalent service areas for services provided in the Sandbox were: end of life planning, business, marriage/family, accident/injury, immigration, military/veteran, financial, and housing/rental. Monthly activity reports indicate that these service areas account for a substantial majority of services provided in the Sandbox throughout the analysis period. These types of issues typically require at least minimal court contact to address, though it is not possible to know the precise proportion. In the absence of this data, we have applied a conservative estimate of 50%—that is, both the lower and upper bound estimates are reduced by a further 50%. Lower bound: Estimated 75%, the lowest reported proportion of services that fell into the relevant service areas during a given month,[25] reduced by 50%. 75% x 50% = 38% Upper bound: Estimated at 97%, the highest reported proportion of services that fell into relevant service areas during a given month,[26] reduced by 50%. 97% x 50% = 49%
% Otherwise SRL	Estimates the proportion of Sandbox issues that, in the absence of the Sandbox, would be expected to be addressed via self-representation. Lower and upper bounds are estimated based on the proportions calculated in Figure 14 for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help*. Lower bound: Estimated at the inverse of the upper bound for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help* in Figure 14. 100% - 20% = 80% Upper bound: Estimated at the inverse of the lower bound for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help* in Figure 14. 100% - 18% = 82%

Applying these constraints substantially narrows the universe of Sandbox services that could plausibly contribute to reduced court resources use during the analysis period.

Figure 9 presents the calculation used to estimate the proportion of civil and domestic relations cases filed during the study period that are plausibly impacted by Sandbox services. These estimates are calculated by dividing the estimated number of Sandbox-related issues plausibly contributing to reduced court resource use by the estimated number of civil and domestic relations cases filed during the study period. The resulting range

[25] Office of Legal Services Innovation, Sandbox Monthly Activity Report: July 2021 (on file with authors).

[26] July 2023 Activity Report, *supra* note 24.

indicates that approximately 1.7% to 2.9% of civil and domestic relations cases filed during the study period are plausibly impacted by Sandbox services.

Figure 9: Estimated Proportion of Civil Cases Filed Plausibly Impacted by Sandbox Services

	# Issues Plausibly Contributing to Reduced Court Resource Use		# Civil/DR Cases Filed During Study Period		**% CIVIL/DR CASES PLAUSIBLY IMPACTED BY THE SANDBOX**
LOWER BOUND	7,296	÷	424,705	=	**1.7%**
UPPER BOUND	9,643	÷	334,518	=	**2.9%**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Issues Plausibly Contributing to Reduced Court Resource Use	Estimate derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 8.
# Civil Cases Filed During Study Period	Estimate derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 7. Note that the upper bound calculated for this variable appears in denominator for the lower bound in this calculation, and vice versa. This results in the broadest range of plausible estimates.

Step 3: Determine scope of court resource use plausibly impacted by the bounded set of Sandbox-relevant issues.

Having established that Sandbox services plausibly intersect with a relatively small portion of the Utah civil docket during the study period (estimated at 1.7%–2.9% of civil cases filed; see Figure 9), the next step is to estimate the amount of court resource time associated with that bounded subset of cases. As with previous steps, this analysis does not assume that Sandbox services reduced court resource use in any specific case. Rather, it estimates the amount of court capacity typically associated with the subset of civil cases that could plausibly be impacted by the Sandbox.

Figure 10 presents the calculation used to estimate the proportion of judge and court staff full-time equivalent (FTE) capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-related cases during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying three factors: 1) the assumed

proportion of total FTE time devoted to case-related work, 2) the estimated proportion of case-related work time devoted to civil and domestic relations matters, and 3) the estimated proportion of civil and domestic relations cases plausibly impacted by Sandbox services. The resulting range indicates that approximately 0.2% to 0.6% of judge and court staff FTE capacity could plausibly be associated with Sandbox-related cases during the study period.

Figure 10: Estimated Percent of Judge and Court Staff Time Plausibly Associated with Sandbox-Related Issues

	% FTE Spent on Case-Related Tasks		% Case-Related FTE Spent on Civil/DR Matters		% Civil/DR Cases Plausibly Impacted by the Sandbox		**% FTE PLAUSIBLY ASSOC. W/ SANDBOX**
LOWER BOUND	75%	x	17%	x	1.7%	=	**0.2%**
UPPER BOUND	90%	x	24%	x	2.9%	=	**0.6%**

Variable	Source/Rationale
% FTE Spent on Case-Related Tasks	Estimates the proportion of each FTE spent on case-related tasks. Estimates assume judges and staff typically spend a substantial majority of their time on case-related tasks (as opposed to administrative, managerial, or other tasks). Lower bound: Estimated at 75% Upper bound: Estimated at 90%
% Case-Related FTE Spent on Civil/DR Matters	Estimates the proportion of case-related work time dedicated to civil and domestic relations matters. Estimated as equivalent to the proportion of cases filed in Utah state court designated as civil or domestic relations. Based on data reported by Utah to the National Center for State Courts.[27] Lower bound: Estimated by adding the lowest reported annual number of civil and domestic relations cases filed during the study period, then dividing by the highest reported total number of cases filed.[28]

[27] COURT STATISTICS PROJECT, *supra* note 22.

[28] *Id.* ((90,270 + 24,291) / 677,094 = 17%).

	Upper bound: Estimated by adding the highest reported annual number of civil and domestic relations cases filed during the study period, then dividing by the lowest reported total number of cases filed.[29]
% Civil/DR Cases Plausibly Impacted by the Sandbox	Estimate derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 9.

Step 4: Estimate monetary value of court resource capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases.

The final step in this component of the analysis is to estimate the dollar value of court resource capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant civil and domestic relations cases during the study period. This step does not estimate actual cost savings to the courts, nor does it assume that Sandbox services caused a reduction in court expenditures. Instead, it translates the bounded share of court resource capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases into dollar terms, using available data and carefully bounded assumptions about staffing levels and compensation. Importantly, this estimate should not be interpreted as a one-to-one reduction in court time or expenditures for each Sandbox-related case. Rather, it represents the estimated share of judicial and staff capacity plausibly associated with these cases under current system conditions. The resulting estimates represent the monetary value of judicial and staff time that could plausibly be associated with Sandbox-related court interactions during the study period.

Court resource capacity is monetized separately for judges, court staff, and staff attorneys to reflect differences in roles, staffing levels, and compensation. For each role, we estimate total compensation costs during the study period and apply the lower- and upper-bound estimates of the share of FTE capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases.

Figure 11 presents the calculation used to estimate the dollar value of judicial capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant civil and domestic relations cases during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the number of full-time district judge FTEs by the annual compensation for a district court judge, the estimated proportion of judicial FTE capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases (see Figure 10),

[29] *Id.* ((107,412 + 38,035) / 598,942 = 24%).

and the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that approximately $76,800 to $230,400 in judicial capacity is plausibly associated with Sandbox-related cases during the study period.

Figure 11: Estimated Dollar Value of Judicial Capacity Plausibly Associated with Sandbox-Related Issues

	# Judge FTEs		Judge Annual Compensation		% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox		Years		$ VALUE OF JUDICIAL CAPACITY PLAUSIBLY ASSOC. W/ SANDBOX
LOWER BOUND	71	x	$185,200	x	0.2%	x	2.92	=	**$76,791**
UPPER BOUND	71	x	$185,200	x	0.6%	x	2.92	=	**$230,373**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Judge FTEs	Utah's state court website states that "there are 71 full-time district judges serving in the state's eight judicial districts."[30]
Judge Annual Compensation	Utah's state legislature sets annual salaries for district court judges. Point-estimate based on 2023 district court judge salaries, the only year in the study period for which data is available. [31]
% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox	Estimate derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 10.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

Figure 12 applies the logic to court staff capacity. Estimates for the dollar value of court staff capacity are calculated by multiplying 1) the estimated number of court staff FTEs by 2) the estimated annual compensation for court staff and 3) the lower- and upper-bound estimates of the share of staff FTE capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases, and 4) then applying this value across the study period. The resulting range suggests that

[30] UTAH STATE COURTS, AN OVERVIEW OF THE UTAH DISTRICT COURTS, https://www.utcourts.gov/en/about/courts/dist/overview.html (last visited January 10, 2026).

[31] UTAH LEGISLATURE, *supra* note 9.

approximately $96,600 to $359,400 in court staff capacity could plausibly be associated with Sandbox-related cases during the analysis period.

Figure 12: Estimated Dollar Value of Court Staff Capacity Plausibly Associated with Sandbox-Related Issues

	# Court Staff FTEs		Court Staff Annual Compensation		% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox		Years		**$ VALUE OF CT. STAFF CAPACITY PLAUSIBLY ASSOC. W/ SANDBOX**
LOWER BOUND	355	x	$46,571	x	0.2%	x	2.92	=	**$96,551**
UPPER BOUND	355	x	$57,782	x	0.6%	x	2.92	=	**$359,380**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Court Staff FTEs	The exact number of Utah court staff FTEs employed during the study period is not available. Estimates are based on review of staff rosters available on the Utah courts website, which indicate that there are about 5 court staff FTEs for every judge FTE across district courts.[32] Point estimate calculated as 5 court staff FTEs per judge FTE, multiplied by 71 judge FTEs. 71 x 5 = 355
Court Staff Annual Compensation	Utah does not share court staff salaries with the public. Estimates are drawn from a review of job postings listed on the Utah State Court website. Lower bound: Drawn from a review of Utah state court job postings for court staff positions, where $22.39 was the lowest posted hourly pay rate. [33] This is equivalent to $46,571 annually. Upper bound: Drawn from a review of Utah state court job postings for court staff positions, where $27.78 was the highest posted hourly pay rate.[34] This is equivalent to $57,782 annually.
% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 10.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

[32] UTAH STATE COURTS, EMPLOYEE DIRECTORY SEARCH, https://www.utcourts.gov/en/about/miscellaneous/directory.html (last visited February 13, 2026)

[33] UTAH STATE COURTS, JOBS WITH THE COURTS - EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, https://www.utcourts.gov/en/careers/careers/jobs.html (last visited February 2, 2026)

[34] GLASSDOOR, UTAH COURTS, JUDICIAL ASSISTANTS, https://www.glassdoor.com/Salary/Utah-Courts-Judicial-Assistant-Salaries-E43017_D_KO12,30.htm (last visited February 2, 2026)

Figure 13 presents the calculation used to estimate the dollar value of staff attorney capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant civil and domestic relations cases during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the number of court-employed staff attorney FTEs by the average annual compensation for staff attorneys, the estimated proportion of FTE capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases (see Figure 10), and the length of the SROI analysis period. The resulting range indicates that approximately $30,700 to $92,000 in staff attorney capacity is plausibly associated with Sandbox-related cases during the study period.

Figure 13: Estimated Dollar Value of Staff Attorney Capacity Plausibly Associated with Sandbox-Related Issues

	# Staff Attorney FTEs		Staff Attorney Annual Compensation		% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox		Years		**$ VALUE OF STAFF ATTY. CAPACITY PLAUSIBLY ASSOC. W/ SANDBOX**
LOWER BOUND	75	x	$70,000	x	0.2%	x	2.92	=	**$30,660**
UPPER BOUND	75	x	$70,000	x	0.6%	x	2.92	=	**$91,980**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Staff Attorney FTEs	Point-estimate for the number of staff attorney FTEs is drawn from the Utah Judicial Council's 2023 Annual Report (75).[35]
Staff Attorney Annual Compensation	Point-estimate for the staff attorney annual compensation is drawn from the Utah Judicial Council's 2023 Annual Report and represents the average pay for court-employed attorneys ($70,000).[36]
% FTE Plausibly Assoc. w/ Sandbox	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 10.
Years	SROI analysis period (August 2020 – July 2023)

[35] UTAH JUD. COUNCIL, ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE, GOVERNOR, & LEGISLATURE (2023), at 11, https://www.utcourts.gov/content/dam/court-records-publications/publications/court-publications/court-reports/2023-CourtsAnnualReport.pdf.

[36] *Id.*

2. Impact for Utah Legal Consumers

In addition to potential reductions in court resource use, Sandbox services may benefit Utah legal consumers by reducing the financial, personal, and practical burdens associated with addressing civil legal problems. This subsection estimates the monetary value of selected consumer-level outcomes that can be plausibly quantified using available data and conservative assumptions. Consistent with the broader SROI framework, these estimates do not assume causal impact in any individual case and are intended to bound the range of consumer-level benefits plausibly associated with Sandbox services during the study period.

a. Reduced Cost of Legal Help

One category of consumer-level benefit plausibly associated with Sandbox services is reduced spending on legal services among individuals who would have otherwise sought help from a lawyer to address their legal issue. Traditional legal representation can be prohibitively expensive for many of those facing civil and domestic relations matters, and cost remains a well-documented barrier to accessing legal help.[37]

Estimating reductions in consumer legal costs associated with the Sandbox requires translating changes in access to legal help into changes in out-of-pocket spending. We accomplish this using a structured, multi-step approach grounded in conservative assumptions. Consistent with other components of this analysis, estimates are bounded using lower- and upper-bound assumptions and do not assume that Sandbox services replaced full-scope legal representation in every case. Rather, the resulting values represent a plausible range of direct consumer savings associated with reduced reliance on traditional legal services during the study period.

The analysis first estimates the total number of Sandbox services for which consumers would otherwise have been expected to seek assistance from a lawyer in the absence of the

[37] *See, e.g.*, KNOWLTON ET AL., *supra* note 19.

Sandbox.[38] Figure 14 presents the calculation used to estimate this subset of services during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the total number of services provided in the Sandbox by the estimated proportion of issues for which consumers would otherwise seek attorney assistance. The resulting range indicates that approximately 11,000 to 12,000 of the more than 60,000 services provided in the Sandbox during the study period would otherwise have been expected to involve attorney representation.

Figure 14: Estimated Number of Sandbox Services for Which the Consumer Would Otherwise be Expected to Seek Attorney Help

	# Sandbox Services		% Otherwise Seek Attorney Help		**# SERVICES FOR WHICH CONSUMER EXPECTED TO OTHERWISE SEEK ATTY. HELP**
LOWER BOUND	60,798	x	18%	=	**10,944**
UPPER BOUND	60,798	x	20%	=	**12,160**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Sandbox Services	Point-estimate reflects the total number of services provided in the Sandbox during the study period. Estimate drawn from the July 2023 Sandbox Monthly Activity Report (60,798).[39]
% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help	Estimates the proportion of Sandbox services that, in the absence of the Sandbox, would be expected to be addressed by an attorney. Survey data collected during the study period suggests that people seeking help for their most serious legal

[38] This estimate captures consumer-level cost savings associated with access to legal assistance and is conceptually distinct from the court resource estimates presented earlier in the analysis. The court resource calculations estimate the share of judicial and staff capacity plausibly associated with cases involving self-represented litigants, whereas this calculation estimates the difference in out-of-pocket legal costs for consumers who would otherwise have sought attorney help. Because the two components measure different dimensions of impact—court system capacity and consumer spending—they are presented separately rather than treated as overlapping savings.

[39] July 2023 Activity Report, *supra* note 24.

	issue will go to an attorney about 23% of the time.[40] Lower- and upper-bound estimates are calculated to account for the survey data's limitation to a person's most serious issue (i.e., people are expected to seek attorney help less frequently when legal issues are perceived as less serious). Lower bound: Estimated at 23%, reduced by 20%. 23% x (100% - 20%) = 18% Upper bound: Estimated at 23%, reduced by 10%. 23% x (100% - 10%) = 20%

The analysis next estimates the value of avoided legal costs per Sandbox service for those services for which consumers would otherwise have sought attorney help. For the purposes of conservative estimation, we assume that each Sandbox service corresponds to approximately one hour of attorney time. While many legal services would likely require more than one hour of attorney involvement, using a single hour provides a cautious benchmark that avoids overstating potential cost savings. Figure 15 presents the calculation used to estimate this value. These estimates are calculated by subtracting the average cost of a Sandbox service from the average hourly rate charged by Utah attorneys. The resulting range indicates that each Sandbox service is associated with approximately $88 to $98 in avoided legal costs that consumers would otherwise have incurred.

[40] HAGUE INST. FOR INNOVATION OF LAW, INST. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AM. LEGAL SYS., JUSTICE NEEDS & SATISFACTION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: LEGAL PROBLEMS IN DAILY LIFE (2021) [hereinafter US JUSTICE NEEDS], https://iaals.du.edu/sites/default/files/documents/publications/justice-needs-and-satisfaction-us.pdf.

Figure 15: Estimated Dollar Value of Avoided Legal Costs per Sandbox Service

	$ for Utah Attorney		$ per Sandbox Service		**$ VALUE OF AVOIDED LEGAL COSTS PER SERVICE**
LOWER BOUND	$250	-	$162	=	**$88**
UPPER BOUND	$260	-	$162	=	**$98**

Variable	Source/Rationale
$ for Utah Attorney	Estimates the average hourly rate for Utah attorneys as reported in Clio's Legal Trends Reports.[41] Lower bound: Estimated at the lowest average hourly attorney rate across study years for which data is available (average for 2023 = $250). Upper bound: Estimated at the highest average hourly attorney rate across study years for which data is available (average for 2021 = $260).
$ per Sandbox Service	Point-estimate reflects the average cost of Sandbox services reported by the Utah Supreme Court ($162).[42]

The final step for this component of the analysis is to estimate the total value of avoided legal costs associated with Sandbox services during the study period. Figure 16 presents the calculation used to estimate this value. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the estimated number of Sandbox services for which consumers would otherwise have sought attorney assistance (see Figure 14) by the estimated value of avoided legal costs per service (see Figure 15). The resulting range indicates that Sandbox services are plausibly associated with approximately $960,000 to $1.2 million in avoided legal costs for consumers during the study period.

[41] CLIO, HOURLY RATES FOR LEGAL SERVICES IN UTAH, https://www.clio.com/resources/legal-trends/compare-lawyer-rates/ut/ (last visited February 2, 2026)

[42] March 2023 Letter, *supra* note 8.

Figure 16: Total Estimated Value of Avoided Legal Costs

	# Services For Which Consumer Expected to Otherwise Seek Atty. Help		$ Value of Reduced Legal Costs Per Service		**TOTAL $ VALUE OF AVOIDED LEGAL COSTS**
LOWER BOUND	10,944	x	$88	=	**$963,072**
UPPER BOUND	12,160	x	$98	=	**$1,191,680**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Services For Which Consumer Expected to Otherwise Seek Atty. Help	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 14.
$ Value of Reduced Legal Costs Per Service	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 15.

b. Reduced Indirect Costs of Addressing Legal Issues in Court

In addition to reducing costs for legal services, Sandbox services may generate indirect economic benefits for consumers by reducing the time and stress, as well as ancillary costs, associated with addressing civil legal problems, such as missed work, childcare, transportation, healthcare, and similar out-of-pocket or opportunity costs. These indirect costs are most frequently borne by individuals who would otherwise proceed without legal representation; for that reason, our calculations for this part of the analysis include only those expected to otherwise be self-represented.[43]

This component of the analysis estimates the number of Sandbox consumers who would plausibly avoid indirect costs associated with self-representation. Figure 17 presents the calculation used to estimate this number during the study period. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the total number of unique Sandbox consumers served during the study period by the estimated proportion of consumers who would otherwise have been self-represented and the estimated proportion of those consumers expected to experience

[43] *See, e.g.*, KNOWLTON ET AL., *supra* note 19.

negative effects associated with their legal issue. The resulting range indicates that approximately 6,900 to 8,100 consumers could plausibly avoid indirect costs through access to Sandbox services during the study period.

Figure 17: Estimated Number of Sandbox Consumers Expected to Avoid Indirect Costs

	# Sandbox Consumers		% Otherwise SRL		% Expected to Experience Neg. Effects		**# CONSUMERS EXPECTED TO AVOID INDIRECT COSTS**
LOWER BOUND	24,000	x	80%	x	36%	=	**6,912**
UPPER BOUND	24,000	x	82%	x	41%	=	**8,069**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Sandbox Consumers	Point-estimate reflects the total number of unique consumers served by the Sandbox during the study period, as reported in the Monthly Activity Report for July 2023 (24,000).[44]
% Otherwise SRL	Estimates the proportion of Sandbox consumers that, in the absence of the Sandbox, would be expected to be self represented. Lower and upper bounds are estimated based on the proportions calculated in Figure 14 for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help*. Lower bound: Estimated at the inverse of the upper bound for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help* in Figure 14. 100% - 20% = 80% Upper bound: Estimated at the inverse of the lower bound for *% Otherwise Seek Lawyer Help* in Figure 14. 100% - 18% = 82%
% Expected to Experience Neg. Effects	Estimates the proportion of Sandbox consumers expected to experience negative effects as a result of their legal issue. Survey data collected during the study period suggests that people experience negative effects as a result of their most serious legal issues about 45% of the time.[45] Lower- and upper-bound estimates are calculated to account for the survey data's limitation to a person's most serious issue (i.e., people are expected to experience fewer negative consequences with less serious legal issues). Lower bound: Estimated at 45%, reduced by 20%. 45% x (100% - 20%) = 36% Upper bound: Estimated at 45%, reduced by 10%. 45% x (100% - 10%) = 41%

[44] July 2023 Activity Report, *supra* note 24.

[45] US JUSTICE NEEDS, *supra* note 40, at 103.

The analysis then estimates the value of avoided indirect spending per consumer for those consumers expected to avoid indirect costs. Figure 18 presents the calculation used to estimate this value. These estimates are calculated by applying a bounded percentage of Utah's median household income to approximate the value of avoided indirect costs, including participation-related expenses. The resulting range indicates that avoided indirect spending per consumer is approximately $46 to $92 during the study period.

Figure 18: Estimated Dollar Value of Avoided Indirect Per-Consumer Spending Plausibly Associated with Sandbox Services

	Median Household Income in UT		% Spending Avoided		**$ AMOUNT OF INDIRECT SPENDING AVOIDED PER CONSUMER**
LOWER BOUND	$91,750	x	0.05%	=	**$46**
UPPER BOUND	$91,750	x	0.10%	=	**$92**

Variable	Source/Rationale
Median Household Income in UT	Point-estimate reflects the median household income for Utahns in 2023 ($91,750).[46]
% Spending Avoided	Estimates the proportion of the median household income expected for consumers to save, on average, as a result of Sandbox services. Estimated proportions are intended as conservative estimates of amounts saved on indirect costs frequently associated with resolving a legal issue (e.g., missed work, childcare, transportation, mental/physical healthcare, etc.).[47]

[46] CTRS. FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SVCS., NATIONAL HEALTH EXPENDITURE DATA: STATE (RESIDENCE), https://www.cms.gov/data-research/statistics-trends-and-reports/national-health-expenditure-data/state-residence (last visited January 10, 2026).

[47] These types of indirect costs are frequently noted in access-to-justice literature and policy discussions but there is limited empirical data quantifying the typical magnitude of these costs across cases. Because it is well-established that these costs are real for litigants, we would expect that an SROI calculation that *does not include* savings associated with these would necessarily result

	Lower bound: Estimated at 0.05%. Upper bound: Estimated at 0.10%.

Finally, we estimate the total value of avoided indirect spending plausibly associated with Sandbox services during the study period. Figure 19 presents the calculation used to estimate this value. These estimates are calculated by multiplying the estimated number of consumers expected to avoid indirect costs (see Figure 17) by the estimated value of avoided indirect spending per consumer (see Figure 18). The resulting range indicates that Sandbox services are plausibly associated with approximately $318,000 to $742,000 in avoided indirect costs for consumers during the study period.

Figure 19: Estimated Total Dollar Value of Avoided Indirect Spending Plausibly Associated with Sandbox Services

	# Consumers Expected to Avoid Indirect Costs		$ Amount of Indirect Spending Avoided per Consumer		**TOTAL $ AMOUNT OF INDIRECT SPENDING AVOIDED**
LOWER BOUND	6,912	x	$46	=	**$317,952**
UPPER BOUND	8,069	x	$92	=	**$742,348**

Variable	Source/Rationale
# Consumers Expected to Avoid Indirect Costs	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 17.
$ Amount of Indirect Spending Avoided per Consumer	Estimates derived from a previous calculation. See Figure 18.

in an under-estimation of impact. For these reasons, we have used a strategy for estimation that is both conservative and conceptually plausible. For example, the lower-bound estimate is just under the total pay for one full shift of work for a minimum-wage employee in Utah in 2023 ($7.25/hour at minimum wage * 8 hours/shift = $58/shift).

3. Summary of Impact for Utah Courts and Consumers

Figure 20 summarizes the bounded estimates of court- and consumer-level impacts plausibly associated with Sandbox services during the study period. Estimated court impacts—representing the monetary value of judicial, court staff, and court-employed attorney capacity plausibly associated with Sandbox-relevant cases—range from approximately $250,000 to $910,000. Estimated consumer impacts, including avoided legal costs and avoided indirect costs, range from approximately $1.3 million to $1.9 million. Taken together, total court and consumer impacts range from approximately $1.5 million to $2.8 million during the study period.

Figure 20: Estimated Dollar Value of Impacts for Courts and Consumers Plausibly Associated with Sandbox Services

	Lower-Bound Estimate	Upper-Bound Estimate
COURT IMPACTS		
Value of Judicial Capacity	$76,791	$230,373
Value of Court Staff Capacity	$96,551	$359,380
Value of Court-Employed Attorney Capacity	$30,660	$91,980
Total Court Impacts	**$204,002**	**$681,733**
CONSUMER IMPACTS		
Value of Avoided Legal Costs	$963,072	$1,191,680
Value of Avoided Indirect Costs	$317,952	$742,348
Total Consumer Impacts	**$1,281,024**	**$1,934,028**
TOTAL IMPACTS		
Total Court and Consumer Impacts	**$1,485,026**	**$2,615,761**

C. Calculate the SROI

Having established bounded estimates for Sandbox inputs and impacts, we next calculate the SROI ratio. Table 2 summarizes the estimated lower- and upper-bound estimates of total inputs and total impacts developed in the preceding sections.

Table 2: Summary of Estimated Dollar Value of Sandbox Inputs and Impacts

	Lower-Bound Estimate	Upper-Bound Estimate
Total Estimated Value of Inputs	$1,269,777	$1,533,913
Total Estimated Value of Impacts	$1,485,026	$2,615,761

The SROI ratio is calculated by dividing total estimated impacts by total estimated inputs under lower- and upper-bound assumptions. Figure 21 presents the resulting lower- and upper-bound SROI ratios.

Applying the lower-bound estimates yields an SROI ratio of 1.17, indicating that approximately $1.17 in social value is associated with each $1.00 invested in the Sandbox. Applying the upper-bound estimates yields an SROI ratio of 1.71, indicating that approximately $1.71 in social value is associated with each $1.00 invested. Otherwise stated, these results suggest that the Sandbox generated between $1.17 and $1.71 in social value for every $1.00 invested during the study period.

Figure 21: Social Return on Investment Ratio Calculation, Lower and Upper Bounds

Lower-Bound SROI	Upper-Bound SROI
$\frac{\$1,485,026}{\$1,269,777} = \mathbf{\$1.17}$	$\frac{\$2,615,761}{\$1,533,913} = \mathbf{\$1.71}$

VI. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The SROI ratio provides a concise way to summarize the relationship between the resources invested in the Sandbox and the social value plausibly associated with it. By comparing the estimated monetary value of impacts to the estimated value of inputs, the ratio expresses how much social value is generated for each dollar invested, based on the assumptions and bounds applied in this analysis. SROI ratios greater than 1.0 indicate that a program is generating more social value than the resources required to support it. Conversely, ratios lower than 1.0 indicate that the resources required to support the program are greater than the social value generated.

It should be noted that this analysis focuses specifically on the social value generated in relation to the Court's investments in establishing and operating the Sandbox as a regulatory framework. As such, investments made by Sandbox entities to develop and deliver their individual business models—and the financial returns associated with those investments—are not included in the SROI calculation. Including those elements would shift the focus of the analysis toward the performance of individual entities, rather than the value generated by the Sandbox as a policy intervention, and would risk obscuring the relationship between the Court's investments and the outcomes evaluated here. Still, understanding the nature and impact of entity-level investments represents an important area for future research, particularly as the Sandbox continues to mature and more data becomes available.

Importantly, SROI estimates are expected to be lowest during the early stages of new initiatives. During this period, program development costs—including design, oversight, and implementation infrastructure—are typically highest, while impacts accumulate gradually as the program expands and matures. Thus, any SROI ratio above 1.0 during the early stages of program implementation would provide promising evidence for the effectiveness of the program.

We can, therefore, interpret the SROI analysis results for the Sandbox as indicative of success during its first three years of operation. While the actual range of values for the Sandbox SROI ratio reflects relatively modest returns—$1.17 to $1.71 returned for every

$1.00 invested—this is exactly what we would expect for a young program that is effectively progressing toward achieving its goals.

Also important to note is that the SROI estimates presented here capture only a subset of outcomes that can be credibly quantified at this stage of the Sandbox's development. As is typical for programs in their early years—particularly those focused on regulatory innovation and system-level change—many anticipated benefits are expected to emerge gradually over time or are not yet observable in ways that support reliable monetization. Potential longer-term effects, such as sustained changes in legal service delivery models, broader improvements in access to justice, and shifts in market behavior, are therefore not reflected in these calculations.

In addition, certain non-monetized outcomes—such as increased consumer confidence, improved procedural fairness, greater engagement with the legal system (as opposed to default or disengagement), and reduced stress associated with unresolved legal issues—may represent meaningful sources of social value that are not captured in the present analysis. Other impacts that could plausibly increase the estimated social return are also not monetized in this analysis. For example, unresolved legal problems are often associated with downstream effects on employment stability, housing security, financial well-being, and health outcomes. To the extent that improved access to legal services through the Sandbox helps individuals resolve legal issues earlier or more effectively, these broader societal benefits may represent additional sources of value that are not reflected in the present estimates.

While continued evaluation will be important to refine these estimates and assess longer-term outcomes, the present findings provide preliminary evidence that the Sandbox model is producing measurable economic benefits relative to its cost. As additional data becomes available and the Sandbox continues to evolve, future analyses may be able to capture a wider range of outcomes and provide a more complete picture of its longer-term social return.

VII. CONCLUSION

This SROI analysis provides a structured and conservative estimate of the social value plausibly associated with Utah's Legal Regulatory Sandbox during its early years of operation. By systematically identifying and valuing key inputs and a bounded set of measurable impacts, the analysis estimates an SROI range suggesting the measurable benefits to courts and consumers exceeded the program's operating costs during the study period. Importantly, these findings are grounded in cautious assumptions, transparent methods, and sensitivity analysis designed to avoid overstating effects—underscoring the credibility of the results rather than their precision.

Beyond the specific estimates presented here, the analysis highlights the Sandbox's potential as a vehicle for advancing access to justice while supporting more efficient use of court and consumer resources. In addition to the monetized impacts captured in this report, the Sandbox may be contributing to broader system-level changes, such as increased innovation in legal service delivery, expanded consumer choice, and improved alignment between regulatory structures and public need, that are not yet fully observable or quantifiable. As the Sandbox continues to evolve and additional data becomes available, future research will be well positioned to examine longer-term outcomes, refine valuation approaches, and assess how impacts change as services scale and mature. Future evaluation will be critical to understanding not only whether the Sandbox continues to generate positive returns, but how its design and implementation can be optimized to maximize social benefit over time.

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