



Statewide Policy

State of Ohio Administrative Policy

Website Accessibility

No:
Information Technology
IT-09

Effective:
July 22, 2021

Issued By:

Kathleen C. Madden, Director

1.0 Purpose

This state policy establishes minimum website accessibility requirements for information provided on public-facing ***State of Ohio websites***.

A glossary of terms found in this policy is located in Appendix A - Definitions. The first occurrence of a defined term is in ***bold italics***.

2.0 Policy

State agencies shall establish a website accessibility strategy that applies to the design, development, implementation and maintenance of public-facing agency Web pages. At a minimum, public-facing state websites shall meet the following requirements:

2.1 **Web Page Accessibility Requirements**: State of Ohio public-facing Web pages shall be compliant with the accessibility standards established by the ***Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0***, Level A and Level AA.

2.1.1 Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 shall take precedence when agencies have agreements in place with the federal government to make their websites Section 508 compliant.

2.2 **Outsourced Web Development**: Agencies shall ensure that all contracted, in-kind, or other third-party website development complies with the accessibility standards established by WCAG 2.0, Level A and Level AA.

2.3 **Accessibility Statements**: Agencies shall include an accessibility statement at a minimum on the ***agency home page*** and primary entry points or provide a link to an accessibility statement. The accessibility statement shall include:

- A statement of compliance if compliance has been attained;
- A statement describing steps taken to ensure continuing compliance if compliance has been attained; and
- A feedback mechanism for Internet visitors to report accessibility issues with the agency's website.

2.4 **Implementation:** This state policy requires that state agencies ensure a certain level of accessibility on State of Ohio public-facing websites.

As of the effective date of this state policy, some agency public-facing websites are unlikely to be completely aligned to the requirements of this policy. Given the varying degrees of complexity and capability of each agency's environment, alignment to certain requirements may require a development period.

Given these understandings, a general implementation framework for the requirements of this policy includes:

- 2.4.1 Web pages created after the effective date of this policy shall be compliant.
- 2.4.2 If there is reasonable opportunity, Web pages created, but not yet implemented as of the effective date of this policy shall be compliant.
- 2.4.3 Web pages that are redesigned after the effective date of this policy shall be compliant.
- 2.4.4 Web pages that are already in place shall be made compliant, if not already, within a reasonable amount of time in consideration of the complexity and capability of the agency's environment with priority given to the agency home page and Web pages that receive frequent traffic.
- 2.4.5 A process of incremental effort toward implementation of the management controls outlined in this policy shall begin.
- 2.4.6 All State of Ohio public-facing Web pages shall be compliant with this policy within two years of the effective date.

3.0 Authority

ORC 125.02, 125.021, 125.023, 125.04, 125.041, 125.18

4.0 Revision History

| Date | Description of Change |
|------------|---|
| 08/20/2007 | Original Policy |
| 10/13/2016 | Transferred policy content to a new State of Ohio Administrative Policy |

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|------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| | Template. Re-numbered policy to IT-09 format. | to be consistent with new numbering |
| 05/01/2017 | Revised the policy to establish the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A and Level AA, as the standard for State of Ohio public-facing website accessibility. | |
| 07/22/2021 | Updated the policy template to reflect the DAS director change. | |
| 07/22/2023 | Scheduled policy review. | |

5.0 Inquiries

Direct inquiries about this policy to:

State IT Policy Manager
Enterprise IT Architecture & Policy
Office of Information Technology
Ohio Department of Administrative Services
30 East Broad Street, 39th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

1-614-466-6930 | DAS.State.ITPolicy.Manager@das.ohio.gov

State of Ohio Administrative Policies may be found online at <https://das.ohio.gov/technology-and-strategy/policies>

6.0 Attachments

None.

Appendix A - Definitions

- a. Agency Home Page. The agency home page serves as the starting point to navigation for an agency site or agency presence. It is the first page presented when an Internet user navigates to an agency site or an agency presence on the World Wide Web.
- b. State of Ohio Websites. Websites developed and maintained by Ohio agencies, or under contracts administered by Ohio agencies.
- c. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. WCAG 2.0 is a stable, referenceable technical standard. It has 12 guidelines that are organized under four principles: perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. For each guideline, there are testable success criteria, which are at three levels: A, AA, and AAA.¹

¹ Henry Lawton Shawn, Education and Outreach Working Group (EOWG), Web Content Accessibility Working Group (WCAG WG). "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Overview." W3C March 2017. <<https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag>>.

Appendix B – Resources

The following resources provide accessibility standards, guidelines, training opportunities and tools to assist Web page authors and designers:

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| Document Name |
| Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and Resources |
| <i>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0</i> https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/ |
| W3C Web Design and Applications https://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/ |
| <i>Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Communications Act Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards and Guidelines</i> https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-00395/information-and-communication-technology-ict-standards-and-guidelines |
| <i>United States Access Board</i> https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-ict-refresh/final-rule |
| PDF and Microsoft Office Accessibility Guides |
| <i>Adobe Accessibility Resource Center</i> https://www.adobe.com/accessibility.html |
| <i>State of Minnesota, The Office of Accessibility</i> https://mn.gov/mnit/about-mnit/accessibility/ |
| <i>Microsoft Accessibility Resources</i> https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/accessibility/resources?activetab=pivot_1%3aprimar3 |
| Website Tools |
| <i>World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Advanced Search for Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools</i> https://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/ |
| <i>World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Developers</i> https://www.w3.org/developers/ |
| <i>WebAIM WCAG 2.0 Checklist</i> https://webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist |
| <i>Adobe PDF Converter</i> https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/acrobat/features.html |