Web Accessibility

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[Web Accessibility](#) refers to the design and development of websites, web applications, digital documents and hypermedia for people who experience disabilities. Accessible design and development ensure both direct and equal access that is compatible with a person's assistive technology, such as a screen reader, alternative input device or screen magnification.

Census data shows that between 12% and 20% of the U.S. population experience a disability that impacts computer use. Building accessible websites, web applications and software adds an additional user demographic to possible users. Using basic accessibility principles has also been shown to improve overall usability.

WaTech offers a suite of services designed to help agencies meet and exceed the Washington state policy related to accessibility (OCIO Policy 188). This policy references standards that conform to parts of Section 508 concerning digital access and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. These services include:

- Accessibility assessment – A report conducted and compiled by accessibility subject matter experts providing an actionable assessment of a website or app based on preset criteria. It includes functional and human determined data.
- Automated code review – An automated service that reviews compliance of code with a full report. Does not cover functional requirements, only reviews coding standards.
- Coordinated user testing – A full-service experience testing engagement. Coordinated and organized testing with full report on test results.
- Site and application work – Full-service web development and code fixes for improving accessibility-related issues.

This is a brokered service. WaTech partners with a leader in the industry to provide web accessibility evaluation and testing services to our customers.

[Visit the Web Accessibility page](#) for more information.

Helpful information

Service category
Professional Services

Service availability
24/7/365

Related services
- User Experience
- Website Services

How to request service
Eligible organizations must first enter into a Master Service Agreement (MSA). See if you qualify for an MSA.

Send a request to support@watech.wa.gov and we will schedule a consult with you.

Service owner
Wendy Wickstrom

Intended customers

All state and local government organizations, Tribal and non-profits in Washington state. To date, more than 18 agencies have utilized this service for more than 40 projects.

Options available with this service

- Professional evaluations of websites and applications
- Usability testing with users using assistive technologies
- Detailed recommendations for improvements and fixes based on WCAG 2.1 AA or AAA
- Document remediation (dependent on size of effort)

Customer engagement

- Semi-annual customer Town Hall with all Computing Services teams providing updates and gathering customer feedback.

- Monthly Technology Management Council meeting and weekly CIO call.
- Monthly status meetings with Business Relationship Managers.
- Regular outreach to solicit feedback, provide updates and inform agencies on emerging projects, initiatives, and services.
- Requests for new consultations and modifications to existing applications.

Action plan

Current activity

- Actively market the service to state and local government agencies, many of which are not aware that it is offered by WaTech. Participate in the state's Accessibility Committee which is being established within the IT Enterprise Governance model. Present to Communicators groups, TMC and BMC.
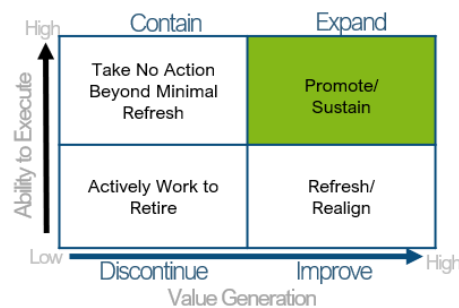
One- to two-year goals

- Continue to actively market the service to state and local government agencies and continue to participate in the state's Accessibility Committee and the WaTech Accessibility program.
- Develop a statewide policy to require accessibility in technology procurements.
- Increase utilization of this contract by 50% to support the Governor's priority around accessibility and equitable access.

Three- to five-year goals

- Continue to actively market the service to state and local government agencies and continue to participate in the state's Accessibility Committee.
- Continue building team expertise on Accessibility laws, tools and advancements

Service review and fully loaded service budget projection

Revenue source:

The Web Accessibility service is bundled and funded using the revenue received under the overarching Usability and Accessibility service model.

All services under this rate model operate on a pay-per-use rate structure. Revenue received from this rate structure goes directly against the cost incurred to provide the service. As a brokered service, WaTech charges a percentage of total contract costs for vendor management. This is currently 1.5% but will likely have to increase to 2% to cover increased costs.

Decision Packages

In the 2023-25 biennial budget submittal process, WaTech requested funding to establish the Enterprise IT Accessibility Program. This program will provide enterprise level guidance through policy and establish partnerships to address accessibility issues impacting all areas of state government operations. Additionally, it will assist in maturing accessibility programs and improving the accessibility of digital content.