

USER-01-01-S

State CIO Adopted: Dec. 10, 2024

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Sunset Review: Dec. 10, 2027



Replaces:
188.10 Minimum Accessibility Standard
August 31, 2021

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

See Also:

RCW [43.105.054](#) WaTech Governance

RCW [43.105.052](#) Powers and duties of agency—Application to higher education, legislature, and judiciary.

RCW [43.105.020](#) (22) "State agency"

- 1. The minimum level of accessibility compliance for [covered technology](#) is Level AA compliance with [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1](#), including the guidelines associated with these principles:**
 - a. [Perceivable](#) - Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can comprehend.
 - b. [Operable](#) - User interface components and navigation must be operable.
 - c. [Understandable](#) - Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.
 - d. [Robust](#) - Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.
- 2. [WCAG 2.1](#) AA provides success criteria for measuring web accessibility and provides principles and useful metrics for products and services that are not specifically web based.**
- 3. Effective July 1, 2026, the minimum level of compliance for accessibility is Level AA compliance with [WCAG 2.2](#).**
- 4. Agency covered technology procurement and contracting activities must include the following:**
 - a. Accessibility requirements in the procurement, design, project scope, budget, and maintenance of IT Project/Systems applications and IT services.
 - b. Accessibility validation:
 - i. Ensure agency or third-party human user testing to validate accessibility, and;
 - ii. A third-party accessibility validation report, or;

- iii. Vendor Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) or;
 - iv. Compliance review documentation showing an evaluation of the solution's compliance with the applicable WCAG level.
- c. Remediation activities:
- i. Require a remediation plan from the vendor for addressing accessibility issues.
 - ii. Evaluate the vendor's remediation plan and timeline and determine contractual clauses to enforce remediation.
 - iii. Where the vendor does not have a remediation plan, and no other accessible solution will meet the agency's needs, agencies must:
 - 1. Ensure alternative methods for access are incorporated into the agency's IT Accessibility Plan. Alternative access methods must also comply with applicable Washington State IT policies and standards.
 - 2. Reserve the right to reduce the amount or terminate contracts where vendors demonstrate a lack of accountability to timely response and remediation and accessibility improvements with new releases and updates. This also applies if a vendor misrepresents the current accessibility of their products.
 - 3. Consider the track record of vendors through comprehensive evaluation of accessibility and prioritization of accessibility, including contract violations, in renewal processes or new procurement processes.

REFERENCES

1. [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1.](#)
2. [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.2.](#)
3. [Definition of Terms Used in WaTech Policies and Reports.](#)
4. [Guidance on Applying WCAG 2 to Non-Web Information and Communications Technologies \(WCAG2ICT\)](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about this policy, please email the [WaTech Policy Mailbox](#).

DEFINITIONS

Covered Technology:

All public-facing digital content and tools, including:

- Websites,
- applications,
- documents and media,
- blog posts, and
- social media content.

Certain non-public-facing content that must also comply including:

- All electronic content used for official business to communicate,
- emergency notifications,
- internal data collection structures,
- initial or final decisions adjudicating administrative claims or proceedings,
- internal or external program or policy announcements,
- notices of benefits, program eligibility, employment opportunities, or
- personnel actions, formal acknowledgements or receipts.