

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish the Louisiana Department of Education's (LDOE) accessibility requirements for public access to web-based information available on its website.

POLICY STATEMENT: It is the policy of the LDOE to ensure that people with hearing, visual and other disabilities have equal access to public information that has been made available by the agency on the World Wide Web. It is the direct responsibility of the agency to be knowledgeable of the guidelines for achieving universal accessibility. These guidelines shall be reflected in the design and creation of all official LDOE web-based information resources.

SCOPE: This policy is intended for use by all web authors, web application developers, communication liaisons and contractors creating or maintaining web pages for the LDOE. The basic concepts should be understandable by anyone with a general familiarity with web technologies. Knowledge of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and related web languages will help in fully understanding the associated Standards and Guidelines. Exceptions to accessibility standards may be noted for internet mapping (GIS) and engineering design (CAD) web based applications.

POLICY: The LDOE has adopted Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative standards and guidelines as the benchmark to meet the objective of achieving universal accessibility for web sites. All LDOE web sites shall be designed to meet or exceed all Section 508 requirements and all Web Content Accessibility Guideline (WCAG) Priority 1 checkpoints and Priority 2 and 3 checkpoints as needed.

Many of the WCAG Checklist of Checkpoints for Web Content Accessibility are incorporated into Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, which establishes accessibility standards for federal agencies. To comply with the intent of the Web Accessibility Policy, agencies should:

- Satisfy all Section 508 Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards (Subpart B — Technical Standards: Sec. 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications)
- Satisfy all Priority 1 WCAG checkpoints.
- Implement Priority 2 and 3 checkpoints as needed, especially if the Web site uses tables, frames, or form controls.
- Create a logical tab order for navigation.
- Test and modify as needed with an accessibility evaluation and repair tool.

All agency sponsored websites shall comply with these requirements for new web pages developed subsequent to the adoption of this policy. As existing web pages are updated, managing entities must ensure that the updated pages meet these requirements. Full compliance with this policy is anticipated with the implementation of a single state web portal or within three years of the effective date of this policy, whichever comes first.

All agency sponsored web development performed under contract shall comply with this policy. All web development contracts shall include explicit provisions by which contractors will demonstrate compliance with this policy through the use of standard tools for testing and verifying accessibility according to Section 508 and WCAG guidelines.

ENFORCEMENT

The LDOE will provide training to all communication liaisons to ensure that all websites or web page request meet accessibility standards and therefore are accessible to all users. Subsequently, the Office of Public Affairs will monitor all website requests to also ensure accessibility with all web pages and documents. The Office of Public Affairs shall review and approve any updates to this policy, and/or accessibility standards set forth by the agency to ensure that the LDOE meets the required goals.