

System-wide Policy: IT0126 - Accessibility	
Version: 1	Effective Date: 10/01/2017

IT0126 - Accessibility

Objective:

The University of Tennessee (UT) strives to deploy information, materials, and technology that have been designed, developed, or procured to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those who use assistive technologies.

Scope:

This policy applies to all users of and information technology (IT) resources owned, operated, or provided by the University of Tennessee System including its campuses, institutes, and administration (University and/or Campuses).

“Users” includes but is not limited to students, faculty, staff, contractors, agents, representatives, and visitors accessing, using, or handling the University’s information technology resources.

Information transmitted or stored on University IT resources is the property of the University unless it is specifically identified as the property of other parties.

Principles:

A Campus/Unit may apply more stringent requirements than those documented in this policy provided they do not conflict with or lower the standards or requirements established by this or any other University policy.

Each User of University resources is required to be familiar and comply with University policies. Acceptance of this policy is assumed if a User accesses, uses, or handles University resources.

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Policy:

The University of Tennessee is committed to supporting a teaching and learning environment that is accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities. To this end, the University seeks to deploy information, materials, and technology (IMT) that have been designed, developed, or procured to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those who use assistive technologies. An accessible IMT environment generally enhances usability for everyone. By supporting IMT accessibility, the University helps ensure that a broad population is able to access, benefit from, and contribute to its programs and services.

Under this policy, all UT locations must:

- Adhere to the *UT IMT Accessibility Requirements (Addendum A)*, including the establishment of and adherence to an IMT Accessibility Program.
- Develop, purchase, and/or acquire, to the extent feasible, hardware and software products that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Promote awareness of this policy to all members of the University community, particularly those in roles that are responsible for creating, selecting, or maintaining electronic content and applications.

Compliance/Responsibilities:

Chancellors or other administrative heads of UT locations are responsible for facilitating and ensuring implementation of this policy at their locations.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs & Student Success is responsible for issuing and updating any requirements, standards or guidelines that support this policy and shall facilitate regular communication among locations to address consistent implementation of this policy throughout the University of Tennessee system.

Procedures:

See Addendum A: IMT Accessibility Requirements

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References:

University of Tennessee:

- Information, Materials, & Technology Accessibility Addendum A
- [Electronic Accessibility at the University of Tennessee](#)

External:

- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#)

Definitions:

Accessible: Refers to the concept that people with disabilities are able, including with the help of assistive technologies, to access and use a product or system,. For example, an “accessible” website may be designed so that the text can be enlarged by the user, rather than having a fixed font size, or may be designed so that it can be interpreted and “read aloud” by screen reader software used by individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Accessible Information, Materials & Technology: That which has been designed, developed, or procured to be usable by, and therefore accessible to, individuals with disabilities, including those who use assistive technologies.

Assistive Technologies: Adaptive, rehabilitative devices that promote greater independence for individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, special input devices (e.g., head or foot mouse, puff- and-sip switches, speech recognition), screen-reading software, and screen magnifiers.

UT Location / Location: Physical sites with a University of Tennessee presence, including, but not limited to University campuses, institutes, and centers.

Usability: Refers to how easily, effectively, and efficiently users can use a product or system to achieve their goals, and how satisfied they are with the experience.

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Addendum A:

Information, Materials & Technology Accessibility Requirements

Effective Date: October 7, 2015

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I. SUMMARY

This addendum describes the minimum requirements for UT locations to comply with UT IT0126 – Information, Materials & Technology Accessibility. Information technology is a dynamic field, and these requirements will be updated as technology and accessibility-related issues evolve.

II. REQUIREMENTS

Information, Materials & Technology Accessibility Program

Each UT location must establish an IMT Accessibility Program. The purpose of an IMT Accessibility Program (Program) is to establish processes to address IT accessibility in a systematic fashion, using local structures and practices as appropriate. The Chancellor or other administrative head of the UT location must designate an individual and/or a committee to develop and oversee the Program and to promote coordination

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with system wide IMT accessibility initiatives. The designated individual and/or committee must represent a broad range of functional areas and be able to address academic, research, and administrative concerns and needs.

Locations are encouraged to be innovative in addressing IMT accessibility. At a minimum, the Program must include the following:

1. **Authority and Responsibility:** Assignment of roles, authority, responsibilities, and accountability for achieving policy compliance
2. **Audience:** A strategy to address the different needs of the academic, research, and administrative functions and to support IT accessibility for decentralized academic and research activities
3. **Prioritization:** A process to prioritize effort that takes into consideration local needs, practices and available resources, including providing access to centralized IMT accessibility support
4. **Design Process:** A strategy to incorporate accessibility into the design and authoring process of electronic information resources
5. **Procurement:** A procedure to incorporate IT accessibility into the procurement process, including establishment of a formal means for evaluating the accessibility of products or systems under consideration for procurement
6. **Training:** A training plan for personnel who develop and maintain electronic information resources, author web content, or make IT related purchases
7. **Awareness Campaign:** A communication plan and campaign to raise awareness about IMT accessibility
8. **Compliance Monitoring:** Processes for monitoring compliance, including compliance with any standards listed in this Addendum A
9. **Evaluation:** An evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of the Program
10. **Exception Process:** A process for determining exceptions and for ensuring the development, documentation, and communication of effective alternate forms of access

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B. Standards

Compliance with standards listed in this section must be considered high priority in the development and implementation of the location's IMT Accessibility Program and must be measured as part of the formal program evaluation process.

1. Web Standard - The standards for accessibility of electronic information are Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 at level AA Success Criteria. More information about the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) standards for accessibility can be found at the W3C website.
2. New Development and Purchases - New development and purchases, including development and purchases for major revisions and updates of existing electronic information resources, should receive higher priority over the retrofit of existing electronic information resources.

Additional standards for other electronic information resources may be identified over time and added to this Addendum A.

C. Exceptions

Conformance to standards may not always be feasible due to the nature of the content, the purpose of the resource, the lack of accessible solutions, or an unreasonably high administrative or financial cost necessary to make the resource accessible.

However, these difficulties do not relieve University programs or services from their IT accessibility obligations. University managers of programs and services must be prepared to provide content and/or services in a suitable alternative format (e.g., electronic text file or audio description) upon request.

III. RELATED INFORMATION

IV. REVISION HISTORY