

DIGITAL CONTENT ACCESSIBILITY

I. Procedure

A. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Western Dakota Technical College (WDTC) Digital Accessibility Committee is responsible for guiding the College's compliance with Accessibility Standards so Digital Content is readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities.

The Committee will support the College and its employees

- In designing accessible Digital Content through guidance, training, tools, and resources.
- By ensuring policy continues to align with laws and the College's commitment to accessibility.
- Through reviewing the applicability exceptions, approving exceptions, and maintaining documentation of approved exceptions.
- Through reviewing Equally Effective Alternative Access Plan (EEAAP) submissions and maintaining documentation of approvals and denials of EEAAPs.

The Committee will be comprised of College stakeholders to include, but not limited to representatives from compliance, IT, marketing, finance, human resources, and faculty.

2. Department Leadership such as Deans, Directors, and Vice President's are responsible for establishing mechanisms to ensure that Digital Content within their areas conform to the College's Digital Accessibility policy by:
 - Ensuring that Digital Content in their area has identified Digital Content Owners;
 - Charging Digital Content Owners to
 - Identify Digital Content Creators;
 - Promote the necessary training and education for Digital Content Creators; and
 - Respond to compliance deficiencies in a timely manner.
3. Digital Content Owners are responsible for the accessibility of the Digital Content under their purview, absent a written exception granted by the Digital Accessibility Committee, and must hold Digital Content Creators, developers,

and other necessary parties accountable for ensuring the Digital Content's accessibility. Digital Content Owners will coordinate with their Digital Content Creators to:

- Identify and provide any resource/training needs;
- Create a plan for and conduct an annual audit of their Digital Content's compliance with this policy;
- Report annual audit results to their Department Leadership and to the Digital Accessibility Committee by June 30 of each year.

B. Exceptions to Accessible Digital Content

1. Digital Content Owners bear the responsibility of ensuring Digital Content under their purview meets Accessibility Standards unless an exception has been approved by the Digital Accessibility Committee. Digital Content Owners must request an exception following the processes established by the Digital Accessibility Committee. No exceptions are authorized until the Digital Content Owner receives written approval of the exception.
2. Exceptions that will be reviewed for potential approval include:
 - Archived Web Content – Archived web content means web content that:
 - Was created before April 24, 2026, reproduces paper documents created before April 24, 2026, or reproduces the contents of other physical media created before April 24, 2026;
 - Is retained exclusively for reference, research, or recordkeeping;
 - Is not altered or updated after the date of archiving; and
 - Is organized and stored in a dedicated area or areas clearly identified as being archived
 - Preexisting Conventional Electronic Documents – Conventional electronic documents that are available as part of WDTC's web content or mobile apps before April 24, 2026, unless such documents are currently used to apply for, gain access to, or participate in WDTC's services, programs, or activities.
 - Content Posted by a Third Party – Content posted by a third party, unless the third party is posting due to contractual, licensing, or other arrangements with WDTC.
 - Individualized, Password-Protected or Otherwise Secured Conventional Electronic Documents – Conventional electronic documents that are:
 - About a specific individual, their property, or their account; and
 - Password-protected or otherwise secured.

Note: This exception does not apply to My.WDT sites or any software/website utilized for sharing course materials in the regular course of educational programs.

- Preexisting Social Media Post – WDTC’s social media posts that were posted before April 24, 2026.

C. Procurement of Digital Content

1. Those responsible for procuring Digital Content for the College shall:
 - Exercise due diligence in researching available information about a product’s accessibility (e.g. examining the Accessibility Compliance Report (“ACR”) and/or Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (“VPAT”) provided for a given tool);
 - Endeavor that contracts with suppliers, vendors, or providers include language holding the suppliers, vendors, or providers accountable for conforming with the Accessibility Standards; and
2. When conformance with the Accessibility Standards is not possible, those responsible for procuring Digital Content must request an Equally Effective Alternative by submitting an EEAAP to the Digital Accessibility Committee. EEAAPs must include a detailed description as to why conformance with the Accessibility Standards is not feasible or would cause undue hardship or a fundamental alteration. EEAAPs must detail how information will be made available to individuals with disabilities until conformance with the Accessibility Standards is achieved. No Equally Effective Alternatives are authorized until the requestor receives written approval of their EEAAP by the Digital Accessibility Committee.
3. If those responsible for procuring Digital Content are working with a supplier, vendor, or provider who will provide a custom build (e.g. new website, custom software, or My.WDT tools/LMS integration), they must seek to:
 - Incorporate digital accessibility requirements into the RFP or work request;
 - Exercise due diligence in researching available information about a product’s accessibility (e.g. examining the ACR and/or VPAT provided for a given tool);
 - Ensure that contracts with suppliers, vendors, or providers include language holding the suppliers, vendors, or providers accountable for conforming with the Accessibility Standards; and
 - Request an Equally Effective Alternative through the EEAAP process, when conformance with the Accessibility Standards is not possible.

D. Reporting and Responding to Accessibility Issues

1. Reporting

- The Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Office will provide Digital Content Owners an accessibility statement and a link to report an accessibility barrier-concern. The Digital Content Owner must ensure the statement and link are included in the footer of each page, or another location approved by the Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Office. The purpose of the statement and the link is to provide a primary means for users to submit a request or express concerns about the accessibility of Digital Content.
- If the Digital Content Owner becomes aware of the request or concern through another channel, the Digital Content Owner must submit the request or issue using the link provided by the Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Office for proper documentation and tracking purposes.

2. Responding

- The Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Office will work with the appropriate Digital Content Owners and/or the appropriate Department Leader to respond to and resolve the request or concern.

E. Enforcement Sanctions

If Digital Content remains in non-conformance after good-faith effort has been made by the Department Leader, the Digital Content Accessibility Committee, or the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success, the Digital Content Owner and/or the Digital Content Creator will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment.

II. Definitions

- A. Accessibility Standards means the Worldwide Web Consortium's Guidelines (WCAG) that is required by the Department of Justice's regulations as stated in [Subpart H of 28 CFR Part 35](#). *(On the approval date of this policy, the standard was Level A and Level AA success criteria and conformance requirements specified in [WCAG 2.1](#).)*
- B. Digital Content means all electronic information and communication technology (ICT) procured, created, produced, or revised by the College, which includes, but is not limited to:
- Websites hosted on the College domain;
 - Course sites and learning management system (LMS) content;

- WDTC-created and third-party software, applications, mobile applications, domains, and websites utilized by the College;
 - Official College social media accounts and digital marketing materials;
 - Audiovisual materials, such as videos, podcasts, and live-streamed events;
 - Downloadable and shareable documents made available through College websites, course sites, email communications, and social media (e.g., PDFs, Word documents, spreadsheets, and presentations); and
 - Electronic communications distributed by the College
- C. Digital Content Owner means an individual responsible for College Digital Content.
- D. Equally effective means a method that communicates the same information and provides equivalent functionality and privacy as Digital Content that is not fully accessible.
- E. Exception means a documented determination that specific Digital Content cannot practicably meet WCAG standards, and for which an equally effective alternative will be provided.
- F. Fundamental Alteration means a change to an academic program, a service, or an activity that significantly changes the essential nature of the program, service, or activity.
- G. Procurement means the process by which Western Dakota Technical College acquires goods, services, software, digital tools, or other resources from external suppliers, vendors, or providers. Procurement includes all activities such as identifying needs, evaluating options, reviewing accessibility and compliance requirements, negotiating terms, ensuring contract language meets institutional standards, and finalizing agreements with suppliers, vendors, or providers.
- H. Undue Hardship means a change to the work environment that would impose significant operational difficulties and/or financial strain.

Legal References:

[Subpart H – Web and Mobile Accessibility \(CFR 35.200 – 35.209\)](#) of Title 28 Chapter 1 Part 35 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services;
[Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq;](#)
[Section 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794](#)

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