Digital Services Policy Framework

Accessibility and Inclusivity Standard

Last Updated: January 2024

Document Control

Document version history

Date	Author	Version	Revision Notes
2011	Public Sector Commission	1	First Release
2014	Department of Finance	1	Rebranded to Department of Finance
2017	Office of the GCIO	1.1	Applied Office of the GCIO brand; Edits to facilitate moving the content under the Digital Services Policy Framework, including removing references to WGF PSC Circular and the National Transition Strategy, and added more references to Further Guidance section.

Date	Author	Version	Revision Notes
April 2018	Office of the GCIO	2.0	The Standard has been strengthened and expanded to consider as many people's needs and abilities as possible. It also provides a transition plan for digital services to achieve WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance.
September 2019	Office of Digital Government	2.1	Rebranded to Office of Digital Government; Updated hyperlink and added entry in related policies, standards and guidance section.
January 2024	Office of Digital Government	3.0	Updated information from the Accessibility and Inclusivity working group.

Overview

Accessibility is the practice of making content usable by everyone. This includes:

- people with a disability,
- older people,
- people who find using digital services difficult,
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds,
- people living in remote areas who may experience low bandwidth,
- and people using different devices such as smartphones and tablets.

We must create and manage online government information and services using a consistent approach based on best practice so that:

- information and services are easy to find and access;
- information is easy to read and understand;
- information and services are relevant and current;
- services are easy to use; and
- information and services are available to everyone.

Definition of terms

Term	Definition
Archived content	Archived content remains available for meaningful reference purposes only. It is not maintained or updated.
Assistive digital support	Helping users with low digital skills or limited access to the web.
Assistive technology	Assistive technology such as mobility aids, computer software and hardware such as a screen reader, hearing aids are a device, system or support used by individuals to perform tasks that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.
Content	Content is defined as information published by agencies in the form of text, documents, images, audio and video. It is used to inform, educate and connect people with our information and services.
Responsive design	Responsive design is the approach that suggests design and development should respond to the user's behaviour and environment based on screen size, platform and orientation.
WCAG	The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) are a series of internationally recognised standards for web content accessibility.

Purpose

The purpose of this Standard is to:

- ensure Western Australian Government agencies adopt a minimum accessibility standard when designing, developing and delivering digital products, services and content.

- ensure a consistent approach is taken across government so that the community can expect the same minimum standards no matter which agency is providing the digital product, service or content.
- strengthen the accessibility of all government digital products, services and content.
- provide a single point of reference for digital content authors, developers and designers.

Scope

This Standard applies to all entities that are within the scope of Digital Strategy for the Western Australian Government. This includes all agencies, statutory authorities and government trading enterprises.

This Standard is to be applied to:

- public facing websites
- intranets
- extranets
- web applications
- mobile applications
- social media sites and tools
- advertising campaigns, such as television and radio.

Cross-jurisdictional websites and websites created through public-private partnerships are required to meet the accessibility requirements applicable to the main authoring agency.

Web content relating to government funded programs (including grants) or initiatives delivered through third-party providers must meet accessibility requirements if the information provided is considered to be, 'government information'.

Out of scope

Archived content provided for reference purposes.

Authority

This Standard underpins the Digital Services Policy and is a mandatory component of the Digital Services Policy Framework (DSPF).

Related legislation

- Disability Services Act 1993 requires Western Australian state and local governments to develop and implement a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). DAIPs aid in planning services, facilities and information to assist people with disabilities access to public authorities.
- Equal Opportunity Act WA 1984 assists to ensure that people are equally able to access services, facilities, information and buildings in WA.
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 requires the provision of equitable access to people with disabilities. Under the Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against

persons with disabilities by excluding access to information and services, which includes those delivered online.

Requirements

Requirement	Description
Requirement 1	All digital content must adopt the latest WCAG standard to AA level.
Requirement 2	Content must be accessible and provided in the most useful and accessible format for the community.
Requirement 3	A digital service must provide a comparable experience for all without undermining the quality of the content.
Requirement 4	A digital service must allow for assistive technologies and methods.
Requirement 5	Agencies must test and review digital services at regular intervals, both before and after a major release.
Requirement 6	Agencies are required to report on their website accessibility levels annually through their Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). There is no process by which an agency can secure an exemption from the requirement to meet the standard. Instead, each agency is responsible for meeting the standard, and accordingly accepts any risks associated with not doing so.

Implementation

All Western Australian government digital services are required to be compliant with the latest WCAG Level AA.

Responsibility for implementation and achieving compliance with this Standard's requirements lie with the agency authoring the content.

The level of effort and cost will vary by agency and depends on a number of factors, for example, number and complexity of websites, available resources and ICT infrastructure requirements.

Agencies need to recognise that this is not purely a technical issue and solely an IT related cost. Primarily, it needs to be viewed, funded and resourced as a critically important element of each agency's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DIAP). By prioritising accessibility in the DAIP, agencies can ensure that they are meeting the needs of all members of the community, including those with disabilities.

Related policies, standards and guidance

This Standard forms part of the [Digital Services Policy Framework](#) that provides guidance for agencies in the delivery of digital services, including websites and supports the [Digital Services Policy](#).

You can also refer to the:

- [Digital Services Accessibility and Inclusivity Guidelines](#) — provides information and recommendations to assist agencies in complying this standard.
- [Digital Services Content Standard](#) — defines the minimum standards that Western Australian Government agencies should apply when creating content for digital services.
- [Digital Services Content Guidelines](#) — provides information and recommendations to assist agencies in complying with the Digital Services Content Standard.
- [Digital Services Writing Guide](#) — the single point of reference for common terms, spelling, punctuation, and naming conventions.