

STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

29.01.04.M1.01 **Web Accessibility and Usability Procedures (including Linking and Indexing)**

Approved May 4, 2004

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Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University is committed to making its websites accessible and usable. The accessibility goal for all new or redesigned web pages/content is that they are designed and created to be accessible to, and usable by, all users. The University must comply with the 1 Texas Administrative Code § 206.70, *Accessibility and Usability of Institution of Higher Education Websites*, which implements the access standards of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The intended audience for this procedure includes personnel who develop and maintain Texas A&M University web pages, deans, and division heads.

Definitions

508 validation tool: a software application that can scan web pages and provide information to assist in determining if the web pages meet the Section 508 standards. These 508 validation tools provide reports that help to ensure websites are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Accessibility: web design criteria which support access that is not dependent on a single sense or ability, such as vision or hearing.

IETF: Internet Engineering Task Force.

Information Resource Owner: an entity responsible for a business function and determining controls and access to information resources (e.g., web pages) supporting that business function.

Key Public Entry Point (KPEP): a web page that a state agency or institution of higher education has specifically designed for members of the general public to access official information (e.g.,

the governing or authoritative documents) from the agency or institution of higher education. A list of these pages can be found at <http://itaccessibility.tamu.edu/requirements/kpep.php>.

Metadata: data about data; index-type data used to identify, describe, locate, or preserve (other) data over time.

TRAIL: The Texas Records and Information Locator and Electronic Depository Program (TRAIL/EDP) is an automated system used to collect, index, and preserve electronic state publications. To ensure that publications are appropriately harvested and indexed, a publishing entity must include metadata in its online publications.

University Campus Homepage: the main page for Texas A&M University, College Station; Texas A&M University, Galveston; or, Texas A&M University at Qatar.

Texas A&M University (TAMU) Website: a TAMU owned, operated by/or for, or funded website connected to the Internet, including the home page and any key public entry points.

Usability: web design criteria that support user performance, ease of navigation, and understandability.

W3C: World Wide Web Consortium

Responsibilities and Requirements

1. The EIR Accessibility Coordinator for the University also serves as the Web Accessibility Coordinator. Responsibilities of the Accessibility Coordinator are as follows:
 - 1.1. Develop and maintain a web accessibility plan including metrics to measure progress in plan implementation.
 - 1.2. Monitor compliance in achieving accessibility through reports generated with the use of automated 508 validation software, applications, manual testing, and other tools as appropriate.
 - 1.3. Distribute 508 validation reports to deans and vice presidents that indicate the accessibility level of the various web pages and overall progress towards accessibility in their respective areas.
 - 1.4. Coordinate with the Vice President for Information Technology & Chief Information Officer, or designee, in approving or disapproving an exception for web accessibility.
 - 1.5. Serve as a contact point for technical questions and provide informational and tutorial/instructional resources (e.g., links) for website owners.
2. Responsibilities for deans and vice presidents include:

- 2.1. Review and assess web accessibility reports for progress.
- 2.2. Communicate and reinforce achievement of web accessibility goals.
3. The information resource owner (i.e., web page owner) has overall responsibility for their websites. Website supervisors or webmasters ensure their websites are created and maintained to contain accessible, timely, and accurate information.
4. All new or redesigned web pages/content must comply with the requirements of 1 Texas Administrative Code § 206 and this procedure unless an exception is approved through the [Exception Request Process](#), pursuant to § 2054.460, Texas Government Code.
5. New and modified web pages are to be tested by the web page owners using one or more § 508, or equivalent, validation tools in conjunction with manual procedures to validate compliance with State (1 Tex. Admin. Code § 206.70) and Federal requirements unless an exception is approved through the [Exception Request Process](#), pursuant to § 2054.460, Texas Government Code.
6. All TAMU homepages and key public entry points must include an “Accessibility” link, or a “Site Policies” link to a web page that contains the University’s accessibility policy; site validation standard (i.e., §508); contact information for the University’s Web Accessibility Coordinator; and, a link to the Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities website.
7. All web pages shall avoid vendor specific, “non-standard” extensions and shall comply with applicable Internet standards. For example, use: IETF for internetworking technology or methodology (e.g., SSL); and W3C for markup/style sheet languages (HTML, XML, CSS, etc.).
8. All web pages must implement the following:
 - 8.1. Metadata, following the TRAIL Meta-tagging Standards (see <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/trail/about.html> for more information). The descriptors of TRAIL meta tags must describe the specific web page or publication in which they are included. Use of a generic set of descriptors for every publication is not acceptable. The following meta tags must be implemented:
 - 8.1.1. DC.Subject.Keyword
 - 8.1.2. DC.Description
 - 8.1.3. DC.Subject
 - 8.1.4. DC.Type
 - 8.1.5. The HTML TITLE Tag
9. University campus homepages must contain the following:
 - 9.1. Links to the following State of Texas resources:

- 9.1.1. State of Texas homepage
- 9.1.2. Texas Homeland Security website
- 9.1.3. Statewide Search website
- 9.1.4. State Link Policy or to a TAMU Link/Site Policy page
- 9.2. Individual links to the following or to the Site Policies page with links to the following:
 - 9.2.1. Privacy and Security Policy
 - 9.2.2. Accessibility Policy
 - 9.2.3. Institution of higher education contact information
 - 9.2.4. Description of policy/procedures related to the Open Records/Public Information Act
 - 9.2.5. Compact with Texans
- 10. Key Public Entry Points must provide links to the following:
 - 10.1. University campus homepage
 - 10.2. Individual links to the following or to a Site Policies page containing links to the following:
 - 10.2.1. University Contact Information
 - 10.2.2. Accessibility Policy
 - 10.2.3. Privacy and Security Policy

Appendix

[Web Page Accessibility Plan](#)

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Administrative Code § 206.70](#), *Accessibility and Usability Requirements of Higher Education Websites*

[Texas Government Code § 2054.456](#), *Access to Electronic and Information Resources by State Employees with Disabilities*

[Texas Government Code § 2054.457](#), *Access to Electronic and Information Resources by Other Individuals with Disabilities*

[Texas Government Code § 2054.460](#), *Exception for Significant Difficulty or Expense; Alternate Methods*

Contact Office

Direct technical questions regarding web accessibility to
[IT Accessibility](#)
itaccessibility@exchange.tamu.edu.

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY:
[Office of the Vice President and Chief Information Officer](#).