

System-wide Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Policy Guide

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to provide high-level direction and support regarding electronic and information technology (EIT) accessibility across the University of Illinois System. The guide is intended to provide specific information to help the three universities and the system offices establish and enhance their own policy and procedures. Policies must: (1) ensure EITs are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including existing and new application development (web, mobile, and desktop), electronic and information content, existing and new procurements, classroom deliverables, virtual meeting spaces and other online activities; (2) provide mechanisms and resources to ensure appropriate parties are notified of and can respond to EIT accessibility issues and concerns; and (3) foster compliance across the U of I System.

Scope

The Policy Guide applies to all existing and new EITs developed, procured, maintained or provided by any unit with the University of Illinois System, including the universities in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield and the U of I System Offices, for use by its personnel, students or the public. The University Hospital and clinics will fall under the U of I Chicago's EIT accessibility policy.

Definitions

Accessible means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. An individual with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability.

Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) refers to any computer hardware and software, operating systems, web-based information and applications, telecommunications products, kiosks, and video equipment and multimedia products that are used to access, create, convert, disseminate, or duplicate data or information needed to facilitate the core missions of the University.

EIT includes but is not limited to websites, digital content, classroom deliverables, virtual meeting spaces, software, and mobile applications.

Equally Effective Alternative Access refers to an alternative format, medium, or other aid that timely and accurately communicates the same content as does the original format or medium, and that is appropriate to an individual's disability.

Policy Guide Standards

The University of Illinois System will implement applicable federal and state law requirements for electronic and information technology accessibility. Each university and the system offices will oversee their EIT Accessibility Policy. Current recommended standards set are the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), as referenced in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended (“Rehabilitation Act”) and the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act (“IITAA”).

Responsibilities

Each university and the system offices must: (1) ensure the EIT Accessibility Policy complies with federal and state law requirements and are consistent with this Policy Guide; (2) develop, oversee, administer and manage accessibility guidelines and standards developed; and (3) communicate and provide necessary training and education to faculty, staff and students on compliance with policy.

Each university and the system offices shall review their EIT Accessibility Policy at least every three (3) years and shall otherwise review and comply with changes in IITAA standards. This review shall include an assessment of accessibility guidelines and standards established by law, including without limitation the WCAG, as referenced in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the IITAA, to determine whether any revisions or updates to their policy or its implementation procedures are necessary.

A system-wide committee will have the responsibility to review risk associated with EIT that impacts the entire University of Illinois System. One or more representatives from each university and from the system offices will serve on the system-wide committee.

Exception Process

Each university and the system offices will have their own EIT Accessibility Exception Process. Submitted exception requests must follow the established review processes. Individuals requesting an exception must provide a plan that would provide Equally Effective Alternative Access, unless such an alternative is not possible due to technological constraints or if the intended purpose of the technology does not allow for an alternative. Each university or the system offices must have an implementation plan describing the terms that must be met for exception to be granted. Exceptions that will impact multiple universities or the system offices will be reviewed by a system-wide committee.

Related Policies and Guidelines

- [Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act \(IITAA\)](#)
- [Section 508 Standards for Electronic and Information Technology](#)
- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#)
- [UIUC Electronic Information Technology Accessibility Policy](#)
- [UIC Electronic Information Technology Accessibility](#)
- [UIS Digital Resource Accessibility Policy](#)
- [System Office Policy](#)

Contact Information

- [UIUC Digital Accessibility](#)
- [UIC Digital Accessibility](#)
- [UIS Digital Accessibility](#)
- [U of I System Accessibility](#)