

WEB SITE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Purpose: To establish a common and uniform policy for all State of New Hampshire agencies to ensure that all Web pages are accessible to disabled users.

Policy: All New Hampshire State agency Web sites shall comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and be consistent in design and navigation with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Accountability: This policy pertains to all State of New Hampshire agency web sites and applications and to their administrators.

State agencies shall designate a staff member to be responsible for incorporation of this Policy. This responsibility includes the dissemination of guidelines, standards, and compliance monitoring reports to the appropriate staff. Appropriate staff includes, but is not limited to, agency employees responsible for site administration or content development as well as any consultant or vendor responsible for an agency Web site and/or content.

The Web Services Division (WSD) within the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) will regularly monitor all agency Web sites for Section 508 compliance and will send a monitor report to the agency staff member designated as responsible for the incorporation of this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the agency to ensure its web site is in compliance.

Employees who do not comply with this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Administrative Rules of the Division of Personnel.

Description: The enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) protects Americans with physical or mental disabilities from discrimination. There are five sections to the ADA: Employment, Public services, Public accommodations and services operated by private entities, Telecommunications, and Miscellaneous provisions.

In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Inaccessible technology interferes with an individual's ability to obtain and use information quickly and easily. The passing of Section 508 eliminates barriers in information technology, to make available new opportunities for people with disabilities, and to encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology. Under Section 508 (29 U.S.C. ' 794d), agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.