

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy #:	02-0028
Name of Policy:	Digital Accessibility Policy
Revision History	Last Revised: N/A Initial Approval: April 2026 Initial Effective Date: April 2026
Policy Owner	Information Technology
Policy/Chapter Sections	University Policy
Date of Next Review:	April 2029

1.0 PURPOSE

This University Policy advances the fundamental principles of equality of opportunity for individuals with disabilities under applicable federal and state law.

Digital accessibility is a shared responsibility across the university. This policy and its associated procedures and processes support continuous improvement toward equitable access to the University's digital communications and information technology..

2.0 SCOPE

This University Policy applies to University digital communications and information technologies and all students, employees, volunteers, and contractors of the University that procure, configure, design and operate such communications and technology. This policy applies to all digital communications and information technologies operated by the University, including, but not limited to, web-based communications, software, applications and services, mobile applications, videos and multimedia, instructional materials and online learning modules, telecommunications, computers and computing devices, digital content and files, services, and other applicable or emerging systems or technologies.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Assistive Technology: Any adaptive device or software that assists individuals with disabilities in accessing or interacting with technology. Examples include magnification software, screen readers, captioning, and text-to-speech tools. This is not an all-inclusive list.

Digital Accessibility: The design and development of websites, tools, and technologies so that people with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, interact with, and use them with substantially equivalent ease of access.

Individuals with disabilities: Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.

WCAG 2.1 Level AA: The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Version 2.1, Level AA, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which provide internationally recognized technical standards for making digital content accessible to individuals with disabilities.

4.0 POLICY

Missouri Southern State University ("the University") is committed to providing digital communications and Information Technology that is accessible to everyone who engages with it with substantially equivalent ease of use.

The University will take reasonable and timely steps to ensure that its digital communications and information technologies are accessible to individuals with disabilities. As a technical standard, the University will utilize the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA** as the primary measure for evaluating the accessibility of web-based and digital content, unless an alternative standard is required by law or provides a higher level of accessibility.

The implementation of this Policy will be a continuous and iterative effort over time, and the University's approach will evolve alongside changes in technology and applicable standards. The ADA Compliance Steering Committee may evaluate, as appropriate, current accessibility standards, available resources, prioritization guidelines, and training processes and materials to support the University's ongoing efforts to integrate accessibility into its daily operations and communication environments..

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXCEPTIONS

5.1 Key Implementation Office

The office of Disability Services is designated to administer Title II compliance by:

- Coordinating accessibility training, audits, and investigations, by means of an ad-hoc committee composed of the disciplines necessary to effectively make an informed decision after a thorough investigation.
- Providing support and expertise for the University community on how to comply with this University Policy.

5.2 Component Support for Digital Accessibility

The following departments will be responsible for compliance within their separate spheres of management:

- University Relations and Marketing will provide expertise and tools to maintain compliance within all public-facing web media, University-sanctioned social media, and any other external marketing channels related to campus communications.
- The Center for Integrated Educational Excellence (CIEE) will provide expertise, tools, and training for all student-facing learning technologies.
- Information Technology will review new technology purchases for accessibility and provide written guidance relative to those prospective purchases. See the IT Asset Management Policy for more information.

Each member of the University community is responsible for compliance with this policy related to digital communications and information technology used and controlled in their area of University operations. All employees of the University will be required to participate in trainings that are offered in order to facilitate this policy.

5.3 Exceptions

Exceptions to this University Policy may be granted when complying would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity, or would cause undue financial and administration burdens, or when there is no equivalent IT option available that meets Accessibility.

Requests for exceptions must be made in writing to the office of Disability Services and submitted to the provost or their designee. To be considered, requests must document the following:

- a. The Information Technology for which the exception is being requested;
- b. Any alternative IT that meets functionality requirements but is not accessible;
- c. Any alternative IT that is accessible but does not meet functionality requirements; and,
- d. Evidence of recent efforts by a vendor to remediate the accessibility defects by a defined date, if applicable.

The provost or their designee will grant or deny the request. The decision of the provost or their designee is final.

Notice of granted or rejected exceptions will be retained by the Office of Disability Services.

5.4 Reporting Accessibility Barriers

Individuals who experience a barrier related to University digital communications or information technologies should contact a professor or supervisor, or contact the ADA Coordinator/Student Disability Services Coordinator. When an individual receives information about a digital accessibility issue, the individual should notify the ADA Coordinator/Student Disability Services Coordinator .

Questions and concerns regarding digital accessibility can be submitted by contacting the Digital Accessibility Coordinator or by using the following form.

[Access Barrier Form](#)

In conjunction with Disability Services, the Digital Accessibility Coordinator will review the inquiry form or other information provided. The Digital Accessibility Coordinator and the Director of Disability Services, or designees, will assess the concern and the digital communication or information technology at issue, using internal and external mechanisms to test digital accessibility. The Digital Accessibility Coordinator and the Director of Disability Services will collectively determine a means of resolution of the accessibility issue, in most cases within 30 days of receiving the concern and will communicate the outcome to the necessary individuals.

5.5 Accommodations

The University recognizes that individuals with disabilities may need specific accessibility-related software, hardware or other assistive technology in order to access certain technology. As a reminder, individuals with disabilities are encouraged to request assistive technology or other accommodations in accordance with University Student Accommodation policies, the Employee Reasonable Accommodation Policy, or by contacting the Digital Accessibility Coordinator and the Director of Disability Services. While there is overlap between the University's commitment to making digital communications and informal technology accessible and providing accommodations to individuals with disabilities, individuals requesting accommodations must contact Digital Accessibility Coordinator and the Director of Disability Services to engage in the interactive process for approved accommodations.

6.0 HISTORY

No known history of policy found in Policy Library.

This policy may be revised, edited, changed or removed at any time with or without notice to applicable individuals.

7.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

IT Asset Management Policy

Accessibility Grievance Procedure

Accessibility Grievance Form

Accessibility Exception Application Form