

Purpose

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to establishing guidelines for website accessibility, and to ensure compliance with state and federal laws regarding equal access to websites and content for persons with disabilities. Compliance with the following standards will not only benefit our citizens with disabilities, but will also provide an additional benefit to those users requiring keyboard access or use of text-based browsers, low-end processors, slow modem connections and/or no multi-media capabilities on their computers.

Goal

Our goal at WKU Libraries is to make sure our websites and database vendor pages are at least 70% compliant with Section 508 standards.

Accessibility Mission

Maintaining and creating an accessible website are an ongoing priority and responsibility for WKU Libraries. The goal is:

- To offer seamless access to all students, faculty, staff, visitors, and the general public for the University Libraries' electronic resources.
- To foster ownership of accessibility across the Libraries' web community by ensuring accessibility proactively, rather than addressed in a reactive method for individualized accommodations.

Background

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 1998 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 508) require government websites to eliminate barriers in information technology and encourage development of technologies to help achieve these goals. Under Section 508, agencies must give persons with disabilities access to information comparable to access available to others.

Relation to Existing Accessibility Standards

WKU's Accessibility Policy for electronic resources builds on two sets of existing standards:

1. Federal "Section 508" Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards for Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications
2. World Wide Web (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 1.0 and WCAG 2.0 AA.

Our Web Accessibility Policy is designed to meet or exceed all Federal Section 508 requirements, all WCAG 1.0 “Priority 1 and 2” Checkpoints, and WCAG 2.0 “A, AA” Checkpoints.

Policy

Creating and maintaining accessible electronic content is a priority and a responsibility of the Western Kentucky University Libraries. WKU Libraries will provide seamless access for all students, faculty, staff and visitors to the WKU library’s online resources offered via various vendors. WKU Libraries is committed to making all library web sites and electronic content accessible to all.

Although the libraries are not expected to have a specialized set of equipment for every kind of disability, WKU library staff should be aware of the options for making library resources accessible. A procedure to ensure a quick response to requests for accommodations to meet the needs of patrons with disabilities should be active at all times.

Western Kentucky University Library’s web sites and electronic content must be in compliance with the accepted standards and procedures expressed in the accompanying WKU’s Libraries Web Accessibility Procedures documentation.