OP 52.05: Electronic and Information Resources Accessibility

DATE: February 4, 2015

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to establish rules for the procurement, development, maintenance, and use of electronic and information resources that will be accessible to persons with disabilities.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in November of even-numbered years by the IT accessibility coordinator, IT policy and planning officer, the managing director of Procurement Services, the managing director of Communications and Marketing, and the Office of the General Counsel with substantive revisions forwarded to the TTU chief information officer (CIO).

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Electronic and information resources (EIR) includes information technology and any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the creation, conversion, duplication, or delivery of data or information.1

2. All EIR products developed, procured, or changed through a procured services contract, and all EIR services provided through hosted or managed services contracts, shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 206, State Websites, and Chapter 213, Electronic and Information Resources, of the Texas Administrative Code, as applicable, unless such requirement imposes a significant difficulty or expense, as determined and exempted by the TTU president or chancellor.2

3. In order for an EIR product or service to be considered accessible, the product must offer an alternate format or method of comparable quality for providing information, including product documentation, to people with disabilities. Additionally, it must work with the assistive technology commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities for individuals with disabilities.

4. Required accessibility compliance is divided into three areas:
   a. Electronic and information resources
      (1) Software applications and operating systems
      (2) Telecommunications products

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1 Defined by Texas Administrative Code §213.1(6)
2 Mandated by Texas Administrative Code §213.37
(3) Video and multimedia products

(4) Self-contained, closed products

(5) Desktop and portable computers

The specific technical standards for each of the above category of EIR are documented at http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=1&pt=10&ch=213&sch=C&rl=Y.

b. Procurement

(1) Before any purchases of EIR can be approved, vendors must certify that their products comply with the Texas Administrative Code, Chapters 206, State Websites, and 213, Electronic and Information Resources, as applicable, and provide accessibility information for every product under consideration using one of the following methods:

(a) Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) (http://www.itic.org/public-policy/accessibility);

(b) Buy Accessible Wizard (available through the US General Services Administration);

(c) Electronic document that addresses the same accessibility criteria in substantively the same format as the VPAT; or

(d) URL to a web page that explains how to request a completed VPAT for any product under contract.

(2) The degree of accessibility of a given product should be determined by the procuring department. The IT accessibility coordinator is available to assist departments and areas in making this determination.

(3) Departments shall coordinate purchases of EIR with Procurement Services and the IT Accessibility Coordinator to ensure compliance with the Texas Administrative Code and this policy.

(4) All purchases must follow the established TTU OPs for procurement.

c. Websites

(1) Per the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 206, State Websites, all university public entry points must be accessible. Specific website design guidelines are published at http://www.ttu.edu/webguidelines/.

(2) Key public entry points are web pages that an institution of higher education has specifically designed for the public to access official information. Designated TTU key public entry points are:

(a) The Texas Tech University System home page at http://www.texastech.edu
(b) The Texas Tech University home page at http://www.ttu.edu

5. Under the provisions of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 213, Electronic and Information Resources, an IT accessibility coordinator must be appointed for the university; the managing director for Technology Support is the designated TTU IT accessibility coordinator.

6. The CIO has final authority on all TTU IT-related issues, including exceptions to existing IT policies.