A. PURPOSE

This policy is established to support the Old Dominion University community in promoting equal access to information technology (IT) resources and services produced, maintained, distributed, and/or purchased by ODU for use by students, staff, faculty, and visitors. This policy sets forth accessibility standards and guidelines, including tools and training, that reflect best practices for achieving the accessibility standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The purpose of this policy is to document the industry best practices with which the University will align its information technology accessibility activities.

B. AUTHORITY

Code of Virginia Section 23.1-1301, as amended, grants authority to the Board of Visitors to make rules and policies concerning the institution. Section 7.01(a)(6) of the Board of Visitors Bylaws grants authority to the President to implement the policies and procedures of the Board relating to University operations.

The Commonwealth of Virginia Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act of 2005 grants institutions additional authority over financial and administrative operations, on condition that certain commitments to the Commonwealth are met.

Chapters 124 and 125 of the 2019 Virginia Acts of the Assembly and ODU’s Management Agreement with the Commonwealth provide full delegated responsibility for management of the institution’s IT architecture, infrastructure, and ongoing operations, of which IT accessibility is a part. This delegation includes the authority to conduct these activities in accordance with industry best practices appropriately tailored for the specific circumstances of the University, in lieu of following Commonwealth-determined specifications.


Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA), provides a comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities.
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508, requires Federal agencies to ensure that electronic and information technology is accessible to employees and members of the public with disabilities to the extent it does not pose an “undue burden.”

C. DEFINITIONS

Accessibility- Refers to the University objective that everyone within the University community, regardless of physical disability, will have the opportunity for appropriate access to information technology.

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) - An international organization that develops interoperable technologies to lead the Web to its full potential. W3C is a forum of information, commerce, communication, and collective understanding.

University Community – Students, faculty, staff and visitors of ODU.

D. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to colleges, departments, auxiliaries, research, and administrative entities with the Information Technology organization supporting the programs or services of the University. This policy applies to all decision makers, developers and planners of University systems and operations related to the conceptualization, design, acquisition, and maintenance of information technology.

E. POLICY STATEMENT

Any information technology purchased, developed, and/or maintained by the University, including any information technology obtained, provided, developed, and/or maintained by third-party vendors, related to the provision of University programs, activities, or services must be accessible to individuals with disabilities and in compliance with The procurement, development, and/or maintenance of information technology and user support services for persons with disabilities align with accessibility standards specified in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines from the World Wide Web Consortium, appropriately tailored to the specific circumstances of the University.

Accessibility standards are designed to evolve and change, as newer technologies are introduced and user needs change. At the same time, the standards maintain a consistent framework for accessibility training and support services. University information technology development, maintenance, training, and support personnel responsible for information technology procurement, programs, and services should possess an appropriate level of technical knowledge related to accessibility standards for persons with disabilities.

F. PROCEDURES

The specific standards to be utilized for compliance with this policy are published on the Information Technology Services Computing Policies and Standards website. Additional guidelines are available on the University Web and Digital Communication website.
G. RECORDS RETENTION

Applicable records must be retained and then destroyed in accordance with the Commonwealth’s Records Retention Schedules.

H. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Chief Information Officer

I. RELATED INFORMATION

University Policy 4500 - Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
University Policy 5406 – Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities
Information Technology Standard 09.1.0 – Acceptable Use Standard
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
United States Access Board
Office of Educational Accessibility