

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

July 1, 2008

To: Deans, Directors, Chairs and Executive Managers

From: Kim Wilcox, Provost

Fred Poston, Vice President, Finance & Operations

Subject: New MSU Policy on Web Accessibility

Please distribute broadly within your department.

Michigan State University is committed to facilitating access to University instruction, communication, research, and business processes, while enhancing community building for the broadest possible audience. It is this commitment that has led to a new MSU policy on Web accessibility and interim Web accessibility technical guidelines, which have been endorsed by the President's Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and the Libraries, Computing and Technology (LCT) communities on Accommodating Technology, Instructional Computing and Technology, and Network Communications.



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The policy on Web accessibility will apply to all University Web pages used to conduct core University business or academic activities as defined in the policy. Unless an exception is granted under Article IV of the policy, all new and redesigned University Web pages published after December 31, 2008, must be in compliance with Section I, Required Checkpoints, of the Web Accessibility Technical Guidelines. University Web pages published before December 31, 2008, must assess compliance with Section I of the Web Accessibility Technical Guidelines through an evaluation and validation process. There are three basic approaches for evaluating and validating the accessibility of new or existing Web sites:

1. Automated testing: A software tool examines the page or site and generates a report.
2. Expert evaluation: An expert in accessibility evaluates the site and writes a report.

3. User testing: Web accessibility experts observe as test users perform assigned tasks at the Web site under review. The testing could take place at a special test facility or in any setting.

Following completion of the evaluation and validation process, remediation plans should be developed to address any areas of non-compliance. Units will have an opportunity to establish reasonable timetables for remediation of non-compliant Web pages published before December 31, 2008. However, a Web Accessibility Review Form (WARF), which assesses the Web site's compliance with the new policy and collects information on remediation plans, must be submitted to the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives by December 31, 2008.

The Policy Implementation Team has developed a Web Accessibility Website, [www.webaccess.msu.edu](http://www.webaccess.msu.edu), to assist you in complying with this new policy. Visit this site for evaluation and validation information; techniques and tutorials; courses and workshops; consulting services; a quick start guide; and more.

Finally, a Resource Team has been formed to assist in implementation efforts, including representatives from Libraries, Computing and Technology, the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, and the Usability and Accessibility Center. The Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives will be contacting some key University units and organizations to request an opportunity for the Resource Team to present information on the policy, answer questions, and identify additional resources. Units or organizations may also contact the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives to request a presentation by the Resource Team.

For additional information on the policy or questions related to this memorandum and implementation of the policy, please contact the Project Coordinator, Karen Woehlert, in the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, at 353-3922 or [woehlert@msu.edu](mailto:woehlert@msu.edu).

c: President Simon