



## **AA-22: Digital Accessibility Policy**

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### **I. PURPOSE:**

Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans (LSUHSC-NO) is committed to providing accessible digital content so that individuals with disabilities have full and equal opportunity to access and benefit from the university's programs, services, and activities.

This policy establishes institutional standards and procedures to ensure LSUHSC-NO digital content complies with applicable accessibility requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Louisiana Policy and Procedure Memorandum 74 (PPM-74).

LSUHSC-NO is implementing this policy in accordance with the U.S. Department of Justice final rule regarding accessibility of web information and services of state and local government entities, which establishes April 26, 2027 as the compliance deadline for applicable digital accessibility standards.

This policy applies to LSUHSC-NO digital content, including institutional websites, web applications, electronic instructional materials delivered through the learning management system, and official LSUHSC-NO social media platforms.

### **II. DEFINITIONS:**

**Accessible:** Digital content that can be perceived, operated, and understood by individuals with disabilities, including those using assistive technologies.

**Digital Content:** Information and materials created, maintained, or distributed by LSUHSC-NO in digital form. This includes official LSUHSC-NO websites, web-based applications, electronic instructional materials delivered through LSUHSC-NO's learning management system, digital documents, multimedia, and content posted on official LSUHSC-NO social media accounts or other official digital platforms.

**Major Web Property:** The various points on the web used by LSUHSC-NO to represent the institution online. Major web properties include public-facing websites, web applications, mobile applications, and official LSUHSC-NO social media platforms that are controlled, maintained, produced, or commissioned by LSUHSC-NO and available to the public.

For purposes of accessibility compliance, the public includes prospective students, students and trainees, patients, visitors, and other individuals seeking to access LSUHSC-NO programs, services, or activities.

**Web Content:** Information and sensory experience communicated to users through a web browser or

other user agent, including code or markup that defines the content's structure, presentation, and interaction. Examples include text, images, sounds, videos, controls, animations, and conventional electronic documents.

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG):** Technical standards for accessible digital content developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). LSUHSC-NO adopts WCAG 2.1 Level AA, or any later version adopted by applicable accessibility regulations, as the minimum accessibility standard for digital content.

### **III. CONTENT STANDARDS:**

LSUHSC-NO adopts the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA, or any subsequent version adopted by applicable state or federal accessibility regulations, as the minimum standard for digital accessibility.

Digital content and services published on LSUHSC-NO major web properties must conform to this standard.

All newly created or updated digital content must meet accessibility standards prior to publication.

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

#### **Web Accessibility Coordinator:**

The Web Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the accessibility of LSUHSC-NO digital content and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards. Responsibilities include coordinating institutional accessibility efforts, providing guidance regarding accessibility requirements, monitoring compliance with accessibility standards, assisting with remediation of accessibility issues, and reviewing accessibility documentation for digital products and services.

#### **ADA Coordinator:**

The ADA Coordinator is responsible for coordinating LSUHSC-NO efforts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including addressing accessibility concerns and accommodation requests.

#### **Web Content Editors:**

Web Content Editors are individuals authorized to update official LSUHSC-NO web properties and are responsible for ensuring that content they publish complies with institutional accessibility standards.

#### **Social Media Managers:**

Social Media Managers are LSUHSC-NO employees or students authorized to publish content through official LSUHSC-NO social media platforms and are responsible for ensuring social media content is accessible to the greatest extent possible.

#### **Web Vendors:**

Third-party vendors that develop or support web-based software, applications, or services used by LSUHSC-NO must support applicable accessibility requirements consistent with institutional standards.

### **V. AUTHORITY:**

The following roles are authorized to publish digital content on behalf of LSUHSC-NO:

**Web Content Editors** – Individuals authorized to publish and update content through LSUHSC-NO

content management systems or other institutional web publishing platforms.

**Social Media Managers** – Individuals authorized to publish content through official LSUHSC-NO social media platforms.

Authorization to publish digital content may be granted or revoked by LSUHSC-NO administrative leadership or designated institutional offices. Authorization to publish digital content may be suspended or revoked if accessibility requirements or institutional web content standards are not followed.

#### **VI. ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW PROCEDURES:**

All digital content must be reviewed for accessibility prior to publication. Web Content Editors and Social Media Managers are responsible for ensuring that content published to LSUHSC-NO digital platforms conforms to institutional accessibility standards.

Accessibility review may include the use of built-in accessibility checkers available in software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint; accessibility review tools within Adobe Acrobat for PDF documents; automated accessibility evaluation tools; or manual accessibility review when appropriate.

#### **Third-Party Digital Products and Services:**

Digital software, applications, platforms, or services procured or licensed by LSUHSC-NO must be evaluated for accessibility during the procurement or implementation process. Vendors may be required to provide accessibility documentation, such as a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) or equivalent accessibility conformance report.

Accessibility documentation for third-party digital products may be reviewed by the LSUHSC-NO Web Accessibility Coordinator and ADA Coordinator to determine whether the product sufficiently supports applicable accessibility standards before the product is implemented or made available for use.

When third-party digital products or services cannot fully conform to accessibility standards, LSUHSC-NO will work with the vendor and provide reasonable accommodations or alternative access when necessary to ensure individuals with disabilities can access programs, services, and activities.

#### **VII. LEGACY CONTENT:**

Digital content created or published prior to the applicable accessibility compliance deadline may not fully conform to current accessibility standards.

Preexisting electronic documents (such as PDF, Word, presentation, or spreadsheet files) that were published prior to applicable accessibility compliance deadlines may not require immediate remediation unless they are currently used to access programs, services, or activities.

LSUHSC-NO will prioritize remediation of legacy content that is actively used to access programs, services, or activities. Remediation of legacy content will be prioritized based on frequency of use, relevance to current programs and services, and the impact on individuals with disabilities.

When legacy content that is not accessible is required by an individual with a disability, LSUHSC-NO will make reasonable efforts to provide an accessible version or alternative format upon request.

Archived content maintained solely for reference, research, or recordkeeping purposes may be retained in its original form, provided that the content is clearly identified as archived and has not been modified since being archived.

Instructional materials used in courses should be made accessible when they are created, revised, or reused for future instructional use.

**VIII. ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT:**

LSUHSC-NO will maintain an accessibility statement linked directly from the LSUHSC-NO homepage.

The accessibility statement will include the name, email address, and telephone number of the LSUHSC-NO Web Accessibility Coordinator and provide a mechanism for reporting accessibility barriers or requesting accessible formats of digital content.

LSUHSC-NO will make reasonable efforts to respond to accessibility inquiries or requests for accessible content in a timely manner.

**IX. ONGOING ACCESSIBILITY MAINTENANCE:**

Accessibility is an ongoing institutional responsibility. LSUHSC-NO will continue to monitor and improve the accessibility of its digital content and services and will address accessibility barriers as they are identified.

When accessibility barriers are reported, LSUHSC-NO will work to provide accessible alternatives or reasonable accommodations in a timely manner.