

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY TECHNOLOGY LETTER	NUMBER: TL 15-05	DATE ISSUED: NOVEMBER 2015
SUBJECT: WEB ACCESSIBILITY	REFERENCES: Government Code (GC) Sections 11135 and 11545 State Administrative Manual (SAM) Sections 4819.2 and 4833 Statewide Information Management Manual (SIMM) Section 20, 25, 30	

BACKGROUND

State law ([GC § 11135](#)) directs all state entities (in developing, procuring, maintaining, or using electronic or information technology, either indirectly or through the use of state funds by other entities) to comply with the accessibility requirements of Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended ([29 U.S.C. Sec. 794d](#)), and regulations implementing that act as set forth in [Part 1194 of Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#). In requiring compliance with Section 508, GC § 11135 mandates that Electronic and Information Technology¹ (EIT) be accessible to individuals with disabilities. GC § 11135 applies the same requirements to state agencies and employees that Section 508 applies to federal agencies or employees. [SAM](#) Section 4833 includes the IT policy in support of regulations on accessibility in state government IT.

Agencies/state entities and contractors working on their behalf are responsible for ensuring that their Agency/state entity public websites are accessible to the general public, and that their internal information technology systems are accessible by state employees with disabilities. [SIMM](#) Section 25 IT Accessibility Resource Guide includes state web accessibility standards that Agencies/state entities must use to comply with IT policy. These standards are based on the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Technology Letter (TL) is to remind all Agencies/state entities of the statutory requirements related to web accessibility and to provide information to assist in immediate implementation:

- Website and web-based application developers, designers, programmers, and content providers must be familiar with the standards and guidelines for achieving universal web accessibility and must comply with applicable Digital Accessibility Laws as described in [SIMM](#) Section 25.
- California Agencies/state entities must design and develop websites and web-based applications that are equally accessible to people with disabilities as well as those without disabilities.
- By July 1, 2016, all public facing websites maintained by California Agencies/state entities² shall include a webpage that lists standard browser usability features and links to additional pertinent information. A hyperlink to this webpage shall be included in the header or footer and be consistently displayed on all webpages, including the homepage. The hyperlink should not be included in any slideshow or rotating carousel display.

¹ For the purposes of this policy, "EIT" is limited to IT that is within the scope of authority of the California Department of Technology.

² **Agency/State entity:** Includes every state office, officer, department, division, bureau, board, and commission, including Constitutional Officers. "State entity" does not include the University of California, California State University, the State Compensation Insurance Fund, the Legislature, or the Legislative Data Center in the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

- Instructions to assist Agencies/state entities to comply with this requirement and methods by which they can conduct web accessibility testing can be found on the Department of Technology Web Services Unit's [Webtools](#) website.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this Technology Letter should be directed to the Department of Technology, Policy Office at ITPolicy@state.ca.gov.

SIGNATURE

/s/_____

Carlos Ramos, Director
California Department of Technology