

2023 -- H 5106

LC000213

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENTS OF STATE  
GOVERNMENT

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Noret, Hull, Corvese, J Lombardi,  
Diaz, Azzinaro, Kazarian, Solomon, and Shanley

Date Introduced: January 12, 2023

Referred To: House Innovation, Internet, & Technology

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 42-6 of the General Laws entitled "Departments of State  
2 Government" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **42-6-16. Website accessibility.**

4 (a) State departments enumerated in § 42-6-1 and state boards, divisions, bureaus,  
5 commissions and agencies shall with newly created or contracted public access websites be  
6 designed and coded in compliance with the web content accessibility guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1),  
7 or a subsequent version published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web  
8 Consortium at a level AA success criteria.

9 (b) Existing public access websites for state departments enumerated in § 42-6-1 and state  
10 boards, divisions, bureaus, commissions and agencies shall on or before July 1, 2028 design or  
11 redesign and code or recode existing websites to be in compliance with WCAG 2.1 or a subsequent  
12 version published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium at a level  
13 AA success criteria.

14 (c) Upon creation or activation of a website subject to the provisions of subsection (a) of  
15 this section and on or before July 1, 2028 for a website subject to the provisions of subsection (b)  
16 of this section, the director of each state department and/or the executive or administrative head of  
17 each state agency or entity and the information technology project manager assigned pursuant to §  
18 42-6-15 to manage compliance with the provisions of this section shall post on the home page of

1 [the website a signed certification that the website is in compliance with the standards provided in](#)  
2 [this section.](#)

3 [\(d\) Municipalities are strongly encouraged and recommended to adopt and implement a](#)  
4 [program to make municipal websites more accessible by adoption of standards consistent with the](#)  
5 [provisions of this section.](#)

6 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would require all newly established public access websites to be in compliance  
2 with Web Contract Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) for accessibility in compliance with  
3 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Existing state websites would be required to  
4 comply no later than July 1, 2028. Municipalities would be strongly encouraged to adopt consistent  
5 standards with the WCAG 2.1 provisions.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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