I. STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Yakima County is committed to providing equality of opportunity to persons with disabilities, including equal access to programs, services and activities provided through information technology (IT). With its rapid proliferation, IT is increasingly becoming the communication medium for programs and services. Consequently, accessibility considerations need to be evaluated as we design, acquire or use new IT. Because of its myriad of formats and the numerous individuals throughout the County involved in the design, acquisition or use of IT, a policy must be developed to establish the minimum standards and expectations regarding the design, acquisition or use of information technology.

The policy will be introduced in phases. This first phase includes website and web-based content accessibility. This includes all electronic documents and multimedia that are distributed through the web. Additional phases of the policy will include, at a minimum; hardware, software and the procurement of these IT products.

This policy is a living document that will change over time as IT changes. Ample opportunities for education and communication will occur whenever changes to the policy take place.

II. PURPOSE

Yakima County commits to ensuring equal access to all programs, services and activities provided through information technology (IT). Unless an exemption applies and according to the applicability and timeline specifications below, all departments, offices and entities of Yakima County will:

A. Use County web page designs that are consistent with the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG) Level AA. For additional information visit www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20

B. Disseminate electronic documents and multimedia on web pages that are consistent with this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **Archived Page:** A web page that has been kept for information purposes only, with no plans for redesign or alteration.

2. **Electronic Document:** Any file that is posted or distributed through a web page. These files usually are created, edited and viewed with such software as word processors, spreadsheets, presentations/slideshows and portable document format (PDF). Common examples of software used to create such files include Microsoft Office, Apple iWork and Adobe products.

3. **Information Technology (IT):** Any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment, That is used in the automatic acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information. The term information technology includes computers, ancillary equipment, software, firmware and similar procedures, services (including support services), and related resources.

4. **New Web Page:** A web page created for or by any Yakima County unit after the effective date of this policy.

5. **Revised Web Page:** A web page that has been altered or updated through visual design or significant content additions, subtractions, or modifications after the effective date of this policy.

6. **W3C:** World Wide Web Consortium. The main international standards group for website design.

7. **WCAG:** Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, version 1.0 published in 1999, version 2.0 published in 2008. WCAG is a working group of the W3C that focuses specifically on accessibility standards creation. WCAG is a widely accepted and commonly used standard.

8. **Web-based Applications:** Usually provided by third-party contracted services, these are any service that is provided online, but not specifically in a web page format.

9. **Web Page:** A single internet address (aka URL) that contains content that must be viewed through a web browser. Usually, multiple web pages are linked to define a website.

10. **Website:** A group of web pages, usually connected by a home page and regarded as a single entity, or several closely related topics, such as a department or office website.

IV. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all IT that is acquired, developed, distributed, used, purchased or implemented by or for any Yakima County department or office and used to provide programs, services, or activities through websites or web-based applications, including:

1. **Official web pages and associated web-based applications** (see Web Page Requirements and Time Frames below)

2. **Electronic Documents**
   a) Any documents created or obtained and disseminated after the effective date of this policy.

   b) Electronic documents created or obtained prior to effective date of the policy and that are disseminated on a web page must comply according to the time frames specified below for web page requirements.

3. **Multimedia**
   a) Any multimedia created or obtained and disseminated after the effective date of the policy.

   b) Multimedia created or obtained prior to the effective date of this policy and that is disseminated on a web page must comply according to the time frames specified below for web page requirements.

Web Page Requirements & Time Frames:
1. All new and revised web pages, website templates, and website themes published on or after the effective date of this policy must comply with WCAG 2.0 Level AA. For additional information visit www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20

2. All new and revised web pages must indicate in plain text a method for users having trouble accessing the site to report that inaccessibility. This could be in the form of contact information on the bottom of every Yakima County page.

3. When contacted and offered technical assistance, departments with identified high priority pages must cooperate with Technology Services and Yakima County's ADA Coordinator to make their web pages consistent with WCAG 2.0 Level AA. Departments will be notified if their pages have been deemed high priority. Some assistance may be available regarding locating a resource to help mitigate any issues with compliance.

   The following list describes the priorities as identified:
   - **SS (Critical) –** Indicates a Showstopper. These are issues that will prevent some visitors from being able to perform certain functions or enter certain areas on the web site. These must be fixed before the website is published.
   - **P1 (High) –** Priority One issues, while not showstoppers, must be given high priority for being fixed.
   - **P2 (Medium) –** Priority Two issues make the site difficult to use and should be fixed as soon as the more critical problems are remedied.
   - **P3 (Low) –** Priority Three issues are annoyances that make the websites less user friendly for some audiences.

Exemptions:
1. Archived Pages do not have to comply with WCAG 2.0 Level AA unless specifically requested by an individual with a disability.

2. Undue burden and non-availability may qualify as an exemption from the policy under the following circumstances:
   - Where compliance is not technically possible, or is unreasonably expensive or difficult in that it may require extraordinary measures due to the nature of the IT or the intent of a web page.
   - The conclusion of undue burden or non-availability is an institutional decision to be made by Technology Services in consultation with the affected Department, legal review and others with relevant perspective or expertise.

Effective Date:
This policy will take effect six months after its adoption.
The Effective Date: June 1, 2017

V. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Board of Yakima County Commissioners - *Final Authority on all Action*

- Department Heads/Elected Officials/Managers – *Compliance Responsibility*

- Employees who are responsible for their department's website or web-based applications - *First line of compliance responsibility, notify this individual if you have concerns.*

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- Employees who uses web pages to provide Yakima County services, programs or activities – *First line of compliance responsibility, notify this individual and/or Department Head if you have concerns.*

- Employees or contracted individuals that create or edit Yakima County affiliated web pages - *First line of compliance responsibility, notify this individual and/or Department Head if you have concerns.*

VI. TESTING

All existing web content and online services will be periodically and randomly tested. An automated tool will be used to perform accessibility tests of websites and all online services.

If there are issues with compliance that are discovered through the automated tool or by any individual the department head will be notified of the issue.

VII. COMPLIANCE

The ADA Coordinator, in conjunction with Technology Services, is responsible for overseeing compliance with regard to state and federal regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and require reasonable accommodation. Questions or concerns regarding compliance with the policy or standards, or complaints of discrimination, should be directed to Yakima County Human Resources ADA Coordinator at 509-574-2210 or human.resources@co.yakima.wa.us.

Each individual or department responsible for web content must also know the policy and how to provide accessible content. Those responsible must also monitor and evaluate their content regularly for accessibility. Training will be offered and coordinated through Technology Services.

Departments determined, after a review with the Technology Services Director (or appointed representative), Yakima County Human Resources ADA Coordinator and the affected Department Head/Elected Official (or appointed representative), to have non-compliant web sites or web sites not progressing towards compliance will be reported to the Board of Yakima County Commissioners for consideration of ordering the site to be disabled until it is brought into compliance.

VIII. CONTACTS

Primary Contact: **Technology Services   509-574-2000**
                          technology.services@co.yakima.wa.us

Policy Question: **ADA Coordinator   509-574-2210**
                          human.resources@co.yakima.wa.us

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