

RESOLUTION AGREEMENT

State University of New York at Buffalo Case Number 02-17-2422

In order to resolve Case No. 02-17-2422, the State University of New York at Buffalo (the University) assures the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) that it will take the following actions to comply with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 104, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (the ADA) and its implementing regulation at 28 C.F.R. Part 35.

Assurances of Nondiscrimination. The University hereby reaffirms its commitment to ensure that people with disabilities have an opportunity equal to that of their nondisabled peers to participate in the University's programs, benefits, and services, including those delivered through electronic and information technology, except where doing so would impose an undue burden or create a fundamental alteration.

Benchmarks for Measuring Accessibility. For the purposes of this Agreement, the accessibility of online content and functionality will be measured according to the W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA and the Web Accessibility Initiative Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite (WAI-ARIA) 1.0 for web content, which are incorporated by reference.

Adherence to these accessible technology standards is one way to ensure compliance with the University's underlying legal obligations to ensure that people with disabilities are able to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same benefits and services within the same timeframe as their nondisabled peers, with substantially equivalent ease of use; that they are not excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination in any University programs, services, and activities delivered online, as required by Section 504 and Title II of the ADA and their implementing regulations; and that they receive effective communication of the University's programs, services, and activities delivered online.

Remedies and Reporting Requirements

- 1) Proposed Policies and Procedures Regarding Online Content and Functionality. By February 15, 2018, the University will submit to OCR for its review and approval proposed policies and procedures ("Web Accessibility Policy") to ensure that all new, newly-added, or modified online content and functionality will be accessible to people with disabilities as measured by conformance to the standards described above, except where doing so would impose a fundamental alteration or undue burden.
 - a. When fundamental alteration or undue burden defenses apply, the Web Accessibility Policy will require the University to provide equally effective

alternative access. The Web Accessibility Policy will require the University, in providing equally effective alternate access, to take any actions that do not result in a fundamental alteration or undue financial and administrative burdens, but nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with disabilities receive the same benefits or services as their nondisabled peers. To provide equally effective alternate access, alternates are not required to produce the identical result or level of achievement for persons with and without disabilities, but must afford persons with disabilities equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement, in the most integrated setting appropriate to the person's needs.

- b. The Web Accessibility Policy must include sufficient quality assurance procedures, backed by adequate personnel and financial resources, for full implementation. This provision also applies to the University's online content and functionality developed by, maintained by, or offered through a third-party vendor or by using open sources.
 - c. Within 30 days of receiving OCR's approval of the Web Accessibility Policy, the University will officially adopt, and begin implementation of the amended policies and procedures.
 - d. Reporting: Within 45 days of receiving OCR's approval of the Web Accessibility Policy, the University will submit to OCR the approved Web Accessibility Policy, and evidence of its adoption and distribution.
- 2) Undue Burden and Fundamental Alteration. For any technology-related requirement in this Agreement for which the University asserts an undue burden or fundamental alteration defense, such assertion may only be made by the President of the University, or designee, after considering all resources available for use in the funding and operation of the service, program, or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement certifying the reasons for reaching that conclusion, including the cost of meeting the requirement and the available funding and other resources. If such a determination is made, the certifying official will describe in the written statement how it will provide equally effective alternate access, *i.e.*, other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with disabilities receive the same benefits or services provided by the University as their nondisabled peers.
- 3) Audit of Existing Content and Functionality. By February 15, 2018, the University will propose for OCR's review and approval the identity and bona fides of an Auditor (corporation or individual) to audit all content and functionality on its website, including, but not limited to, the home page, all subordinate pages, and intranet pages and sites used to access the University's programs, services and activities, to identify any online content or functionality that is inaccessible to persons with disabilities, including online content and functionality developed by, maintained by, or offered through a third party vendor or an open source. The Auditor will have sufficient knowledge and experience in website

accessibility for people with disabilities to carry out all related tasks, including developing a Proposed Corrective Action Plan. The Audit will use the Benchmarks for Measuring Accessibility set out above, unless the University receives prior permission from OCR to use a different standard as a benchmark. During the Audit, the University will also seek input from members of the public with disabilities, including parents, students, employees, and others associated with the University, and other persons knowledgeable about website accessibility, regarding the accessibility of its online content and functionality.

a. Reporting:

- i. By February 15, 2018, the University will submit the *bona fides* of its proposed Auditor to OCR for review and approval. Within 15 days after submission, OCR will evaluate whether the proposed Auditor has the requisite experience and knowledge to carry out an appropriate Audit and to develop a Proposed Corrective Action Plan and notify the University of whether or not the Auditor is approved.
 - ii. By May 15, 2018, the University will submit to OCR documentation of the steps taken by the Auditor during the Audit, a description of the outreach it undertook and the input it received, and a detailed accounting of the results of the Audit.
- 4) Proposed Corrective Action Plan. Simultaneously with the submission of the Audit on May 15, 2018, the University will submit to OCR for its review and approval a proposed Corrective Action Plan to address all inaccessible content and functionality identified during the University's Audit. The proposed Corrective Action Plan will set out a detailed schedule for: (a) addressing problems, taking into account identified priorities, with all corrective actions to be completed within 18 months of the date OCR approved the Corrective Action Plan; (b) setting up systems of accountability and verifying the accessibility of products that are offered by vendors or open sources and that are used to access the University's programs, services, and activities; and (c) setting up a system of testing and accountability to maintain the accessibility of all online content and functionality on an ongoing basis.
- 5) Within 30 days of receiving OCR's approval of the proposed Corrective Action Plan, the University will officially adopt and begin implementation of the Corrective Action Plan.
 - a. Reporting: Within 45 days of receiving OCR's approval of the proposed Corrective Action Plan, the University will submit to OCR written confirmation that the Corrective Action Plan is being implemented according to the approved schedule. The University will submit subsequent Reports describing action taken in compliance with the Corrective Action Plan every six months thereafter until the Corrective Action Plan has been completed.

- 6) Notice. By December 15, 2017, the University will submit to OCR for review and approval a proposed Notice to individuals with disabilities regarding how to request the webmaster or other appropriate person to provide access to (or notify the University regarding) online information or functionality that is currently inaccessible. The proposed notice will also include information or an accessible link to information instructing people how to file formal grievances under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. Within 10 days of receiving OCR's approval of the proposed Notice, the University will prominently post the approved Notice, or a link thereto, on its home page and throughout its website (including all subordinate pages and intranet sites).
 - a. Reporting: Within 15 days of receiving OCR's approval of the University's proposed Notice, the University will provide documentation to OCR regarding the locations and content of its published Notice.
- 7) Training. Starting no later than February 15, 2018, and at least annually thereafter, the University will begin delivery of website accessibility training to all appropriate personnel, including, but not limited to: content developers, webmasters, procurement officials, and all others responsible for developing, loading, maintaining, or auditing web content and functionality.
 - a. Reporting: For each training session required by this Agreement, until such time as OCR closes the monitoring of this Agreement, the University will submit to OCR documentation that it has been delivered. The documentation will include a list of invitees and attendees, including titles; a description of the delivered training content; and the presenters' credentials for giving such training.

The University understands that by signing this Agreement, it agrees to provide the foregoing information in a timely manner in accordance with the reporting requirements of this Agreement. Further, the University understands that during the monitoring of this Agreement, if necessary, OCR may visit the University, interview staff and students, and request such additional reports or data as are necessary for OCR to determine whether the University has fulfilled the terms of this Agreement and is in compliance with the regulations implementing Section 504, at 34 C.F.R. §§ 104.4 (a) and (b) and Title II of the ADA, at 28 C.F.R. §§ 35.130 and 35.160. Upon completion of the obligations under this Agreement, OCR shall close this case.

The University understands and acknowledges that OCR may initiate administrative enforcement or judicial proceedings to enforce the specific terms and obligations of this Agreement. Before initiating administrative enforcement (34 C.F.R. §§ 100.9, 100.10), or judicial proceedings to enforce this Agreement, OCR shall give the University written notice of the alleged breach and sixty (60) calendar days to cure the alleged breach.

This Agreement will become effective immediately upon the signature of the University's representative below.

November 13, 2017

/s/

Date

Laura E. Hubbard
Vice President for Finance and Administration
State University of New York at Buffalo