

# Information Technology Policy

## *Internet Browser Policy*

**Number**

ITP-SFT006

**Effective Date**

November 20, 2009

**Category**

Software

**Supersedes**

None

**Contact**

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**Scheduled Review**

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### 1. Purpose

This Information Technology Policy (ITP) establishes enterprise-wide standards and policies for internet browser technology.

Setting and implementing internet browser technology standards benefits the Commonwealth through increased enterprise security, streamlining patch management and ensuring compatibility with enterprise applications.

### 2. Scope

This ITP applies to all offices, departments, boards, commissions, and councils under the Governor's jurisdiction (hereinafter referred to as "agencies"). Agencies not under the Governor's jurisdiction are strongly encouraged to follow this ITP.

Third-party vendors, licensors, contractors, or suppliers shall meet the policy requirements of this ITP that are applicable to the products and services provided to the Commonwealth.

### 3. Background

An internet browser is a software application used for retrieving, presenting, and traversing information resources. The purpose of an internet browser is to bring information resources to the user. Internet browser software provides the following capabilities to a user:

- Allows the user to open multiple information resources at the same time. This can be done in different browser windows or in different tabs of the same window.
- Includes pop-up blockers to prevent unwanted windows from appearing without the user's consent.
- Displays bookmarked pages so users can return quickly to pages they already viewed (favorites).

- Features Web feed aggregator "live bookmarks" and behaves like a folder of bookmarks corresponding to recent entries in the feed.
- Includes incremental find features to search within a Web page.
- Supports HTTP Secure (HTTPS).
- Offers quick and easy ways to delete the Web cache, cookies, and browsing history.
- Provides development features for creating, actively modifying, and debugging code.
- Provides the ability to browse incognito or in private.

## 4. Policy

Agencies shall refer to [Management Directive 205.34 Amended, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#) for acceptable use of internet browsers.

### 4.1 Desktop Internet Browsers

Agencies shall adhere to the current standards for desktop internet browser as identified in *STD-SFT006A, Internet Browser Standards*.

Patches shall be applied in accordance with [ITP-SEC041, Commonwealth IT Resources Patching Policy](#).

Agencies shall ensure that all internet traffic will be directed through the Commonwealth's Internet Access Control and Content Filtering implementation per [ITP-SEC003, Enterprise Content Filtering Standard](#).

Agencies shall test and verify that all line-of-business applications are compatible with the current internet browser standards before upgrading to new standards.

Agencies shall block incognito and private browsing at the client machine level.

### 4.2 Mobile Internet Browsers

Agencies shall adhere to the current standards for mobile internet browsers as identified in *STD-SFT006A, Internet Browser Standards*.

### 4.3 Agency Optional Browsers

Internet browsers listed as Agency Optional in *STD-SFT006A, Internet Browser Standards* may be used by agencies to meet business requirements. If an agency chooses to deploy the browsers listed in Agency Optional, the agency assumes all risk and responsibility.

Agencies shall maintain and update the browser software patches to the current stable versions to protect from potential vulnerabilities. With the exception of the OA Consolidated Agencies, agency patch and security management for Agency Optional technologies shall not be managed by OA/IT. To stay up to date with security alerts, agencies shall sign up for the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) email alerts: <https://www.us-cert.gov/>

Agencies shall adhere to [ITP-SEC041, Commonwealth IT Resources Patching Policy](#) for patching of Agency Optional browsers.

Agencies shall evaluate and test for both enterprise and agency application or service compatibility prior to deploying these technologies.

Agency Optional browsers' licenses shall be reviewed along with the intended purpose of the software product. This review shall be accomplished internally at each agency. Obtaining legal counsel review is necessary to assess the impact of the license provisions and how the agency may enter into the licensing agreement. Agencies shall ensure that adequate legal review has been performed and an agreement is in place prior to clicking through or otherwise agreeing to any license agreement. This ensures the proper license risks have been assessed, and any distribution or other substantive licensing conditions have been, and can continue to be, met.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 Agencies:

Where any Agency Optional browser is freeware, agencies need not seek a waiver under [ITP-SFT001, Software Licensing](#), but agencies are nonetheless solely responsible to review, assess risks in accordance with, and comply with all ITPs, including but not limited to the following requirements:

- Agencies are solely responsible to ensure that the use of freeware will not invalidate the terms as specified in the end-user agreement and that the product does not conflict with existing support agreements. Agencies granted approval to use a freeware application shall have their appropriate legal office review the terms of the product agreement to ensure they are acceptable to the Commonwealth.
- Agencies are responsible for support and inventory control of freeware products. Freeware products used in production shall be tested and validated in a development environment to ensure security and quality control.

Where any Agency Optional browser is Open-Source Software (OSS), agencies need not seek a waiver under [ITP-SFT001 Software Licensing](#), but agencies are nonetheless solely responsible to review, assess risks in accordance with, and comply with all ITPs, including but not limited to the following requirements:

- Agencies desiring to install OSS to either a desktop or server platform shall coordinate with their respective support organizations for the management of those platforms.
- Agencies are responsible for support and inventory control of OSS. Agencies planning to use OSS in production shall test and validate the OSS in a development environment to ensure security and quality control.
- Agencies shall adhere to Commonwealth standards for applying security related patching for OSS products. See [ITP-SEC041, Commonwealth IT Resources Patching Policy](#), for detailed information.
- Agencies granted approval to use a OSS license shall have their appropriate legal office review the terms of the product agreement to ensure they are acceptable to the Commonwealth.
- Agencies shall consult with their legal office regarding the rights and

responsibilities conferred by the OSS license associated with the solution.

- Agencies are responsible to ensure that adequate legal review has been performed prior to distributing any source code. This ensures the proper license agreement has been obtained, any distribution conditions have been met, and that indemnification risks associated with use and distribution have been addressed.

Agencies are responsible to continually keep informed of and alert their legal offices to the most up-to-date terms of agreements and other associated policies provided by licensors of Agency Optional products.

### **5.2 Office of Administration, Office for Information Technology shall:**

Coordinate with the Agency's Continuity of Operations Program Manager to ensure that all software supporting essential functions (i.e., business or IT) are properly categorized and submitted in the Application Inventory (AI) and aligned to the enterprise online continuity planning software.

### **5.3 Third-party vendors, licensors, contractors, or suppliers shall:**

Ensure the products or solutions provided to the Commonwealth that utilize an internet browser are compatible with the internet browser standards detailed in *STD-SFT006A, Internet Browser Standards*.

## **6. Related ITPs/Other References**

- Definitions of associated terms of this policy are published on the Office of Administration's public portal: <http://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/Pages/Glossary.aspx>
- Commonwealth policies, including Executive Orders, Management Directives, and IT Policies are published on the Office of Administration's public portal: <http://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/Pages/default.aspx>
- [Management Directive 205.34 Amended, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Management Directive 205.41, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Continuity of Operations \(COOP\) Program](#)
- [ITP-ACC001, Digital Accessibility Policy](#)
- [ITP-BUS004, IT Policy Waiver Review Process](#)
- [ITP-PLT017, Desktop and Laptop Operating System Standards](#)
- [OPD-PLT017A, Windows 10 Configuration Requirements](#)
- [ITP-SEC003, Enterprise Content Filtering Standard](#)
- [ITP-SFT001, Software Licensing](#)
- *STD-SFT006A, Internet Browser Standards*
- [ITP-SEC041, Commonwealth IT Resources Patching Policy](#).

- Microsoft Support Lifecycle - <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/lifecycle>
- United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) - <https://www.cisa.gov/uscert/>

## 7. Authority

[Executive Order 2016-06, Enterprise Information Technology Governance](#)

## 8. Publication Version Control

It is the [Authorized User's](#) responsibility to ensure they have the latest version of this publication, which appears on <https://itcentral.pa.gov> for Commonwealth personnel and on the Office of Administration public portal:

<http://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/Pages/default.aspx>. Questions regarding this publication shall be directed to [RA-ITCentral@pa.gov](mailto:RA-ITCentral@pa.gov).

## 9. Exemption from this Policy

In the event an agency chooses to seek an exemption from the guidance within this ITP, a request for a policy waiver shall be submitted via the enterprise IT policy waiver process. Refer to [ITP-BUS004, IT Policy Waiver Review Process](#) for guidance.

This chart contains a history of this publication's revisions. Redline documents detail the revisions and are available to CWOPA users only.

Version	Date	Purpose of Revision	Redline Link
Original	11/20/2009	Base Document	N/A
Revision	10/25/2010	ITP Refresh	N/A
Revision	2/11/2014	ITP Refresh	N/A
Revision	10/09/2015	Updated Internet Explorer Technology statuses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet Explorer 11 – added to Current</li> <li>• Internet Explorer 9 &amp; 10 – added to Contain</li> <li>• Internet Explorer 8 – added to Retire</li> <li>• Removed Internet Explorer 11 &amp; 12 from Emerging/Research</li> <li>• Removed Opera from Emerging/Research</li> <li>• Removed SAP GUI version requirement for IE 8</li> <li>• Added SAP GUI version requirement for IE 11</li> <li>• Removed Objectives section (redundant)</li> <li>• Added language detailing Internet Explorer 9 &amp; 10 will move to Retired status after January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	01/12/2015	Removed Internet Explorer 9, 10 from Contain, moved to Retire status	N/A
Revision	02/26/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add Microsoft Edge browser to the “Emerging” classification</li> <li>• Added language notifying agencies must submit and receive an ITP waiver prior to deployment</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	08/09/2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removed Firefox, Chrome from Emerging/Research Technology status</li> <li>• Added new Technology Status “Agency Optional” category and added Firefox, Chrome, Edge browsers</li> </ul>	N/A

Version	Date	Purpose of Revision	Redline Link
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added additional language on Agency responsibilities including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Licensing guidance</li> <li>○ No waiver required for ITP-APP020/APP033 to deploy freeware, open-source software (OSS) Agency Optional browsers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Added additional references</li> <li>• Added Exemption section</li> <li>• Revised “Internet” to “internet” to reflect new AP Style standard</li> </ul>	
Revision	02/22/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moved to Software domain from Application, including ITP number change Revised references to</li> <li>• ITP-APP domain to reflect new SFT domain ITPs Replaces ITP-APP035 Internet Browser Policy</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	06/16/2017	No changes	N/A
Revision	06/25/2020	Updated Exemption section to remove reference to COPPAR	N/A
Revision	03/31/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moved Internet Browser Standards to a supplemental document</li> <li>• Moved Internet Explorer 11 to Contain</li> <li>• Moved Microsoft Edge to Current</li> <li>• Added in private and incognito to policy</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	06/04/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OA/OIT Responsibility regarding Continuity of Operations language added</li> <li>• COOP Management Directive referenced</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	06/15/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added third parties to the scope and responsibilities</li> <li>• Removed language regarding 6-month service packs.</li> <li>• Updated references and links</li> </ul>	N/A
Revision	04/25/2023	<p>Added section headings</p> <p>Added new requirement to adhere to standards for mobile internet browsers</p> <p>Minor grammatical and organizational updates</p>	<a href="#">Revised IT Policy Redline &lt;04/25/2023&gt;</a>