

Sec. 508 Compliance: Keeping Up With the Changes

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What we'll cover in this session

Overview of the forthcoming updated Sec. 508 requirements

Disabilities and assistive technologies

Benefits (yes, there are several!)

Sample accessible PDF

Sample Word document

Strategies for your agency

The Sec. 508 “Refresh”

Requires all US federal agencies to make all of the ICT accessible to those with disabilities who use assistive technologies.

What's ICT?

What's covered?

Which disabilities?

What are the regs?

ICT

**Information
Communication
Technology**



What is ICT?

Any digital or electronic form of communication between the agency and the public or its employees.

- Regardless of file format
- Regardless of where it's stored
- Regardless of how it's distributed
- Regardless of the user's technology to read or access it
- Anything you make with your computer or distribute electronically

What is covered?

In the first phase, it's expected to cover only

- **Public-facing ICT**
- HR and personnel ICT from your agency
- Broader coverage in the future

ICT created, procured, or maintained

- by the **agency**, or
- by **contractors** on behalf of the agency, or
- by the agency's **grant recipients**

More ICT is covered than before

- Websites

And all forms of electronic documents

- PDFs
- Office documents
- EPUBs
- Legacy documents
- Any future formats/technologies

A person is shown from the back, wearing a large black headset with a microphone. They are sitting at a desk with a laptop. The laptop keyboard is replaced by a white Braille keyboard. The person's right hand is resting on the Braille keyboard. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

People with disabilities

Use assistive
(or adaptive)
technologies
or “AT”

- Software
- Hardware
- Combo of both



Blind
Partial sight
Low-vision



Vision impairment



Deaf
Hearing impairment



Loss of
upper body
mobility



Cognitive
Brain injury
Dyslexia
Learning Disability



Neurological
Stroke
Parkinson's
MS, etc.



Amputee
Prosthetic
device



Assistive technology
Braille
Text-to-speech
Speech-to-text

Sec. 508 standards

Developed and regulated by
the **US Access Board**
www.Access-Board.gov

Enforced by DOJ

Forthcoming “refresh” will...

Adopt
international
standards for
Federal ICT:

1. WCAG 2.0
Web Content
Accessibility
Guidelines

2. PDF/UA-1
PDF Universal
Accessibility

Benefits

- Harmonize with ICT worldwide
- Harmonize among federal agencies
- Harmonize within US states
- Harmonize between states & federal
- Harmonize between different technologies — not only AT, but also HTML, XML, PDF, SEO, CMS, Mobile, EPUB

What your agency can do

A solution:

Develop a 4-prong strategy.

More later...

What an accessible PDF looks like



Accessible PDFs must have at least these basic features:

1. Tags to label the parts of the PDF
2. Tags in a logical reading order
3. Logical content reading order
4. Alt-Text on graphics
5. Hyperlinks, cross references and other navigation tools

How it's made from MS Word



1. Use the correct styles to trigger the correct tags in the PDF
2. Avoid manual formatting
3. Add alt-text to graphics
4. Eliminate double blank returns
5. Create hyperlinks
6. Use Word's automatic tools for footnotes, cross references, TOCs

Export to PDF

If your document is constructed correctly for accessibility, and
If you export the PDF with Adobe Acrobat tools,

Your PDF will be nearly fully accessible.

There are some tweaks to make in Acrobat to finalize it for accessibility.

Who is responsible for Sec. 508 accessibility?

Everyone is responsible

Manager



SME /
Author



Editor



Web
Team



Designer



4-prong strategy for agencies

Make it easy: accessible templates

Work smart: train everyone
in the basics of accessible
documents

Buy smart: require Sec. 508
compliance in contracts and grants

Hire smart: hire Sec. 508 techs

Make it easy — Templates

Sec. 508 templates for Word and PowerPoint make it easier for staff, authors, and SMEs to create documents with basic accessibility.

- Also saves time.
- Improves cross-media to HTML, Adobe InDesign desktop publishing
- Don't force PhDs and SMEs to learn the details of WCAG and PDF/UA.

Work smart — Training

Short, basic training in using the templates to create accessible Word, PowerPoint and PDF files.

- ½-day to full day for most staff
- 2-3 days for those making complex documents and using Adobe InDesign
- Provide a user manual for the templates

Contact GPO Institute for training

Buy smart — Contracts & Grants

Require Sec. 508 compliant deliverables in your outsourcing contracts and grants.

- Documents: Reference Sec. 508 and PDF/UA-1
- Websites: Reference Sec. 508 and WCAG 2.0

Hire smart — Sec. 508 Technicians

A new position is being developed in government:
Sec. 508 technician.

- Advanced knowledge of PDF/UA and WCAG
- Advanced training in MS Office, PDF remediation, InDesign, testing, and verification of files
- MOS—MS Office Specialist cert.



50+ million Americans have a disability.

It's essential that we make ICT accessible for people with disabilities. Plus, we all benefit from accessible ICT.

Accessibility: Essential to some, beneficial to everyone.

Q&A

Thank you!

See you soon in a GPO Institute class

Bevi Chagnon

*GPO Institute Instructor for accessibility
& digital media*