



Web and Mobile Accessibility

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local governments to ensure their services, programs, and activities are accessible to people with disabilities. Title II applies to all state and local government services, programs, and activities, including election office web content and mobile applications. The [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium, are technical standards that help make the digital world accessible to people with disabilities, in alignment with the ADA.

Steps to address web and mobile application accessibility:

Identify Web and Mobile Content

State and local election offices should first review existing websites, applications, practices, and procedures used. **When performing this review, consider:**

- What websites, applications, and social media does the election office utilize?
- What types of content are on those web pages and applications, for example:
 - HyperText Markup Language (HTML), Portable Document Format (PDF), word processor files, spreadsheets, videos, images, and other formats.
- What types of content does the election office post on social media?
- Does the office use specialized software for voter registration, vote by mail, text alerts, or other tools that voters use to receive information or interact with the election office?

Identify Roles and Responsibilities

Identify the staff involved with web and mobile accessibility. This includes *general staff* who may be responsible for creating and uploading web and mobile content, *information technology (IT) staff* who manage websites and applications, and *accessibility staff* who review for accessibility compliance. **When identifying staff and roles, consider:**

- Expectations for content creators, reviewers, editors, and approvers.
- The resources required, for example, *technical* resources like web and mobile platform expertise, printed instructions, legal compliance, and *financial* resources like a sufficient budget for initial implementation and ongoing maintenance.

Staff Training

Staff training should be divided into two categories:

- **General training:** All staff should receive training that explains what web accessibility means and why it is important.
- **Specialized training:** Staff responsible for ensuring accessibility should be trained on the specific requirements, duties and responsibilities for their role.

Develop a Testing Plan

Develop a plan to conduct accessibility testing and a timeline to implement solutions. This plan should be developed with the personnel who support each website or mobile app.

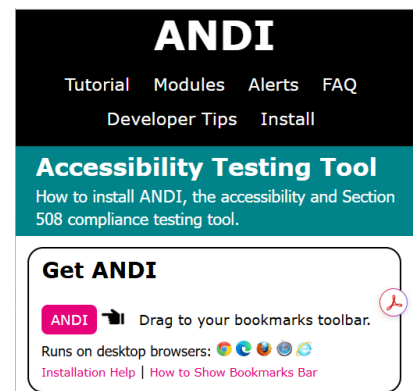
Keep in mind that it's very likely there will be WCAG conformance errors, especially if testing a website or mobile application for the first time.

A common accessibility issue detected during testing is **low contrast text**, which refers to the use of colors with minimal difference in lightness or darkness between the text and its background, making it difficult to read. For example, **this text** would fail this test. Contrast issues can be resolved with adjustments to color schemes or text sizes.

Determine the Accessibility Fixes Needed

One easy way to identify what accessibility fixes are needed is using the Accessible Name & Description Inspector (ANDI), a free inspection tool developed by the federal government to detect accessibility issues.

- **ANDI application:**
ssa.gov/accessibility/andi/help/howtouse.html
- **ANDI training videos:**
section508.gov/training/web-software/andi-training-videos/



Contracts and Vendors

Public entities are responsible for ensuring that vendors and contractors who provide websites and mobile applications on the public entity's behalf comply with WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Be sure to require detailed information about the level of accessibility of vendor products before contracting. **Some public entities find it helpful to:**

- Require vendors to provide a warranty stating that the vendor complies with specific technical standards and applicable federal and state accessibility laws.
- Prohibit vendors from disclaiming accessibility warranties.

Policies and Compliance

Finally, develop and follow standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure compliance.

SOPs should cover how your office:

- Keeps track of web content and mobile applications,
- Assigns duties and responsibilities for ensuring accessibility,
- Establishes a process for monitoring compliance; and
- How the office engages with stakeholders.