



508 Compliance Information

Toolkit Reference F

What This Is:

This document provides information and resources about Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that requires government websites and e-learning products to meet certain technical and functional performance criteria to be accessible to users with disabilities.

Why It's Useful:

Webmasters and those responsible for developing and hosting online content, documents, presentations, etc. must ensure these products meet specific technical standards and criteria. They must also be aware of accessibility requirements when working with vendors and contractors that produce commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) or custom deliverables that will be used by VA staff.

How To Use It:

During the development lifecycle it is important to incorporate accessibility (Section 508) requirements into the entire process.

The Section 508 Homepage provides one-stop shopping to help you understand the law, applicable standards, and additional resources. To better understand VA's interpretation and implementation of Section 508 standards, visit the VHA Section 508 Web site. There, you can access tutorials and find resources and checklists that provide guidance and standard processes to help you consistently develop accessible products. Want to know how to make a PowerPoint accessible? Check out the Documentation and Communication Tips and Tricks page. You'll also find directions to make Word documents and PDFs accessible.

Section 508 Resources

508 Accessibility: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires government websites and e-learning products to meet certain technical and functional performance criteria to be accessible to users with disabilities. Reference:

<http://www.section508.gov/>.

Section 508 Requirements: There are several sets of Section 508 requirements pertinent to e-learning content included in the following sections of Subpart B — Technical Standards. Reference: <http://www.access-board.gov/508.htm>

- 1194.21 - software and plug-ins
- 1194.22 - web-based content
- 1194.24 - part of this set includes multimedia
- 1194.31 – functional standards

The applicable standards will depend upon the type of functionality and the format of the final deliverable.

There is a checklist of VA’s compliance requirements for each of these technical standards sections on the VHA Section 508 link provided below. Developers of e-learning should review each of the checklists to identify all criteria that may pertain to the specific e-learning product they are developing. Please refer to these sites to assure that the most currently accurate guidance is used.

Link to 508 compliance requirements checklists:

<http://vaww.vista.med.va.gov/508workgroup/checklists.asp>

Link to a training course for producing accessible web-based information technology:

<http://vaww.vista.med.va.gov/508workgroup/training/index.asp>