



Guidelines for Contractors Regarding Document Accessibility

All California state agencies must comply with federal and state nondiscrimination laws for persons with disabilities, which includes meeting AB 434 and Section 508 accessibility standards for all websites and documents.

Accessibility refers to providing equal access to content for individuals with visual, auditory, or cognitive disabilities, including all printed and digital documents such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PDFs.

All contracts must reflect these requirements. Contractors are responsible for creating accessible website content and documents. CalRecycle will review contractor-produced documents, and any that are not fully accessible will be returned for remediation.

The key principles of accessibility include:

- Document properties are included (title, author, and subject).
- Minimum font size is 12pt.
- Color contrast is 7:1 for normal text at level AAA.
 - For more information on color contrast ratios, and to test color contrast using a free [color analyzer tool](http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/): webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/
- Documents should use built-in formatting styles (like headings) for Word, PowerPoint, and Acrobat.
- Ensure PDF, Word, and Excel documents pass an automated accessibility check in the respective software and a manual check by a person.

Things to Consider:

- Depending on how complicated the document is (with images, tables, charts, and graphs), it may take several hours to remediate a document for accessibility.
- Build extra time into the workflow to accommodate accessibility formatting and verification.
- Documents that include images must include alt text descriptions (exceptions apply to images that have been described within the body of the text).
- Documents that include charts, infographics, and other visual representations of data must include an appendix with source data (i.e., an accessible table) and a brief description that explains the significance of the data depicted in the chart.
- Keep table structures as simple as possible. Avoid merged cells or nested tables, which can make tables difficult for screen readers. If complex scientific data is required, provide a brief summary explaining the table.

Note: CalRecycle web standards require most documents in PDF format. If contractors convert Word or Excel documents to PDF, both the original and the final PDF must be accessible. A properly formatted, fully remediated source document usually results in a PDF needing only minor accessibility fixes.



Resources

- AB 434 law: leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB434
 - Section 508: section508.gov
 - Department of Rehabilitation How To: dor.ca.gov/Home/HowToCreateAccessibleContent
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