EPA
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Think 508 First!



Section 508 Quick Reference Guide

intranet.epa.gov/accessibility

Section 508 – Access for All, Barriers for None

What is Section 508?

Section 508 of the RehabilitationAct (29 U.S.C. § 794d) requires federal agencies to develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology (EIT) that is accessible to people with disabilities – regardless of whether or not they work for the federal government. The U.S. Access Board establishes the Section 508 standards in order to implement the law.

Is Section 508 the same as Reasonable Accommodation?

Section 508 and Reasonable Accommodation (Section 501) are often confused with each other Section 508 is about the EIT – the equipment and the tools that people use to access information or to do their jobs. Reasonable Accommodation is about the individual and what he/she needs because of his/her disability. Reasonable accommodation removes workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities.

Why does EIT have to be accessible?

Some people who access EP A's information and resources may have disabilities. EPA has employees with disabilities and any new employees could potentially have disabilities. A person can become disabled at any time either temporarily or permanently. EPA makes its EIT accessible so everybody can access EP A information, because it is the right thing to do, and because it is the law.



What is EIT?

Electronic and Information Technology (EIT) is any equipment or system that EPA uses to create, convert, duplicate or access information and data.

Examples of EIT include, but are not limited to:

- Telephones, smart phones, and mobile devices
- Televisions, DVD players, and videotaped productions
- Internet and Intranet websites
- PDF documents
- Content on DVDs and CDs
- On-line training
- Webinars and teleconferencing
- Technical support call centers
- Remote access websites and tools
- Tablet, laptop, and desktop computers
- Software and operating systems
- User guides for software and tools
- Copiers, printers, and fax machines
- Calculators
- Lab equipment

How do I make EIT Section 508 compliant?

When you **develop, procure, maintain, or use** EIT, "Think 508 first!"

- Determine if your product or service is EIT. If it is EIT, Section 508 applies.
- Decide what standards may be applicable.
- Write specific 508 requirements in contracts and IT workplans.
- Test and verify compliance with 508 standards before accepting deliverables, purchasing products and services, or launching websites, applications, or trainings.
- Maintain a dialogue with developers, contractors, and project teams, throughout the acquisition and life cycle process.
- For more information, refer to

  intranet.epa.gov/accessibility; www.section508.gov; and www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm

Understanding Disabilities

Not all disabilities are obvious or easily identifiable. Many people tend to think of disabilities in absolutes: can see or can't, can hear or can't. However, disabilities take a variety of forms and may not always be readily apparent. Approximately 54 million Americans have some type of disability. Also, disabilities may not be permanent and can be temporary as a result of a medical condition, illness or surgery. Accessible EIT helps people with all kinds of disabilities. The important thing to remember is that disabilities are as unique as the individuals they affect.





Visual – Blind or low vision, which includes a person having dimness, haziness, color blindness, tunnel vision, cataracts or eyesight problems.

Auditory – A person who is deaf or hard of hearing can have a hearing loss ranging from mild to a total loss of hearing. A person might hear sounds but may have difficulty or is unable to comprehend spoken words.

Speech – Speech related disabilities may include difficulty with voice strength, fluency , aphasia, which may alter how words are articulated, or complete voicelessness.

Dexterity – Most individ uals who have dexterity disabilities have limited or no use of their upper or lower extremities. Individuals can have difficulty with coordination and movement due to the effects of arthritis, stroke, carpal tunnel syndrome, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease, or accidents and injuries.

Cognitive – A cognitive disability is any disability that affects mental processes and covers a wide range of abilities.

Mobility – A person can have a motor impairment that limits his/her mobility or range of motion. A person may require the use of wheelchairs, canes, crutches, braces, or prostheses which can hinder access to EIT controls on kiosks or other closed products.

EPA Accessibility Programs and Contact Information

Section 508 Program

Section 508 Executive Council

EPA's Section 508 Executive Council is responsible for guiding the Agency's Section 508 Program. The Executive Council includes senior leaders from the EPA program and regional offices, and it is co-chaired by the Director of the Office of Information Analysis and Access (OIAA) and the Director of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

Section 508 Coordinators

Section 508 Coordinators serve as the EPA's point of contact for Section 508 information. The 508 Coordinators work with the EPA offices to implement EPA's Section 508 program on behalf of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Section 508 Executive Council. The coordinators provide consultation and information about resources as needed.

Section 508 Coordinator:
Amanda Sweda

Assistant Section 508 Coordinator:
Dorothy Semazzi

E-mail: section508@epa.gov

Assistive Technology Center

The Assistive Technology Center (ATC) is a resource located at EPA Headquarters for using adaptive and assistive technology. Adaptive and assistive technology (AT) is used by people with disabilities in a way that best meets their individual needs. AT can include a variety of tools such as hardware and software, braille displays and note takers, larger monitors, volume handsets for phones, ergonomic keyboards, etc. EPA employees and system developers can test products, software applications, agency applications, websites and hardware with current versions of accessibility testing tools and assistive technology in the ATC to help ensure compliance with the Section 508 standards.

ATC Manager:
Elaine Davis, davis.elaine@epa.gov

Reasonable Accommodation Program

Reasonable accommodations are designed to remove workplace barriers for individuals with disabilities. The Office of Civil Rights coordinates the Reasonable Accommodation Program for EPA. In addition, there are Local Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators (LORACs) in EPA's ten regional offices, as well as in the Research Triangle Park (RTP) and Cincinnati labs, who can assist with implementing the program.

National Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator:
William Haig, haig.william@epa.gov

Assistant Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator:
Kristin Piorkowski Tropp, piorkowski.kristin@epa.gov

Special Emphasis Program for Persons with Disabilities

The Office of Civil Rights manages and administers the Agency's Special Emphasis Program for persons with disabilities. The National Program Manager provides policy guidance and technical assistance to EPA managers on the prevention and elimination of discrimination and harassment in the workforce for persons with disabilities.

National Program Manager for Persons with Disabilities:
Christopher Emanuel, emanuel.christopher@epa.gov

Additional Resources

EPA Section 508 Website
www.intranet.epa.gov/accessibility

Federal Section 508 Website
www.section508.gov

Section 508 Standards
www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm

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