



# Federal Accessibility Requirements

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# Federal Requirements

- Two Federal Laws
  - Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Rehabilitation Act Section 504
- Guidance on Web Accessibility and the ADA (2022)
  - <https://www.ada.gov/resources/web-guidance/>
- DOJ has consistently interpreted the ADA to include accessibility of electronic materials.
- State and local governments are under Title II.

# Federal Requirements

Dear Colleague Letter (2023)

<https://www.justice.gov/crt/case-document/file/1584491/dl>

This table shows how much time a state or local government has to comply with this rule.

State and local government size	Compliance date
0 to 49,999 persons	April 26, 2027
Special district governments	April 26, 2027
50,000 or more persons	April 24, 2026

# Federal Requirements

<https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/>

State and local governments' web content and mobile apps must meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA technical standards.

# Exception

There is an exception for archived web content that meets all four of the following points:

1. The content was created before the date the state or local government must comply with this rule, or reproduces paper documents or the contents of other physical media (audiotapes, film negatives, and CD-ROMs for example) that were created before the government must comply with this rule, AND
2. The content is kept only for reference, research, or recordkeeping, AND
3. The content is kept in a special area for archived content, AND
4. The content has not been changed since it was archived.

# What's required?

- Documents
- Media
- Graphic design

# What are colleges doing?

- Course remediation is typically organized out of the teaching & learning center or distance ed
- Accessibility checkers for remediation
- Determination around compliance benchmarks
- Determination about active, current content vs. archived or what should be removed

# Resource

- Accessible design cheat sheet:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VyZPG0UjUA-CSZ3AuYu7KCxKPTJsb0vcBrFexnxhGcU/edit?tab=t.0>

# Questions

Thank you!



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# **A Live Walk-Through of Document Accessibility**

May 16, 2026



# What We'll Cover Today

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1. Resources
2. Web Accessibility
3. Accessible Documents
  - ✓ Reading Order
  - ✓ Alt Text
  - ✓ Descriptive Links
  - ✓ Color/Color Contrast
  - ✓ Lists
  - ✓ Tables
  - ✓ Plain Language
4. Live Demonstration



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# General Guidelines

- ✓ **Don't** send scanned documents
- ✓ Use a simple, large **font**
  - ✓ Documents: 12 points (16 pixels)
  - ✓ Slides: 24 points (32 pixels)

A large, solid dark blue circle is positioned on the right side of the slide. Inside the circle, the text "If the Word Doc's bad, so's the PDF" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered both horizontally and vertically.

**If the Word Doc's bad,  
so's the PDF**



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# Accessibility Checker



## ✓ Use the **Accessibility Checker**

- ✓ **Microsoft Office:** Review Tab/Accessibility or bottom banner
- ✓ **Adobe Acrobat Pro:** Tools/Prepare for accessibility



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# Section 1: **RESOURCES**



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# **DoIT:** The Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology

Let's take a tour.

[Click here to launch DoIT's  
Accessibility Guides](#)



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## Section 2: **WEB ACCESSIBILITY**

## Web Accessibility: P.O.U.R.

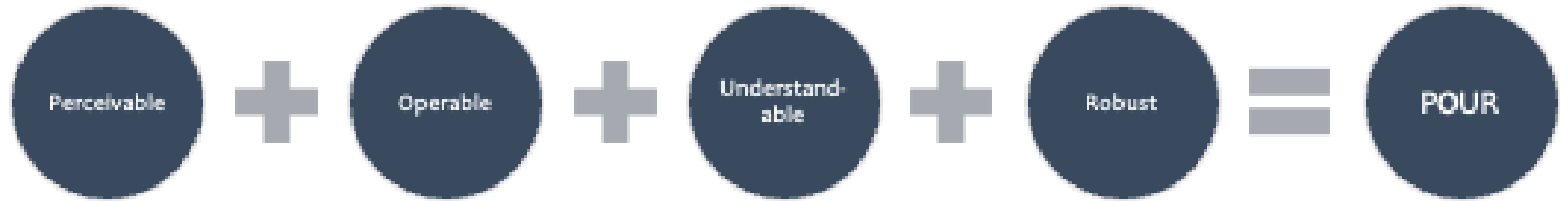


Let's take a tour.

[Click here to learn more  
about P.O.U.R.](#)

[Click here to learn about  
web accessibility in more  
detail](#)

## P=Perceivable



✓ Can be understood by multiple senses

✓ Examples:

✓ Alt text for images

✓ Convey meaning by color and texture

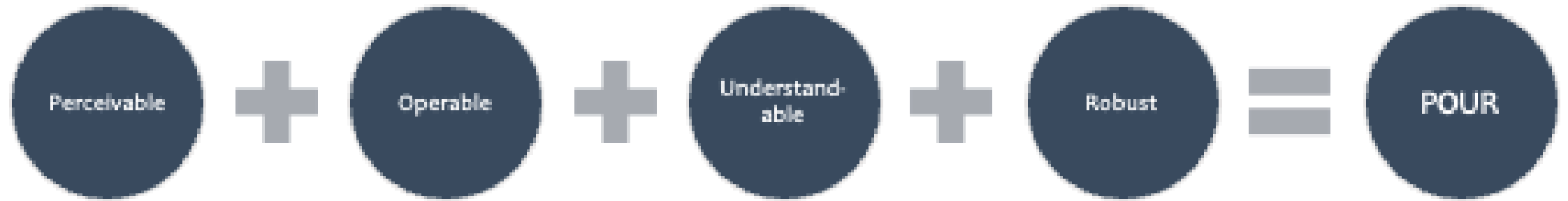
✓ Closed captions and audio description for time-based media

## O=Operable



- ✓ Able to access and use by all users regardless of ability
- ✓ Examples:
  - ✓ Navigable by more than just mouse
  - ✓ Ability to turn off, adjust or extend time limits on web pages
  - ✓ Ensuring that material doesn't trigger seizures or other dangerous physical reactions
  - ✓ Information follows logical reading order (left to right, large to small, image to text)

## U=Understandable



✓ Can be understood by all users

✓ Examples:

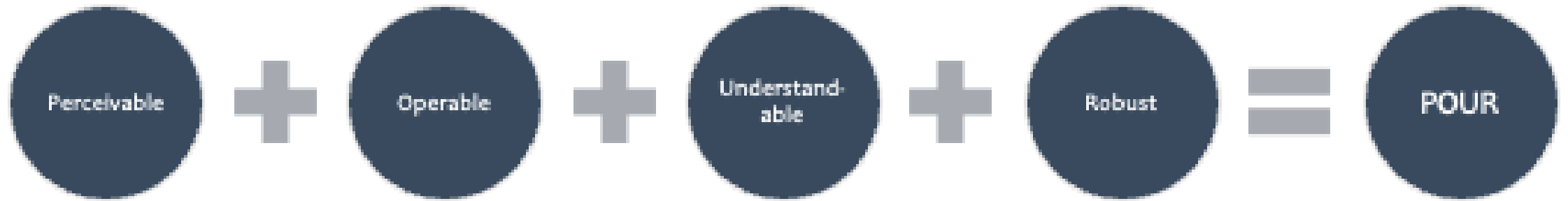
✓ Plain language

✓ Page language specified

✓ Webpages must "appear and operate in predictable ways"

✓ Regular maintenance and error correction

## R=Robust



- ✓ Can be accessed by screen readers and other assistive technologies
- ✓ Examples:
  - ✓ HTML elements have complete start and end tags
  - ✓ Names, roles of elements must be able to be programmatically determined by assistive technology (including status messages)

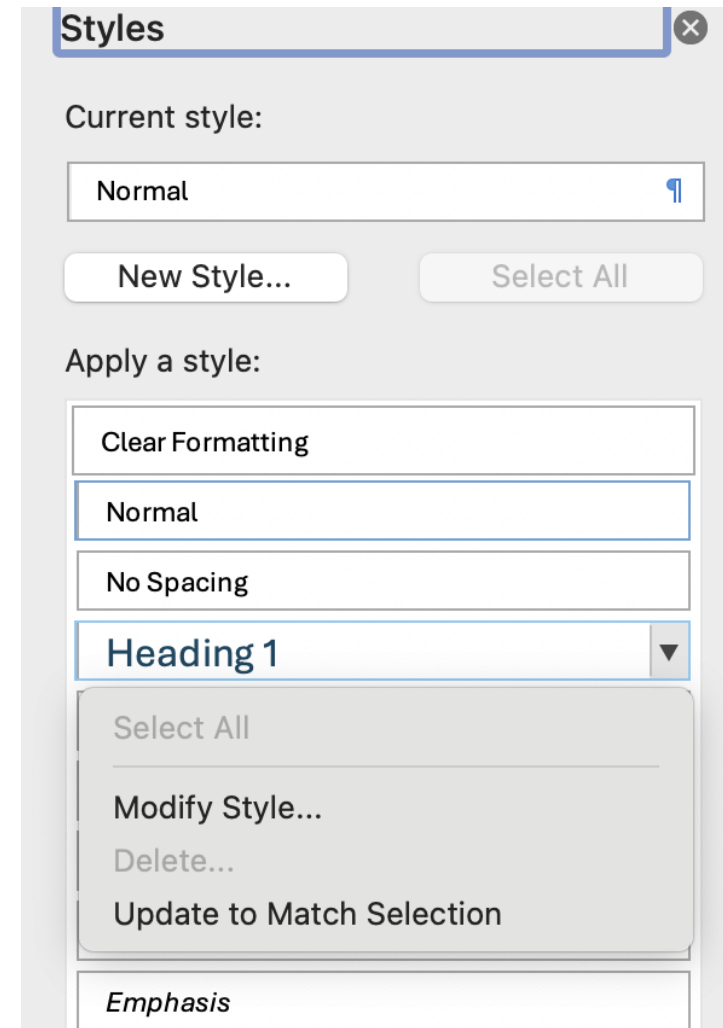


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# Section 3: **ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS**

# Manipulating Reading Order: Word

- ✓ Home Tab/Styles Pane
- ✓ Right style
- ✓ Select “modify style”
  - ✓ This opens a new window
  - ✓ Edit font, color, size, space before/after paragraph
- ✓ Or, select an example text and click “Update to Match Selections”



# Manipulating Reading Order: PowerPoint

- ✓ Review Tab/Check Accessibility/Reading Order Pane
- ✓ Drag and drop until correct
- ✓ No repeating or absent headers

The screenshot shows the 'Reading Order Pane' in PowerPoint. The pane title is 'Reading Order Pane' with a close button (X) in the top right corner. Below the title, there is a descriptive text: 'Set the sequence and content that accessibility tools will read'. There are two legend items: a checked checkbox followed by '= Included in reading order' and a warning triangle icon followed by '= Missing alt text'. Below the legend, there are two buttons: 'Sort By Rows' and 'Sort By Columns'. At the bottom, there is a list of two items, each with a checked checkbox, a number, a title, and a pencil icon for editing:

Order	Content	Status
1	Title 1: Manipulating Readin...	Included
2	Content Placeholder 5: Use...	Included



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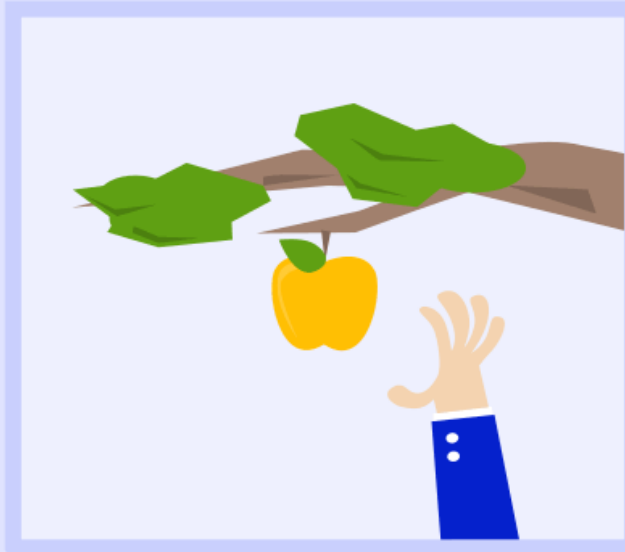
# Reading Order Guidelines



- ✓ Header 1: Document Title
- ✓ Max 3 sub headers or rethink your structure

## Alt Text

- ✓ Only add if information is being conveyed
- ✓ Otherwise mark as decorative

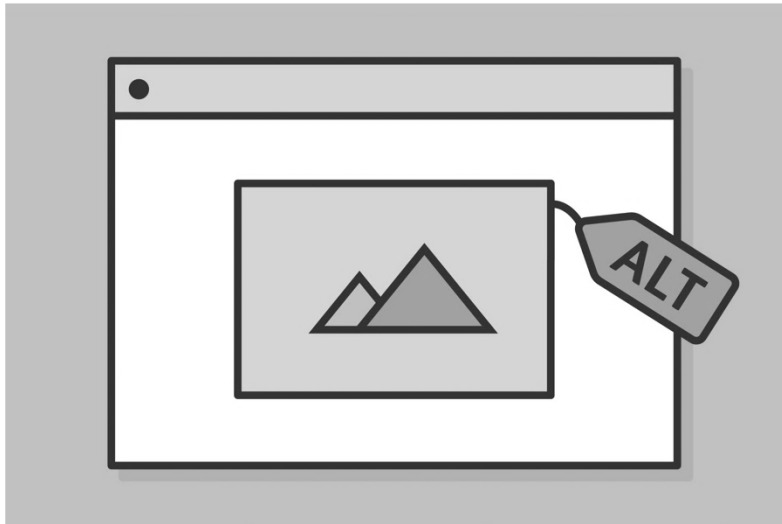


**alt**="yellow apple"



**alt**="hand reaching for a yellow apple hanging from the tree"

## How to Add Alt Text



- ✓ Microsoft Office:
  - ✓ Right click/View Alt-Text
  - ✓ Click picture/Shape Format/Alt Text
- ✓ Adobe Acrobat Pro:
  - ✓ Tools/Prepare for Accessibility/Set Alternative Text
- ✓ “Mark as decorative”

## Descriptive Links

- ✓ When to rename a hyperlink
  - ✓ If you're certain this document will not be printed



## Descriptive Links

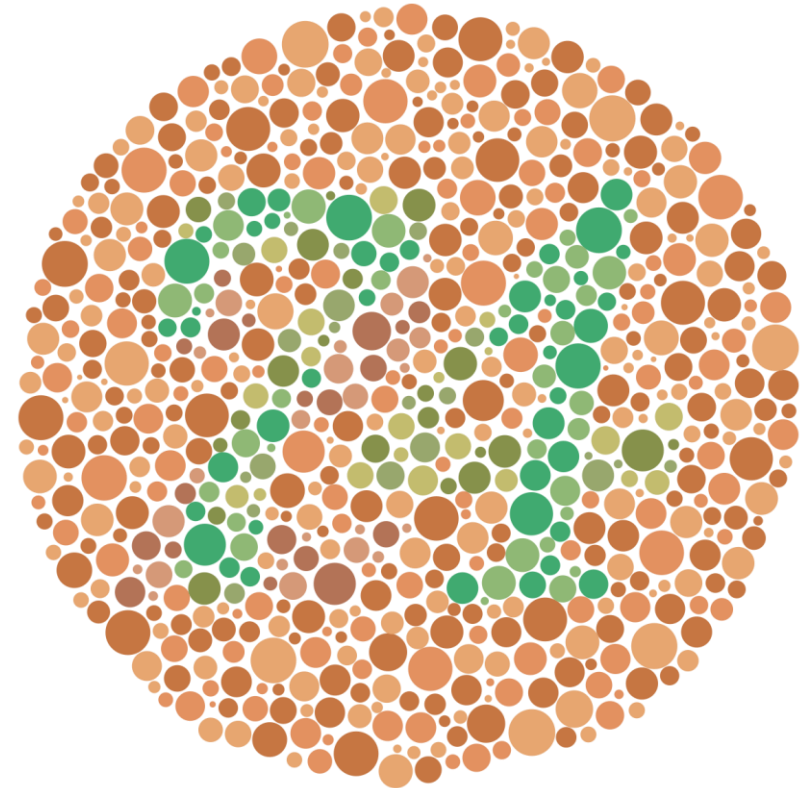


- ✓ How to rename hyperlinks
  - ✓ Either: right click/edit hyperlink
  - ✓ Or: Select text/Insert Tab/Link
- ✓ Don't look like a phishing scam
  - ✓ Always say where you're directing people

## Color/Color Contrast

### Designing for Color Blind Individuals

- ✓ Can your content be understood **without color**?
- ✓ Can your links and buttons be understood **without color**?
- ✓ Color-blindness is **unique to the individual**



# Colour Contrast Analyser

The screenshot shows the Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA) application window. It features a dark theme with white text. The 'Foreground colour' is set to black (#000000) and the 'Background colour' is set to white (#FFFFFF). A 'Sample preview' section shows the text 'example text showing contrast' on a white background. The 'WCAG 2.1 results' section shows a 'Contrast ratio' of 21:1 and three categories of results: 1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (AA) with 'Pass (regular text)' and 'Pass (large text)', 1.4.6 Contrast (Enhanced) (AAA) with 'Pass (regular text)' and 'Pass (large text)', and 1.4.11 Non-text Contrast (AA) with 'Pass (UI components and graphical objects)'. The interface includes various control buttons like 'HEX', 'up/down arrows', 'swap', 'erase', and 'help'.

**Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA)**

**Foreground colour** (black)  
HEX

**Background colour** (white)  
HEX

**Sample preview**  
example text showing contrast

**WCAG 2.1 results** Contrast ratio 21:1

- ▶ **1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (AA)**
  - ✔ Pass (regular text)
  - ✔ Pass (large text)
- ▶ **1.4.6 Contrast (Enhanced) (AAA)**
  - ✔ Pass (regular text)
  - ✔ Pass (large text)
- ▶ **1.4.11 Non-text Contrast (AA)**
  - ✔ Pass (UI components and graphical objects)

- ✔ Checks if the color contrast of your text and your background is high enough
- ✔ [Click here to learn more and/or download the app](#)



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# Lists

- ✓ Use the built-in lists feature
- ✓ Great, thank you, that's all



## Tables

- ✓ When to use a screenshot and alt text:
  - ✓ If Excel doc is large enough that text will be too small to read
  - ✓ If only a few lines of information are pertinent to reader
- ✓ Guidelines
  - ✓ No empty spaces
  - ✓ Use headers in columns/rows



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# Plain Language

- Write for your reader
- Major points first, details last
- Eliminate filler
- Minimize abbreviations/acronyms
- Use common definitions
- Avoid legal, foreign, or technical jargon
- Use tables/illustrations
- Use short paragraphs
- Use many headers
- Have a proofreader
- Spell out acronyms and explain programs





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Questions?



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# Section 4: **LIVE TUTORIAL**



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Thank You!