

Indian Health Service

Digital Accessibility

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SECTION 508 PROGRAM MANAGER



Disability is a part of human diversity

Federal agencies must put accessibility at the center of every digital experience – so government can truly deliver for all Americans.

1 in 4

adults in the United States live with a **disability**¹

¹ National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

17%

of today's Federal **workforce** identifies as having a disability²

² OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results 2022

5%

of employed Americans will experience a **short-term disability** every year³

³ AARP and National Alliance for Caregiving, Caregiving in the United States 2020



Biography

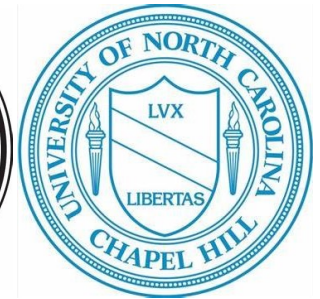
Raised and work in Miami, Florida

30 years of federal IT experience with the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, and Indian Health Service HQ

Bachelor of Science in Social Science, Florida State University

Master of Public Administration candidate (2026), University of North Carolina

Volunteer youth sports coach and adult leader in the Boy Scouts of America



Agenda

Section 508's origins

What is ICT?

Section 508 in Acquisitions

How to be accessible daily

Contact & resources

Questions



Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC §794d)



Section 508 passed in 1998, requires information communications technology (ICT) that is **procured**, **developed**, **maintained**, or **used** by federal agencies:

- Must be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities
- Public and federal employees accessing government ICT
- Revised in 2018
- 2021 Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 39 adopted new guidelines (FAR)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act, same thing right?

Americans with Disabilities Act

- All areas of public life and private life open to the public must be accessible
- Both laws prohibit discrimination
- Applies to all levels of government, nonprofits, and businesses
- Recent 2024 ruling addresses ICT in the state and lower levels of government

Rehabilitation Act and Section 508

- Federal government and federal-funded programs applicability only
- Section 508 **strictly applies to information communications technology (ICT)** bought, used, and maintained



What is ICT anyways?





You say you are accessible, but are you really?

According to a recent Web Accessibility In Mind (WebAim) study, less than 3% of all websites are fully accessible. Dating back to 1999, WebAIM is one of the leading providers of web accessibility expertise internationally.

Acquiring ICT to-do list

Engage Section 508
early in the CPIC
process (CPIC web app,
Planview)

Complete Procuring
Section 508
Conformant ICT
Training Course

HHSAR Generator (IHS
508 SharePoint)

Voluntary Product
Accessibility Template
(VPAT) or HHS
Conformance Checklist

Most accessible
product that also
meets business needs



Project Conformance Checklist

- Did you complete the Procuring Section 508 Conformant ICT Products and Services training and obtain a certification of completion?
 - ✓ Proof of completion is part of the required documentation for Section 508 review. Training can be found at [Section 508 Procurement Training](#)
- Is an Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) available for each product and has it been evaluated and deemed conformant with the IHS accessibility requirements?
 - ✓ During market research it is imperative all products' conformance state be identified and the most accessible product is chosen. Refer vendors to <https://section508.gov/sell> for guidance on using ACRs and the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT™). Alternatively, the Department of Health and Human Services has an [HHS checklist](#) that can be used to attest to Section 508 conformance.
- Copy and paste the updated Department of Health and Human Services Acquisition Regulation (HHSAR) Section 508 provision (solicitation) and clause (contract) into contracting documents.
 - ✓ A Section 508 and Accessibility Requirements section must be included in the documentation to cover the entire project. Follow the instructions listed on the [HHS Acquisition Requirements website](#) to include
- Has the IHS Section 508 Program Manager been engaged?
 - ✓ Engage the Section 508 Program Manager early in the contracting and project lifecycle to ensure compliance is being met.

Checklist completed by:

The Project Lifecycle



Shifting Section 508 to the left

- Bake into your processes early (costlier later)
- Support current and future users with disabilities



✘ Before

Medicaid: Apply if you are aged (65 years old or older), blind, or disabled and have low income and few resources. Apply if you are terminally ill and want to receive hospice services. Apply if you are aged, blind, or disabled; live in a nursing home; and have low income and limited resources. Apply if you are aged, blind, or disabled and need nursing home care, but can stay at home with special community care services. Apply if you are eligible for Medicare and have low income and limited resources.

✔ After

You may apply for Medicaid if you are:

- Terminally ill and want hospice services
- Eligible for Medicare and have low income and limited resources
- 65 years old or older, blind, or disabled and have low income and few resources and:
 - Live in a nursing home
 - Need a nursing home care but can stay at home with special community care services

Before and After, a Tale of Two Rewrites



Document structure makes navigation easier

H1: President of the United States

- H2: Health and Human Services
 - H3: Indian Health Service
 - H3: National Institutes of Health

H2: Department of State

H2: Department of Defense

- H3: Navy
- H3: Army



Avoid walls of text



Documents without headings are not user friendly



All that you need to know about accessible fonts

Sans-serif or non-serif recommended such as:

- Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Trebuchet MS, Verdana, Open Sans

Serif fonts (no-no):

- Times New Roman and Century

No italic, handwriting, script, novelty fonts

Font size 12 body, 24 point for titles, 18 point for headings, 1.5 line spacing

Color contrast



Serif and Sans Serif comparison

serifs
Text

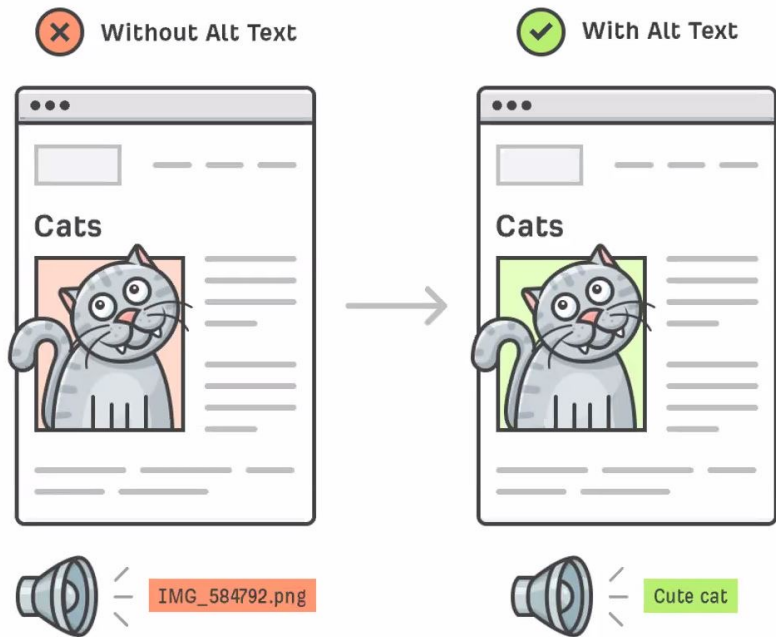
Serif Font

Text

Sans Serif Font



Use alternative text for images



Images without alternative text



Laws, Rehabilitation Act of 1973,
Section 508 and Americans with
Disabilities Act (1990)

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graph TD; A[Laws, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 and Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)] --> B[Section 508 in Acquisitions]; B --> C[Pro tips, what we can do to be accessible];
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Section 508 in Acquisitions

Pro tips, what we can do to be
accessible

Recap

Contact info & resources

- IHSsection508@ihs.gov
- Kevin Fulbright 301.526.9652
- [Section 508 - 508Resources \(ihs.gov\)](https://ihs.gov/508Resources)
- [Section 508 - Section 508 HHSAR Generator \(ihs.gov\)](https://ihs.gov/508HHSARGenerator)
- [Acquisition Guidance on the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template \(VPAT®\) and Accessibility Conformance Report \(ACR\) \(hhs.gov\)](https://hhs.gov/vpat)
- [Procuring Section 508 Conformant ICT Products and Services](#)



Procuring Section 508 conformant ICT products and services (Section508.gov course)



Building a better place for everyone

“Inequality is exclusion.
Exclusion is disabling, not the
disability itself.”

Tiffany Yu, the founder and CEO
of Diversability and Disability
Influencer





Questions?

