ADA Basic Guidelines

To understand the basics of website accessibility, you need to know a few terms:

* **Screen reader** – a computer program that speaks written text. It allows a person to listen to the written text on a webpage or in a computer program. Screen readers read only text; they cannot describe pictures or other images, even if the images are pictures of text.
* **HTML tags** – specific instructions understood by a web browser or screen reader. One type of HTML tag, called an alt attribute (short for “alternative text”), is used to provide brief text descriptions of images and links that screen readers can understand and speak.

**IMPORTANT:** Any content needs to first be placed in Notepad or WordPad before copying it into the webpage.

# Font/Text Content

**Problem:** Font color is a bright color.

**Solution:** Keep text a dark color (black on white) since visually impaired users will not be able to read this clearly.

**Problem:** Highlighted text

**Solution:** Do not use highlight text.

**Problem:** Text is on a colored background.

**Solution:** Make sure there is enough contrast and if in doubt use. <http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>.

Contrast ratio between text and background is at least 4.5:1

**Problem:** The page contains abbreviations or hard to pronounce words.

**Solution:** Write out abbreviations. Make sure to explain words that are hard to pronounce.

**Problem:** The page has a background image or colored background.

**Solution:** Remove the background image and make sure image is white.

**Problem:** Copying content from Word is causing issues with spacing, fonts and table.

**Solution:** Copy content from Word to Notepad. Then copy from Notepad to the actual webpage.

# Hyperlinks

**Problem:** The link reads “click here,” “read more,” or “view more.”

**Solution:** Use more descriptive words such as the name of the document or the website.

**Examples:** Broward College Handbook 2016, Department of Motor Vehicles website, International Student Application 2017

# Images

**Problem:** Image can’t be read by screen reader.

**Solution:** Make sure that the image has a designated title, alt text and/or description.

**Problem:** The page has an image that has lots of text.

**Solution:** Remove the text from the image. Make sure that the image has a designated title, alt text and/or description.

# Video/Audio

**Problem:** Video doesn’t contain subtitles and captions.

**Solutions:** Before contacting helpdesk to place video on a webpage make sure that the video has subtitles and captions.

Do one of two options:

1. Contact the marketing department for assistance or
2. If you have a YouTube account then use the following tutorial to add captions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCZ-cxfxzvk&feature=youtu.be>

# PDFs/ Documents

Use Adobe Acrobat Pro to check for accessibility issues. Once you have your PDF open then click on the Tools option located on the top right-hand side corner. Select the Accessibility tab and do a Full Check.

Tutorial: <http://www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/accessibility/products/acrobat/pdfs/acrobat-x-accessibility-checker.pdf>

**Problem:** Reading order is not logical or accessible by keyboard.

**Solution:** Use styles in Word, Excel or PowerPoint to indicate heading, subheading and/or paragraphs. Using Adobe Acrobat Pro, select the Touch up Reading Order option under the Accessibility tab.

**Problem:** The screen reader can’t read the graphic elements or photos in the PDF.

**Solution:** Go to your original file (Word, Excel or PowerPoint) and click on the image. Right click on the image and select Format Picture. Then click the third option to open the Alt Text option. Add a descriptive alt text and description.

**Problem:** The screen reader can’t read a table in the PDF.

**Solution:** Go to your original file (Word, Excel or PowerPoint). Make sure the table was created from the Insert tab. Right-click on the table and select Table Properties. Then click on the Alt text tab. Fill in the alt text field box and the description field box. Try not to merge or split columns/rows.

**Problem:** The PDF has many ADA issues.

**Solution:** Simplify the original document or have an html page created.

**Problem:** The file name/URL contains %20 or similar.

**Solution:** Replace spaces/special characters in the file name with a dash (–) or remove all spaces.

**Problem:** The document is missing a default language.

**Solution:** Open the original file and click on file. Then select Options and click on the Language tab. Check that English has been enabled.

**Problem:** The document does not have tags.

**Solution:** Open windows explorer and locate the file. Under the document details, click on tags. Add tags (keywords) to the document. (Windows 7 only)

**Solution:** Open the original file that does not have tags. Click file tab > Save As, in the following window, under Save as type you will see Authors; Tags; and Title, click Add a tag to add tags (keywords), when finished click Save. (Windows 7/10)

**Problem:** The document is not searchable.

**Solution:** Make sure that the text can be selected and copied when using mouse. If it’s a scanned image then the document has to be recreated.

**Problem**: The PDF is 9 pages are more.

**Solution:** Open the PDF and use the bookmarks option on the left side panel. Highlight the title of each section and click on the add bookmark on the Bookmarks panel. This will add the title as a heading in the bookmarks panel. Continue adding bookmarks throughout the PDF document. For further explanation use the following tutorial: <https://youtu.be/9xMyevd0i_Y>

**Problem:** The PDF has a background image or watermark.

**Solution:** Open the original file and remove any background images. White background is preferred.

# Tables

**Problem:** The table has spacing issues, the formatting is weird or the font is off.

**Solution:** Use the CMS styled accessible table instead of copying and pasting directing from word doc.