



Proactive accessibility



The power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect.”

Tim Berners-Lee
Inventor of the World Wide Web

Whether driven by legal requirements, humanitarian reasons, or to pursue the original vision for the web, making a concerted effort to maintain an accessible web presence is the right choice. Creating a proactive web accessibility program in your organization can be very satisfying and rewarding. The principles of change management will be a key ingredient to your success. Creating a culture of accessibility can be accomplished by taking the following actions:

1. **Make a commitment:** Affirm your organization’s commitment to provide equal access to your website for people with disabilities. Recognize that accessibility applies to students, parents and employees who have the right to enjoy your online programs services and activities.
2. **Publish a way to report web accessibility problems:** Make it easy for anyone to report a web accessibility problem on your site. Promptly fix any problems reported.
3. **Hire expert auditor:** Find and select an accessibility expert to test your website for WCAG 2.0 AA compliance.
4. **Conduct expert audit:** Have an expert conduct a thorough accessibility audit of your website.
5. **Implement policy and procedures:** Publish web policy and procedures to make sure that all new, modified, or current content and functionality will be accessible to people with disabilities.
 - a. **Designate a web accessibility coordinator:** Define who in your organization is responsible for monitoring and reporting on web accessibility.
 - b. **Provide training:** Provide web accessibility training to all appropriate personnel now and annually.
 - c. **Ensure all new content published is accessible:** Make all new web content and functionality accessible to people with disabilities.
 - d. **Develop and implement a corrective action plan:** Develop a corrective action plan to prioritize and fix any errors found in the expert WCAG 2.0 AA audit of your website. For ideas about how to create a pragmatic plan that focuses on the highest priorities, read Accessibility Prioritization: Your Tactical Roadmap.
 - e. **Monitor compliance:** Have your web accessibility coordinator conduct regular WCAG 2.0 AA audits on your website. Make sure this employee has access to the training and resources needed to be successful.

Proposed timeline for establishing a web accessibility program

Setting up a web accessibility program is not something you can accomplish in an afternoon. It is possible to lay the foundation for your program in as little as 7 months. The foundation of your program and a proposed timeline could be:

MONTH 1 Days 1-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make a commitment b. Designate an employee to be your web accessibility coordinator c. Publish a way to report accessibility problems
MONTH 2 Days 31-60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hire an expert auditor to test your website and help you with a corrective action plan b. Draft initial policy & review it with your legal counsel c. Provide basic accessibility training to your employees
MONTH 3-5 Days 61-150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expert auditor conducts WCAG 2.0 AA test of your website b. Publish your web accessibility policy on your website c. Your employees only publish new content to your site that is accessible
MONTH 6 Days 151-180	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expert auditor provides WCAG 2.0 AA compliance report for your website b. Expert auditor works with you to develop a corrective action plan. Plan to try to resolve all WCAG 2.0 AA issues within 12 months
MONTH 7 Days 181-210	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Begin implementation of the correction action plan to resolve any accessibility issues found during the WCAG 2.0 AA audit
ONGOING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. New employees complete required training on web accessibility within first 30 days of their employment b. Staff/faculty complete required training on web accessibility annually c. Web accessibility coordinator conduct monthly compliance monitoring and reporting. Reports are submitted to the District Superintendent and the District Legal Counsel d. Have the web accessibility coordinator monitor and resolve any problems reported

Start today!

The advantage of being proactive is you may be able to avoid the stress of dealing with a legal discrimination complaint based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or Title II of the Americans with Disability Act. More importantly, making sure that people with disabilities have equal access to all your programs and services will transform you into a civil rights super hero. If you need a little extra motivation, watch the short films from [Apple Accessibility](#).

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