



WESCO socialsecurity.gov
Accessibility Requirements Policy

1 Applicability

- 1.1 Section 508 applies to all electronic content and functionality published on socialsecurity.gov. This policy informs the agency’s implementation of Section 508 on socialsecurity.gov.
 - 1.1.1. Content must at a minimum meet the standards and requirements imposed at the time of publication to socialsecurity.gov.
 - 1.1.2. Content includes HTML web pages, web applications, and any of the following posted, embedded, or linked to from socialsecurity.gov: attached documents (Word, PDF, Power Point, Excel, etc.), electronic forms (includes HTML, Flash, and PDF forms); video and video players, audio files (including podcasts); Flash applications and other interactive content; and live or recorded web events (webinars, webcasts, online presentations, etc.).
- 1.2 Inaccessible content posted by the Agency to third party websites (including social media and other cloud computing websites) must have an accessible alternative posted on socialsecurity.gov. A link to mirrored content located on socialsecurity.gov must be visible on the third party site.
- 1.3 General Exception: An exception may apply if both 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 are met. When using this exception, content owners must provide a disclaimer that states the following: “The following content was not authored, procured, or commissioned by the Social Security Administration. The agency cannot make any assurances as to the level of accessibility of this content.”
 - 1.3.1. The content is not essential for accomplishing the mission of the agency.
 - 1.3.2. The content comes from a party that is not another federal entity, and was not procured through a formal contract, inter-agency agreement, or other formal agreement.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Agency Section 508 Coordinator will maintain minimum accessibility requirements for content posted to socialsecurity.gov for:
 - 2.1.1. [Web Pages and Web Applications](#) (SSA internal link removed)
 - 2.1.2. [Adobe PDF Documents and Forms](#) (SSA internal link removed)
 - 2.1.3. [Microsoft Word](#) (SSA internal link removed)
 - 2.1.4. [Microsoft Power Point](#) (SSA internal link removed)
 - 2.1.5. [Microsoft Excel](#) (SSA internal link removed)

- 2.1.6. [Video](#) (SSA internal link removed)
- 2.1.7. [Audio](#) (SSA internal link removed)
- 2.1.8. [Flash](#) (SSA internal link removed)
- 2.1.9. [Live and Recorded Web Events](#) (SSA internal link removed)
- 2.2 The Agency Section 508 Coordinator will certify all socialsecurity.gov site templates for Section 508 compliance. The current socialsecurity.gov site templates ensure common web elements are accessible. View updated [socialsecurity.gov web templates](#) (SSA internal link removed).
- 2.3 Agency webmasters are responsible for Section 508 compliance of web pages they author using approved socialsecurity.gov content templates at the time of initial publication.
- 2.4 Content owners and Agency webmasters will use the web page and web application testing guidelines provided by the Agency Section 508 Coordinator. [View testing guidelines](#) (SSA internal link removed).
- 2.5 Content owners must certify that all content submitted for publication on socialsecurity.gov, other than that which will be coded by the Agency webmaster in HTML (e.g. video, document download, podcast, browser applications, forms, PDF files, etc.), meets applicable content accessibility requirements.
 - 2.5.1. If content owners don't have the expertise to author accessible content they must arrange for services to be provided, either by OCOMM's Office of Media Technology, the Systems Accessible Solutions Branch, or other provider with the appropriate expertise. Content owners must initiate these services with sufficient time to develop accessible and validate content.
 - 2.5.2. Agency webmasters may reject content that does not meet accessibility requirements until the content owner remediates the content.
 - 2.5.3. If it is not possible to for the content owner to obtain an accessible version of electronic content before publication, the content owner must request, and the Agency webmaster may grant, a two-week grace period.
 - 2.5.4. If accessible content is not submitted by the end of the grace period, the Agency webmaster must notify the Section 508 Coordinator immediately to determine what action should be taken.

3 Requirements

3.1 Web Pages and Web Applications

- 3.1.1. All HTML based web content, forms and applications published to socialsecurity.gov must meet the [SSA Web page and web application accessibility requirements](#) (SSA internal link removed).
- 3.1.2. Web page and web application content requirements are applicable to static and dynamic html pages.
- 3.1.3. Web page and web application content does not include files posted on web pages, browser-embedded videos/audio/animations, or browser-embedded interactive content (Flash, live webinars, etc.). For these types of content, see the relevant sections below.

3.2 Adobe PDF Documents and Forms

- 3.2.1. Web posted PDF documents and interactive PDF forms posted to socialsecurity.gov must meet the [SSA Adobe PDF documents and forms accessibility requirements](#) (SSA internal link removed).
- 3.2.2. Where possible provide an HTML equivalent for PDF documents. Only use PDF when it is important to retain the original formatting of a document
- 3.2.3. The following exceptions may apply:
 - 3.2.3.1 The PDF is entirely image-based (scanned document converted to PDF images) AND optical character recognition (OCR) is not possible (e.g. text is hand written, poor image quality, mixed text and image elements complicate read order, etc.).
 - 3.2.3.2 PDF documents that require a professional for interpretation (e.g, medical records, x-rays, etc.)

3.3 Microsoft Word

- 3.3.1. All Microsoft Word documents posted to socialsecurity.gov which do not have an accessible HTML or PDF alternative must meet the [SSA Microsoft Word accessibility requirements](#) (SSA internal link removed).

3.4 Microsoft Power Point

- 3.4.1. All Microsoft PowerPoint documents posted to socialsecurity.gov which do not have an accessible HTML or PDF alternative must meet the [SSA Microsoft Power Point accessibility guidelines](#) (SSA internal link removed).

3.5 Microsoft Excel

- 3.5.1. All Microsoft Excel documents posted to socialsecurity.gov which do not have an accessible HTML or PDF alternative must meet the [SSA Microsoft Excel accessibility guidelines](#) (*SSA internal link removed*).

3.6 Video

- 3.6.1. All video and audio content posted to socialsecurity.gov must meet the [SSA Video accessibility requirements](#) (*SSA internal link removed*).
- 3.6.2. Only the [Captionate](#) browser embedded video player for Flash should be used on socialsecurity.gov. If another player is required, submit a testing request to the Accessible Solution Branch.

3.7 Audio

- 3.7.1. All video and audio content posted to socialsecurity.gov must meet the [SSA Audio accessibility requirements](#) (*SSA internal link removed*).
- 3.7.2. Audio must be published in an mp3 format.

3.8 Flash

- 3.8.1. All browser-embedded applications, interactive charts, and animations posted to socialsecurity.gov must use the [SSA Flash accessibility requirements](#) (*SSA internal link removed*).
- 3.8.2. All Flash content must be manually tested for accessibility. Automated web testing tools will not be able to test this type of content.

3.9 Live and Recorded Web Events

- 3.9.1. All live and recorded webinars, webcasts, online presentations, online demonstrations, and other web events viewable through socialsecurity.gov must use the [SSA Live and Recorded Web Events accessibility guidelines](#) (*SSA internal link removed*).
- 3.9.2. Given the difficulty of making some portions of live and real-time events accessible, one alternative is to provide reasonable accommodations for attendees with disabilities.
- 3.9.3. When it is difficult to make web events completely accessible, the event must only be open to preregistered users.
 - 3.9.3.1 Preregistration should allow for the identification of each attendee's accessibility needs well before the event so that proper accessibility accommodations can be prepared.

- 3.9.3.2 Users must be able to access the webinar site and navigate to necessary areas/features of the site (e.g. help, site navigation, volume, advance slide, etc.).
- 3.9.3.3 If no individuals need accommodations, accessibility requirements may be reduced to a minimum (basic HTML requirements).

4 Resources

4.1 Captioning Support

- 4.1.1. The Office of Communications (OCOMM) provides Closed Caption Support. For Closed Captioning Services contact Michael Redford in OCOMM/OCPT at 410-597-1297, Michael.Redford@ssa.gov

4.2 Testing

- 4.2.1. The Accessibility Resource Center in the Office of Systems assists with 508 testing upon request for PDF documents and forms, Microsoft Office documents & forms, video and multi-media files, customized multi-media players, webcasts, webinars and other online presentations, animation files, and online surveys. Requests for testing assistance should be sent to *(SSA internal email removed)*. Requests should be provided within three weeks of the target publication date. The Accessibility Resource Center will do its best to provide testing within shorter requested timeframes; however the actual turnaround time will be based on existing workloads and available staffing.

4.3 Training

- 4.3.1. The Accessibility Resource Center in the Office of Systems provides [online and instructor led training for accessibility](#) *(SSA internal link removed)*.