

PDF Requirements Checklist

The following checklist should be used to verify that all content meets the requirements established by VA for Section 508 conformance. For guidance specific to a requirement refer to the Requirement Guidelines section of this document.

ID	1.0 Document Layout and Formatting Requirements	Evaluation
1.1	Does the document contain the correct Document Property Tags? Do the tags reflect the document structure?	
1.2	Headers: If a designation such as bold and/or italicized text is used to denote headings, have the headings been properly tagged?	
1.3	Lists: Are bulleted, numbered and/or alphabetical lists properly tagged?	
1.4	Links: Are links properly tagged with a <Link> tag, a Link-ObjR tag, and a content tag?	
1.5	Does the document have a logical reading order, i.e. is this tab order correct?	
1.6	Does the document have the language specified in the Document Properties?	
1.7	If the document contains a Table of Contents (TOC) or Bookmarks are they functioning correctly?	
1.8	Do all URL's contain the correct hyperlink and display the fully qualified URL (i.e., http://www.va.gov and not www.va.gov)?	
1.9	Are all URL's linked to the correct Web destinations?	
1.10	Have comments been removed and formatting marks been turned off?	

Section 508 Acceptance Checklist

PDF - Adobe Acrobat

1.11	Has a full Accessibility Report been run on the document in Adobe Acrobat Professional 8 or higher showing no errors are present?	
1.12	Have documents with multi-column text, tables, or call-out boxes been checked for correct reading order using the Acrobat Pro 'Read Aloud' function?	
1.13	Has a separate accessible version of the document been provided when there is no other way to make the content accessible? (Example: An organizational chart)	

ID	2.0 Document Image Requirements	Evaluation
2.1	Do all images, grouped images and non-text elements that convey information have alternative text descriptions?	
2.2	Is the document absent of scanned images of text?	
2.3	Do complex images have descriptive text immediately after the image?	
2.4	Are multiple associated images on the same page (e.g., boxes in an organizational chart) grouped as one object?	
2.5	Have all multi-layered objects been flattened into one image and use one Alternative Text (Alt Tag) for this image?	
2.6	Do decorative images that do not convey information have an empty Alternative Text (Alt Text) (i.e, alt="")?	

Section 508 Acceptance Checklist

PDF - Adobe Acrobat

ID	3.0 Document Table Requirements	Evaluation
3.1	Do all data tables in the document have Row and Column headers?	
3.2	Are tables being used to create a tabular structure (not tabs or spaces)?	
3.3	Do all data tables in the document have a logical reading order from left to right, top to bottom?	
3.4	Are data cells in the tables logically associated with the Row/Column Header Elements?	
3.5	Are all data tables in the document named, numbered (if applicable) and have a description?	
3.6	Are all table cells, with the exception of those associated with the Header Row, designated as data cells?	

ID	4.0 Additional Requirements	Evaluation
A	Has a visual check been performed on the document to ensure that no hidden data from Word (or other applications used to create the original document) is present in the PDF file?	
B	Is the document file name concise, generally limited to 20-30 characters, and make the content of the file clear in the context in which it is presented?	
C	Does the document contain scanned signatures?	
D	Does the document utilize recommended fonts i.e. Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Calibri and Helvetica?	
E	Has a separate accessible version of the document been provided when there is no other way to make the content accessible? (Example: An organizational chart).	

PDF Requirement Guidelines

The following guidelines have been established for PDF files by the VA to meet Section 508 requirements.

1.0 Document Layout and Formatting Guidelines

- 1.1. The document should be properly tagged, i.e. the Document Properties / Description tab should have “Yes” selected for “Tagged PDF”.
- 1.2. The document language should be specified, i.e. the Document Properties / Advanced tab should have the Language set to “English” or “English US”.
- 1.3. The document should have a logical reading order, i.e. the Tab Order must be in the correct order to make the document readable.
- 1.4. If the document contains a Table of Contents (TOC) or Bookmarks they must be functioning correctly.
- 1.5. All URL’s must contain the correct hyperlink and display the fully qualified URL (i.e., <http://www.va.gov> and not www.va.gov).
- 1.6. All URLs must be linked to an active Web Destination.
- 1.7. All Acrobat Comment and Markup items must be removed from the document. The presence of Comment and Markup items will adversely affect the screen reader’s ability to correctly interpret the document.
- 1.8. All Acrobat Accessibility Tags must be applied to the document. Acrobat Accessibility Tags are added to the document as part of the conversion process and should be visually verified.
- 1.9. A Full Accessibility Report must be run on the document (using Adobe Acrobat Professional 8 or higher) showing that no errors are present.
- 1.10. Documents that contain multi-column text, tables, or call-out boxes (i.e. balloons or other graphics with enclosed text) should be checked for correct reading order using the Acrobat Pro ‘Read Aloud’ function. Using the “Read Aloud” function will also validate that the tab order of the document is correct and that a screen reader will be able to track the correct flow of the document.
- 1.11. Any document that is unable to be made accessible will need to have a separate accessible version available for disabled users to access. (Example: An organizational chart)

2.0 Document Images Guidelines

- 2.1. All document images, grouped images or non-text elements (charts and graphics) should have Alternative Text (Alt Text) associated with them.
- 2.2. Documents comprised of scanned images of text are not 508 compliant. Scanned images of text are unable to be accurately interpreted by screen readers and cannot be made compliant. One alternative is to use Adobe Acrobat to rescan the document to text with OCR activated.
- 2.3. Complex images (i.e. charts, graphs, flowcharts, etc.) must have descriptive text immediately after the image.
- 2.4. Multiple associated images must be grouped as one object. Grouping the images together will deflect possible errors when the document is presented by the screen reader.
- 2.5. All multi-layered objects must be flattened into one image and use one Alternative Text (Alt Tag) for this image.
- 2.6. Images used only for decoration (do not convey information) should have an empty Alt Text: `alt=""`.

3.0 Document Tables Guidelines

- 3.1. Documents containing data tables should have readily identifiable row and column headers.
- 3.2. Tables should be used to organize information into a tabular format. The use of tabs or spaces to create tabular data will adversely affect the screen reader and should not be used.
- 3.3. Data tables should have a logical reading order from left to right and top to bottom. This is the table structure that screen readers are designed to follow and any other format will adversely affect its ability to correctly convey the information.
- 3.4. Table cells should be logically associated with the Row/Column Header i.e. there should be a logical, one-to-one association from the data to the information in the Row/Column Header.
- 3.5. Tables should be named, have a table number (if applicable) and have a description. This will allow the screen reader to identify each table and allow the user to recognize the information being presented.
- 3.6. All cells within a data table, that are not part of the header row, must be designated as “data cells”.

4.0 Additional Requirements Guidelines

- A. A visual check should be done to the document to ensure that no hidden data from Word (or other applications used to create the original document) is present in the resulting PDF file.
- B. The document file name must be concise, generally limited to 20-30 characters, to make the content of the file clear in the context in which it is presented.
- C. Scanned signatures within documents are a considered a theft-of-identity risk and should not be used. Alternative methods of “signing” documents should be used. (Refer to the VA 6102 Handbook page 16 number 24 of the Web Site Checklist
[http://www1.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub_ID=410&FType=2.](http://www1.va.gov/vapubs/viewPublication.asp?Pub_ID=410&FType=2))
- D. The document must utilize the recommended fonts i.e. Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Calibri and Helvetica.
- E. If there is no other way to make the content accessible, a separate accessible version of the document must be provided (example: an organizational chart).

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