

MS Word 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 Requirement	Evaluation
1.1	Has the document been formatted using Style elements (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc as laid out in the outline view) and/or using Outline formatting in a hierarchical manner (i.e. Heading 1 to Heading 2, etc. to Body Text)?	
1.2	Does the document refrain from using flashing/flickering text and/or animated text?	
1.3	Are page numbering codes used as opposed to manually typed page numbers?	
1.4	If footnotes are present, have they been created through Word Footnote linking?	
1.5	If color is used to emphasize the importance of selected text, is there an alternative method used in addition to color for emphasis?	
1.6	Is the Bullet style being used as opposed to manually typed characters (e.g. Hyphens)?	
1.7	Have track changes been accepted or rejected and turned off?	
1.8	Have comments been removed and formatting marks been turned off?	
1.9	Has the Document been reviewed in <i>Print Preview</i> for a final visual check?	
1.10	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)?	

1.11	Are all URL's linked to correct Web destinations?	
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ID	2.0 Document Images Requirement	Evaluation
2.1	Do all images, grouped images and non-text elements that convey information have alternative text descriptions?	
2.2	Do complex images (i.e., charts and graphs) have descriptive text immediately after the image?	
2.3	Is the document free of background images or watermarks?	
2.4	Is the image text wrapping style "In Line with Text "used for all images?	
2.5	Are multiple associated images on the same page (e.g., boxes in an organizational chart) grouped as one object?	
2.6	Have all multi-layered objects been flattened into one image and use one Alternative Text (Alt Text) for this image?	
2.7	Is the document free of Text boxes being used for simple graphics?	
2.8	Do decorative images that do not convey information have an empty Alternative Text (Alt Text) (i.e, alt="")?	

ID	3.0 Document Tables	Evaluation
3.1	Are tables being used to create a tabular structure (not tabs or spaces)?	
3.2	Do all tables have a logical reading order from left to right, top to bottom?	
3.3	Do Data tables have the entire first row designated as a 'Header Row' in table properties?	
3.4	Is the table free of merged cells?	
3.5	Are all tables described and labeled (where appropriate)? Note: In some cases naming/numbering of tables may not be appropriate. For example, a small data table in a presentation may not need a reference.	
3.6	In table properties, is "Allow row to break across pages" unchecked?	

ID	4.0 Additional Requirements	Evaluation
A	Is the document file name concise, generally limited to 20-30 characters, and makes the contents of the file clear in the context in which it is presented?	
B	Does the document utilize recommended fonts i.e. Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Calibri and Helvetica?	
C	Are the Document Properties (i.e. Subject, Author, Title, Keywords, and Language) properly filled out? Note: For Author, do not use individuals name or contractor name. Should use government organization name (i.e., Section 508 VA)	
D	If the document contains a Table of Contents (TOC), was it created using the TOC field (e.g., created using the TOC Command in MS Word)?	
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).	

MS Word Requirement Guidelines

The following guidelines have been established by VA to ensure that MS Word documents meet Section 508 requirements.

1.0 Document Layout and Formatting Guidelines

- 1.1. The document must be formatted using Style elements in a hierarchical manner (i.e. headings different from body text etc.). Use the outline view to check the formatting.
- 1.2. The document must refrain from using flashing/flickering text and/or animated text.
- 1.3. Page numbering codes must be used as opposed to manually typed page numbers.
- 1.4. If footnotes are present, they must be created through Word Footnote linking.
- 1.5. If color is used to emphasize the importance of selected text, there must be an alternate method.
- 1.6. The Bullet style must be used as opposed to manually typed characters (e.g. Hyphens).
- 1.7. Track Changes must be accepted or rejected and turned off.
- 1.8. All comments and formatting marks must be turned off.

- 1.9. The Document must be reviewed in *Print Preview* for a final visual check.
- 1.10. All URL's must contain the correct hyperlink and display the fully qualified URL be hyperlinked with the full address (i.e., <http://www.va.gov> not www.va.gov)
- 1.11. All URL's must be linked to active Web destination.

2.0 Document Images Guidelines

- 2.1. All images, grouped images and non-text elements that convey information must have alternative text descriptions.
- 2.2. Complex images must have descriptive text immediately after the image.
- 2.3. The document must be free of background images or watermarks.
- 2.4. The image text wrapping style "In Line with Text" must be used for all images.
- 2.5. Multiple associated images must be grouped as One Object (i.e., Organizational Charts).
- 2.6. All multi-layered objects must be flattened into one image and use one Alternative Text (Alt Text) for the image.
- 2.7. Text boxes must not be used for simple graphics.
- 2.8. Images used only for decoration (do not convey information) should have an empty Alt Text: `alt=""`.

3.0 Document Tables Guidelines

- 3.1. Tables must be used, to create a tabular structure (not tabs or spaces). i.e. Do not use tabs or spaces to display columns of information.
- 3.2. All tables must read from left to right, top to bottom. (For proper reading order by the Screen reader)
- 3.3. Tables containing 'data' must have the first row designated as a 'Header Row' in table properties.
- 3.4. Tables must not use merged cells, because it can be problematic for screen readers to read the file. It is also problematic to convert the file to PDF.
- 3.5. If tables are used, where appropriate, they should be described and labeled.
- 3.6. Rows should not break across pages as it will make it more difficult. In MS-Word, Table properties, the "Allow to break across pages" checkbox must be unchecked.

4.0 Additional Requirements Guidelines

- A. The document file name must be concise, generally limited to 20-30 characters, and make the contents of the file clear in the context in which it is presented.
- B. The document must utilize the recommended fonts i.e. Times New Roman, Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, Calibri and Helvetica.
- C. The Document Properties (i.e. Subject, Author, Title, Keywords, and Language) must be properly filled out. Note: For “Author” do not use individuals name or contractor name. Should use government organization name (i.e., Section 508 VA).
- D. Files that contain a Table of Contents (TOC) must use the TOC field (e.g., created using the TOC Command in MS Word).
- E. A separate accessible version of the document must be provided when there is no other way to make the content accessible. (Example: An organizational chart).

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