

PDF Accessibility Guidance

Arvada, and any contractor performing work for Arvada, must comply with the *Accessibility Standards for an Individual with a Disability* adopted by Colorado's Office of Information Technology and any applicable federal standards (collectively the "Standards"). At a high level, the Standards require all digital assets (e.g. documents, mobile apps, videos, etc.) to comply with the WCAG 2.1 AA. Arvada provides the guidance below solely to help a content creator generate compliant digital assets and inform a content creator of how Arvada reviews compliance. **The provided guidance is not comprehensive. A content creator should be aware that meeting all guidance provided in this document does not guarantee the digital asset is fully compliant with the Standards. Content creators should conduct their own digital accessibility review and consult with their legal counsel or the City Attorney's Office, as applicable.**

City of Arvada Checking Process

1. Understanding of the WCAG 2.1 AA standards to be in compliance with OIT's *Accessibility Standards for an Individual with a Disability* (8 CCR 1501-11) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act pertaining to web and mobile accessibility (28 CFR 35.200).
2. Run the Adobe accessibility checker
3. Manually check for color contrast, reading order, table structure, image alt text and items that should or should not be marked decorative and other issues that may be present

Accessibility Checker in Adobe Acrobat

Upon running the Accessibility Checker in Adobe Acrobat, the City will be looking for the following information. Again, this is not a comprehensive list of everything that may be necessary to make a PDF accessible, nor a list of everything the City will review.

- Tagged PDF - WCAG section: 1.3.1 Info and Relationships, 1.3.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.4, 2.4.5, 2.4.6, 3.1.2, 3.3.2, 4.1.2 Name, role, value
- Title - WCAG section: 2.4 Page Titled (Level A)
- Bookmarks - WCAG sections: 2.4.1 Bypass Blocks (Level A), 2.4.5 Multiple Ways (Level AA)
- Tab order - WCAG section: 2.4.3, Focus Order (Level A)
- Alternate Text - WCAG section: 1.1.1 Non-text Content. (A)
 - Figures alt text

- Nested alt text
- Associated with content
- Hides annotations
- Other elements alt text
- Tables - WCAG section: 1.3.1 Info and Relationships. (Level A)
 - Rows
 - TH and TD
 - Headers
 - Regularity
 - Different criteria may be applied as tables become more complex
- Lists - WCAG section: 1.3.1 Info and Relationships. (Level A)
 - List items
 - Lbl and LBody
- Headings - WCAG section: 2.4.6 Headings and Labels. (Level AA). The order of headings is not required under WCAG, and is only an advisory technique.
 - Appropriate nesting
- Color contrast - manual check using a contrast checker like [WebAIM](#)
- Reading order - manual check

Examples of Common Issues (Automated and Manual Checks):

- Many logos appear more than once. The first one should be identified in the alt text and can be marked as decorative on repeated appearance.
- Charts can be marked as decorative IF there is sufficient text describing them in the body of the document. If it is possible to describe the chart effectively, using only a short sentence in alt text, that is acceptable. The goal is to give the exact same information to a sighted user as a user who is using a screen reader.
- Some images and figures are not tagged. That is fine if they are decorative, but if not, they must be tagged and appropriate alt text must be added.
- Words and images presented in a table for layout purposes should be corrected by updating the tags to paragraphs instead of using tables and table data.
- There are some invisible characters that are causing trouble with character encoding. For example, there can be an extra, invisible character after a word that can trigger an error. This is often from cutting and pasting text from another source.
- The charts at the end of the document are listed as images instead of text.
- The identified table errors are due to the tables being used incorrectly and/or the tables not having appropriate header rows. Cells in header rows or columns must use th instead of td.

- Inconsistent headings. Sometimes headings are used and sometimes they are not. This makes it difficult if not impossible to create bookmarks.

Summary

Many documents need significant work to ensure accessibility. The built-in adobe accessibility checker can catch a lot of issues, but a manual check is also required. The manual check looks for color contrast, reading order, and correctly identifying parts of the document and making sure that they are tagged correctly. Internal content creators may contact digitalaccessibility@arvada.org for assistance; external content creators may contact their project manager for assistance.