



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS)

Accessibility Center for Education, Consultation, and Support Services (ACCESS)

Microsoft Word Document Accessibility Testing Checklist

Each level requires document creators to develop their accessibility skillset by adding more manual testing and validation. Each level includes and builds off of the items in the preceding levels (e.g., Level 2 encompasses the items in Levels 1 and 2, Level 4 encompasses the items in Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4).

- Level 1: Run automated tests and fix any errors found
- Level 2: Manual verification of visible content
- Level 3: Manual verification of document properties
- Level 4: Preparing to finalize

Microsoft Word Documents

Level 1:

- ☐ Was the [automated accessibility checker](#) or accessibility assistant used?
- ☐ Were any errors found fixed?

Level 2:

- ☐ Is there only one Heading 1 present?
- ☐ Are all [headings](#) in order and nested properly using Styles?
- ☐ Are [headings](#) clear and descriptive?
- ☐ Is all header content in the main body of the document for the first occurrence of the header with additional headers and footers marked as decorative?
- ☐ Are the [font choices](#) clear, legible, and do they adhere to font size recommendations (12 pts minimum)?
- ☐ Are sans serif fonts used for the body text?
- ☐ Is all [hyperlink text](#) unique and descriptive?
- ☐ Is the [use of color only to indicate meaning](#) avoided?
- ☐ Do all images have meaningful [alt text](#) and graphics irrelevant to the content set as decorative?
- ☐ Do all [tables have a header row](#) and/or a header column?
- ☐ Are tables avoided for visual formatting of content?

Level 3:

- ☐ Does the document contain proper metadata (e.g., [title](#), [language](#))?
- ☐ Is [plain language](#) used, avoiding jargon, and spelling out abbreviations the first time they're used?
- ☐ Is [directional and/or sensory language](#) avoided (e.g., “the image to the right” or “the blue icon”)?
- ☐ Is the content visible in [high contrast mode](#) and [dark theme](#)?
- ☐ Are images of text avoided?
- ☐ Are emojis or other non-standard symbols avoided for bulleted and numbered [lists](#)?
- ☐ Are all [tables simple with no merged, split, or empty cells](#) or multiple header rows?
- ☐ Does each table have a descriptive caption or associated title?
- ☐ Does the [color contrast](#) between text and background, link text and background, and graphics and background meet 4.5:1 for text and 3:1 for large text and images minimum contrast requirements?

Level 4:

- ☐ Are all [images inline](#) with no text wrapping?
- ☐ Are [text alternatives](#) provided for complex charts and graphs?
- ☐ Are excessive carriage returns or line breaks avoided to create white space between paragraphs or sections?
- ☐ Are graphics clear and understandable in grayscale?
- ☐ Is “[print to PDF](#)” avoided when saving or exporting the document?
- ☐ Is language translation provided for critical information?

Document Change Control

Version No.	Revised by	Effective Date	Description of Changes
1.0	ACCESS Team	August 1, 2025	Initial document