

# Using Editorially to make your content more accessible

10/30/25



# What is Content Lab?

- Focuses on **Content Strategy**: Managing your content to reach target audiences and using data and feedback to improve content and user experience
- Community of practice
  - Values ongoing learning and continuous improvement
  - Flexible format
  - Thrives on active participation

*Content Lab is aligned to the Digital Roadmap, supporting the goal of high-quality, accessible, user-centric content on state websites*

# Our purpose: Learning + better content

## Community of practice

- We want to continually grow and improve
- We use real content examples – yours and ours
- The methods and practices are the point

## Mass.gov content

- Clear before clever
- Current
- Constituent-friendly



## Agenda

- What is Editoria1ly?
- Editoria1ly needs you
- You need Editoria1ly
- How can I use Editoria1ly?
- How do I fix the issues Editoria1ly flags?
- Wrap up

What is Editorially?

# Editorially

- Accessibility checker built into the CMS
- Once a page is built and saved, it functions
- Opening a page in **view** in the CMS triggers it
- Icon in lower right corner flags issues
  - Blue with a checkmark means no issues were detected by Editorially
  - Red means you've got accessibility issues that need fixing
  - Yellow means you should review
- If you fix the issue/s, you should get a blue checkmark
- Reviews your content, not the page template



# What does Editorially catch?

- Alt text issues
- Problems with links
- Errors in page outline/structure
  - Skipped heading levels
  - Issues with tables
  - List formatting
- General quality assurance
  - All caps text
  - Video closed captions
  - Reminders to make sure downloads are accessible

## Accessibility report for authors

Organization (direct match)

Authored by

Issue type

Is one of ▾

Authored on

Is greater than or equal to ▾

APPLY

Content heading inside a table

Alt text is meaningless

Empty table header cell

Heading tag without any text

Image has no alternative text attribute

Image's text alternative is a URL

None -

# What does Editorially not catch?

- Design issues, like color contrast
- Sensory/directional language
- Limited in its ability to catch poor writing
  - Alt text
  - Link text
  - Headings
- Some issues in tables (merged cells, empty cells)
- Unlinked phone numbers



cadet.jpg (17.64 KB)

[Remove](#)



## Alternative text

If the image conveys information that is not part of the link text, describe it here. If the image is purely decorative, leave it blank. Screen readers will read the alt text first, then the link text.

Cadet



Editorially needs you

# Does Editorially make mistakes?

- Occasionally we see missed issues or false positives
- Make a ServiceNow ticket, so the Mass.gov team can investigate it!



# Hyperlinked email

You may call at this number, 617-740-1600 voice, 617-326-7546 VP, or send an email, [MHCancellation@mass.gov](mailto:MHCancellation@mass.gov) with the same details shown on the link above.

The staff will respond to your request within 2 business days, please contact us to

You may call at this number, 617-740-1600 voice, 617-326-7546 VP, or send an email, [MHCancellation@mass.gov](mailto:MHCancellation@mass.gov)

The staff will respond to your request within 2 business days, please contact us to

**Submit Form**

Manual check: is opening a new window expected?

Readers can always choose to open a link a new window. When a link forces open a new window, it can be confusing and annoying, especially for assistive device users who may wonder why their browser's "back" button is suddenly disabled.

There are two general exceptions:

- When the user is filling out a form, and opening a link in the same window would cause them to lose their work.
- When the user is clearly warned a link will open a new window.

To fix: set this link back its default target, or add a screen-reader accessible warning (text or an icon with alt text).

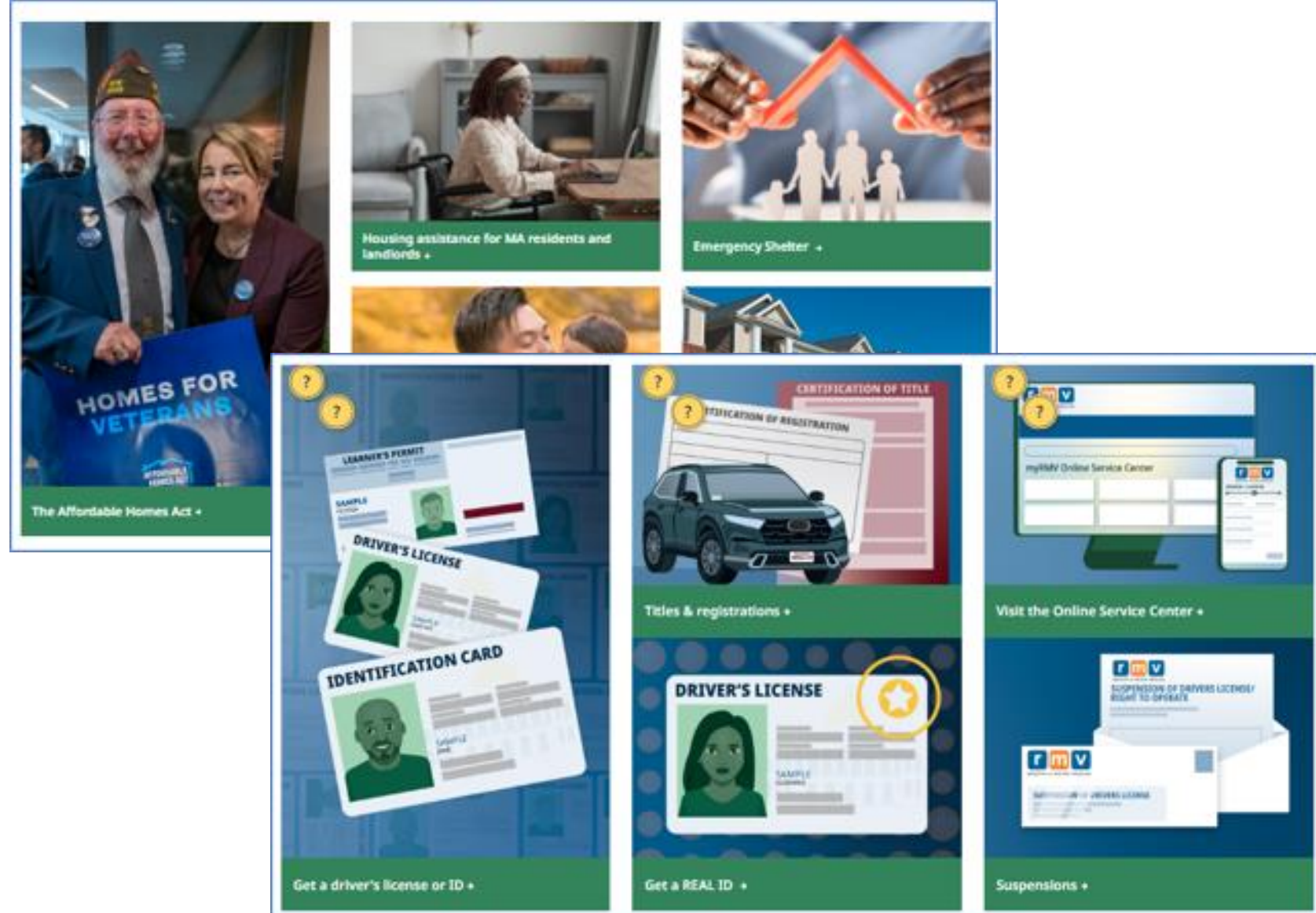
Hide alert for me

Mark OK for all users

?

# Mosaics

- No alt text, no alert
- Alt text, alert





# Video captioning

The image shows a video player interface for a lesson titled "Lesson 1: Intro to Accessibility - Mass Digital Content Lab Accessibility Course". The video player has a blue header with the lesson title and a "Mass.gov" logo. Below the header, the video content is displayed. A yellow circular icon with a question mark is overlaid on the video player, indicating a manual check for accurate captioning. A modal dialog box is open, titled "Manual check: is this video accurately captioned?". The dialog box contains the following text: "If a recorded video contains speech or meaningful sounds, it must provide captioning." and "Note that automatic, machine-generated captions must be proofread, and speaker identifications must be added, before being considered an equal alternative." At the bottom of the dialog box, there are three buttons: "Hide alert for me", "Mark OK for all users", and a question mark icon. The video player interface also shows a play button, a progress bar, and a timestamp of 03:05.

Lesson 1: Intro to Accessibility - Mass Digital Content Lab Accessibility Course

Mass.gov

Lesson 1: Intro to Accessibility

03:05

Manual check: is this video accurately captioned?

If a recorded video contains speech or meaningful sounds, it must provide captioning.

Note that automatic, machine-generated captions must be proofread, and speaker identifications must be added, before being considered an equal alternative.

Hide alert for me Mark OK for all users ?



# Some table issues

- Stacked headers
- Merged (or split) cells

## Occupations and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)

"The 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is a federal statistical standard used by federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into one of 867 detailed occupations according to their occupational definition." ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#))

SOC Example: Surgical Technicians		
Digits/Code	Level of Detail	Title
29-0000	Major Groups	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
29-2000	Minor Groups	Health Technologists and Technicians
29-2050	Broad Occupations	Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians
29-2055	Detailed Occupation	Surgical Technicians

You need Editoria1ly

# Heading levels on flexible page types

# ResilientMass

ResilientMass is the state's cross-government program for building statewide capacity for climate change adaptation and resilience. It provides funding, local climate data, and decision support tools for communities to take action against climate change.



Manual check: was a heading level skipped?


Headings and subheadings are the page's table of contents. The *numbers* indicate indents, in a nesting relationship:

- Heading level 1
  - Heading level 2: a topic
    - Heading level 3: a subtopic
  - Heading level 2: a new topic

This heading skipped from level 1 to level 3. From a screen reader, this sounds like content is missing.


To fix: adjust levels to form an accurate outline, without gaps.

Hide alert for me Mark OK for all users ?



H3 ResilientCoasts →

Learn more about EEA's statewide strategy for coastal resilience.



ResilientMass Metrics →

Track Massachusetts' progress toward building statewide resilience to climate change.

Issues	Outline	Alt Text	?	-	x
Check that this forms a <u>complete outline</u> :					
H2: Primary tabs					
H1: ResilientMass					
H3: ResilientMass Tools Hub (flagged for skipped level)					
H3: ResilientCoasts					
H3: ResilientMass Metrics					
H2: Find funding for climate resilience projects					
H3: ResilientMass Calendar					
H2: Learn about ResilientMass					
H2: Get Involved					
H2: Learn about climate resilience					
H3: Additional resources					



# Copying and pasting

## Contact

### Manual check: is this a blockquote?

Blockquote formatting tells screen readers that the text should be announced as a quotation. This was flagged because short blockquotes are sometimes actually headings. If this is a heading and not a quotation, use heading formatting instead, so this appears in the page outline.

[C 1389 \(1975\)](#), aff'd sub nom., School Committee of  
[, 376 Mass. 112 \(1978\)](#); In the Matter of the Board of  
etts, [37 MLC 58, 67](#).

### Link with no accessible text

This link is either invisible and empty (e.g., a linked space character), or wrapped around something with no text alternative (an image with no alt attribute).

Screen readers will either pause with an uninformative silence when they reach this link:

"Link, [...awkward pause where the link title should be...],"

or spell out the URL, character by character:

"Link, H-T-T-P-S forward-slash forward-slash example dot com"

To fix: add text if this should be a link, or delete it if it should not.

How can I use Editorially?

## On a page

You can

- See how many issues there are
- Toggle through each issue
- Find out what the issue is\*
- Read the why
- Learn what the fix is
- Fix it

Issues	Outline	Alt Text	?	–	×
3 issues detected.			First »		

# Sample issue explanation: Headings

Manual check: was a heading level skipped?

Headings and subheadings are the page's table of contents. The *numbers* indicate indents, in a nesting relationship:

- Heading level 1
  - Heading level 2: a topic
    - Heading level 3: a subtopic
  - Heading level 2: a new topic

This heading skipped from level 3 to level 6. From a screen reader, this sounds like content is missing.

To fix: adjust levels to form an accurate outline, without gaps.

Hide alert for me

Mark OK for all users

?

Submit an Incident



# Sample issue: headings - outline view

THI

H2

S

What you need

How to request

More info

Manage your account

Contact

What you need

Do I submit an Incident or use the Catalog?

Submit an Incident

Product & Service Catalog

Submit an incident to report an incident if *something you currently have is broken*.

Submit a request through the Catalog to *request something you do not*

col

H2

EOTSS End User Service Support

Phone

EOTSS End User IT Service Support (844) 435-7629

Support for Commonwealth support personnel

Online

ServiceNow

Log in to ServiceNow

Issues

Outline

Alt Text

?

-

Check that this forms a complete outline:

H2: Primary tabs

H1: Request IT support or services

H2: The Details

H3: What you need

H3: Do I submit an Incident or use the Catalog?

H6: Submit an Incident (flagged for skipped level)

H6: Product & Service Catalog

H3: Self-help

H6: Locked out? (flagged for skipped level)

## Sample issue explanation: Alt text

- There is a message...

Manual check: possibly redundant text in alt

This image's alt text is: **"image of Azure AD password reset error"**

Screen readers **announce** they are describing an image when reading alt text, so phrases like "image of" and "photo of" are usually redundant, sounding like "this image's alt is the alt of an image."

Note that sometimes the phrase is not redundant and should be kept, because the image is an image of an image:

- Redundant: "image of a VHS tape"
- Relevant: "image of a VHS tape being shown in history class"

Hide alert for me

Mark OK for all users

?

# Sample issue explanation: Link text

**Manual check: is this link meaningful and concise?** ×

This link's text is: **click here.**

Readers skim for links. This is especially true of screen reader users, who navigate using a list of on-page links.

Generic links like "click here," "read more" or "download" require the reader to stop, go back, and figure out each link's purpose from context. Few readers do this, so these links are often missed.

- Not meaningful: "Click here to learn about meaningful links."
- Not concise: "Click here to learn about meaningful links"
- Ideal: "Learn about meaningful links"

Hide alert for me Mark OK for all users ?

lers, **click here.**

# Sample issue: Empty table header cell

Document Downloads							
Summary of EA Uniform Shelter Program Rules	<a href="#">English</a>	<a href="#">Amharic</a>	<a href="#">Arabic</a>	<a href="#">Cape Verdean Creole</a>	<a href="#">Haitian</a>	<a href="#">Portuguese</a>	
EA Uniform Shelter Program Rules	<a href="#">English</a>	<a href="#">Amharic</a>	<a href="#">Arabic</a>	<a href="#">Cape Verdean Creole</a>	<a href="#">Haitian</a>	<a href="#">Portuguese</a>	
Receipt of USR Acknowledgment	<a href="#">English</a>	<a href="#">Amharic</a>	<a href="#">Arabic</a>	<a href="#">Cape Verdean Creole</a>	<a href="#">Haitian</a>	<a href="#">Portuguese</a>	<a href="#">Somali</a> <a href="#">Spanish</a>

!

!

Empty table header cell

When exploring tables, screen readers repeat table header cells as needed to orient users. Without headers, it is very easy to get lost; screen reader users have to count columns and rows and try to remember which columns went with which rows.  
  
To fix: make sure each header cell in this table contains text.

×



## Through the Editorially report

- Go to the Reports tab in the CMS
- Choose "Editorially accessibility report"
- Enter your Organization in that filter and hit "apply"
- You'll get a list of pages with issues and can begin addressing them
- Start with pages that have most views/most issues

How do I fix the issues Editorially flags?



## Wrap up and upcoming sessions

- We post everything in the Content Lab Teams channel
- See you for our next session on...
- [Sign up for a Content Lab Consult](#) if you're looking for help with a content strategy issue

