

NDRPA State Conference 2026

Are You Ready for 2028?

A Conversation about Digital Accessibility

What's Your Knowledge Level of Digital Accessibility?

1. Just Arrived at the Trailhead
2. Finding the Trail Markers
3. On the Main Trail
4. Trail Guide
5. Accessibility Ranger

Session Agenda

- Digital accessibility, disabilities, and the ADA rule
- Steps toward compliance
- Challenges
- Tools, training options, and resources

What Is Digital Accessibility?

- **Digital accessibility is like creating an “electronic” curb cut**
– anything digital needs to be designed with accessibility regardless of whether the end user has a disability or not
- Includes websites, conventional electronic documents, mobile apps, software, hardware, video, audio, etc.
- [W3C Overview Video of Web Accessibility](#)

Types of Disabilities

- Visual: color blindness, low vision, blindness
- Cognitive and learning: ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, mental health, memory impairments, perceptual disabilities, seizure disorders
- Auditory: hard of hearing, deafness
- Physical: amputation, arthritis, paralysis, repetitive stress injury
- Speech: muteness, stuttering
- [Video stories of web users](#)

Why Digital Accessibility Matters

- It's the right thing to do.
- It's the law.
 - A blind camping advocate secured a landmark \$2 million settlement in late 2023 over a digital accessibility lawsuit targeting California's state park reservation portal.

ADA Title II Technical Standards

- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA**
 - **Web Content:** Information and sensory experiences communicated to the user by means of a user agent, including code or markup that defines the content's structure, presentation, and interactions.
 - Examples: Text, images, sounds, videos, controls, animations, and conventional electronic documents
 - **Mobile Apps:** Software applications that are downloaded and designed to run on mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets.
- **Park District Compliance Deadline: April 26, 2028**
- **[ADA Rule](#)**

Exceptions Under Title II Rule

1. Archived web content
2. Preexisting conventional electronic documents
3. Content posted by a third party where the third party is not posting due to contractual, licensing, or other arrangements with a state or local government
4. Individualized documents that are password-protected
5. Preexisting social media posts

WCAG Guidelines: POUR Principles

- **Perceivable:** people can find information
- **Operable:** use different methods and tools to navigate and interact with content
- **Understandable:** understand what content means
- **Robust:** access content using a variety of devices and assistive technologies

Steps Toward ADA Digital Compliance

- **Policies:** Develop website accessibility statement, etc.
- **Vendors:** Create procurement standards to buy accessible products
- **Digital Asset Transition Plan:** Inventory digital assets, contact vendors as needed, and develop plan that prioritizes fixes based on use
- **Training:** Develop training materials and checklists for staff to create accessible webpages and documents

**“Progress, not
perfection.”**

State of Colorado Information Technology

Policies: Website Accessibility Statement

- Minimum: website accessibility statement
 - [WC3 Generator Tool for Website Accessibility Statement](#)
- Transition/implementation plan
- **Other policies you have or are developing?**

Vendors: Software Procurement

- Include web and mobile app accessibility compliance requirements in bids and quotes
- VPAT (Voluntary Product Accessibility Template)
 - [ITI VPAT](#)
- ACR (Accessibility Compliance Report)
- [State of Colorado Vendor Accessibility Guide](#)
- **Other vendor strategies you are implementing?**

Digital Asset Inventory

Websites and Mobile Apps

- Park district website(s)
- Park district app(s)
- Recreation management software and associated apps
- Bulk mail software
- Survey software
- Social media platforms

Conventional Electronic Documents

- Microsoft 365: Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Google Workspace
- Portable Document Format (PDF)
- Adobe Creative Suite and Canva
- **What other software or documents are you using?**

Toughest Digital Assets to Make ADA Compliant?

- PDFs = transition to HTML webpages whenever possible
- Social media platforms, including video
- Maps
- **What other digital assets are challenging to make accessible?**

**Whose Job Is Digital
Accessibility?**

Free Tools: Manual Testing Required

- [WAVE by WebAIM](#)
- [Colour Contrast Checker](#)
- [NVDA Screen Reader](#)
- [PDF Accessibility Checker \(PAC\)](#)
- **What tools do you recommend?**

Free Training Options

- [W3C Digital Accessibility Foundations Course](#)
- [State of Minnesota IT Services](#)
- [Great Lakes ADA Center](#)
- [Rocky Mountain ADA Center](#)
- [North Dakota Digital Accessibility Space](#) (NDIRF, NDACo, NDLC)
- **What trainings do you recommend?**

Free Resources

- [Luminary Content](#)
- [Accessible Social](#)
- **What resources do you recommend?**

Not All Free but Helpful Resources

- [International Association of Accessibility Professionals \(IAAP\)](#)
- [Pope Tech](#)
- [WeCo](#)

Things to Remember

- **Progress, not perfection.**
- Work together if there's a problem.
- Prioritize.
- Don't simply remove inaccessible content.
- Adapted from: State of Colorado Information Technology

Thank You!

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