# Contentiful's Accessibility Guidelines

## The "Why?"

Contentiful creates, posts, and maintains digital content for federal agencies, so it is important to understand Section 508 requirements and how they apply to the organizations we serve and support. Contentiful shares digital documents with federal employees and develops content for federal government websites, so it is important to know how to make digital content accessible. By understanding and implementing Section 508, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and Plain Language requirements properly, Contentiful helps ensure people with disabilities have equal access to information and communication technology (ICT), and that we comply with all legal requirements for accessibility.

## Section 508 Defined

Section 508 amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 related to ICT (https://www.access-board.gov/ict/). Section 508 mandates that federal government ICT must comply with specific standards designed to improve accessibility.

Section 508 specifically established requirements so that any time a federal government agency "procured, developed, maintained, or used" ICT, **the technology must be usable by people with disabilities**. This law applies to technology used by federal government employees and members of the public who use federal government technology. The federal government established Section 508 to eliminate barriers to technology, **provide equal (or comparable) access to people with disabilities**, and require the development of accessible technology. This law has been revised and updated multiple times, most recently in 2018, to ensure the written standards align with the intended purpose of Section 508.

**ICTs:** computer software and hardware (desktops, mobile devices), kiosks, telephones, printers, scanners, faxes, websites, electronic documentation.

## Electronic Accessibility Policy, Commitment, or Mission Statement

As a strategic communication consultant, Contentiful prioritizes accessibility in content and design for printed and electronic material. We are committed to providing accessible products and deliverables aligned with Section 508 (https://www.section508.gov/), WCAG standards, (https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/)  plain language writing guidelines for federal agencies (https://www.plainlanguage.gov/) .

Creating electronic content in an accessible format means it can be read and understood by everyone, including disabled users.

### Accessible documents

Contentiful uses strategies that incorporate guidance on creating accessible content. These

strategies include color contrast, readability, accessible PDFs and presentations, captioning, alt text and more. Many of these strategies can be codified in an organization's brand book or a writing and usability style guide.

## Focus on readability

The average reading age of adults in the US is eighth grade. This can be a moving target to hit, based on the audience and subject matter. However, applying Plain Language and readability guidelines and principles, Contentiful can help you say more with less and improve overall communication.

## Staff training and guidance

Contentiful has been providing Effective Writing in the Federal Government training for federal government employees since 2013 through the Office of Personnel Management. The training is based on the Plain Language Act of 2010 requiring federal agencies to use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. In addition, Contentiful owner/director, Donna Creason, was the executive editor for the Center for Plain Language's eBook, *Clear Communication with Clear Results*. The eBook is a go-to resource for individuals and organizations interested in starting a Plain Language program. It also further promotes the Center as the foremost authority on clear communication for government and business.

# Accessibility Conformance Testing Procedures

Contentiful uses design and productivity software that has readily available accessibility checkers or features added as plugins. We use a WCAG 2.1-compliant color contrast analyzer to validate the contrast ratios for text, graphical objects, and foreground/background color conform to accessibility standards.

# Accessibility Point of Contact

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# Keeping Updated on Changing Legal Requirements and Accessibility Best Practices

Contentiful currently works as a GSA contractor and must complete the Annual Mandatory Training Refresher curriculum that is mandated by an executive order, government-wide directive, federal statute, or regulation. "Section 508 – What Is It and What Is It Important" is one of the courses included in the mandatory training. Contentiful completed these two courses on 01/15/2024.

GSA.gov also provides access to the 508 Universe Training, a one-stop resource for Section 508 training and information. Contentiful uses this as a go-to resource for accessibility training, tools, events, and information.