ADA Readiness Review: Putting the Polish on Website & Document Compliance for Colorado

STREAMLINE

SDA
Special District Association of Colorado

Agenda

1. 10 Steps to Achieve and Maintain Compliance (review)
2. New Technology Preview (new)
3. Special notes for districts in Colorado

Mac Clemmens (He/Him) • You
Tech entrepreneur and advocate for local government
6d • Edited •

What started as a simple training for Colorado districts to make their websites accessible for users with disabilities turned into a sold out event at the History Colorado Center. And wow, it was pretty incredible.

Streamline and SDA Colorado hosted the event right as the state becomes only the second in the US to ensure equal digital access for users with disabilities via House Bill 21-1110.

We welcomed the bill's author, who experienced his own life changing injury while serving his country in Afghanistan. Rep. David Ortiz was overwhelmed with gratitude to see 150 district leaders gathered working hard to implement his bill. Rep. Ortiz and Ann Terry of the Special Districts Association recognized each of them for their hard work.

We also welcomed Javier Kussrow who starred in this year's Super Bowl ad on accessible tech, and Shawn Jordison, a leading authority on creating accessible documents to train and inspire everyone.

I feel honored and humbled to have spent time with a group of public servants so dedicated to accessibility that they would take a full day to tackle the issue hands-on. These district leaders are the unsung heroes in our community, making sure that everyone can be served. They are a true inspiration! I hope to see others follow Colorado's lead to create a more accessible future.

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Legal foundations for website accessibility
WCAG 2.1 AA Guidelines
Section 508
State Laws
Requires that state agencies comply with accessibility guidelines. Examples include HB 21-1110 in Colorado or AB 434 in California.
ADA Compliance
The Americans with Disabilities Act protects the rights of people with disabilities. It's broad reach extends to websites, but doesn't reference web accessibility specifically.

The day included an Immersive simulation where users had to access a website as a blind user and try to find information about a local election »

Districts were recognized for compliance as defined by checkmydistrict.org

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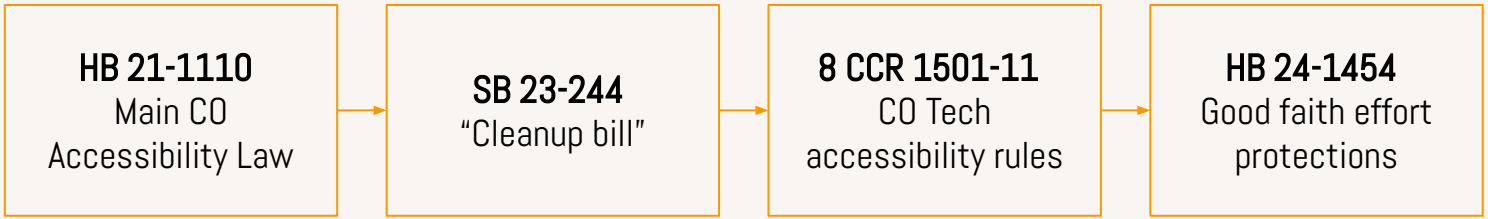
What are all these Colorado laws and rules?



HB 24-1454 Key Takeaways

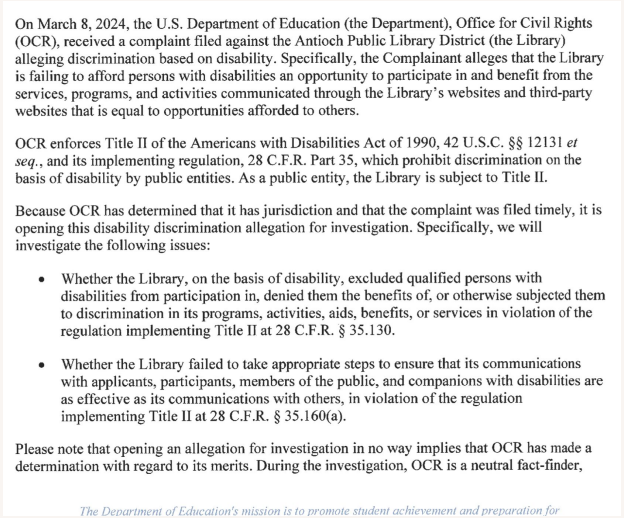
- ✓ In partnership with Colorado Municipal League and Colorado Counties, Inc., SDA is supporting a bill introduced on Apr 15 that would provide a one-year grace period for the $3,500 penalties pursuant to HB21-1110 which takes effect July 1, 2024.
- ✓ This would apply to some ADA issues detected on special district websites, so long as good faith progress is being demonstrated. Good faith progress is defined as
  - (1) a **progress-to-date report** that demonstrates concrete and specific efforts toward compliance,
  - (2) updating the report on a **quarterly basis** ,
  - (3) creating a clear, easy-to-find **process for requesting redress** for inaccessible digital products, including contact options that are not dependent on web access or digital accessibility and are prominently displayed on all front-facing web pages.
- ✓ Although this bill would provide a buffer for pain points like historical PDF files and digital signage, districts still need to be compliant by July 1 per federal law. See the SDA and Streamline ADA compliance checklist to make sure you're ready.

New 8 CCR 1501-11 Takeaways

- ✓ Provisions for archived content before July 1

New DOJ Rule Takeaways

- ✓ Also supporting provisions for archived content
- ✓ Library districts getting hit (AZ, IL)



On March 8, 2024, the U.S. Department of Education (the Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), received a complaint filed against the Antioch Public Library District (the Library) alleging discrimination based on disability. Specifically, the Complainant alleges that the Library is failing to afford persons with disabilities an opportunity to participate in and benefit from the services, programs, and activities communicated through the Library's websites and third-party websites that is equal to opportunities afforded to others.

OCR enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 *et seq.*, and its implementing regulation, 28 C.F.R. Part 35, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities. As a public entity, the Library is subject to Title II.

Because OCR has determined that it has jurisdiction and that the complaint was filed timely, it is opening this disability discrimination allegation for investigation. Specifically, we will investigate the following issues:

- Whether the Library, on the basis of disability, excluded qualified persons with disabilities from participation in, denied them the benefits of, or otherwise subjected them to discrimination in its programs, activities, aids, benefits, or services in violation of the regulation implementing Title II at 28 C.F.R. § 35.130.
- Whether the Library failed to take appropriate steps to ensure that its communications with applicants, participants, members of the public, and companions with disabilities are as effective as its communications with others, in violation of the regulation implementing Title II at 28 C.F.R. § 35.160(a).

Please note that opening an allegation for investigation in no way implies that OCR has made a determination with regard to its merits. During the investigation, OCR is a neutral fact-finder,

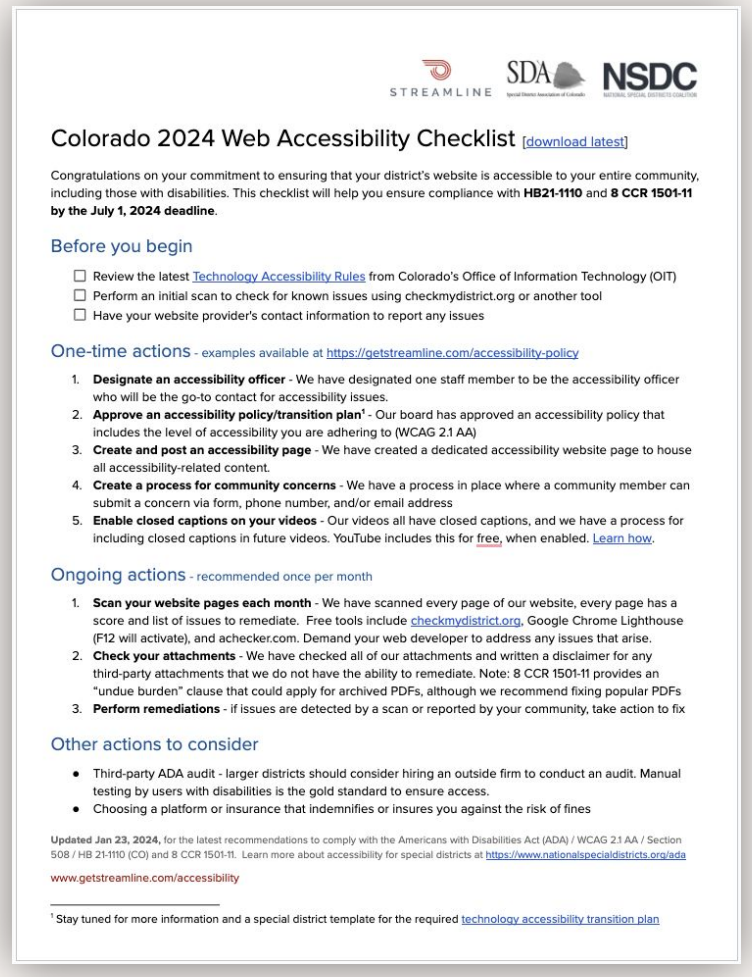
The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for

Our mission

Make special districts the most accessible form of government in the country

10 steps checklist

http://tinyurl.com/adachecklistco



STREAMLINE SDA NSDC

Colorado 2024 Web Accessibility Checklist [download latest]

Congratulations on your commitment to ensuring that your district's website is accessible to your entire community, including those with disabilities. This checklist will help you ensure compliance with **HB21-1110** and **8 CCR 1501-11 by the July 1, 2024 deadline**.

Before you begin

- ☐ Review the latest Technology Accessibility Rules from Colorado's Office of Information Technology (OIT)
- ☐ Perform an initial scan to check for known issues using checkmydistrict.org or another tool
- ☐ Have your website provider's contact information to report any issues

One-time actions - examples available at https://getstreamline.com/accessibility-policy

1. **Designate an accessibility officer** - We have designated one staff member to be the accessibility officer who will be the go-to contact for accessibility issues.
2. **Approve an accessibility policy/transition plan**[1] - Our board has approved an accessibility policy that includes the level of accessibility you are adhering to (WCAG 2.1 AA)
3. **Create and post an accessibility page** - We have created a dedicated accessibility website page to house all accessibility-related content.
4. **Create a process for community concerns** - We have a process in place where a community member can submit a concern via form, phone number, and/or email address
5. **Enable closed captions on your videos** - Our videos all have closed captions, and we have a process for including closed captions in future videos. YouTube includes this for free, when enabled. Learn how.

Ongoing actions - recommended once per month

1. **Scan your website pages each month** - We have scanned every page of our website, every page has a score and list of issues to remediate. Free tools include checkmydistrict.org, Google Chrome Lighthouse (F12 will activate), and achecker.com. Demand your web developer to address any issues that arise.
2. **Check your attachments** - We have checked all of our attachments and written a disclaimer for any third-party attachments that we do not have the ability to remediate. Note: 8 CCR 1501-11 provides an "undue burden" clause that could apply for archived PDFs, although we recommend fixing popular PDFs
3. **Perform remediations** - if issues are detected by a scan or reported by your community, take action to fix

Other actions to consider

- Third-party ADA audit - larger districts should consider hiring an outside firm to conduct an audit. Manual testing by users with disabilities is the gold standard to ensure access.
- Choosing a platform or insurance that indemnifies or insures you against the risk of fines

Updated Jan 23, 2024, for the latest recommendations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) / WCAG 2.1 AA / Section 508 / HB 21-1110 (CO) and 8 CCR 1501-11. Learn more about accessibility for special districts at https://www.nationalspecialdistricts.org/ada

www.getstreamline.com/accessibility

[1] Stay tuned for more information and a special district template for the required technology accessibility transition plan

One-time Actions

To get your district compliant

1 Designate Accessibility Contact

- ✓ Select a person in your organization to handle these requests
- ✓ Usually the person who updates your website

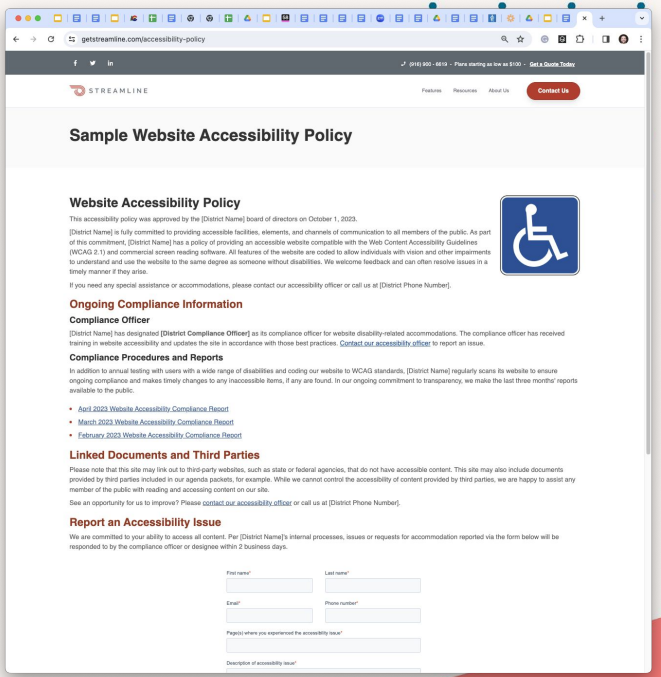
2 Approve a Website Accessibility Statement

- ✓ Here's one to start: getstreamline.com/accessibility-policy

3 Create Accessibility Page

- ✓ A page listing your accessibility contact and your policy, and how to contact the district

(We are removing the publication of the scans as a recommendation)



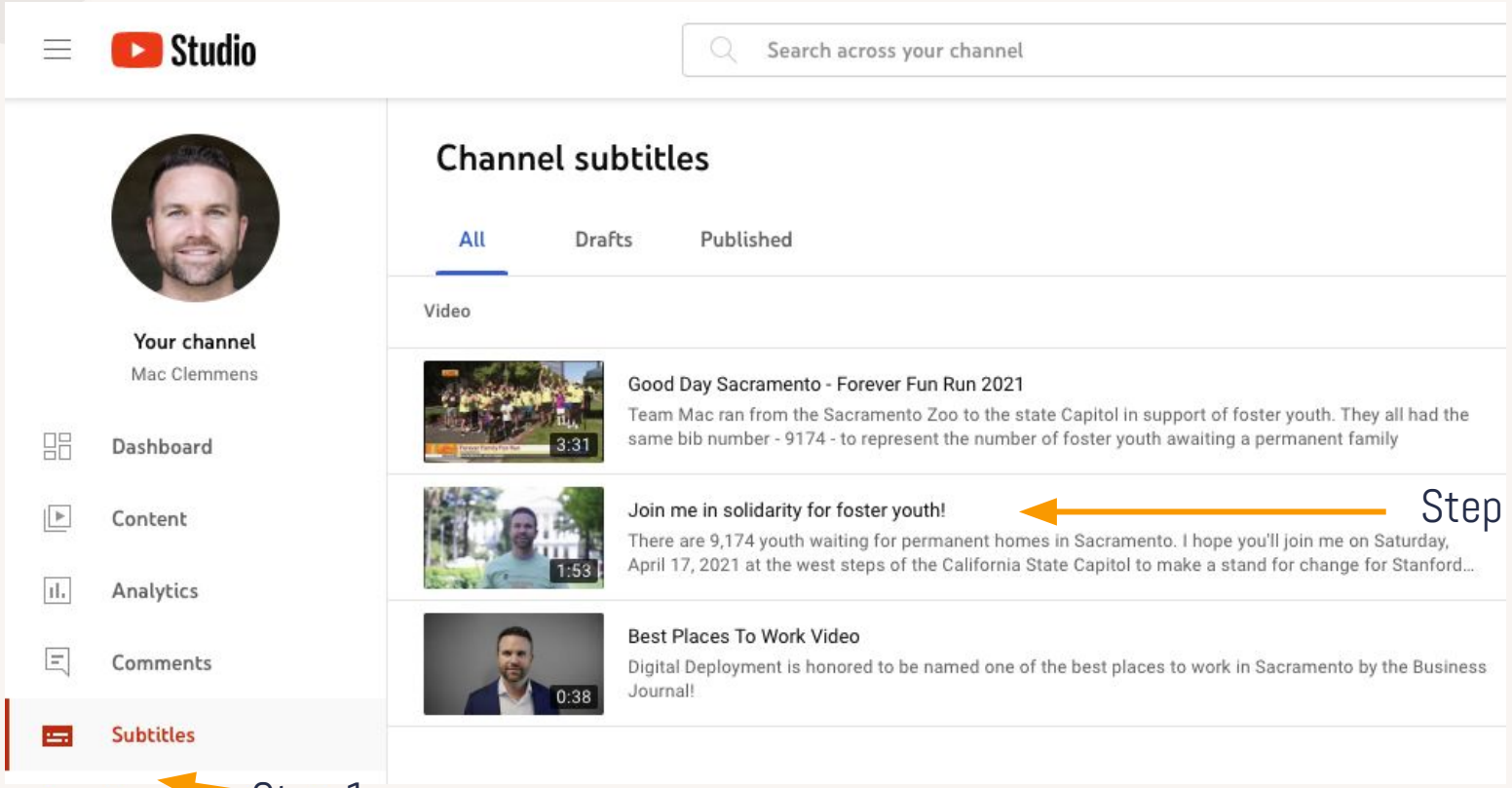
4 Create Process for Requests

- ✓ Just like you do for public records requests
- ✓ Ensure timeline is included

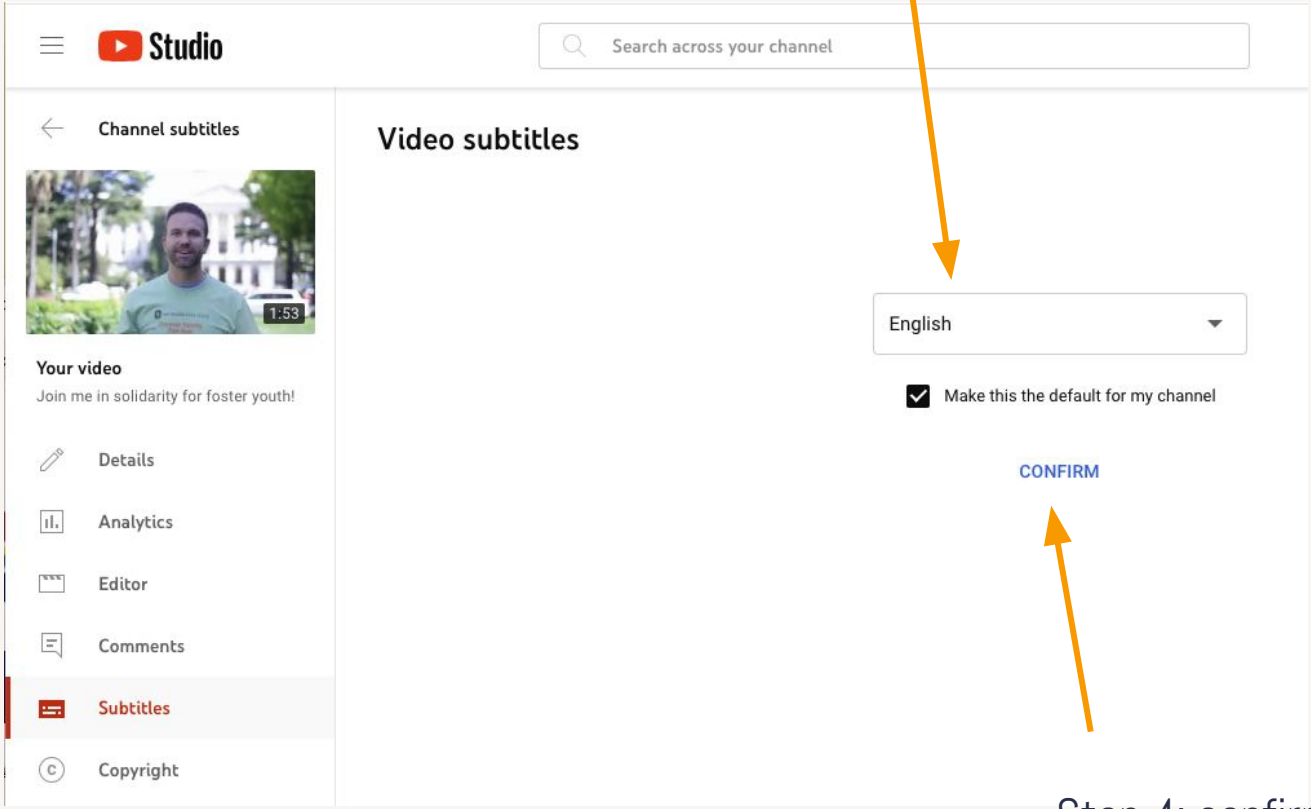
5 Enable Closed Captions

- ✓ If you have videos on your page, or you link to YouTube, make sure Closed Captioning is enabled
- ✓ If you are a larger district, consider hiring a closed captioning service
- ✓ If using Zoom, enable live captions

If you click this, do you see captions?


Studio
Search across your channel
Your channel
Mac Clemmens
Dashboard
Content
Analytics
Comments
Subtitles
Channel subtitles
All
Drafts
Published
Video
3:31
Good Day Sacramento - Forever Fun Run 2021
Team Mac ran from the Sacramento Zoo to the state Capitol in support of foster youth. They all had the same bib number - 9174 - to represent the number of foster youth awaiting a permanent family
1:53
Join me in solidarity for foster youth!
There are 9,174 youth waiting for permanent homes in Sacramento. I hope you'll join me on Saturday, April 17, 2021 at the west steps of the California State Capitol to make a stand for change for Stanford...
0:38
Best Places To Work Video
Digital Deployment is honored to be named one of the best places to work in Sacramento by the Business Journal!
Step 1
Step 2

Step 3: choose language



Step 4: confirm

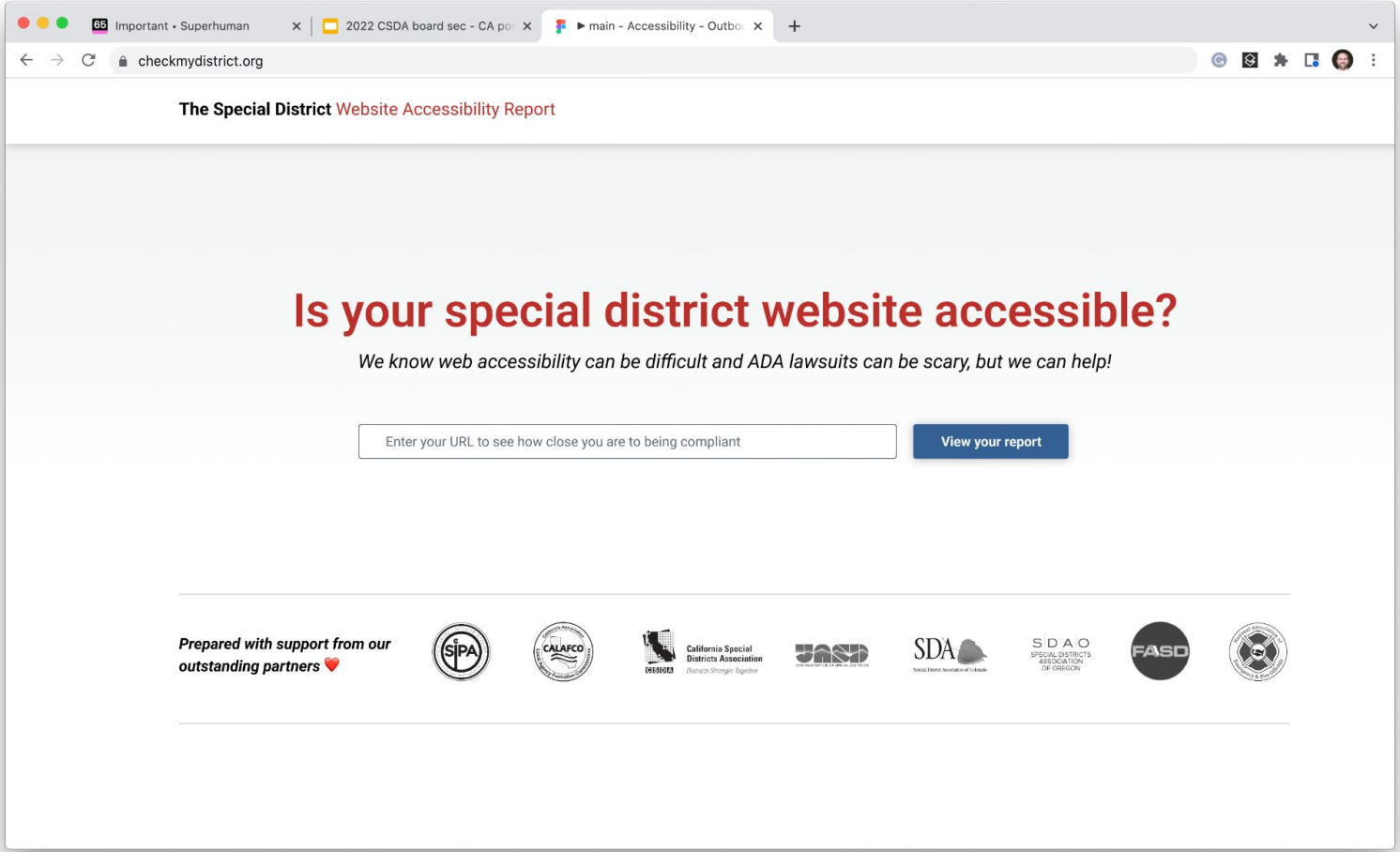
Ongoing Actions

Recommended once per month

6 Scan your website pages

Not a replacement for a full human verification, but a good way to assess your district's general accessibility.

- ✓ Free: Lighthouse (in-browser), WAVE, CheckMyDistrict.org
- ✓ Commercial solutions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checkmydistrict.org
The Special District Website Accessibility Report
Is your special district website accessible?
We know web accessibility can be difficult and ADA lawsuits can be scary, but we can help!
Enter your URL to see how close you are to being compliant
View your report
Prepared with support from our outstanding partners ❤️
SIPA
CALAFCO
California Special Districts Association
Districts Stronger Together
SDA
SDAO
SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF OREGON
FASD

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checkmydistrict.org

The Special Distri

Is ible?

elp!

Prepared with suppo
outstanding partner

FASD

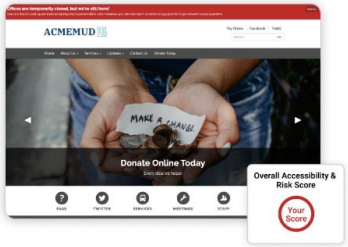
We are preparing your report...

Close

We just need a bit more information so we can send you your special district accessibility report

What you'll find in your report:

1. Your current accessibility / risk snapshot
2. Top accessibility issues on your site
3. Pages that need to be fixed
4. Your timeline to reach accessibility
5. Your monthly progress tracker



Where should we send your accessibility report?

Organization Name*

Your Name*

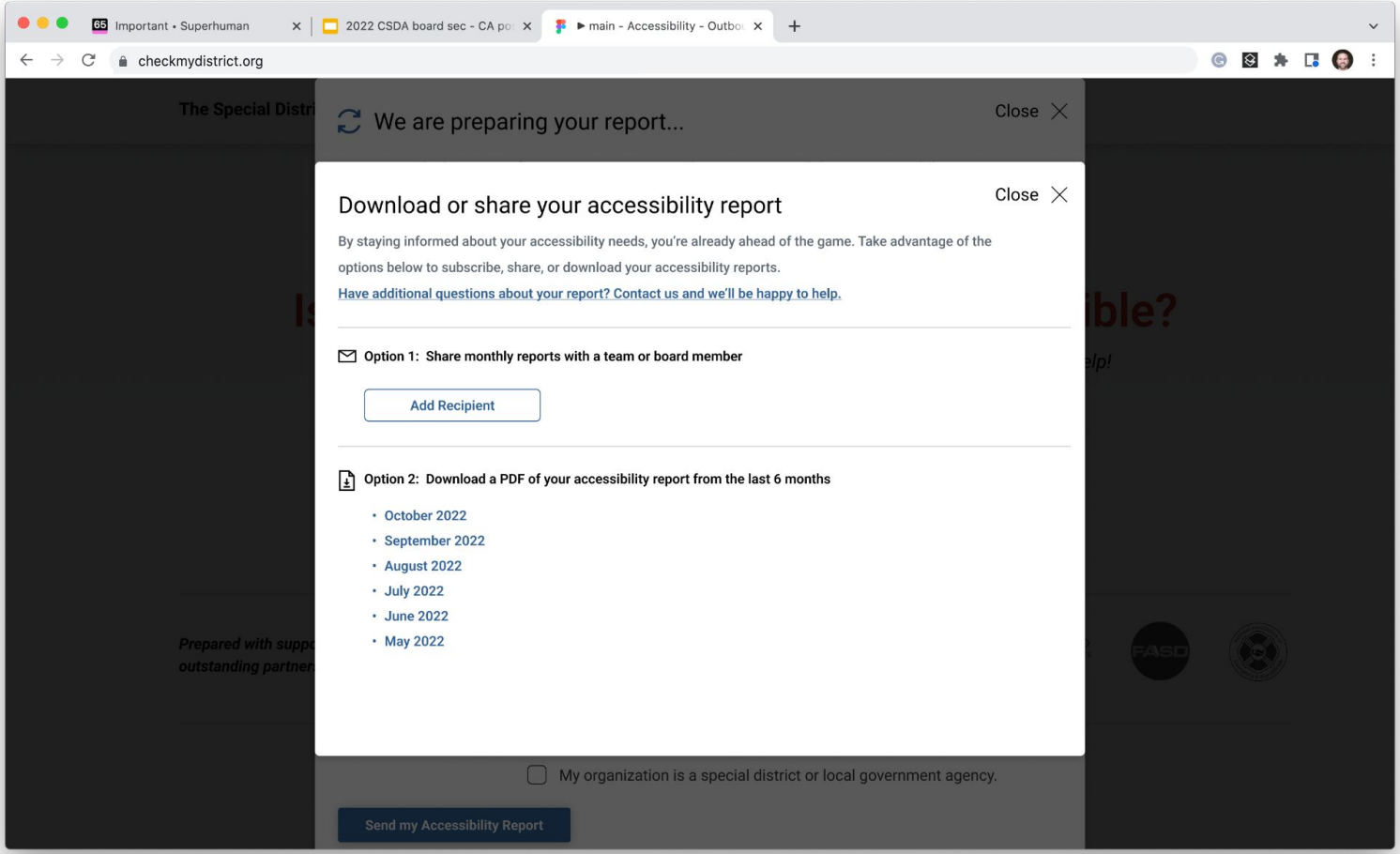
Email*

Job Title*

I'd like to receive monthly accessibilty reports (free)

My organization is a special district or local government agency.

Send my Accessibility Report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checkmydistrict.org
We are preparing your report...
Close
Download or share your accessibility report
Close
By staying informed about your accessibility needs, you're already ahead of the game. Take advantage of the options below to subscribe, share, or download your accessibility reports.
Have additional questions about your report? Contact us and we'll be happy to help.
Option 1: Share monthly reports with a team or board member
Add Recipient
Option 2: Download a PDF of your accessibility report from the last 6 months
October 2022
September 2022
August 2022
July 2022
June 2022
May 2022
My organization is a special district or local government agency.
Send my Accessibility Report

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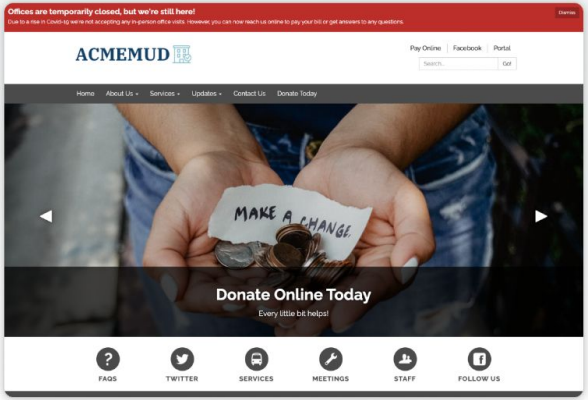
The Special District Website Accessibility Report

Download or Email this Report

ACME Municipal Utility District

Web Accessibility & Risk Report

Prepared on 11/13/22 - 10:03am



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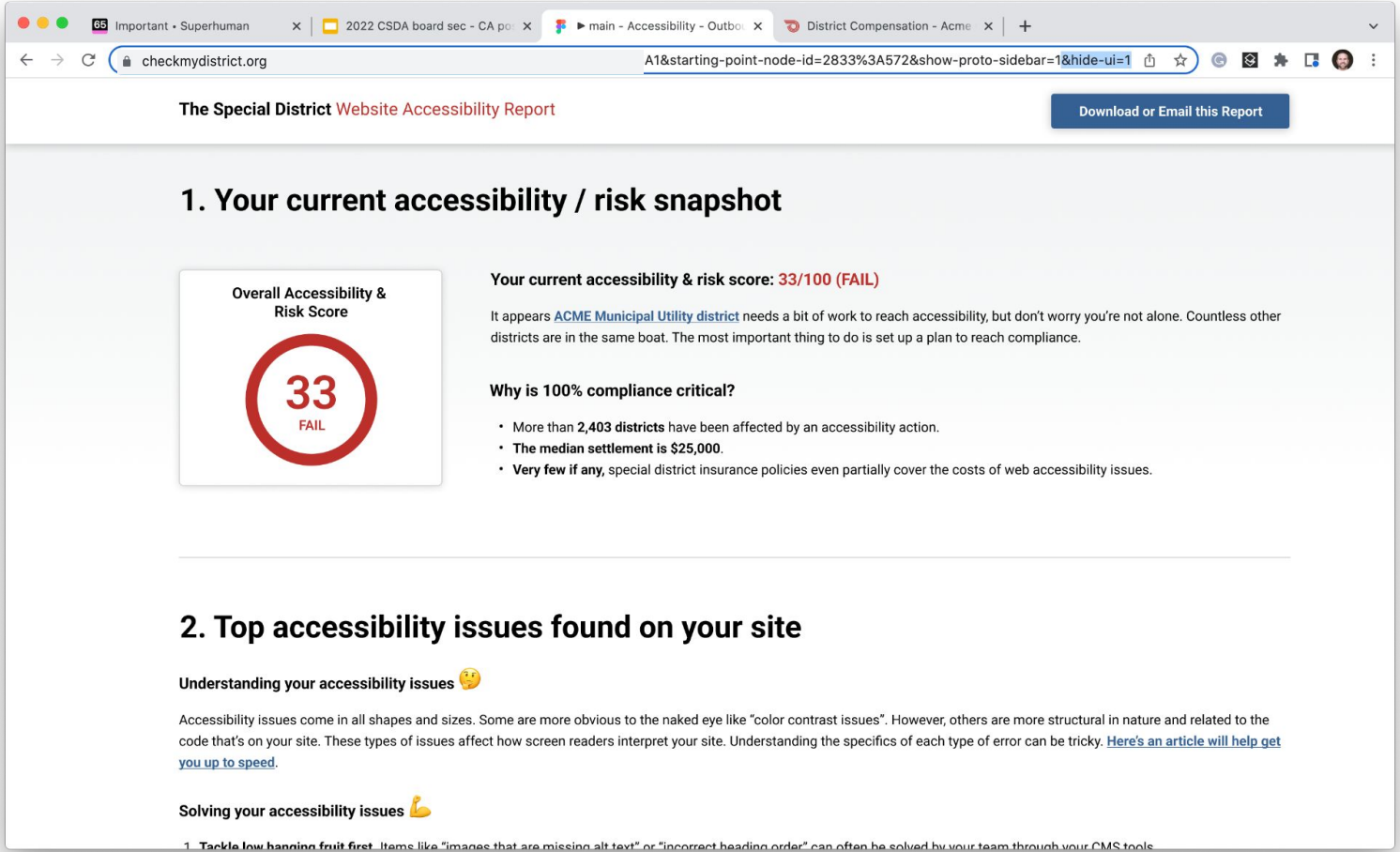
Prepared with support from our outstanding partners ❤️

SPA · CALAFCO · California Special Districts Association · SDA · SDAO Special Districts Association of Oregon · FASD

1. Your current accessibility / risk snapshot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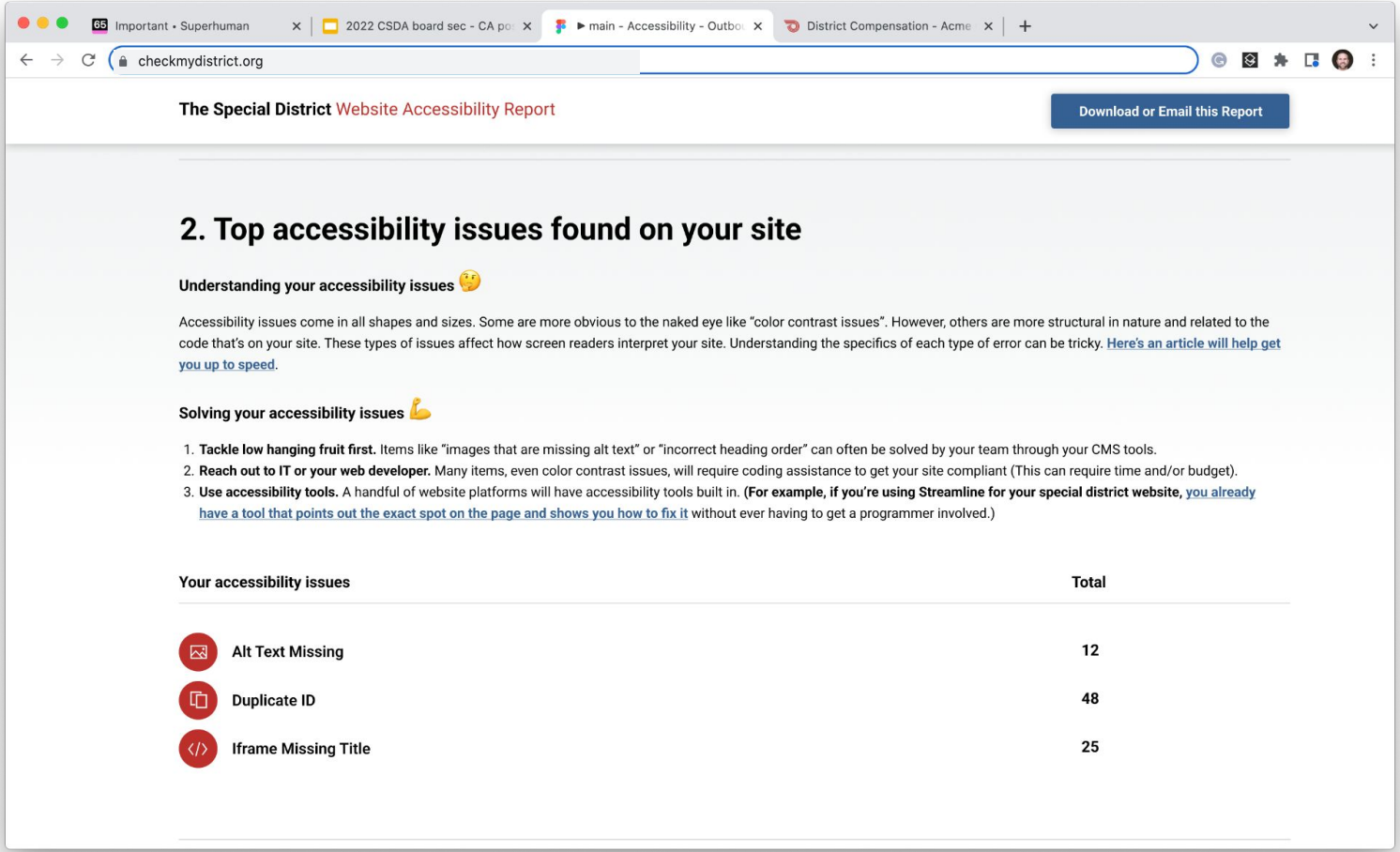
District Compensation - Acme
checkmydistrict.org
A1&starting-point-node-id=2833%3A572&show-proto-sidebar=1&hide-ui=1
The Special District Website Accessibility Report
Download or Email this Report
1. Your current accessibility / risk snapshot
Overall Accessibility & Risk Score
33
FAIL
Your current accessibility & risk score: 33/100 (FAIL)
It appears ACME Municipal Utility district needs a bit of work to reach accessibility, but don't worry you're not alone. Countless other districts are in the same boat. The most important thing to do is set up a plan to reach compliance.
Why is 100% compliance critical?
More than 2,403 districts have been affected by an accessibility action.
The median settlement is $25,000.
Very few if any, special district insurance policies even partially cover the costs of web accessibility issues.
2. Top accessibility issues found on your site
Understanding your accessibility issues 🤔
Accessibility issues come in all shapes and sizes. Some are more obvious to the naked eye like "color contrast issues". However, others are more structural in nature and related to the code that's on your site. These types of issues affect how screen readers interpret your site. Understanding the specifics of each type of error can be tricky. Here's an article will help get you up to speed.
Solving your accessibility issues 💪
1. Tackle low hanging fruit first. Items like "images that are missing alt text" or "incorrect heading order" can often be solved by your team through your CMS tools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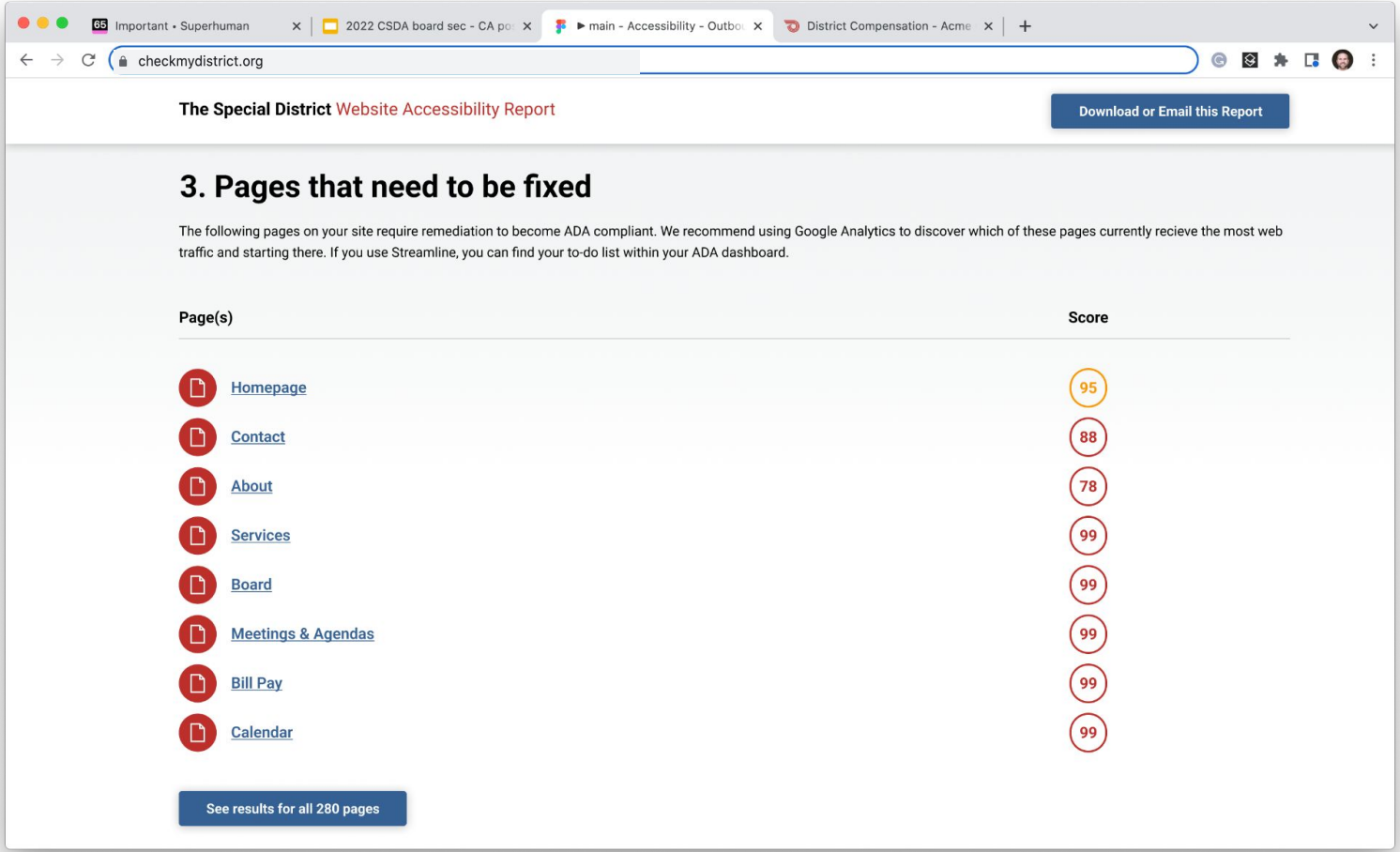
2. Reach out to IT or your web developer. Many items, even color contrast issues, will require coding assistance to get your site compliant (This can require time and/or budget).
3. Use accessibility tools. A handful of website platforms will have accessibility tools built in. (For example, if you're using Streamline for your special district website, you already have a tool that points out the exact spot on the page and shows you how to fix it without ever having to get a programmer involved.)
Your accessibility issues
Total
Alt Text Missing
12
Duplicate ID
48
Iframe Missing Title
25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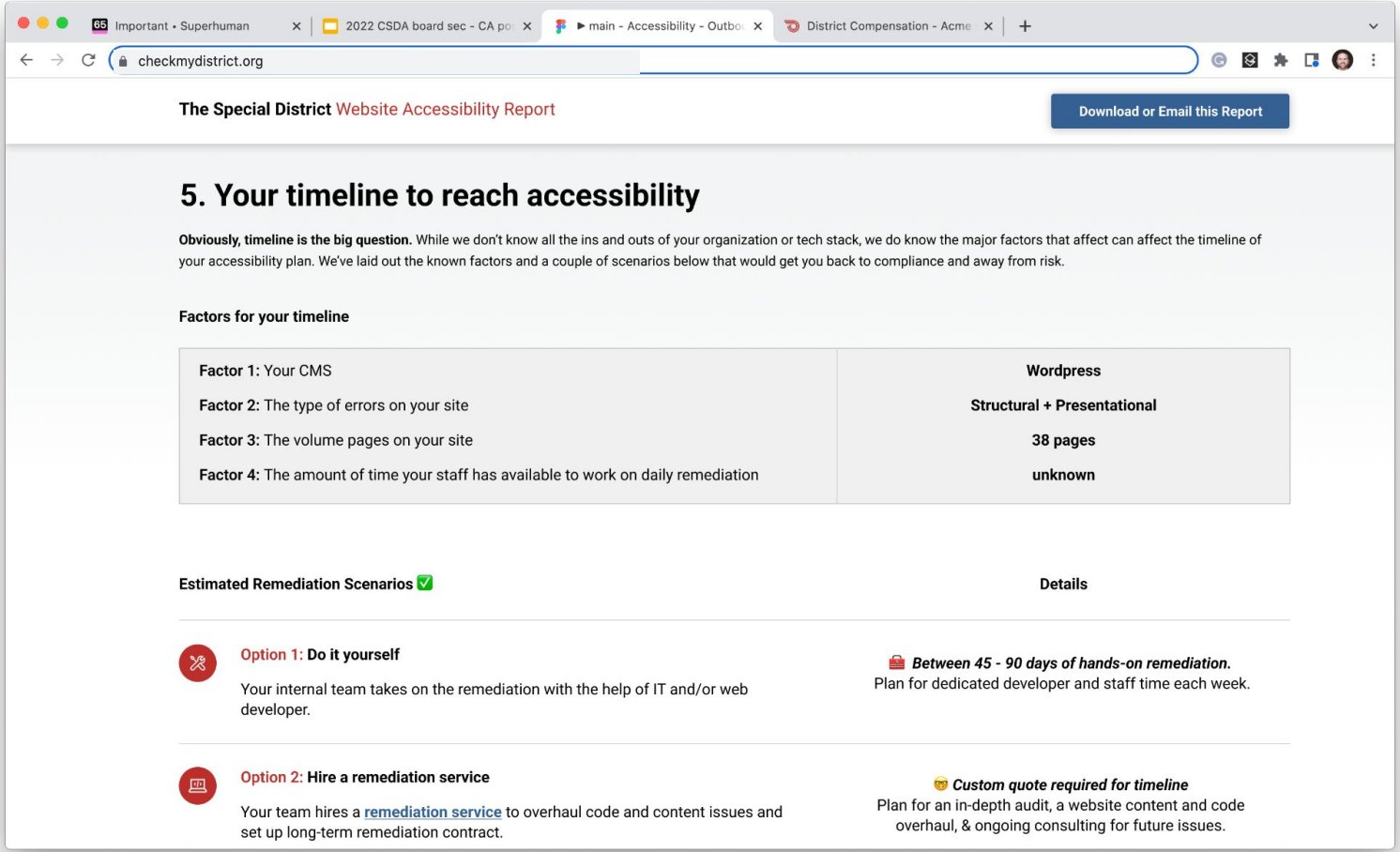
District Compensation - Acme
checkmydistrict.org
The Special District Website Accessibility Report
Download or Email this Report
3. Pages that need to be fixed
The following pages on your site require remediation to become ADA compliant. We recommend using Google Analytics to discover which of these pages currently recieve the most web traffic and starting there. If you use Streamline, you can find your to-do list within your ADA dashboard.
Page(s)
Score
Homepage 95
Contact 88
About 78
Services 99
Board 99
Meetings & Agendas 99
Bill Pay 99
Calendar 99
See results for all 280 pages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5. Your timeline to reach accessibility
Obviously, timeline is the big question. While we don't know all the ins and outs of your organization or tech stack, we do know the major factors that affect can affect the timeline of your accessibility plan. We've laid out the known factors and a couple of scenarios below that would get you back to compliance and away from risk.
Factors for your timeline
Factor 1: Your CMS
Wordpress
Factor 2: The type of errors on your site
Structural + Presentational
Factor 3: The volume pages on your site
38 pages
Factor 4: The amount of time your staff has available to work on daily remediation
unknown
Estimated Remediation Scenarios ✅
Details
Option 1: Do it yourself
Your internal team takes on the remediation with the help of IT and/or web developer.
Between 45 - 90 days of hands-on remediation.
Plan for dedicated developer and staff time each week.
Option 2: Hire a remediation service
Your team hires a remediation service to overhaul code and content issues and set up long-term remediation contract.
Custom quote required for timeline
Plan for an in-depth audit, a website content and code overhaul, & ongoing consulting for future issues.

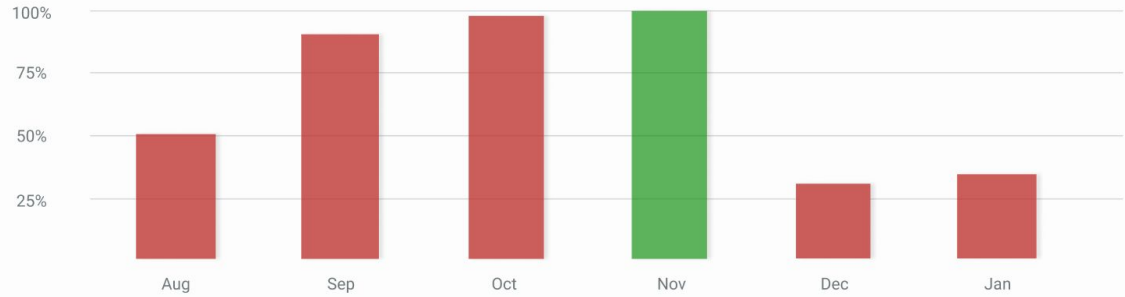
The Special District Website Accessibility Report

Download or Email this Report

6. Your monthly progress tracker

Charting your progress is a key component of remediation. To make this step easy for you we've recorded the past 6 months of accessibility metrics for your site below. Feel free to subscribe and even share this report with your team or board members.

6 Month Site Scan Snapshot - Overall Website Score



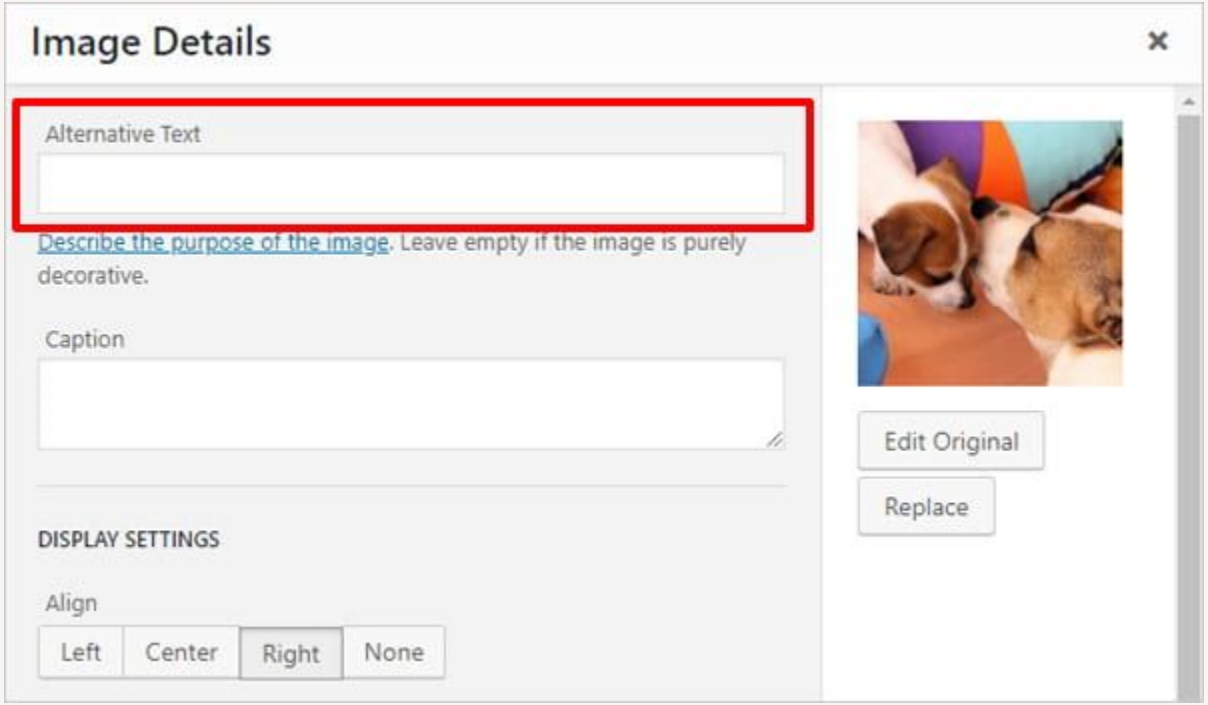
Month	Overall	Pages that require remediation	Images missing alt text

6 Scan your website pages (cont.)

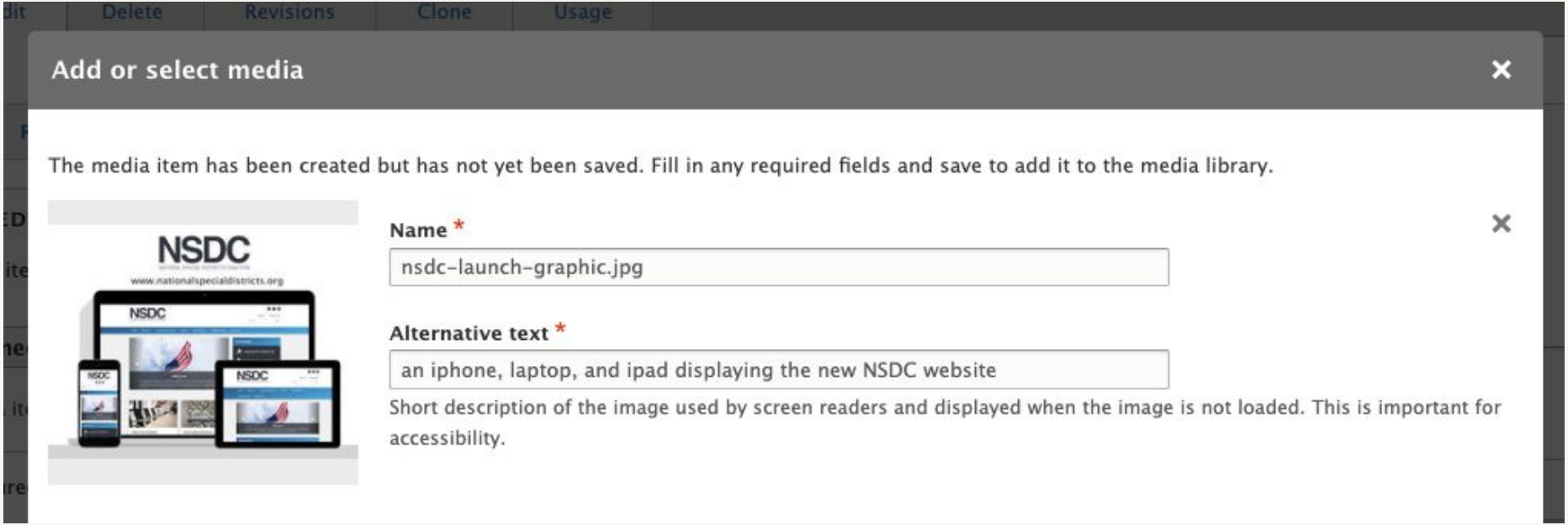
Two most common issues:

- ✓ Missing Alt Text
- ✓ Color Contrast

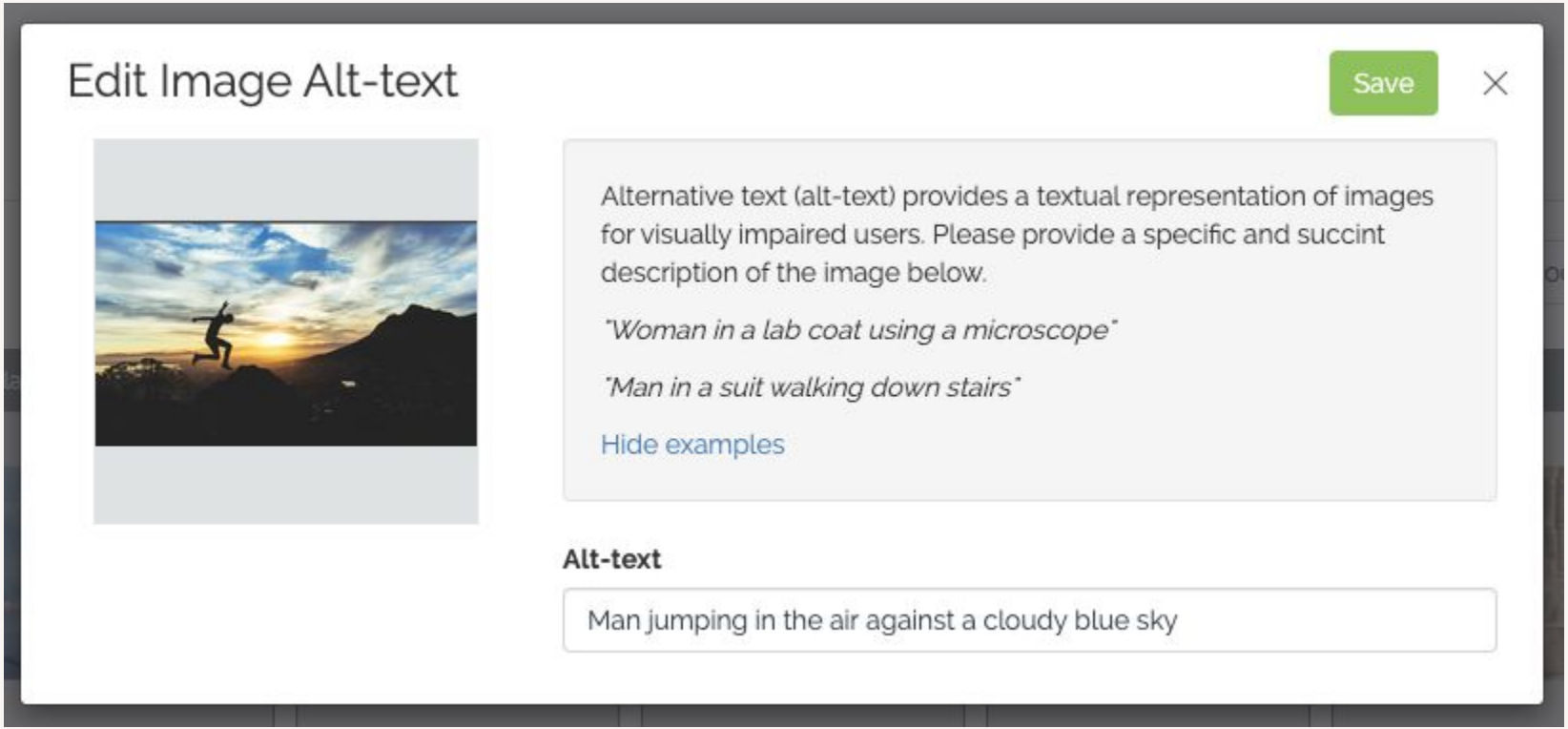
Fixing Alt Text on Wordpress



Fixing Alt Text on Drupal 9



Fixing Alt Text on Streamline



Images: flyers

FAIL

PASS

Water conservation is the practice of using water efficiently to reduce unnecessary water usage. According to Fresh Water Watch, water conservation is important because fresh clean water is a limited resource, as well as a costly one. As a homeowner, you're probably already well aware of the financial costs of inefficient water use. Conservation of this natural resource is critical for the environment — and our wallets.

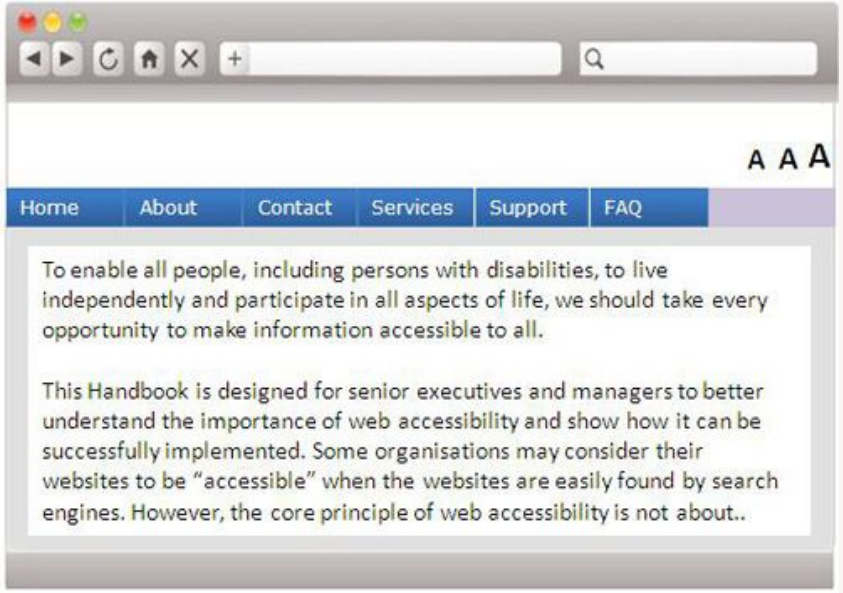
America's population has doubled over the last half century, and our demand for water has tripled. Water conservation is more important than ever, and the world is looking for tips on saving water. The great news is that with just a few simple changes, you can reduce your water footprint. And Constellation is here to help!

How to save water: 10 tips for saving water around the home

The majority of household water use comes from toilets, washing machines, showers, baths, faucets and leaks, but what you can do to save water is fairly simple. These 10

Color contrast

Our favorite tool: [WebAIM color contrast checker]



pass

fail

6 Scan your website pages (cont.)

- ✓ Having a process to check your website on a monthly basis can protect you
- ✓ Keep copies of the results

ACME Water
Serving ACME County since 1926

Website Accessibility Compliance Report

Download

Reporting Period: September 2023

Compliance Snapshot

Overall website score: 99%

At the time of this report, 99% of the pages on this website meet accessibility requirements

Number of pages scanned: 63

This website currently has 63 pages that are accessible to the public. All of these pages were scanned and evaluated in preparation of this report.

Pages in the process of remediation: 3

This website currently has 3 pages that require remediation to meet full compliance.

View list of pages that require remediation +

Focus areas for remediation

We have identified these issues on some pages for remediation, and we will provide an update and improvement in our next monthly report.

View list of focus areas for remediation +

Accountability Snapshot

Website Accessibility Officer

Telephone: (800) 222-7777

7 Check attachments

- ✓ CheckMyDistrict.org (free)
  ~Jun 2025
- ✓ PAC 2024 (free)
- ✓ Adobe Acrobat Pro (not WCAG, but close)
- ✓ CommonLook PDF Validator (free)

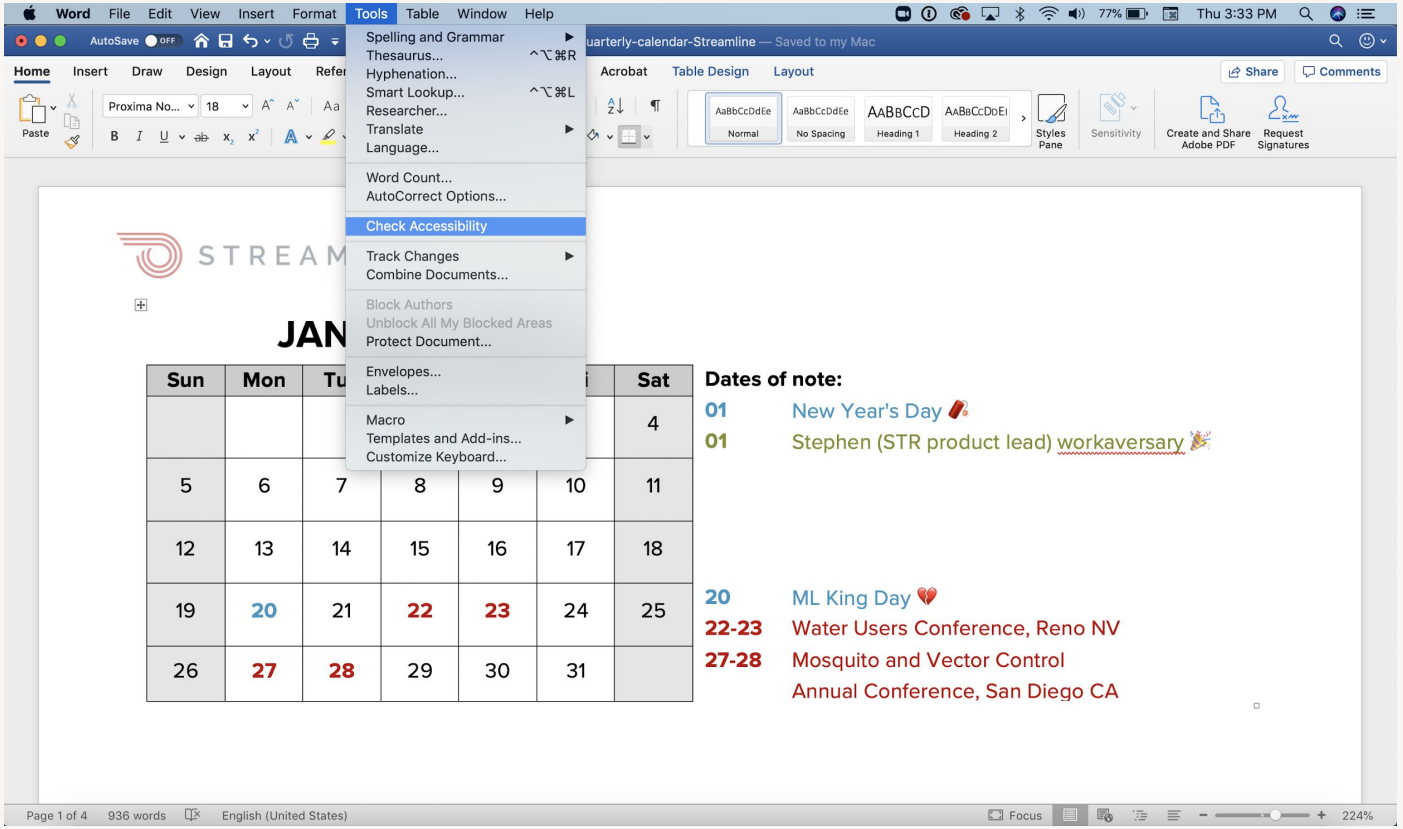
7 Check attachments

- ✓ Develop a process for non-compliant documents
- ✓ Tip: prioritize most popular content first

Creating accessible documents - Microsoft Word

Creating accessible documents - Microsoft Word

- **Start with an accessible Office template**
- **Create agenda or other document**
- Export to PDF
- Use Acrobat to test / add an other required accessibility functions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Hyphenation...
Smart Lookup... ^⌥⌘L
Researcher...
Translate
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Word Count...
AutoCorrect Options...
Check Accessibility
Track Changes
Combine Documents...
Block Authors
Unblock All My Blocked Areas
Protect Document...
Envelopes...
Labels...
Macro
Templates and Add-ins...
Customize Keyboard...
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19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31
Dates of note:
01 New Year's Day
01 Stephen (STR product lead) workaversary
20 ML King Day
22-23 Water Users Conference, Reno NV
27-28 Mosquito and Vector Control
Annual Conference, San Diego CA
Page 1 of 4 936 words English (United States)
Focus
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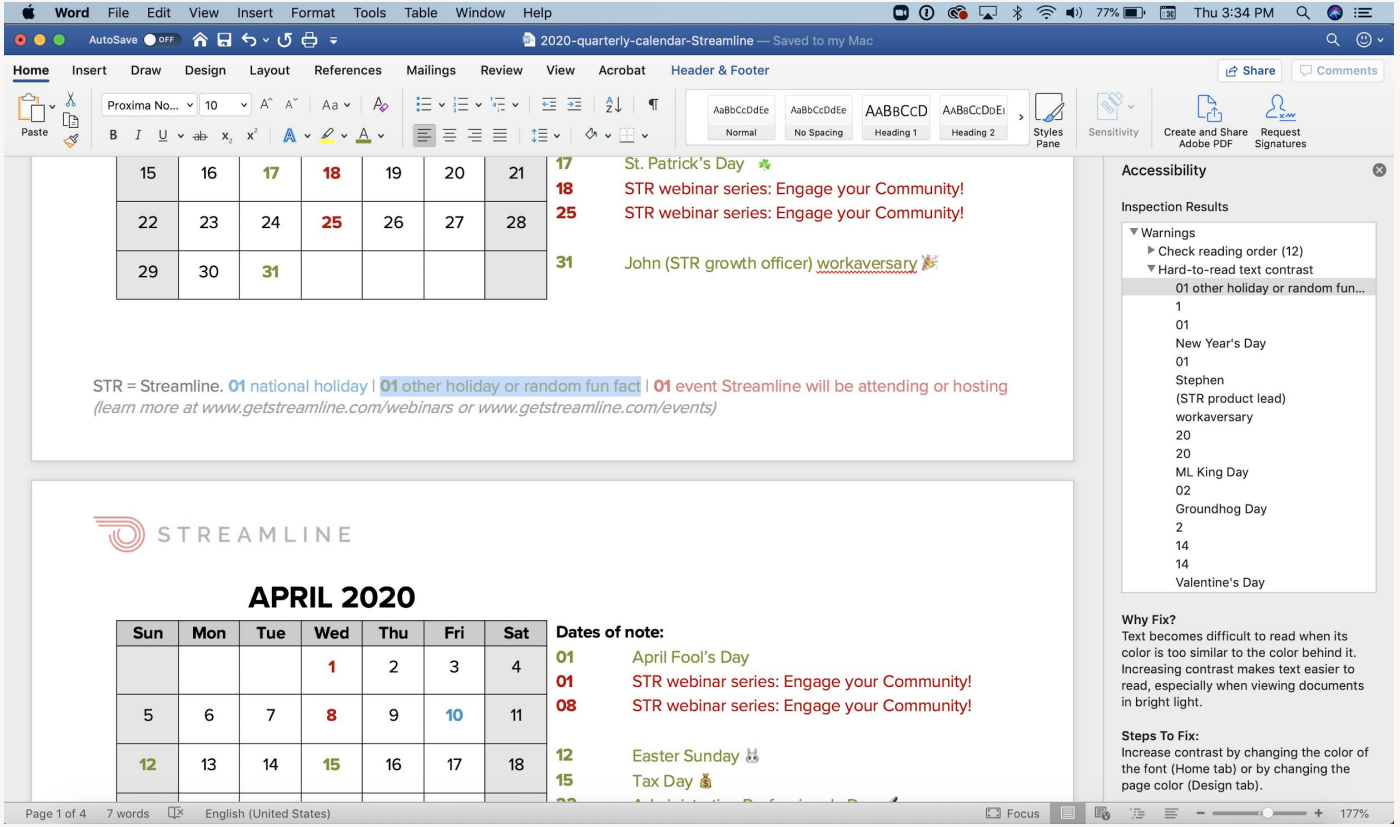
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2020-quarterly-calendar-Streamline — Saved to my Mac
Home Insert Draw Design Layout References Mailings Review View Acrobat Header & Footer
Share Comments
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Sensitivity
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Request Signatures
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25 26 27 28
29 30 31
17 St. Patrick's Day
18 STR webinar series: Engage your Community!
25 STR webinar series: Engage your Community!
31 John (STR growth officer) workaversary
STR = Streamline. 01 national holiday | 01 other holiday or random fun fact | 01 event Streamline will be attending or hosting
(learn more at www.getstreamline.com/webinars or www.getstreamline.com/events)
STREAMLINE
APRIL 2020
Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 9 10 11
12 13 14 15 16 17 18
Dates of note:
01 April Fool's Day
01 STR webinar series: Engage your Community!
08 STR webinar series: Engage your Community!
12 Easter Sunday
15 Tax Day
Accessibility
Inspection Results
Warnings
Check reading order (12)
Hard-to-read text contrast
01 other holiday or random fun...
1
01
New Year's Day
01
Stephen
(STR product lead)
workaversary
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20
ML King Day
02
Groundhog Day
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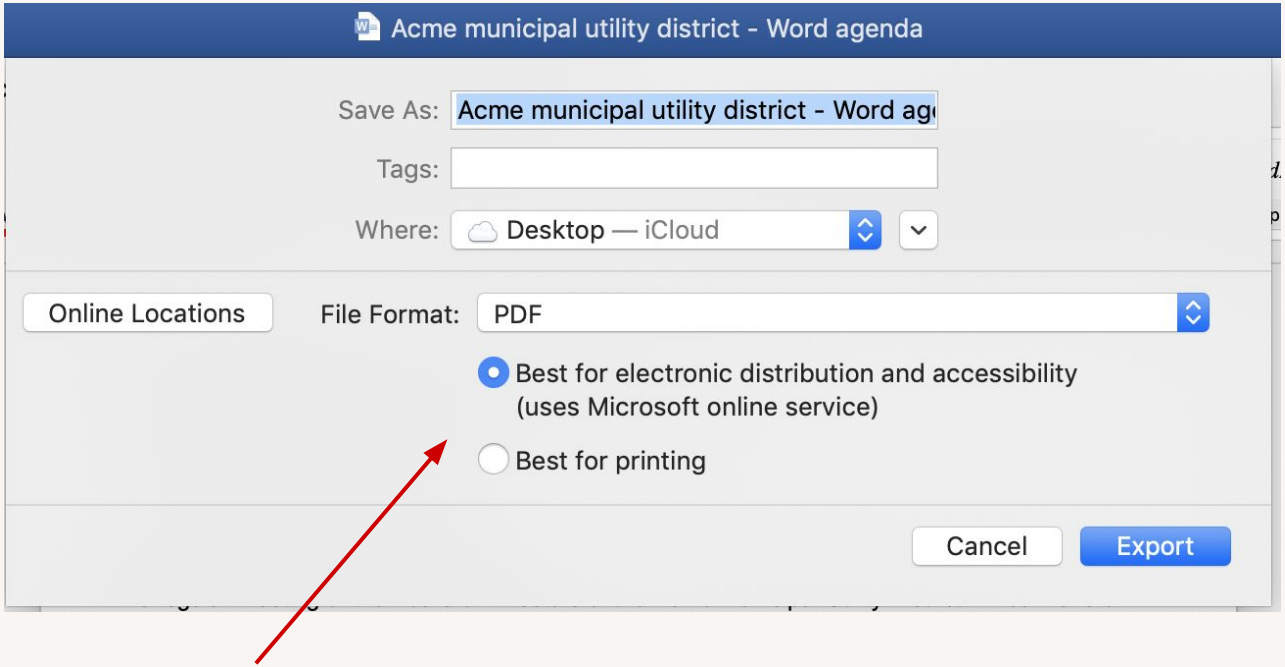
14
Valentine's Day
Why Fix?
Text becomes difficult to read when its color is too similar to the color behind it. Increasing contrast makes text easier to read, especially when viewing documents in bright light.
Steps To Fix:
Increase contrast by changing the color of the font (Home tab) or by changing the page color (Design tab).
Page 1 of 4 7 words English (United States)
Focus
177%

Creating accessible documents - Microsoft Word

- Start with an accessible Office template
- Create agenda or other document
- **Export to PDF**
- **Use Acrobat to test / add an other required accessibility functions**



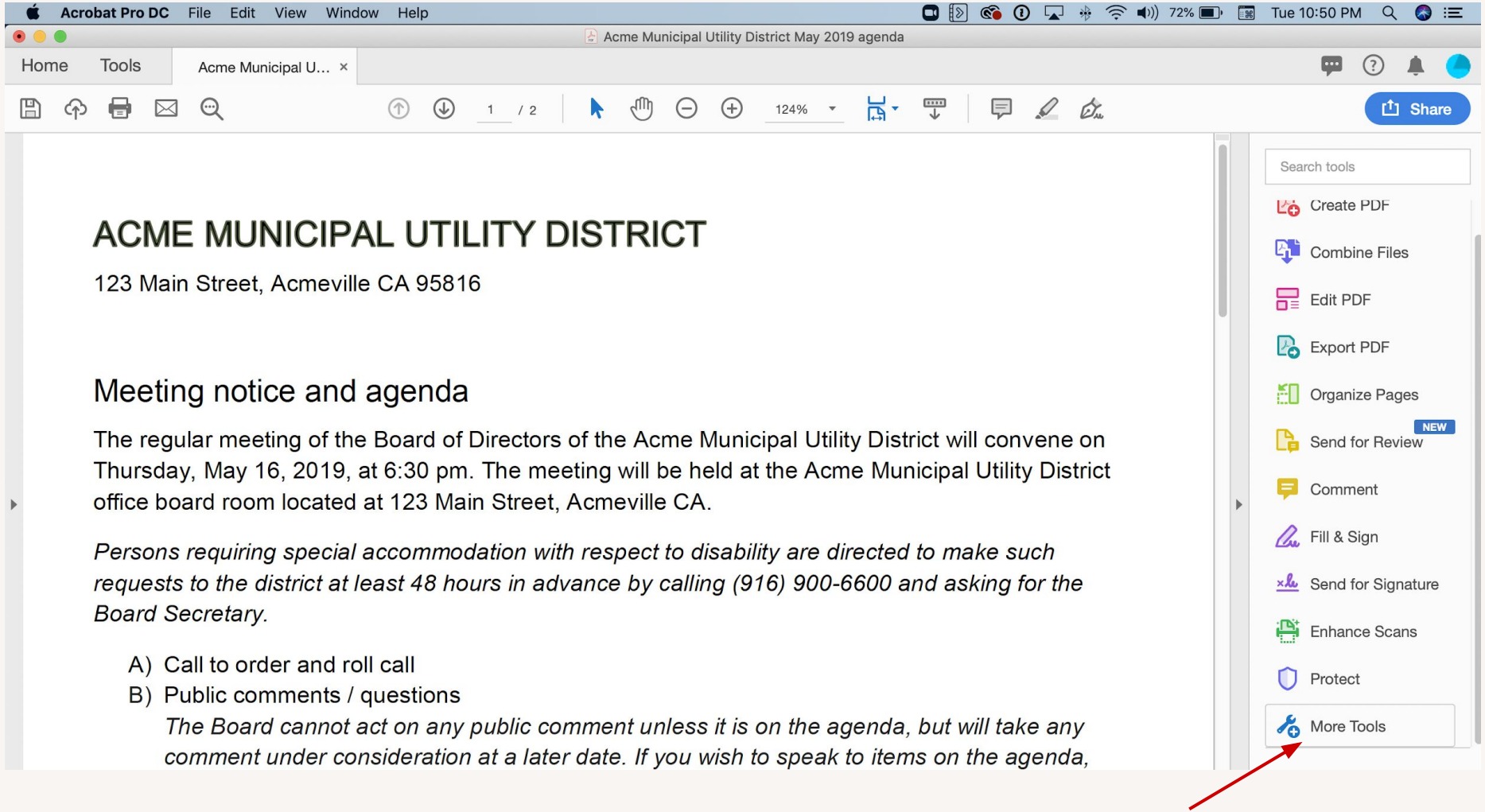
Save as PDF, best for accessibility

How to get Acrobat

- You’ll need Acrobat Pro (not to be confused with Acrobat Reader)

Using Acrobat Pro

- Open the PDF you exported from Word
- Right sidebar, under Tools, choose *More Tools > Accessibility*
- Choose *Full check*
- Right mouse click on anything on the left that shows as failed, and “fix”
- Save PDF



ACME MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

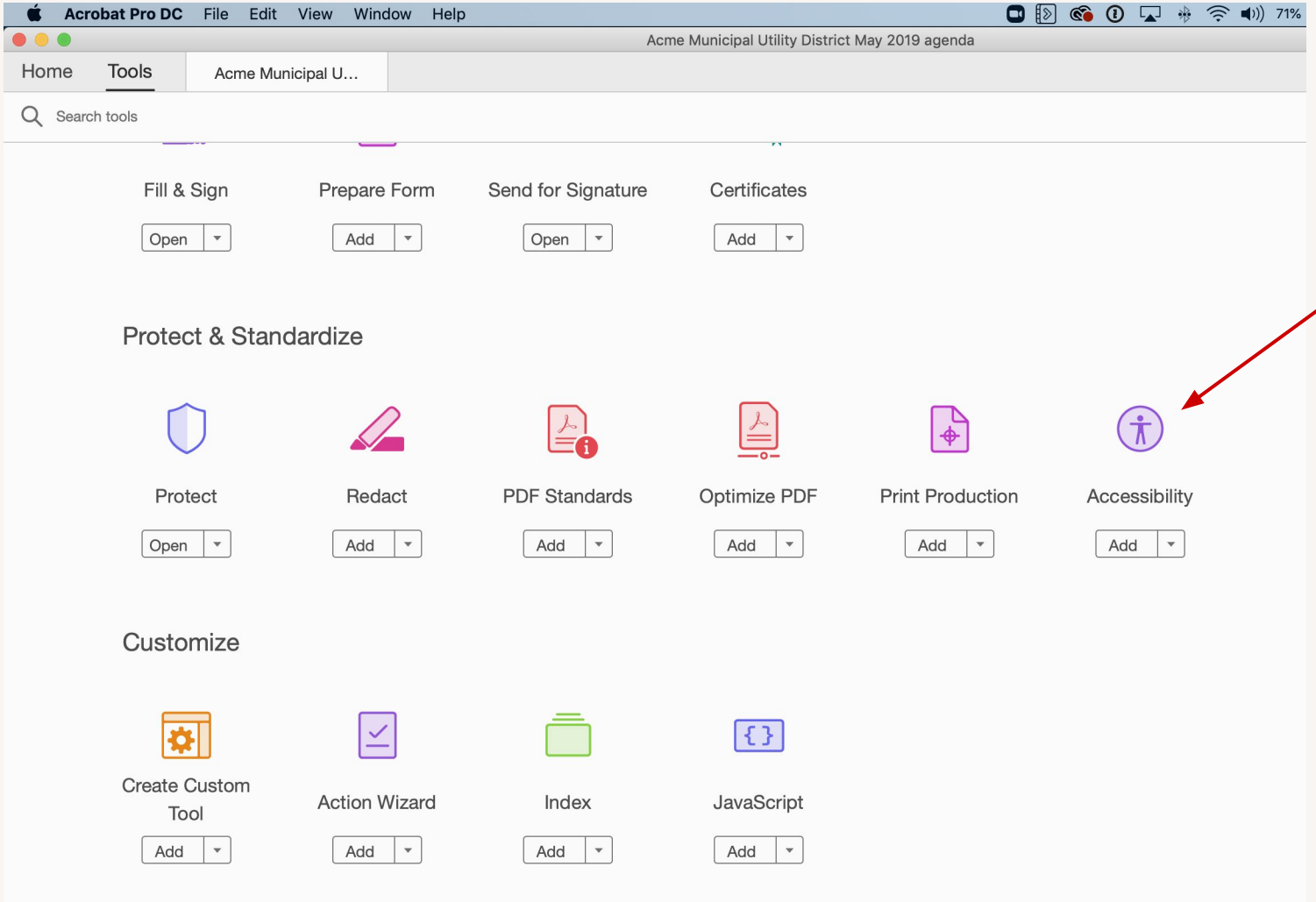
123 Main Street, Acmeville CA 95816

Meeting notice and agenda

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Acme Municipal Utility District will convene on Thursday, May 16, 2019, at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be held at the Acme Municipal Utility District office board room located at 123 Main Street, Acmeville CA.

Persons requiring special accommodation with respect to disability are directed to make such requests to the district at least 48 hours in advance by calling (916) 900-6600 and asking for the Board Secretary.

A) Call to order and roll call
B) Public comments / questions
The Board cannot act on any public comment unless it is on the agenda, but will take any comment under consideration at a later date. If you wish to speak to items on the agenda,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Acme Municipal Utility District May 2019 agenda
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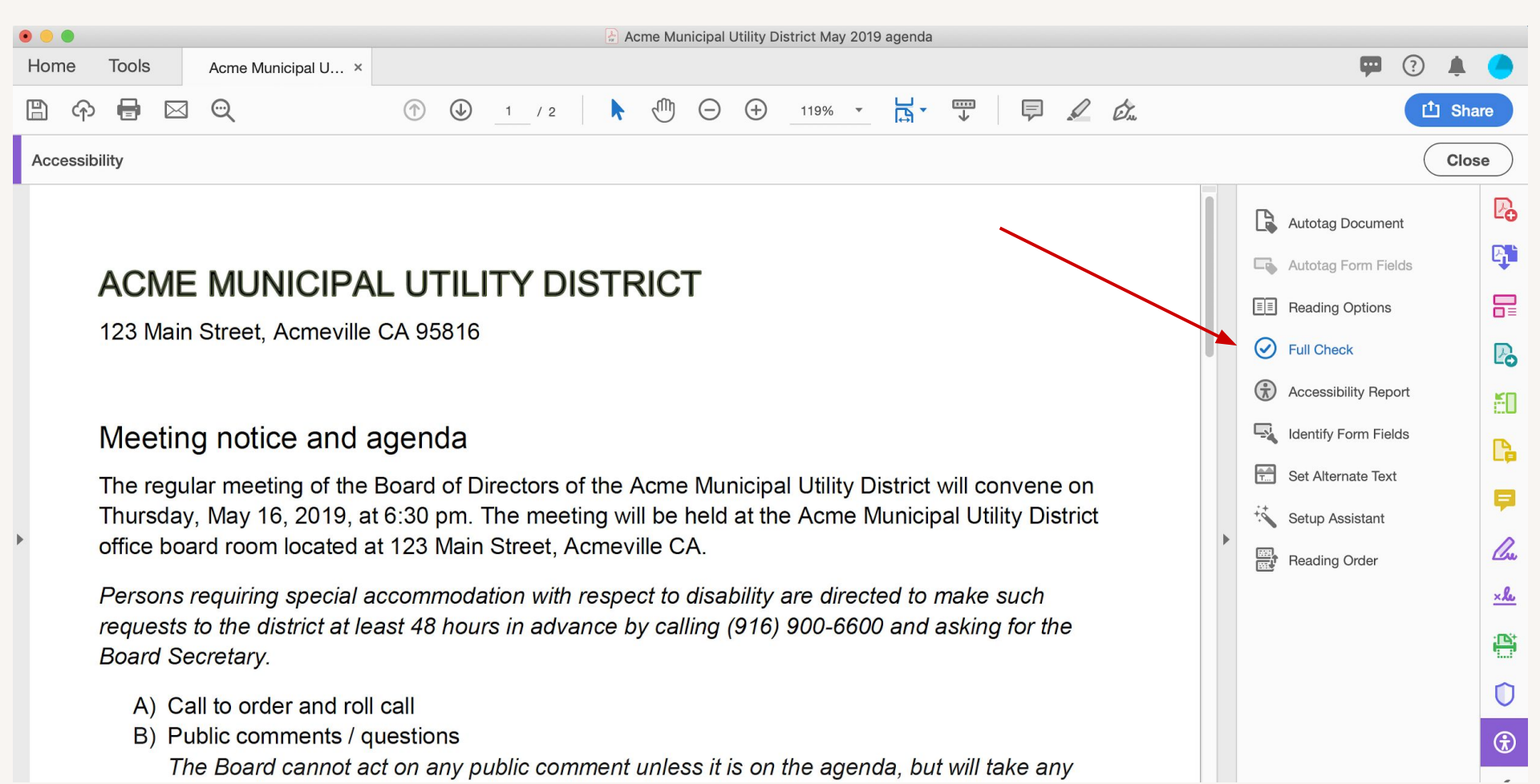
Acme Municipal Utility District May 2019 agenda
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Setup Assistant
Reading Order
ACME MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT
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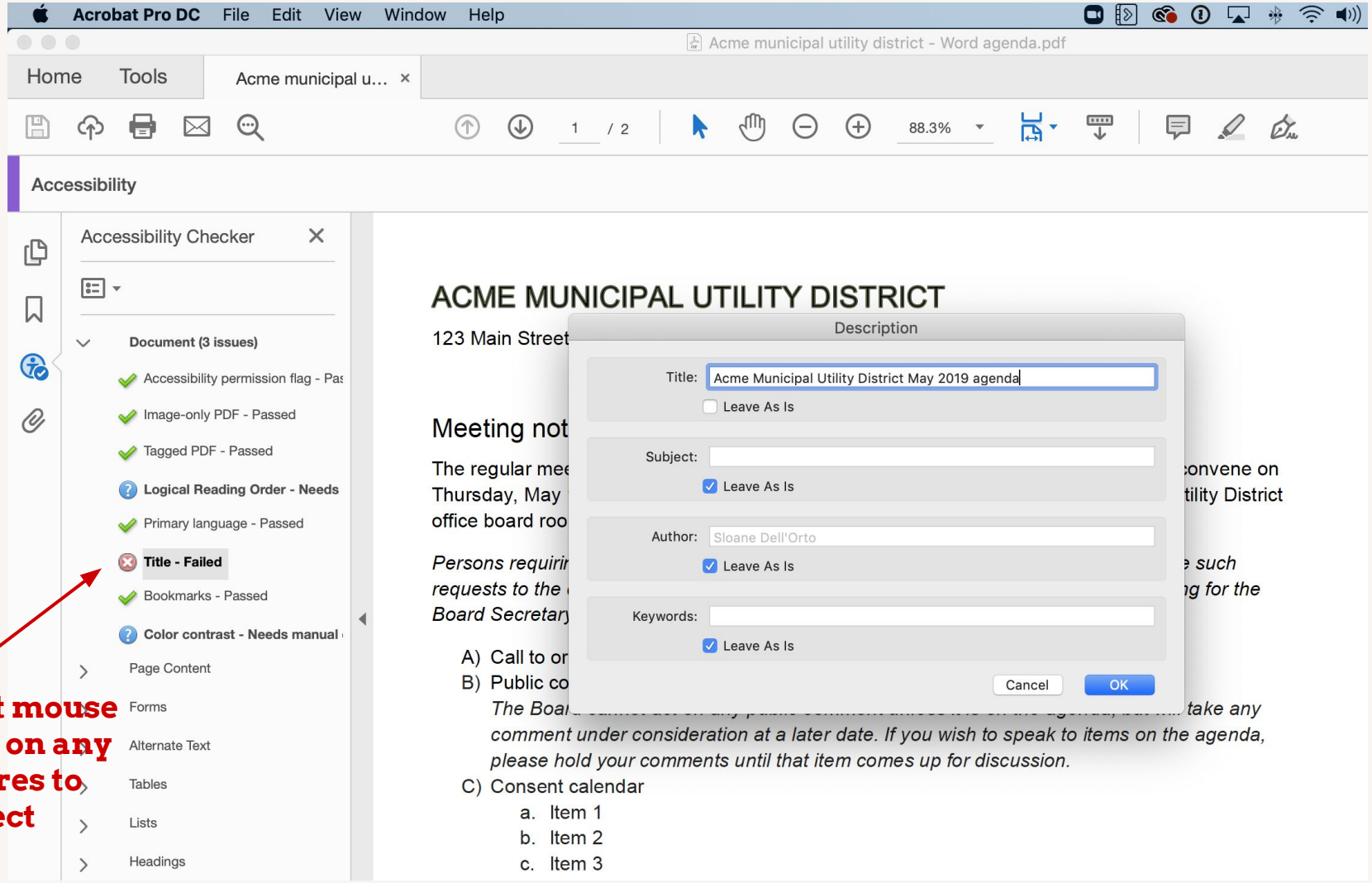
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Accessibility
Accessibility Checker
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Tagged PDF - Passed
Logical Reading Order - Needs
Primary language - Passed
Title - Failed
Bookmarks - Passed
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comment under consideration at a later date. If you wish to speak to items on the agenda,
please hold your comments until that item comes up for discussion.
C) Consent calendar
a. Item 1
b. Item 2
c. Item 3
Description
Title: Acme Municipal Utility District May 2019 agenda
Leave As Is
Subject:
Leave As Is
Author: Sloane Dell'Orto
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Keywords:
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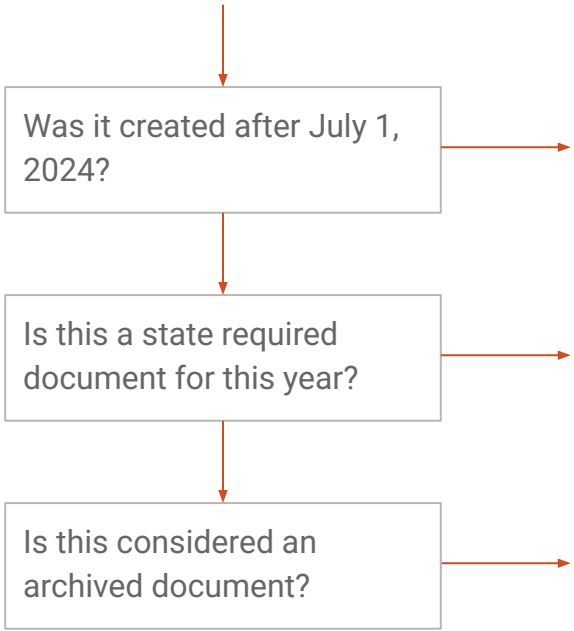
Cancel
OK
Right mouse click on any failures to correct

To remediate or not to remediate?

That is the question!



Yup! Remediate

Yes, better to be safe. Remediate

No - you're off the hook. No Remediation Required . Just add archived notice.

Archived Content as Defined by DOJ

Pressed for time? Consider a service

- ✓ CommonLook, TheAccessibilityGuy.com, etc. ($7/page)
- ✓ New technologies (e.g. DocAccess <$0.06/page/mo)
- ✓ Providers through SIPA
- ✓ Don't boil the ocean, make a plan and work your way through your documents
- ✓ May not be possible to fix all documents, so label archived ones that are infrequently accessed

Close

Your Accessibility Dashboard

Last Site Scan: 1/28/22

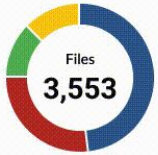
Re-scan Site | View/Download Reports

Overview | Pages | Files | Images | Videos | Embedded Content | Reported Issues | Settings | Accessibility Defense New

File Compliance

File compliance is the latest threat to special districts that can result in legal action. Use this space to review which files need attention and take action.

Need help? Check out our new, built-in PDF remediation & archiving tools.



File Status	Instances
Pending Approval	56
Not Accessible	22
Requires Review	12
Accessible	12

Found 4 Files

Filter Results: Search... | All File Types | All Visibility Status | All Accessibility Status | Reset

File Name	Archived / Visible	File Type	Views/Downloads	Accessibility	Action
Agenda-9-21-23.pdf		PDF	400	Pending Approval	Review & Fix
Agenda-10-21-22.pdf		PDF	652	Pending Approval	Review & Fix
Agenda-11-21-22.pdf		PDF	152	In Remediation	Review
Agenda-9-21-22.pdf		PDF	56	Scanning File	Review
Agenda-9-21-22.pdf	🔒	PDF	201	Not Accessible	Review & Fix
Agenda-9-21-22.pdf		PDF	199	Not Accessible	Review & Fix
Agenda-9-21-22.docx		Word	201	Requires Review	Review & Fix

8 Perform Remediations

- ✓ Insist your vendors do the web remediations
  - contact us for language if you get pushback
  - Add to all RFP language to comply with WCAG 2.1 AA standards (CO vendor letter template)
- ✓ Establish a process

8 Perform Remediations

- ✓ Keep an eye out for nonstandard content
- ✓ if you're embedding a map, adding an infographic, linking to a third-party site, etc. try to provide the content in an accessible format, or at least describe the content so people will know what they are missing and how to contact you for more information.

9 Third-Party ADA Audit

- ✓ If larger district, consider 3rd party test
- ✓ Use software that is audited, ask for copy of last report or VPAT
- ✓ Especially if manual testing was performed, you can include in your plan

10 Consider Platform/Insurance

- ✓ Ask what assurances/indemnification your platform provides
- ✓ Evaluate insurance options, if needed
  - e.g. Prowriters, AAATraq
  - Most standard insurance won't cover (e.g. EPLI, Statewide pools, Cyber)
  - Streamline has added coverage for districts

Keep an Eye Out

- ✓ HB25-1152 – Holding Contractors Accountable for Accessibility Compliance
  - Closes a gap where vendors could ignore accessibility laws without consequence.
- ✓ HB25-1219 (Metro Districts)
  - Making critical governance information more accessible (informationally, not ADA).
  - Clarifying how districts operate and how residents can engage.
- ✓ **More info at the next SDA Leg Update**

Contact us!

We're here to help!

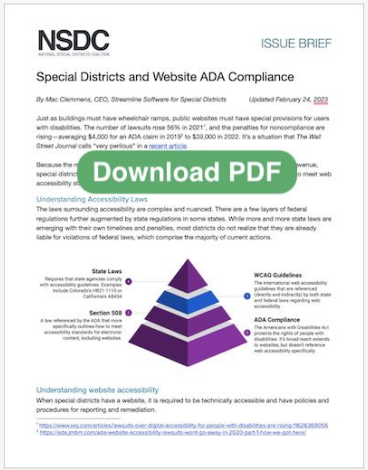
Mac Clemmens
mac@getstreamline.com

Maria Lara
maria@getstreamline.com

Download this slide deck, checklist, and sample policies

getstreamline.com/accessibility

We'll send you an update when the accessibility transition plan template is ready.


NSDC

ISSUE BRIEF

Special Districts and Website ADA Compliance

By Mac Clemmens, CEO, Streamline Software for Special Districts *Updated February 24, 2023*

Just as buildings must have wheelchair ramps, public websites must have special provisions for users with disabilities. The number of lawsuits rose 56% in 2021[1], and the penalties for noncompliance are rising—averaging $4,000 for an ADA claim in 2019[2] to $39,000 in 2022. It's a situation that *The Wall Street Journal* calls "very perilous" in a recent article.

Download PDF

Understanding Accessibility Laws

The laws surrounding accessibility are complex and nuanced. There are a few layers of federal regulations further augmented by state regulations in some states. While more and more state laws are emerging with their own timelines and penalties, most districts do not realize that they are already liable for violations of federal laws, which comprise the majority of current actions.

State Laws

Section 508

WCAG Guidelines

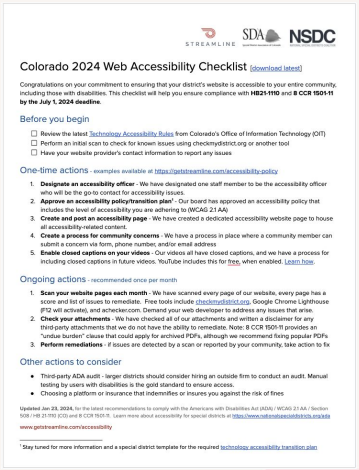
ADA Compliance

Understanding website accessibility

When special districts have a website, it is required to be technically accessible and have policies and procedures for reporting and remediation.

[1] https://www.wsj.com/articles/lawsuits-over-digital-accessibility-for-people-with-disabilities-are-rising-11626369056

[2] https://ada.jmbm.com/ada-website-accessibility-lawsuits-wont-go-away-in-2020-part-1-how-we-got-here/


STREAMLINE SDA NSDC

Colorado 2024 Web Accessibility Checklist (download latest)

Congratulations on your commitment to ensuring that your district's website is accessible to your entire community, including those with disabilities. This checklist will help you ensure compliance with **HB21-1110** and **8 CCR 1501-11** **by the July 1, 2024 deadline.**

Before you begin

- ☐ Review the latest Technology Accessibility Rules from Colorado's Office of Information Technology (OIT)
- ☐ Perform an initial scan to check for known issues using checkmydistrict.org or another tool
- ☐ Have your website provider's contact information to report any issues

One-time actions - examples available at https://getstreamline.com/accessibility-policy

1. **Designate an accessibility officer** - We have designated one staff member to be the accessibility officer who will be the go-to contact for accessibility issues.
2. **Approve an accessibility policy/transition plan**[1] - Our board has approved an accessibility policy that includes the level of accessibility you are adhering to (WCAG 2.1 AA)
3. **Create and post an accessibility page** - We have created a dedicated accessibility website page to house all accessibility-related content.
4. **Create a process for community concerns** - We have a process in place where a community member can submit a concern via form, phone number, and/or email address
5. **Enable closed captions on your videos** - Our videos all have closed captions, and we have a process for including closed captions in future videos. YouTube includes this for free, when enabled. Learn how.

Ongoing actions - recommended once per month

1. **Scan your website pages each month** - We have scanned every page of our website, every page has a score and list of issues to remediate. Free tools include checkmydistrict.org, Google Chrome Lighthouse (F12 will activate), and achecker.com. Demand your web developer to address any issues that arise.
2. **Check your attachments** - We have checked all of our attachments and written a disclaimer for any third-party attachments that we do not have the ability to remediate. Note: 8 CCR 1501-11 provides an "undue burden" clause that could apply for archived PDFs, although we recommend fixing popular PDFs
3. **Perform remediations** - if issues are detected by a scan or reported by your community, take action to fix

Other actions to consider

- Third-party ADA audit - larger districts should consider hiring an outside firm to conduct an audit. Manual testing by users with disabilities is the gold standard to ensure access.
- Choosing a platform or insurance that indemnifies or insures you against the risk of fines

Updated Jan 23, 2024, for the latest recommendations to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) / WCAG 2.1 AA / Section 508 / HB 21-1110 (CO) and 8 CCR 1501-11. Learn more about accessibility for special districts at https://www.nationalspecialdistricts.org/ada

www.getstreamline.com/accessibility

[1] Stay tuned for more information and a special district template for the required technology accessibility transition plan

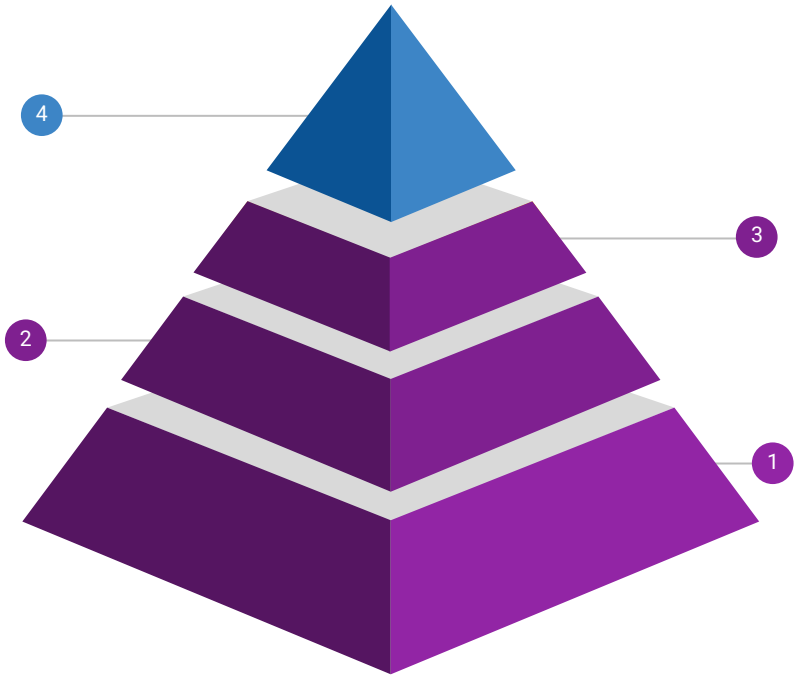
Legal foundations for website accessibility

WCAG 2.1 AA Guidelines

The international web accessibility guidelines that are referenced (directly and indirectly) by both state and federal laws regarding web accessibility.

Section 508

A law referenced by the ADA that more specifically outlines how to meet accessibility standards for electronic content, including websites.



State Laws

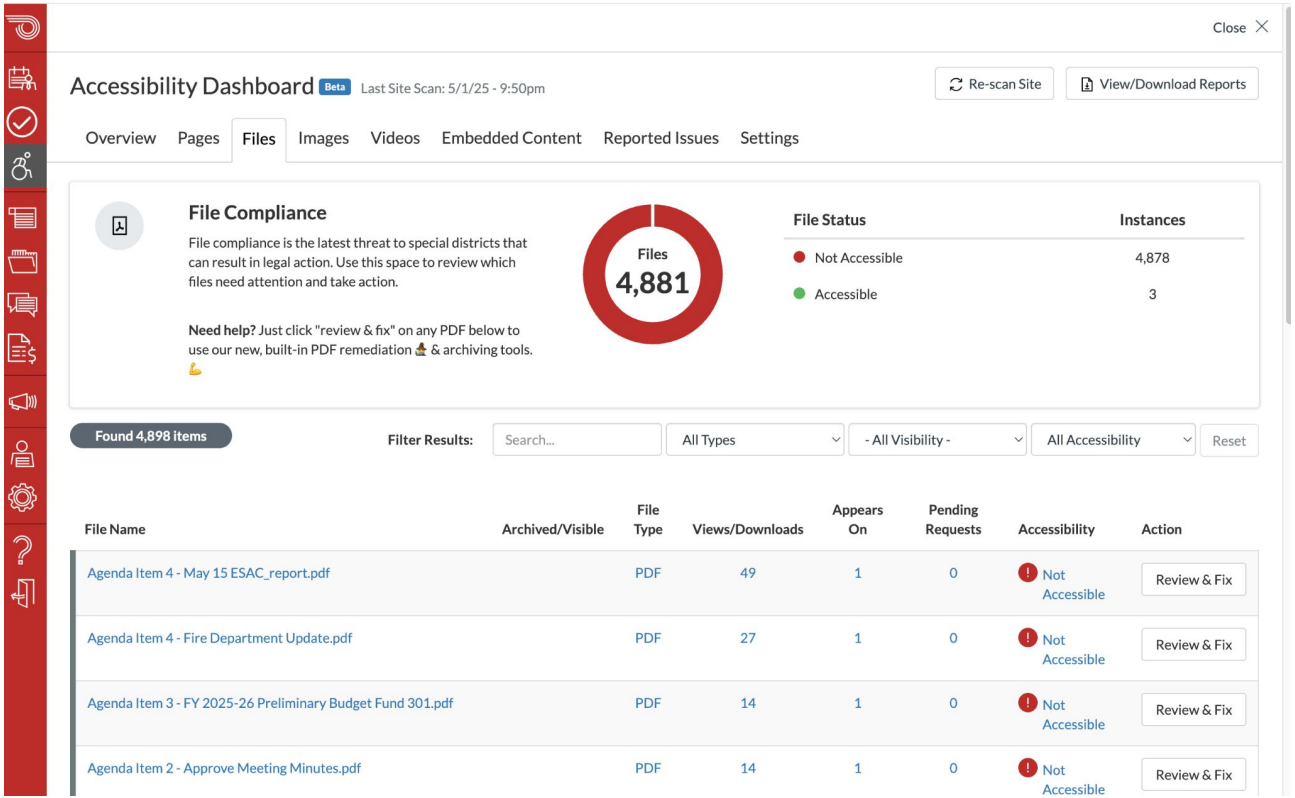
Requires that state agencies comply with accessibility guidelines. Examples include HB 21-1110 in Colorado or AB 434 in California.

ADA Compliance

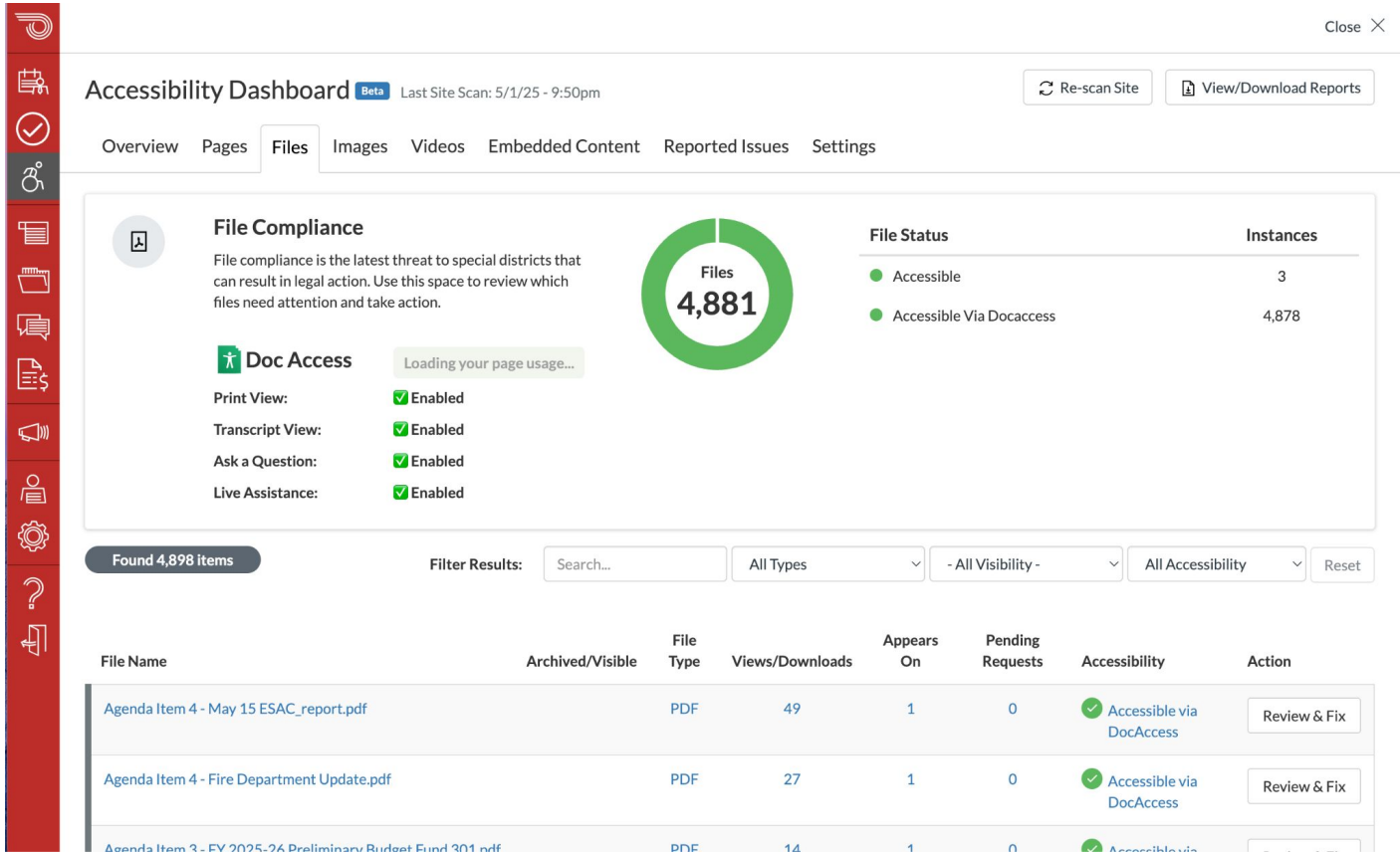
The Americans with Disabilities Act protects the rights of people with disabilities. It's broad reach extends to websites, but doesn't reference web accessibility specifically.

Thank you!

How would you like to go from this…



… to this?


Close
Accessibility Dashboard
Beta
Last Site Scan: 5/1/25 - 9:50pm
Re-scan Site
View/Download Reports
Overview
Pages
Files
Images
Videos
Embedded Content
Reported Issues
Settings
File Compliance
File compliance is the latest threat to special districts that can result in legal action. Use this space to review which files need attention and take action.
Doc Access
Loading your page usage...
Print View: Enabled
Transcript View: Enabled
Ask a Question: Enabled
Live Assistance: Enabled
Files
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Accessibility
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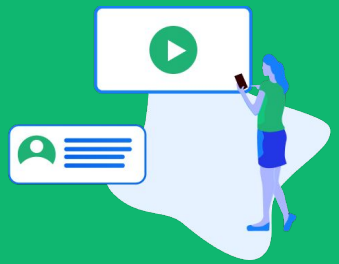
Agenda Item 4 - May 15 ESAC_report.pdf PDF 49 1 0 Accessible via DocAccess Review & Fix
Agenda Item 4 - Fire Department Update.pdf PDF 27 1 0 Accessible via DocAccess Review & Fix

DocAccess

Powered by Streamline™

Instantly make all of your website's PDFs accessible.

Your Same Documents—Transcribed, Searchable, Translated, & fully WCAG 2.1 AA compliant. 👏



Let Your Users Search, Translate, Ask Questions & Get Live Assistance

Be ADA compliant while ensuring all users get the great experience they deserve:

♿Convert to an Accessible Transcript

You can view your document in a print friendly version or turn on the accessible transcript that ensures equal access for people with disabilities, especially those who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have cognitive impairments.

What this solves:

- Handwriting
- Budgets and Tables
- Maps and Diagrams

🌐Translate to 150 Languages

👩‍💻Connect to a Live Visual Interpreter

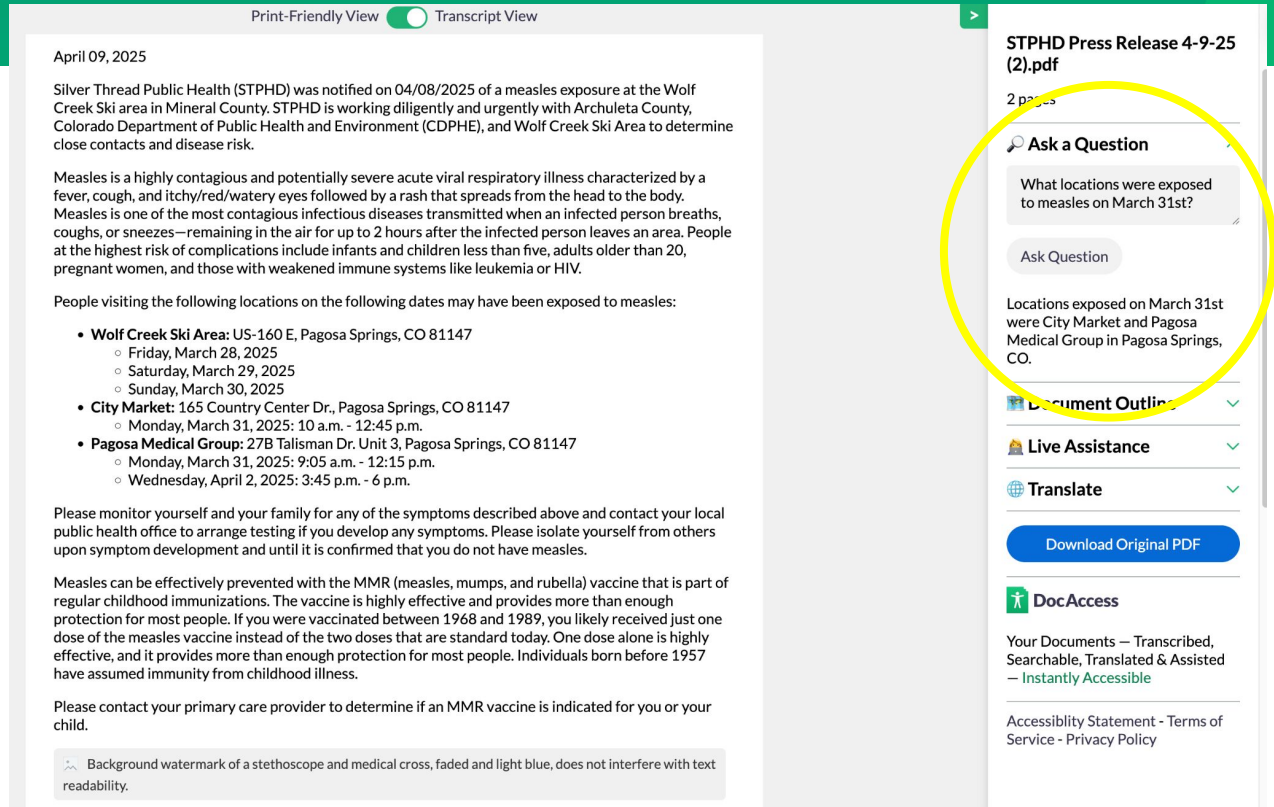
🔎Ask Your Document a Question

🗂️Navigate with a Document Outline

DocAccess
Powered by Streamline®

Translate to your community's native languages

Ask your document a question



Simple Set-Up & Management

Install in **minutes,** and all your document links will automatically be served by DocAccess.

STEP 1

Try DocAccess out for free on your documents!

Set up your free account and access your dashboard. DocAccess will magically scan your site to see how many PDF pages you have, then we'll automatically convert your documents into DocAccess so you can try them out!

STEP 2

Activate DocAccess on your site.

If you like it, you can start a free trial and install the code on your site. Similar to installing Google Analytics, DocAccess installs in minutes and works on any platform. Once installed, document links will automatically open in DocAccess. Users will still be able to download the original PDF.

STEP 3

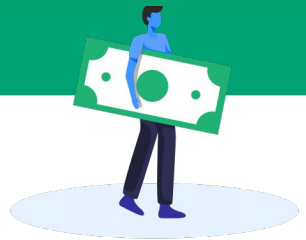
Enjoy always-compliant PDFs for pennies per page.

Once you activate DocAccess, all of your current and future PDFs will automatically be made instantly accessible. Users can then ask questions, translate into their language, ask questions, and even connect to a live visual interpreter, ensuring ADA compliance.

Protect yourself from costly accessibility lawsuits 💪

Accessibility lawsuits in the U.S. have surged in recent years. The most common culprit being an inaccessible document or PDF. Protect yourself from risk and avoid the headache of creating accessible documents or paying for costly remediations.

- No more struggling to create accessible documents
- No more costly PDF remediations
- No more worrying about expensive lawsuits
- No more excluding users from document access



Get on the waiting list

Sign up to be the first to know when this product is released!

https://www.getstreamline.com/docaccess-waitlist

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