

College of Engineering Communications and Marketing Accessibility Plan

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) updated [Title II of the ADA](#) in April 2024, requiring public colleges and universities to ensure all digital content and mobile apps conform to [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1, Level AA](#). The requirements go into effect April 26, 2027.

The Communications and Marketing (Comms) team within the College of Engineering is committed to ensuring equitable access to information for all audiences.

Standards

- All public content beginning April 26, 2027, will align with DOJ accessibility requirements.
- Websites hosted by the Comms team will be mobile and screen-reader friendly with updated accessible navigation to be implemented by December 2026.
- Images contain alt text that aligns with [university guidelines](#) (news, web, newsletters, and pdfs).
- Social media posts will align with accessibility best practices, following the guidance of university strategic communications.
- Videos include closed captioning/transcripts and are available on accessible video players.
- Client submissions to Comms are required to follow the guidelines outlined below.
- News stories will include clear, descriptive headlines, using plain language where possible.
- The team will conduct audits and participate in annual refresher training to ensure compliance. Accessibility training will be included in onboarding new Comms team members.
- Legacy content will be addressed and remediated.

Faculty, Staff, and Student Org Guidelines for Communications and Marketing Projects

- **Clients must meet accessibility guidelines by including all required information when submitting project requests.**
- **Alt Text:** It is required to provide alt text for all images or graphics submitted for distribution in newsletters and on websites. The requestor is responsible for providing accurate alt text or the submission will be returned to provide more information.
 - **When submitting a graphic (jpg, png, pdf, eps) with embedded text:** The alt text must include all relevant text in the graphic, as screen readers cannot read text embedded in images.
 - **When submitting a graphic that includes a QR code:** Provide a short, concise URL as part of the alt text.
 - **University guidelines for alt text can be [found here](#).** Some options to copy/paste embedded text from a graphic include:
 - **OneNote:** Paste an image into OneNote, right-click the image, and select "Copy Text from Picture."
 - **Google Drive/Docs:** Upload an image to Google Drive, right-click, select "Open with" > "Google Docs." It will convert the image and show the text.
 - **Canva:** Use the "Grab Text" tool within the Magic Studio feature to extract text from images.
- **Marketing Project Requests:** When requesting a new project or an update to an existing marketing project (flyer, handout, brochure, signage), indicate the end use of the design request (print, digital).

This determines how the layout will be created by our team. Digitally distributed documents require additional design steps to meet accessibility guidelines.

- **PDF Creation and Usage:**
 - **Penn State has provided branded and accessible templates in Microsoft.** [Find more information and access to templates here.](#)
 - **Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint:** Each of these programs has a built-in accessibility checker to ensure files follow accessibility requirements. To run a check on your document, select the “Review” tab and then “Check Accessibility.”
 - **PDFs on websites:** Avoid adding PDFs to external websites whenever possible. Users prefer a streamlined process of reading content on a webpage. PDFs also hurt search engine optimization. Any PDF submitted for use on college-managed websites must include a successful report from an [accessibility checker](#).
 - If a PDF must be added to a college-managed website (this will be at the discretion of the Comms team), run the PDF through a university-recommended accessibility checker (Resources are under “Repair PDFs” [here](#)), correcting all errors, prior to submitting through a web request and including proof of compliance.
 - The client is responsible for providing [accessibility-friendly PDFs](#) with an approved report. If the approved report isn’t included with the submission, the request will be returned to correct and resubmit, which could delay completion of the project.
 - The Communications and Marketing team reserves the right to provide alternative solutions for sharing information. PDFs do not follow web best practices and will be avoided whenever possible.
- **Internal information:** Content for current student, faculty, or staff audiences (forms, links to Bulletin information like academic plans, faculty/staff resources, etc.) should be added to a unit-created SharePoint site or OneDrive and follow all accessibility guidelines. This content should not be added to externally facing websites.