

FAQs re New ADA/Disability Accommodations Requirements

What is changing and how does it affect me?

The federal government has adopted new mandatory regulations governing how we communicate with students, coworkers, and the public. **These new regulations will impact how every employee communicates electronically.** Employees must be aware of and trained on the new regulations so that the University ensures compliance with these new legal standards. This FAQ is one source of guidance for employees.

What has changed regarding the University's use of websites and mobile apps?

New federal regulations now require the University and its employees to make sure that all content (with few exceptions) shared via website or mobile app, including email, is accessible to people with disabilities. We must meet the technical standards set forth in Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ("WCAG") 2.1 in determining whether our electronic communications are sufficiently accessible. *See <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>* (last visited 7/8/2025).

Why did the government adopt these new regulations?

The federal government has adopted these new regulations to remove accessibility barriers to government services for people with disabilities, which increasingly rely on website and mobile apps to communicate with the public.

When do these new regulations take effect?

The University must comply with the new regulations by **April 24, 2026** and remain in compliance thereafter. This means that all content (with few exceptions) visible on the University's websites and/or mobile apps must be made accessible by April 24, 2026, and new content communicated after that date must be accessible as well.

What are Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)?

"WCAG, [the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#), is a set of guidelines that say what is needed for web accessibility, such as requirements for captions for videos. WCAG is developed by the [World Wide Web Consortium](#)." U.S. Department of Justice, *Fact Sheet: New Rule on the Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps Provided by State and Local Governments*, <https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/> (last visited 7/8/2025) ("Fact Sheet").

What constitutes "web content"?

"'Web content' is defined as the information and experiences available on the web, like text, images, sound, videos, and documents." *See* Fact Sheet. "Web content" includes documents, such as PDFs or Excel documents," posted to a website. That means any documents linked to the website or distributed via applications such as email (with few exceptions) need to meet the new accessibility requirements.

What is a "mobile application" or "mobile app"?

Mobile apps are software applications that are downloaded and designed to run on mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, including Outlook.

Do I have to make sure that software or mobile apps created by third parties (e.g., Survey Monkey) meet the accessibility standards if I use them to communicate with students or the public?

Yes. The regulations apply both to materials communicated directly by the University (e.g., via its website) and by its employees (e.g., via email) *and* to information communicated through third parties on behalf of the University (e.g., via mobile apps such as Facebook or Survey Monkey). Employees should consult with IT before using third party mobile apps to make sure they are appropriate for University business use.

Does old web or app content need to be updated to meet the new accessibility standards?

It depends. “Archived materials” do not need to be made accessible; almost everything else should be made accessible. To be considered “archived material,” the content must meet a four-part test:

1. The content was created before April 24, 2026, or reproduces paper documents or the contents of other physical media (audiotapes, film negatives, and CD-ROMs for example) that were created before that date, **AND**
2. The content is kept only for reference, research, or recordkeeping, **AND**
3. The content is kept in a special area for archived content, **AND**
4. The content has not been changed since it was archived.

See Fact Sheet. If the content does not meet the above test, it must be modified to meet the new accessibility standards. If you have questions about whether content qualifies as archived materials, please confer with our Director of Compliance, Kaitlyn Anne Wild (kwild@govst.edu).

Do we need to make sure that old social media posts that are still visible on the internet are accessible?

No, we do not need to modify historical social media posts even if they are still visible on the internet.

Where can I go for more information?

All employees who desire training and/or additional information about the accessibility guidelines should confer with Alex Dolezal, Web Content Manager (ddolezal@govst.edu).

Faculty and Instructors who require support in the classroom are invited to contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (ctl@govst.edu).

Suggestions for increased accessibility of electronic communications may be made to Dr. Joi F. Patterson, Chief of Institutional Engagement and Excellence (jpatterson3@govst.edu).

Questions or concerns about the University’s compliance with these new standards may be made to Kaitlyn Anne Wild, Director of Compliance (kwild@govst.edu).