

# What Governments Need to Know

Governments are moving their constituent interactions online.

Web-based services can be incredible for efficiency and engagement, but governments must ensure they're accessible to their entire constituency. It's the law.



## What are the rules?



### ADA

(Americans with Disabilities Act)

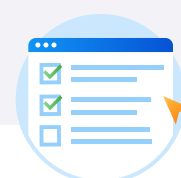
Removed what President George H.W. Bush called a "shameful wall of exclusion" for disabled Americans. Made discrimination based on disability illegal in the U.S.



### Section 508

(of the Workforce Rehabilitation Act)

Requires Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Many states have adopted versions of Section 508 requirements.



### WCAG 2.1

(Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

The latest version of accessibility rules created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international standards organization. Lays out universal principles for making online services accessible to people with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

## Accessibility matters.



**19%** of U.S.  
(56.7 million people)

As of 2010, nearly 1 in 5 Americans have some form of disability<sup>2</sup>

### 1973

The Rehabilitation Act is passed, prohibiting Federal discrimination on the basis of disability in education and employment.

### 2001

Section 508 is added to the Rehabilitation Act to help accessibility legislation keep pace with technology

### 2008

The first version of WCAG is developed to standardize web content accessibility guidelines internationally

### 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act further prohibits discrimination based on disability in all areas of public life

### 2003

The U.S. Department of Justice releases a guide for state and local governments recommending they develop an action plan to improve web accessibility<sup>3</sup>

### 2017

The U.S. Access Board adopts parts of WCAG 2.0 into Section 508

## Legal trouble.

Since 2011, **150+** local governments in the US have been sued for website accessibility issues.<sup>4</sup>



Violations can be costly

Up to **\$75,000** fine for first ADA violation

Up to **\$150,000** fine for subsequent violations<sup>5</sup>

## Who's protected?

WCAG 2.0 requires web content to accommodate certain classes of people, including:



Visually-impaired



Hearing-impaired



Mobility-impaired



Cognitively-impaired



Non-English speakers



A trusted technology partner can help your government create accessible and compliant digital services.

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## Sources

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/miscellaneous/cb12-134.html>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.essentialaccessibility.com/blog/local-government-website-accessibility/>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.adpharos.com/2017/12/12/ada-lawsuits-target-websites-in-georgia/>  
<sup>5</sup> [https://www.ada.gov/civil\\_penalties\\_2014.htm](https://www.ada.gov/civil_penalties_2014.htm)