

5-MINUTE SELF-ASSESSMENT · FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTORS & AGENCIES

Are You Section 508 Ready?

Twenty questions to find out whether your organization is audit-ready under the Revised Section 508 standards, or quietly carrying accessibility exposure that will surface in the next procurement review.

TIME TO COMPLETE

5 minutes

QUESTIONS

20

PUBLISHED

April 2026

Why this assessment exists

Most Section 508 problems are invisible until a procurement officer, an inspector general, or a member of the public surfaces them. By then, the cost of fixing them has multiplied.

The Revised Section 508 standards took effect on January 18, 2018. They incorporate WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA by reference and apply to all electronic and information technology that federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use. For federal contractors, those obligations flow down through procurement clauses, contract terms, and inspector general inquiries.

Most organizations do not know where they stand. They have never been formally audited. Their VPATs are out of date or missing entirely. Their websites pass the easy automated checks and fail the manual ones. Their PDFs are inaccessible. Their procurement teams have never been trained.

This self-assessment surfaces those gaps in five minutes. It will not make you compliant. What it will do is show you which parts of your accessibility posture would survive an audit and which parts would not.

HOW TO SCORE IT

For each question, check YES only if the answer is clearly yes **and you could produce written evidence** if asked. Check NO if the answer is no, partial, or "we are working on it." Check UNSURE if you genuinely do not know. UNSURE counts as NO in the scoring, because that is how an auditor will treat it.

01 Governance and Ownership

4 QUESTIONS

YES NO UNSURE

1.1 Does your organization have a written accessibility policy that has been approved by a senior executive and is available to staff?

IF NO: *You have no documented standard of care. In a procurement review or complaint investigation, there is nothing to point to that shows you take accessibility seriously.*

YES NO UNSURE

1.2 Is there a single named individual, by title and by name, who is accountable for accessibility across your organization?

IF NO: *Without a named owner, accessibility falls between web, IT, procurement, and legal. Each thinks the other is handling it. Nothing gets fixed until something breaks publicly.*

YES NO UNSURE

1.3 Is accessibility built into your software development lifecycle from design through release, not bolted on at the end?

IF NO: *Bolt-on accessibility costs roughly 10x what designed-in accessibility costs. Worse, the bolt-on version usually fails on edge cases that the design-in version would have caught early.*

YES NO UNSURE

1.4 Do procurement and contracting staff receive specific training on what to ask of accessibility vendors and how to evaluate VPATs?

IF NO: *Most weak vendor accessibility claims pass procurement review because no one on the buying side has been trained to push back. That weakness becomes your weakness when the contract is awarded.*

02 Scope and Inventory

4 QUESTIONS

YES NO UNSURE

2.1 Do you maintain a current inventory of every public-facing website, application, and document portal your organization owns?

IF NO: *You cannot audit what you have not inventoried. The websites that get missed in the inventory are usually the ones with the worst accessibility problems, because no one was responsible for them.*

YES NO UNSURE

2.2 Do you know which of your digital assets are subject to Section 508 (versus only ADA, only state law, or only voluntary alignment)?

IF NO: *The legal regimes overlap. Confusing them is how organizations end up with a 508 audit finding on a system they thought was only subject to ADA.*

YES NO UNSURE

2.3 For every system in scope, can you identify the WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA criteria that the Revised 508 standards incorporate by reference?

IF NO: *The Revised 508 standards do not invent new accessibility rules. They incorporate WCAG 2.0 by reference. If your team does not know which criteria those are, they cannot produce a valid VPAT.*

YES NO UNSURE

2.4 Do you maintain a current inventory of the documents (PDFs, Word, Excel, PowerPoint) that the public can download from your website?

IF NO: *Document accessibility is the single most common 508 failure. Most organizations have hundreds of inaccessible PDFs they have never reviewed. The first complaint usually points to one of them.*

03 Testing and Evidence

4 QUESTIONS

YES NO UNSURE

3.1 Has each of your in-scope websites and applications been tested for accessibility within the last 12 months by someone qualified to do manual testing?

IF NO: Automated scanners catch roughly 30 to 40 percent of accessibility issues. The other 60 to 70 percent require manual testing by a qualified tester. If you have only run automated scans, you have only seen part of the problem.

YES NO UNSURE

3.2 Is the manual testing performed by someone independent of the team that built the system?

IF NO: Self-review by the development team is not independent testing. Auditors and federal procurement reviewers want to see that the tester is not the builder.

YES NO UNSURE

3.3 Do you have a current Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for every product your organization sells to or operates on behalf of a federal customer?

IF NO: Federal customers are increasingly required to request ACRs as part of procurement. Showing up without one is a competitive disadvantage; showing up with a stale or low-quality one is sometimes worse.

YES NO UNSURE

3.4 If a federal customer or complainant asked today for evidence of compliance, could you produce the testing reports, the ACR, the remediation log, and the policy documents within 30 days?

IF NO: "We have it somewhere" is not evidence. Organizations that cannot assemble a documentation package in 30 days are functionally noncompliant regardless of their underlying practices.

04 Vendor and Third-Party Risk

4 QUESTIONS

YES NO UNSURE

4.1 Do you require an ACR from every vendor whose product touches your federal contract or your public-facing services?

IF NO: Vendor accessibility risk flows to you. If their product fails an audit, the finding has your name on it because their product is part of your delivery.

YES NO UNSURE

4.2 When a vendor provides an ACR, does someone on your side actually read it, evaluate it, and push back on weak conformance claims?

IF NO: The majority of vendor ACRs use vague language ("Supports" with no remarks) on criteria where the actual product clearly does not support. If no one on your side challenges those claims, the weak ACR becomes your evidence package.

YES NO UNSURE

4.3 Do your vendor contracts include language requiring the vendor to maintain ongoing 508 compliance and to remediate findings within a defined window?

IF NO: Without contract language, you have no enforcement mechanism. Vendors who lose interest in maintaining accessibility do so because there is no contractual cost.

YES NO UNSURE

4.4 If a vendor's product creates an accessibility complaint against your organization, is there a documented escalation and remediation process?

IF NO: The complaint is on the clock the moment it is received. Organizations without an escalation process scramble for weeks while the complainant's lawyer drafts the next letter.

05 Audit and Complaint Readiness

4 QUESTIONS

YES NO UNSURE

5.1 Do you have a documented complaint intake and response process, with named owners and target response times?

IF NO: *Accessibility complaints often arrive through customer service, social media, or general counsel before they ever reach the accessibility team. Without a documented intake, the response is delayed and the legal exposure compounds.*

YES NO UNSURE

5.2 Do you maintain a remediation backlog that tracks every known accessibility issue, who owns it, and the target fix date?

IF NO: *An organization that does not track its known issues looks worse to an auditor than one that has issues but is tracking them. The lack of a backlog signals lack of program maturity.*

YES NO UNSURE

5.3 Has your organization had an independent accessibility audit performed in the last 18 months?

IF NO: *Self-assessment is necessary but not sufficient. An independent audit catches the issues your team has stopped seeing because they look at the same screens every day.*

YES NO UNSURE

5.4 Has your accessibility statement been reviewed and updated in the last 12 months to reflect the actual current state of your program?

IF NO: *An out-of-date accessibility statement is sometimes worse than no statement, because it is an explicit documented claim that contradicts the current state of the system.*

Tally Your Score

SCORE WORKSHEET

Section 1: Governance and Ownership (out of 4) _____

Section 2: Scope and Inventory (out of 4) _____

Section 3: Testing and Evidence (out of 4) _____

Section 4: Vendor and Third-Party Risk (out of 4) _____

Section 5: Audit and Complaint Readiness (out of 4) _____

TOTAL (out of 20) _____

0–9

RED ZONE

Your accessibility posture would not survive an audit, a complaint investigation, or a serious procurement review. Any rights-impacting digital service is carrying significant unmanaged exposure. This is an "address now" situation, not a "we'll get to it" situation.

10–15

YELLOW ZONE

You have foundations in place but meaningful gaps. Something (inventory, manual testing, vendor management, complaint process) is not yet audit-ready. You are probably one accessibility complaint or one procurement review away from finding out which gap matters most.

16–20

GREEN ZONE

Your program looks mature on paper. The next question is whether the evidence actually exists and is current, and whether an independent reviewer would reach the same conclusion. Green Zone organizations benefit most from periodic independent validation.

Want to See How Your Site Actually Scores?

The fastest way to find out where you really stand is to put your homepage in front of a qualified manual tester and get the answer. Most organizations are surprised by what comes back, in both directions: things they thought were broken are fine, and things they thought were fine are not.

Schedule a Free Accessibility Scan

We will run a manual accessibility scan of your homepage at no cost. You will get back a short report with the real findings, prioritized by severity, and a clear answer to the question this self-assessment surfaces: where do we actually stand. No slides. No vendor pitch. Just the scan.

· hello@simkinselgazar.com

[SCHEDULE YOUR FREE SCAN →](#)