

Section 508 Accessibility Standards for EIT

The technical standards of Section 508 provide criteria specific to Electronic & Information Technology (EIT) acquisition. EIT Includes information technology and any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the creation, conversion, or duplication of data or information. The term electronic and information technology includes, but is not limited to, computers, software, telecommunications products (such as telephones), information kiosks and transaction machines, World Wide Web sites, multimedia, and office equipment such as copiers and fax machines. The term does not include any equipment that contains embedded information technology that is used as an integral part of the product, but the principal function of which is not the acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information. For example, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) equipment such as thermostats or temperature control devices, and medical equipment where information technology is integral to its operation, are not information technology. The complete standards are available on the federal Section 508 website <http://www.section508.gov/> and an explanatory guide is available on the Access Board website, <http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/>.

Section 508 standards apply only to new acquisitions; existing EIT products do not have to be made to conform. When developing, procuring, or maintaining EIT, the district shall ensure that those products conform to Section 508 standards, unless a fully conforming product is not commercially available or, unless a significant difficulty or expense would be imposed on the district. Where an exception is claimed, it will still be necessary to provide the information in a timely manner and in an alternate format suitable for the individual with a disability. Purchasers must also pursue effective acquisition strategies for acquiring EIT products that conform to the applicable standards. Successful implementation of Section 508 requires the support of each employee who is involved in the design, development, and procurement of EIT.

508 Compliance Committee: The 508 Compliance Committee will establish a structured EIT procurement process that ensures conformance to these standards. The 508 Compliance Committee will be comprised of stakeholders from the Administration, Purchasing, IT, Center for Students with Disabilities, faculty, staff and individuals with disabilities. Further, this committee will create on-going curriculum for 508 Compliant Procurement Process training program to establish responsibility of administrators and requestors.

508 Compliance Procurement Process: The 508 Compliance Procurement Process shall include provision for the following:

1. Identifying and documenting needs and general product specifications;
2. Market research to determine and document availability of conforming products;
3. Purchase of the most conforming product; and
4. Documentation of criteria if an exception is claimed.

Web Development

For purchases of web-based products or for supplemental applications and/or content in electronic form included as part of a textbook, follow the process outlined above for other EIT products. For web-based development, maintenance, and course content ensure that the final product will conform to the applicable Section 508 standards by including Section 508 conformance as a specification for the contract. If you develop or maintain district web content, refer to the Section 508 Checklist <http://www.webaim.org/standards/508/checklist> for suggestions on how to conform to Section 508 for web content.

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