

Government Website Accessibility Audit Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare for an accessibility review, establish scope, and identify where deeper testing is needed. It is a planning tool, not a certification of compliance. A complete review should combine automated testing, manual expert evaluation, keyboard testing, and testing with assistive technologies.

1. Define the scope

- [ ] List all public websites, subdomains, portals, and web applications.
- [ ] List mobile apps and resident-facing digital tools.
- [ ] Identify third-party platforms used to deliver services.
- [ ] Inventory frequently used PDFs, forms, meeting materials, and public records.
- [ ] Identify the highest-traffic and highest-impact services.
- [ ] Document known complaints, support requests, or problem areas.

2. Check content and structure

- [ ] Confirm pages use a logical heading structure.
- [ ] Confirm informative images have meaningful alternative text.
- [ ] Confirm links describe their destination or purpose.
- [ ] Check that instructions do not rely only on color, shape, sound, or position.
- [ ] Review tables for appropriate headers and reading order.
- [ ] Review PDFs and documents for tags, headings, reading order, and text alternatives.

3. Check navigation and interaction

- [ ] Navigate priority pages and workflows using only a keyboard.
- [ ] Confirm focus is visible and follows a logical order.
- [ ] Check menus, dialogs, carousels, accordions, and other interactive components.
- [ ] Confirm users are not trapped in any component.
- [ ] Review time limits and provide controls where appropriate.

4. Check forms and transactions

- [ ] Confirm every field has a clear label.
- [ ] Provide instructions before complex interactions.
- [ ] Identify errors clearly and explain how to correct them.
- [ ] Confirm required fields are communicated without relying only on color.
- [ ] Test essential forms, payments, permits, registrations, and applications end to end.

5. Check multimedia

- [ ] Provide accurate captions for prerecorded video.
- [ ] Provide transcripts or appropriate text alternatives for audio.
- [ ] Confirm media controls are keyboard accessible.
- [ ] Avoid autoplay or provide clear controls to pause and stop content.

6. Check ownership and follow-through

- [ ] Assign an owner to each issue and affected content area.
- [ ] Prioritize issues by resident impact and service criticality.
- [ ] Document remediation decisions and validation results.
- [ ] Define how new content will be reviewed before publication.
- [ ] Establish a monitoring and reassessment cadence.
- [ ] Create a clear way for residents to report accessibility barriers.