



Technology Accessibility Plan

Douglas County strives to ensure that its services are accessible to all residents, employees and visitors to our community.

Douglas County has invested a significant number of resources to help ensure that all of the County's technology is made easier to use and more accessible for people with disabilities, with the strong belief that every person has the right to live with dignity, equality, comfort, and independence. This investment will not only help make technology accessible to users with sensory, cognitive, and mobility disabilities, but ultimately to all users, regardless of ability.

A cross-functional team of caring staff members have established a committee that meets regularly to discuss how to remove accessibility barriers within Douglas County technology that may affect colleagues, neighbors and visitors. Douglas County is committed to making sustained, good-faith progress on electronic accessibility to ensure that one day all will have equal access to information and services and can engage with their local government, live, work and play in this special place.

Douglas County has been proactively working to create technological inclusivity and continues to constantly improve the accessibility of our website, electronic content and digital services with the belief that it is our collective moral obligation to enable seamless, accessible, and unhindered use for employees and the public alike.

To that end, the County has a plan to prioritize, evaluate, remediate and continuously improve every digital touchpoint within our services, programs, and activities. Below, you'll find just some of the measures that we have taken or are in process of implementing:

- Staff are enabling closed captioning and transcripts for public meetings held on Teams.
- WebEx enabled closed captioning for Business Meetings, Public Hearings and Land Use Meetings.
- Amplification devices available by request for those who attend public meetings in person at the Philip S. Miller Building.
- Our website is regularly evaluated by an Accessibility Scanner to identify and fix every possible accessibility barrier on our site.
- All staff have received guidance on how to remediate historical files.

- Web content creators have been given training on to create accessible content for public consumption.
- The County's website makes available the Website Accessibility Widget that is powered by a dedicated accessibility server through UserWay, Inc. The software allows us to improve our website compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) level AA criteria. This is part of an ongoing effort to make all of the County's technology compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) level AA criteria.
- The Douglas County website's accessibility menu can be enabled by hitting the tab key when the page first loads or by clicking the accessibility menu icon that appears on the bottom left corner of any webpage.
- Human Resources offers information to employees on the internal portal, DCNet, in a centralized location with instruction on how to request an accommodation, links to the County's Accessibility Plan and Statement, current ADA regulations and State of Colorado Office of Information Technology (OIT) rules.
- Job applicants with impaired vision work with a Human Resources technician who assists by filling in required form fields.
- Staff have implemented closed captioning for all new YouTube content and is editing autogenerated content to ensure accuracy. Historic, actively used content is also being addressed in this manner.
- Human Resources staff have inserted technology accessibility expectations into the new employee orientation curriculum.
- All Douglas County staff have been given training on how to comply with OIT rules by creating accessible content through the correct implementation of alternative text, document headings, contrast and font options, tags, bookmarks, links, etc. within the Microsoft Office 365 suite.
- Accessibility requirements and expectations of vendors have been integrated into procurement procedures.
- In the Clerk and Recorder's Office, Elections Division, an accessible voting machine is made available to enable individuals with sight impairments to mark their ballot legally and electronically. Options include on-screen larger font, headphones for audio ballots and a hand-held controller with braille. A paper ballot is then printed out for voter confirmation of their selections.
- The Motor Vehicle Division provides a staff liaison at each location to assist the public with any needs including accommodations.
- Existing employees who are hearing impaired can utilize a closed caption device to enable them to fully interact on telephone calls.
- Quarterly updates are made to the Douglas County Technology Accessibility Inventory Assessment Tracker.
- Many Offices and Departments have designated local staff leads to answer questions and provide guidance.
- HR has a posted process for employees to request accommodations in order for them to perform the essential functions of their position.
- Accessibility requirements have been incorporated into our technology development stages including design, development, user experience, and quality assurance.
- The OIT checklist has been incorporated into our vendor selection process.

Accessibility Maturity

Douglas County is actively engaging in addressing all technology, both internal and external facing, which is not fully accessible for all abilities. Significant resources have been directed to this effort in terms of staff, time, effort, and financial investments. Planning efforts are enterprise-wide, organized, well-defined, coordinated and in place for the foreseeable future. A cross-functional working group has been established with membership from each department and office to continually evaluate electronic accessibility. This team is authorized to take action to tackle areas in need of improvement and provide accommodations until accessibility is attained.

Organizational Measures

While we've made significant progress since HB21-1110 has passed, we recognize that we are at the beginning of a long-term, on-going initiative. To that end, below are some of the steps we've taken to advance our position and ensure future progress:

- Accessibility requirements have been built into our procurement processes.
- We are conducting and will maintain an inventory of our applications and their corresponding accessibility status. Quarterly re-evaluations will take place to maintain awareness of status and future or current situational changes. We will continually and systematically assess, prioritize and then address non-compliance issues that are found in our technology that is being actively used. Our goal is to have the entire inventory of Douglas County applications, both vendor supplied and in-house developed, evaluated for accessibility by the end of 2024.
 - As of June 28, 2024, 20% of our applications have been assessed and are confirmed to be compliant or will be in the near future.
 - By September 30, 63% or more of our applications will be assessed.
- Processes will be established for providing reasonable accommodation until the technology can be made accessible.
- Historical technology not in active use will be remediated upon request.
- Contact information to submit accessibility feedback and accommodation requests has been conspicuously posted on our website with methods to include email, standard telephone and a TTY enabled line.
- Staff follow a Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC) process that addresses appropriate timing for updates, upgrades and replacement taking into account user needs such as accessibility.
- An inventory of our applications documenting our concrete efforts towards compliance with the State of Colorado's Office of Information Technology Accessibility Rules is an element of this Plan and constitutes our progress report. This Plan will be reviewed annually and the spreadsheet will be updated quarterly. This satisfies a component to be in compliance with the requirements of HB24-1454 through July 1, 2025.

Formal Approval

- Holly Carrell, Special Project Manager, Administration
- June 28, 2024