



## Accessibility Part II Checklist – FINAL

### For Communication and Written Documents

#### Purpose

The Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission (VTRC) believes that a person’s ability to fully participate in matters that affect them is a human right. In this spirit, VTRC has created and will continue to revise accessibility protocols that ensure Vermonters full access.

The VTRC is committed to creating equitable and accessible in-person activities and virtual events. The VTRC is taking guidance from State disability organizations and local activists that shape and advocate for accessible protocols and practices.

#### Disclaimer

Effort has been made to avoid complex language and maintain people-first language. Terms used are meant to reflect the variedness of humans. Like other entities of the State, the VTRC aims to make all aspects of its charge inclusive and reflective of human diversity.

#### Contact

The VTRC recognizes that disabilities might take a range of forms, including intellectual, mental or physical. Please contact the VTRC team at [VTRC@vermont.gov](mailto:VTRC@vermont.gov) to request accessible services for in-person or virtual meetings or events.

Accessibility and Safety Checklist - Draft .....	1
Purpose .....	1
Disclaimer.....	1
Contact.....	1
Plain Language Checklist .....	3
Word & PDF Checklist .....	4
Social Media Checklist .....	5
Power-Point Checklist.....	6
Email Checklist.....	7
Spreadsheet and Tables Checklist .....	8

## Plain Language Checklist

### “x”                      Actions

	<b>Grade Level</b> – Use everyday words; 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade level
	<b>Pronouns</b> – Use you and other pronouns
	<b>Active Voice</b> – Use an Active voice, not passive (ex: “Wash fruit. Then, cut and peel them.” Passive voice = “Fruits should be washed before they are cut and peeled.”)
	<b>Direct Speech</b> - Avoid metaphors, imagery, and acronyms
	<b>Tone</b> – Use positive tone; inflection
	<b>Pace and Patience</b> - Take the time necessary to ensure clear understanding and give time to put the thoughts into words, especially when responding to a question
	<b>Concise</b> - Keep it concise, simple, and main point at the start. Repeat when necessary
	<b>Directions</b> – Avoid directional terms, like east-west
	<b>Sentences</b> - Short sentences and paragraphs; avoid sentences with comas or semicolons
	<b>Questions</b> - When asking questions, phrase them to get accurate information. Verify responses by repeating each question in a different way
	<b>Design</b> - Easy-to-follow design features (lists, headers, tables)
	<b>Visuals</b> – Offer visuals to accompany directions, procedures, or learning
	<b>Limit Text</b> – Reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Electronic Versions</b> – Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)
	<b>Instruction</b> – Give direct instruction. Ex: "Be back from lunch at 12:30," not "Be back in 30 minutes". Avoid giving multiple instructions at one time

### Work Cited

- Kirsten Murphy (VT Developmental Disability Council)
- [document-accessibility-basics.pptx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

## Word & PDF Checklist

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use <a href="#">high color contrast</a> text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	<b>Columns and Margins</b> – Reduce use of columns, unless in tables. Use wide or normal margins.
	<b>Charts and Graphs</b> - Describe charts or graphs in one or two sentences; add trends or relevant information in the visual
	<b>Content</b> – Avoid cramming information into a single page
	<b>Subject Line</b> - Add a descriptive subject (ex: “Welcome Email to Committee Members”)
	<b>Background</b> - Don't use background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display.)
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Text-to-Speech</b> – When possible, use text-to-speech
	<b>Visuals</b> – Limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions. Mark images as “decorative” if they don’t offer substantive information or if the information is already conveyed in the body of the document
	<b>Lists</b> – Use lists or bullet-points to organize information
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternate text. Use built-in headers
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link. Avoid “click here”. <a href="#">www.examplelink.com</a> . Example of descriptive link: <a href="#">Microsoft   Create Accessible Links Video</a> here”
	<b>Styles</b> – Use headings and subheadings
	<b>Use the Microsoft and PDF <a href="#">Accessibility Checker</a></b>
	<b>Files</b> - File names should reflect the document

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use lower-case letters and dashes, such as “document-accessibility-checklist”</li> <li>2. Avoid dates in the file name or “draft” unless it’s the title of a report, such as 2020 Report on Health Differences</li> </ol>
	<p><b>PDF Conversion</b> – for Adobe Acrobat Pro DC use “Create PDF”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For Adobe Reader use “Save as Adobe PDF”</li> <li>2. Avoid “Print to PDF” and “Save As” by using PDF extension</li> </ol>

**Work Cited**

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)

**Resource**

- [Video: Check the accessibility of your document - Microsoft Support](#)

<b>Social Media Checklist</b>
-------------------------------

**“x” Actions**

	<b>Plain Language</b> - Use <a href="#">Plain Language Protocol</a> from Green Mountain Advocates. Adjustment for readability, write numbers between zero and nine (Ex: Five, not 5)
	<b>Capitalization</b> – Only capitalize first word in a sentence and titles
	<b>Headers</b> – Apply headers to break-up text and sections.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Camel Case</b> – Use multiword hashtags, such as iPhone or #BlackLivesMatter
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – avoid vague terms like “click here”, “this”, “link”, etc.
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Contact Information</b> – make phone number and email available on the account page for the public to access VTRC
	<b>QR Codes</b> – Create QR Codes that direct the public to events, sign-ups, website, etc. Add description underneath code to indicate where the QR code will direct user.
	<b>Charts and Graphs</b> – Describe them in one or two sentences with trends or relevant information
	<b>Videos</b> – Add descriptions and provide descriptive audios
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Interpretation or Translation</b> – use ASL and other translated versions to increase reach

	<b>Multi-Channels</b> – Create easy access threads, daily email digests, or social media widgets to website
	<b>Support Services</b> – Add contact of supportive staff and post accommodations

### Helpful Links

- [Minimum Accessibility Requirements \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Accessibility by Disability](#)

<b>Power-Point Checklist</b>
------------------------------

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>Headers</b> – Apply headers to break-up text and sections.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Slides and Written Word Color</b> - Use high contrast color schemes. <a href="#">Link: WebAIM Contrast Checker</a> . Avoid white writing when possible. It causes fuzziness, or halation. It’s difficult to read for folx with astigmatism.
	<b>Font Size</b> – Use a large (size 24 or greater), clear, Sans Serif font such as Sans Pro, Arial, or Calibri.
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Animation</b> - Avoid excess animation. Avoid use of it if you can.
	<b>Use the Accessibility Checker and Immersive Reader in PowerPoint</b>
	<b>Limit Text</b> – reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Electronic Versions</b> – Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)

### Resources

- Department of Health - [document-accessibility-basics.pptx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- Accessibility Checklist - [Document Accessibility Checklist \(vermont.gov\)](#)

### Work Cited

- Video for Accessible PDFs: <https://youtu.be/DUPHWF2ZPPg>
- [Accessibility tools for PowerPoint - Microsoft Support](#)

## Email Checklist

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>HTML</b> – Use HTML when possible (see “Email Messaging Using”)
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	<b>Text</b> – Avoid all caps, italics, and underlines (except links)
	<b>Subject Line</b> - Add a descriptive subject (ex: “Welcome Email to Committee Members”)
	<b>Background</b> – Avoid using background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display)
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Text Walls</b> - Avoid large text/wordiness, use bullet points or lists, and headings
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternate text
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link
	<b>Styles</b> – Use headings in Word
	<b>Accessibility Checker</b> – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

### Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)

## Spreadsheet and Tables Checklist

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+
	<b>Text</b> – Avoid all caps, italics, bolding small text, and underlines (except links)
	<b>Images</b> – Use Alternate Text or detailed photo captions
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions.
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternate text. Insert tables, avoid drawing tables. Headers should repeat if the table exceeds the first page. Minimize merging or splitting cells.
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link.
	<b>Styles</b> – Use Headings in Word
	<b>Accessibility Checker</b> – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

### Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)