

NDRN Accessibility Guidelines

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The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) strives to make all its documents, presentations, videos, virtual and in-person meetings as accessible and as inclusive of people of all backgrounds, communities, and identities, especially those of marginalized groups, as possible. All materials that NDRN shares and produces must meet the minimum requirements outlined below.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, or suggestions for improvement, please contact us at accessibility@ndrn.org.

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Word Documents and PowerPoint Presentations

Please note, these guidelines are primarily tailored for Microsoft Office users.

Review Language

Check the language used in your documents and presentations to make sure you're choosing language that centers people with disabilities. We've developed this [Communicating About People with Disabilities](#) resource for guidance.

Whenever possible, write your document or presentation in plain language. Refer to [ASAN's One Idea Per Line: A Guide to Making Easy Read Resources](#) to learn more.

Be sure to spell out any acronyms after the first use.

Use Headings, Styles and Templates

When creating a Word document, [add headings in the styles gallery](#). This ensures screen reader users can more easily navigate through the document using the various heading levels.

When creating a PowerPoint presentation, [use an accessible template](#), or a template that meets these accessibility standards.

For usability, please be sure to include page numbers in documents and slide numbers in presentations.

Additional Resources: [Video to apply styles in Word](#), [Video to add page numbers in Word](#), [Instructions to add slide numbers in PowerPoint](#),

Format Text

Font size: The minimum font size for body text is **14 points** for Word documents and **24 points** for PowerPoint presentations. Footnotes in Word documents should use **12 points** font.

Typeface: Use a sans-serif font [for readability](#) in Word documents and PowerPoint presentations, such as: Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Tahoma, or Verdana. Note: Times New Roman is not a sans-serif font. Use italics sparingly.

Contrast ratio: Use a light-colored background with dark text, so text is distinguishable. To check contrast, [use this tool](#) to make sure the foreground is sufficiently distinct from the background.

Describe Pictures, Graphs, and Non-Text Media

Pictures, graphs and non-text media in any document or presentation must include alternative text. There are two ways to add alternative text to any image:

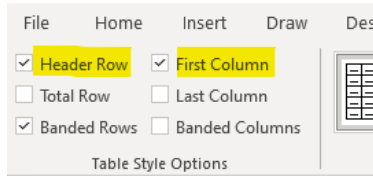
- Add text directly in the document that explains the image, such as a descriptive caption under a photo; or
- Add alternative text (Alt Text) that's read out loud by a screen reader but is not visible on the printed page. If an image is solely decorative, Alt Text is not necessary. Simply put " " in the Alt Text field or select the "Mark as decorative" checkbox.

During presentations, any object conveying meaning visually must be verbally described.

Additional Resources: [Article on adding alt text descriptions in Microsoft apps](#)

Format Tables

Organize information in tables so that a screen reader will navigate through the rows and columns in a logical order. Be sure that the “Header Row” and “First Column” options are checked on the Table Format menu (refer to [create accessible tables](#)). Also, keep tables simple, using as few columns as possible, and without merged cells.



Be Concise

Slide titles are required for all PowerPoint files. You must use unique titles for each slide so people who use screen readers can more quickly navigate around the presentation file. Use ‘Slide Title 1 of 2’ or ‘Slide Title Continued’ when there are multiple slides with the same topic information.

Keep your PowerPoint presentation slides short. For every 1 slide, aim for 2 minutes of speaking/presenting time.

Use slides as an outline for the presentation, with short sentences and/or bulleted phrases (about 5 lines of text / 5 words per line). Avoid long sentences.

Conduct Accessibility Checks and Resolve Issues

Use the built-in [Accessibility Checker](#) to identify and resolve accessibility issues in any Word document or PowerPoint presentation. Select “Review” and then select “Check Accessibility.” This will generate a list of potential accessibility issues for you to review, as well as potential options or instructions for increasing accessibility.

In PowerPoint presentations, potential warnings to check the reading order for a particular slide may be listed in the inspection results. The reading order is the order in which a screen reader reads the slide contents. You

can [open the Reading Order pane](#) to rearrange the order of the slide elements to a logical order.

Additional Resources: [Word document accessibility](#), [PowerPoint presentation accessibility](#).

Review PDFs and Scanned Documents

If all accessibility issues are resolved from the Accessibility Checker, then [exporting to PDF format](#) should maintain accessibility tags. Word documents and PowerPoint presentations exported to PDF on Mac must be reviewed and manually corrected in Acrobat Pro to add accessibility tags.

A scanned document can be read and navigated by a screen reader after using an interpreting program known as [Optical Character Recognition \(OCR\)](#). OCR interprets the scanned document and converts it into a text format. However, formatting errors require review and manual correction. Please provide the source file or a plain text version of a scanned document if available.

Videos

Include Captioning

Any video to be shared during an NDRN event or distributed by NDRN must be captioned. YouTube video captions must be edited for accuracy as automatic captions are not sufficient. A transcript of the video is acceptable.

Provide Audio Description

Whenever possible, videos must describe the descriptive narration of key visual element so people with vision disabilities can access the content of the video.

Additional Resources: [Rooted in Rights Creating Accessibility Videos: A Brief Guide](#)

Meetings

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in all public NDRN events and meetings. ASL is provided upon request.

Virtual Meetings

NDRN will schedule a technical rehearsal for any virtual events open to the network, such as webinars or virtual training events. Presenters will work with producers during the rehearsal to check the following items and address any accessibility issues.

Check Audio

When presenting virtually via Zoom, be sure you're in a quiet space. Be sure to turn off any machinery like air conditioners. Use a good quality headset with a microphone when on your computer or cell phone. Test your audio in advance using any available audio check tools. Avoid using the speaker phone on your cell phone.

Set Up Lighting

All presenters for NDRN events will be on camera while they are presenting. When on camera, avoid back-lighting. Place a light source in front of you, near your computer's camera. Try to find a simple, plain background that will not be distracting to attendees as you speak.

Be Mindful of Captioners and Sign-Language Interpreters

Speak as clearly and slowly as possible so that the captioner can clearly record what you are saying. Pause as needed to allow the American Sign Language Interpreter to catch up.

Describe Images, Pictures, Graphs, and Non-Text Media

When presenting during a virtual meeting, be sure to verbally describe any object that visually conveys meaning, such as a graphic, table or webpage. This includes when sharing a PowerPoint presentation or a website.

Avoid referring to items using words like “this, that, these and those,” unless you indicate what “this” means. For example, “This map shows..., These results indicate...” rather than “This shows...” Attendees with vision disabilities don’t see the content on the slide and will not know what “this” when used alone means.

Any videos played during the presentation must be captioned.

Utilize Interactivity Tools

NDRN encourages presenters to incorporate interactivity into their webinars, meetings and presentations. Zoom offers many interactivity tools. Presenters should be prepared to follow these steps to make the interactivity options accessible for all participants.

- Chat: when responding to a question or comment in the chat box, read the question or comment aloud first.
- Polls: when a poll is first launched, read the question and all possible responses aloud. Remind participants that they may also post their response in the chat box if that is more accessible to them. Once the poll has closed, share the results by summarizing the responses so that participants with visual disabilities can understand the results.
- Whiteboard: when using a whiteboard activity, provide audio descriptions of what is being added to the whiteboard (i.e., read posted comments, describe drawings, summarize vote/stamp counts, etc.)

Additional Resources: [Zoom accessibility](#), [Rooted in Rights Accessibility Video Calls](#)

In-Person Meetings

Always Use a Microphone

Anyone speaking, presenters or attendees, must use a microphone so that attendees with hearing disabilities and/or using assisted listening devices can hear what is being said.

Speak clearly at a normal volume, enunciating and watching your speed so you are easily understood.

Set up Physical Space

Room set-up for any in-person meeting must leave sufficient space for attendees with mobility disabilities. All walkways should be at least 3 feet across, including the space between chairs at neighboring tables.

If using classroom or theater-style seating, ensure that rows are sufficiently spaced so as to allow attendees who use crutches or canes to pass easily. Designate spaces throughout the room for attendees who use manual or power wheelchairs.

Be Mindful of Captioners and Sign-Language Interpreters

If present, confirm that sign language interpreters or captioners have received a copy of your presentation in advance (NDRN should provide these, but please double check).

Speak as clearly and slowly as possible so that the captioner can transcribe what you are saying. Pause as needed to allow the American Sign Language Interpreter to catch up.

When using a PowerPoint or other visual aids, allow extra time for the interpreters to sign or explain the visuals.

Describe Images, Pictures, Graphs, and Non-Text Media

When presenting, be sure to verbally describe any object displayed on the screen or being used as a prop that visually conveys meaning, including graphics, tables, or websites.

Avoid referring to items using words like “this, that, these and those,” unless you indicate what “this” means. For example, “This map shows..., These results indicate...” rather than “This shows...” Attendees with vision disabilities don’t see the content on the slide and will not know what “this” when used alone means.

Any videos played during the presentation must be captioned and the sound run through the meeting facility sound system.

Accessibility Checklists

Before submitting any **Word document** to NDRN, be sure you have done the following:

- Reviewed language (centered people with disabilities, written content in plain language, when possible)
- Designated headers using styles pane
- Inserted page numbers
- Used at least the minimum font size of 12 pts., a sans-serif font, and ensured sufficient contrast between text and background colors
- Added Alt Text to all pictures, graphs and non-text media
- Formatted tables
- Conducted accessibility check and resolved issues

Before submitting any **PowerPoint presentation** to NDRN, be sure you have done the following:

- Reviewed language (centered people with disabilities, written content in plain language, when possible; checked readability)
- Inserted slide numbers
- Added titles to each slide, and used unique slide titles
- Used at least the minimum font size of 24 pts., a sans-serif font, and ensured sufficient contrast between text and background colors
- Added Alt Text to all pictures, graphs and non-text media, or marked them as decorative
- Formatted tables
- Adjusted reading order of slide elements, where needed
- Conducted accessibility check and resolved issues

Before submitting any **videos** to NDRN, be sure you have done the following:

- Added captions
- If possible, added audio description to visuals that convey essential information (i.e., a title screen with text)
- Provided a transcript alternative if video doesn't include audio description

For an NDRN **virtual meeting**, be sure you do the following:

- Check audio quality
- Set up lighting
- Pace yourself with consideration for captioners and ASL interpreters
- Describe images, pictures, graphs, and non-text media
- Utilize interactivity tools

For an NDRN **in-person meetings**, be sure you do the following:

- Always use a microphone
- Set up the physical space to be accessible to attendees with mobility disabilities
- Pace yourself with consideration for captioners and ASL interpreters
- Describe images, pictures, graphs, and non-text media

Submission Process for Accessibility Review

NDRN can only begin an accessibility review when documents, presentations or videos are final. No changes to the content or substance should be made after submitting materials to accessibility@ndrn.org.

NDRN must receive documents or presentations at least 5 business days prior to the date of the event/release date to conduct its accessibility review and post materials for the event/release.

If you're unable to comply with any of the requirements listed above, please include an explanation in the email with as much detail as possible.

When the document or presentation is ready to submit to NDRN for an accessibility review, send an email to accessibility@ndrn.org and please follow these steps:

1. Send an attachment or link to the materials. Word documents should be in .doc or .docx., PowerPoints in .pptx (not a PDF version), and video files should be submitted via OneDrive, Dropbox, Google Drive, or WeTransfer.
2. Include the name and date of the release or event in the email.
3. Copy (cc) the NDRN staff member who is the primary contact for the publication or event.

NDRN will conduct an accessibility review and do one of the following:

1. Confirm that the document, presentation, or video has been accepted. Cleared files will have an updated file name that includes AR and the date in MMDDYY format (e.g., FileNameAR102421.pptx).
2. Return an edited version with accessibility edits.
3. Return the document, presentation, or video for revision with further instructions.