

Implementing New ADA Digital Accessibility Regulations at Kent State

October 7, 2025

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EQUAL ACCESS

PRESENTATION

KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY

Legal History

Scope of New Regs

DA Operating
Principles

Summary of Phases

Phase I: Crucial
Baseline Needs

Phase II: Foundation
Building

Phase III: Enabling
Full Compliance

Partners

Questions and
Discussion

The ADA and Digital Accessibility

- The ADA was signed into law in 1990.
- The DOJ first asserted that the ADA applies to websites of covered entities in 1996 but did not provide specific requirements.
- Because there were no specific technical requirements for web content and mobile apps, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) have been used as the industry standard.
- **NOW: The DOJ has modified Title II of the ADA to address the accessibility of web content and mobile apps by adopting WCAG 2.1, Level AA, as the legal standard.**
- Although technically already applicable, **the new rule goes into effect for Kent State in April 2026.**

Scope of New ADA Digital Accessibility Regulations

Final rule language: any of the below that Kent State University “provides or makes available”, including merely linking out to.



Web and
Digital Content



Electronic
Documents



Social Media



Course and
Library Content



Recorded
and Live A/V



Third-Party
Content and Tech

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ADA Digital Accessibility Scope

1. Web & Digital Content

- a. www.kent.edu PLUS all sites created and hosted by any entity associated with Kent State
- b. Includes data dashboards, shared MS 365 documents, licensed/copyrighted content, and lifecycle-related processes in SSB or other systems.
- c. Covers digital forms unless private to one individual and password-protected (e.g., transcripts).
- d. Includes intranet (SharePoint), emails and other marketing communication

2. Conventional Electronic Documents

- a. Includes PDFs, Word docs, presentations, spreadsheets.
- b. Excludes database files.
- c. Treated as web content under this rule (unlike WCAG 2.1).

3. Social Media

- a. Public posts must generally meet WCAG 2.1 AA.
- b. Must use available accessibility features.
- c. Not responsible for platform-wide accessibility.

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ADA Digital Accessibility Scope, 2

4. Course & Library Content

- a. Course content behind a login is not exempt.
- b. EPUBs/digital textbooks treated like all other educational content.
- c. **If a link is referenced in a course, the destination page/s must be accessible.**
- d. **Includes all apps, platforms, software referred to or used in courses.**
- e. Archived materials (library or other) will likely qualify for exceptions.

5. Live Audio & Captions

- a. ALL VIDEO CONTENT must have accurate captioning
- b. Live audio must be captioned in real-time by a person.
- c. Includes mandatory audio descriptions (what is happening on the screen during silence)

6. Third-Party Content

- a. Applies to content the university creates, provides access to, or licenses.
- b. Includes contractual or other hosted solutions not directly built in-house.
- c. Includes free, low-cost, or professor-purchased tech that even the college business manager may not know about

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Digital Accessibility Operating Principles

- **Perspective:** Journey, not destination.
Focus on creating equally effective access for as many people as possible in as many types of content/media as possible.
- **Targeting/Triage:** ALWAYS focus first largest scope/use – improvements or remediation that will have the greatest impact for the most people.
- **Application:** Create different approaches for existing and new content

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Digital Accessibility Application

- **Advising Protocol:** When consulting with any team/unit, digital accessibility SMEs audit the tech, content, and staff knowledge level, then partner to implement manageable next steps.
- **Available People Resources**
- **Available Learning Materials:** Step-by-step tutorials and one-pagers available at Kent State's [Equal Access Learning Hub](#), plus detailed guides through the [Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](#).

Suggested Three-Phased Approach to Implementation

Meeting Crucial Baseline Needs

- Identify oversight responsibility
- Identify priorities & partners
- Update policies
- Educate campus

Building a Foundation

- Audit content and tech in all units
- Procure only accessible technology
- Proactive course accessibility
- Accessibility Advocates in each unit

Enabling Full Compliance

- Review & update enterprise technology
- Required course & content accessibility in all digital formats
- Identify/Hire staff with digital accessibility responsibility in all units

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Phase 1: Meeting Crucial Baseline Needs

Timeline: AY 2025-2026

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proprietary content**

III. Kent State's Technology Footprint

Final Rule Summary

Legal History

KSU's Tech Footprint

Phase I: Crucial Baseline Needs

Phase II: Foundation Building

Phase III: Completing the Structure

Personnel Needs

Contributing Units

Content

[illegible]

***IV. Phase I: Crucial Baseline Needs to Meet
Timeline: Academic Year 2025-2026***

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Phase I: Crucial
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Phase 1: Develop Plan to Meet Crucial Baseline Needs (2025-2026)

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***V. Phase II: Building the Foundation
for Full Compliance
Timeline: 2026-2028***

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***VI. Phase III: Completing the Administrative,
Auditing, & Support Structure to Enable Full
Compliance***

Timeline: 2028-2030

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VII. Personnel Needs

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Summary of Recommended Personnel Adjustments

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Questions and Discussion