



Alternative Access Plan¹

In compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act (IITAA), Information and Communications Technology (ICT) products and services that the University buys, creates, uses, and maintains must either conform to the ICT Accessibility Policy, standards set forth by the current published version of [W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#), or have an approved exception that provides an equal effective alternative access plan. This form is used to document the Alternative Access Plan (AAP), and it must be included as part of an accessibility exception request.

When units procure ICT that does not meet the requirements and standards set by WCAG, an AAP must be developed to document how an alternative method of access to the information, service, or experience will be provided. The alternative access provided must be appropriate for the needs of those with disabilities who might use the ICT and must allow for equivalent efficiency and inclusiveness.

Important Considerations

To be deemed accessible, an ICT product or its AAP must exhibit the following three attributes:

- Equally Integrated: Offering an inclusive experience and access to all users.
- Equally Effective: Providing equal opportunity or outcome regardless of ability.
- Equivalent Ease of Use: Ensuring access is not significantly more challenging for individuals with disabilities.

¹ This document is based on the [Alternative Access Plan](#) developed at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



An AAP must encompass these Three E's to adequately cater to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Users should not be compelled to disclose their disabilities to utilize the AAP. Furthermore, to uphold inclusivity and efficiency, alternative access should be readily available without requiring individuals to request it.

Functional Accessibility Requirements

A comprehensive AAP should address barriers in the ICT that may impede or negatively impact various interaction modalities, including:

- Vision impairment or limited vision when a visual mode is utilized.
- Color perception issues when visual cues are present.
- Hearing impairment or limited hearing when audio features are used.
- Speech impairment when speech is necessary for input, control, or operation.
- Limited manipulation, reach, and strength when manual operation is involved.
- Limited language, cognitive, and learning abilities, necessitating simplified operation for users with such limitations.

For each affected modality, alternative access methods should be devised for users unable to utilize the ICT.

Components of an Alternative Action Plan

An effective AAP should include:

- The name and contact details of the plan initiator and originating unit.
- A brief overview of the ICT product.



- The intended scope and usage of the ICT product to gauge potential accessibility impacts.
- An outline of access barriers, including affected disability types and extent of access limitations.
- Description of the alternative access methods.
- Strategies for systematic communication of alternative access options.
- Special considerations, such as usage limitations.

Important Considerations

- An AAP serves as documentation of alternative access methods and does not constitute their implementation.
- Typically, the unit procuring an ICT product is responsible for maintaining and reviewing the AAP's effectiveness.
- Alternative access methods should not necessitate disclosure of disabilities and, where feasible, should be readily available without explicit request.

Alternative Access Plan Template

Download and complete the [AAP Template](#) to assist you in the process.

Accessibility Exception Process

The exception process is in place to help ensure that the university is providing an inclusive and welcoming educational and workplace environment through its use of technology and to demonstrate due diligence when procuring and utilizing ICT. Exceptions are reviewed and approved by the System Office Accessibility Review Committee.

Exception Categories



Not all ICT products utilized for the mission of the University of Illinois is eligible for an accessibility exception. This is due to the variable use and nature of the ICT product and the impact of any accessibility issues.

Decision Tree

The [Accessibility Exception Request Decision Tree](#) is provided to facilitate individuals and units in determining if an Accessibility Exception Request must be requested for an ICT product.

Accessibility Exception Request Form

Complete and submit an [Accessibility Exception Request Form](#)