

Website Accessibility and ADA Title II

What Public Libraries Need to Know

Leave-behind resource packet for library directors, web/content owners, communications teams, and procurement staff

WCAG 2.1 AA Technical standard in the federal rule	2026 / 2027 Compliance deadlines depending on entity size	Web + mobile apps Scope includes content libraries provide directly or through vendors
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Core message: Libraries should treat Title II as operational work — content design, development, procurement, media, and documents — not just as a web-only technical project.

1. What changed under ADA Title II

The Department of Justice’s 2024 Title II rule created a clearer baseline for public entities: web content and mobile apps generally need to meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA. For most public entities, the key compliance date is April 24, 2026; for smaller entities and special district governments, it is April 26, 2027.

What is covered Library websites, mobile apps, online forms, event registration, catalog or discovery layers, PDFs and other posted documents, media, and content made available through contractual, licensing, or other arrangements.	What stays true after the deadline The obligation is ongoing. New or updated content after the deadline still has to be accessible.
What libraries should not assume A vendor platform is not outside the rule just because a third party hosts it. If the library provides it as part of library service, it belongs in the accessibility program.	What exceptions do The exceptions help libraries prioritize. They are not a reason to ignore high-value services, current documents, or heavily used digital resources.

Library interpretation to share with staff

- If a resident uses it to get information, complete a task, or engage with a library program, put it in the inventory.
- If it is frequent, transactional, or mission-critical, move it to the front of the remediation queue.
- Where HTML can replace a PDF workflow, HTML is often the better long-term experience for both accessibility and mobile use.

2. Priority content for library teams

Fix first

- Home page, hours, locations, contact paths, and maps
- Event registration, room booking, volunteer forms, and payments
- Top downloaded handouts, board packets, and policy documents
- Captioning/transcripts for recorded storytimes, tutorials, and meetings
- Digital collections or exhibits that support active library services

Exceptions: useful, but not a free pass

- Archived web content only when it meets every condition in the rule
- Certain preexisting conventional electronic documents under narrow conditions
- Certain third-party posted content not tied to the library's own programs or transactions
- Conforming alternate versions only where a technical or legal limitation makes direct conformance impossible

3. A practical 90-day starter plan

Use this as a standing agenda for library leadership, communications, IT, and procurement.

Window	Focus	What good looks like
0–30 days	Mobilize	Assign an owner, name cross-functional stakeholders, publish a feedback channel, and identify the library's top patron tasks.
30–60 days	Inventory and prioritize	List sites, apps, PDFs, forms, media, vendor platforms, and digital collections. Mark each by traffic, business criticality, and remediation effort.
60–75 days	Fix the front door	Repair the home page, contact paths, hours/locations, registration flows, and the highest-use documents or convert them to HTML.
75–90 days	Operationalize	Update purchasing language, ask vendors for current conformance evidence, decide who tests what, and start a simple dashboard.

Recommended participants

- Library director or deputy sponsor
- Web/content owner and communications lead
- IT/application support lead
- Procurement or contracts contact
- Program staff who own events, forms, media, and collections

4. Vendor and platform questions

Use these in meetings with catalog vendors, event or room-booking platforms, digital collection tools, ebook or learning platforms, and communications systems.

1. Show your current accessibility conformance report (ACR/VPAT) and explain what it does not cover.
2. Demonstrate the product with keyboard-only navigation, screen reader output, zoom/reflow, and mobile orientation changes.
3. Explain how captions, alt text, PDFs, templates, and patron-generated content are handled.
4. Describe your bug reporting process, remediation SLA, and the library's path for requesting fixes or alternate access.
5. Confirm whether exported content, admin interfaces, and embedded widgets are covered — not just the public landing page.

5. Curated resources for library teams

DOJ fact sheet and First Steps

Start here for the rule, deadlines, and action planning.

- [DOJ fact sheet on the rule](#)
- [DOJ First Steps guide](#)

Library-specific explainers

Use these to translate the rule for library leadership and peers.

- [American Library Association overview](#)
- [Association of Research Libraries brief](#)

Build content correctly

Practical guidance for forms, headings, images, tables, and accessible documents.

- [W3C tutorials](#)
- [Section508 accessible web design & development](#)
- [US Web Design Systems \(USWDS\)](#)
- [WebAIM WCAG checklist](#)

PDF and document help

Use this when you must keep PDFs in the service path.

- [Section508 guide to PDFs](#)
- [W3C overview of PDF accessibility](#)

Bottom line: For libraries, accessibility is not just a website clean-up project. It is part of service delivery, procurement, communications, and resident trust.