

A number of federal laws have been passed regarding access to information over the Internet for people with disabilities. These laws apply to federal agencies, telecommunication services, public accommodations, and airlines. Many states also have laws regarding access to online information for individuals who have disabilities. These laws require state agencies to implement the federal standards for documents and websites to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Minnesota Office of Accessibility is located within the state agency, Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) and provides information on accessibility for Minnesota government websites and online services (<https://mn.gov/mnit/programs/accessibility/>).

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

29 U.S.C. § 794 (d)

Section 508 applies to federal agencies in developing, procuring, maintaining, and using electronic and information technology. Section 508 explains that agencies must provide employees with a disability, and the public, access to information that is available publicly in a format they can access. On January 18, 2017, Section 508 was updated to accommodate for changes in technology and modern trends. (<https://www.section508.gov/content/learn/laws-and-policies>)

Communications Act, Section 255

47 U.S.C. § 151 et seq.

The Communications Act, Section 255, provides that telecommunication products and services (including cellphones) must be accessible and usable to individuals with disabilities. This law was updated and revisited on January 18, 2017. (<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-access-people-disabilities>)

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

42 U.S.C. § 151 et seq.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) made it illegal to discriminate against an individual with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications, and government activities. (<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-access-people-disabilities>)

Assistive Technology Act of 1998

29 U.S.C. § 3001, et seq., as amended by Pub. L. No. 108-364

The Assistive Technology Act of 1998 created a grant program to provide federal funding to support state programs addressing assistive technology needs for people with disabilities. (<https://www.section508.gov/assistive-technology-act-1998>)

21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010

Pub. L. No. 111-260 (2010), 47 U.S.C. § 613

The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 mandates accessibility of advanced communications services and products for people with disabilities. (<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-cvaa>)

Air Carrier Access Act of 1986

49 U.S.C. § 41705

The Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 prohibits airlines from discriminating against passengers with disabilities, and ensures access to Internet services and online kiosks. (www.congress.gov/bill/99th-congress/senate-bill/2703)

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

WCAG 2.0 provides detailed standards for web content accessibility for federal purposes. Guidelines are presented to make websites more accessible to individuals with disabilities by incorporating assistive touch technologies. This is generally the standard for Minnesota as well. (<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>)

Related Publications

For more about laws related to the Internet, see the publication series, *The Internet and Public Policy*, for publications related to specific topics, including:

- [Challenges and policy consideration for state regulation](#)
- [Privacy and consumer protection](#)
- [Cybertorts and property rights online](#)
- [Criminal activity on the Internet](#)
- [Jurisdiction and procedures in Internet law cases](#)
- [Federal Internet laws](#)