

CareerWise Accessibility Policy

1. What is Accessibility

Accessibility regulations address discriminatory aspects related to equivalent user experience for people with disabilities. It means that people with disabilities can equally perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with websites and documents. It also means that they can contribute equally without barriers.

Accessibility primarily focuses on people with disabilities. Many accessibility requirements improve usability for everyone, especially in limiting situations. For example, providing sufficient contrast benefits people using the web on a mobile device in bright sunlight or in a dark room. Captions benefit people in noisy and in quiet environments. Some people have age-related functional limitations, and may not identify these as “disability”. Accessibility addresses these situations too.

Usability is about designing products to be effective, efficient, and satisfying. Usability includes user experience design. This may include general aspects that impact everyone and do not disproportionately impact people with disabilities. Usability practice and research often does not sufficiently address the needs of people with disabilities.

Inclusion is about diversity, and ensuring involvement of everyone to the greatest extent possible. In some regions this is also referred to as universal design and design for all. It addresses a broad range of issues including: education, geographic location, culture, age, language, access to information, and accessibility for disabilities.

[Source](#)

2. Purpose & Scope

This policy outlines CareerWise’s commitment to accessibility in all aspects of our operations, especially when interacting with government agencies, school districts, or when using public-facing documents or systems. Our goal is to ensure equitable access for all individuals, including those with disabilities, by complying with:

- **Federal Standards**
 - **Section 508** of the Rehabilitation Act
 - **WCAG 2.2 AA** (and evolving to **WCAG 3.0 AA**).

- **Colorado**
 - **HB 21-1110**, requiring WCAG 2.1 AA compliance for digital content connected to state/local government or school districts by July 1 2025.

- **New York**
 - **NYS-P08-005:** The statewide policy mandating accessibility of all web-based information and applications used or managed by state entities. It requires:
 - Conformance to **WCAG 2.1 AA** by **June 25, 2026**, per DOJ Rule.
 - Conformance to **WCAG 2.2 AA** by **January 1, 2027**, under State Technology Law 103-d.
 - Manual testing before deployment, after major changes, and biannual thereafter.
 - Maintenance of testing documentation, compliance status logs, and accessibility links in website footers.
 - Additionally, **Executive Law Section 170-F** extends these accessibility requirements to private contractors, vendors, and consultants serving New York State.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, and external contributors involved in creating or managing:

- All employees, contractors, and third-party vendors.
- All digital content, including websites, documents, multimedia, internal platforms, and mobile applications.
- All work completed for or used by federal entities, Colorado and New York government agencies, and school districts.

4. Compliance Requirements

Jurisdiction	Standard	Deadline
Federal	Section 508 & WCAG 2.1 AA	Ongoing
Colorado (HB 21-1110)	WCAG 2.1 AA	July 1, 2025
New York (NYS-P08-005/DOJ Rule)	WCAG 2.1 AA	June 25, 2026
New York (STL §103-d)	WCAG 2.2 AA	January 1, 2027

5. Policy Components

3.1 Compliance Requirements

All digital content and documents must meet WCAG 2.2 AA criteria. Once WCAG 3.0 AA criteria is published then all digital content and documents must meet that criteria. All digital content and documents include but not limited to

- Any assets for government agencies
- Any assets for school districts

5.2 Enforcement and Accountability

5.2.1 Training & Procurement

All employees and contractors must complete an accessibility course provided by CareerWise yearly to ensure they are up to date on any new policies or regulations. This training must include an overview of the laws, an overview of managing WCAG, and an overview of how staff can stay in compliance.

5.2.2 Public Accountability

CareerWise will have an accessibility policy available on the website and ensure end users can submit a request for accessible documents or changes to features.

5.2.3 Enforcement and Accountability

If employees and contractors are found non-compliant, there are a series of steps CW will take to support the employee and/contractor. First, a notice will be sent and feedback will be given on what needs to be addressed. Second issue will result in the employee needing to retake the training. Third will necessitate a remediation plan with clear deadlines will be put in place with their manager and human resources. If it goes unresolved, access to the systems will be revoked and content will be removed from all systems. If there is repeated or intentional negligence, it may result in termination.

6. Tools and Accessibility Tracking

6.1 Tools and Resources

CareerWise will provide tools and resources for staff to use to ensure they are in compliance with WCAG guidelines and regulations. If staff do not have the proper resources or have questions about the tools that are available to them, contact the alex.peek@careerwiseusa.org.

Some of the resources that will be provided include

- Brand book with guidance
- Accessibility checklist to ensure compliance
- Annual staff training
- Accessibility [guidebook](#) for different platforms, including Google products

6.2 Continued Compliance Tracking

CareerWise will conduct accessibility audits combining automation and manual testing. The results of the audits will be timestamped and documented with any remediation steps that need to take place, along with a remediation timeline.

7. Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
COO	Endorse and provide authority for policy enforcement; allocate resources.
VP of Product & Director of Marketing and Communication	Lead audits, training, remediation, vendor compliance; monitor deadlines.
Graphic Designers and Learning Solutions	Ensure new content meets accessibility standards; fix reported issues.
VP of Product	Provide VPATs or ACRs; comply with remediation requirements.
All Staff	Follow guidelines, report issues, attend training.