U.S. Department of Transportation
**Federal Highway Administration**

# Creating Accessible Excel Files Checklist

FHWA HAD-21-006

This checklist is a companion to "Creating Accessible Excel Files." See that documentation for detailed discussion on any following checklist item.

## Properties

- The title is descriptive of the document.
- The author is FHWA.
- The default language is correct.
- The file contains only content in the default language.
- The file is saved as an xlsx.

## Structure

- The reading order is logical, typically left to right, top to bottom, starting with cell A1.
- Each worksheet tab has a descriptive and unique name.
- Use heading styles in hierarchal order to give the content structure.
- Use styles to indicate the cell's purpose.

## Tables

- Tables are formatted as table.
- The table name is descriptive and unique.
- Header row and first column (if needed, it usually is) are checked.
- For each table, ensure:
  - Each table has a descriptive caption.
  - Column and row headers contain descriptive content.
  - There are no row or column spans.
  - There is only one level of row and column headers.
  - There are no nested tables.
  - Data and headers are in separate cell.

## Other Considerations

- Linked words are descriptive and unique. Do not use "click here," "read more," etc., for the links.
- Symbols are inserted as their proper symbol.

## Text as Text

- Text is rendered as text, not as an image.

**Background Information**

- Ensure vital information is duplicated in the first cell of the worksheet.

**Graphics/Objects**

- Individual graphics are grouped to create a one graphic.
- The alt text describes the meaning of the image fully in as few words as possible.
- Figures that do not provide meaningful information contain "null" or "" in alt text.
- Alt text does not repeat the caption or other surrounding text.
- Alt text does not start with "this is an image of" since that is assumed.

**Sensory Characteristics**

- Avoid references to shape, size sound, color, or location.

**Use of Color**

- Color alone does not convey information. This applies to content including text, links, and graphs/charts.

**Color contrast**

- Text on a background meets minimum color contrast requirements. This includes graphics where an image of text is unavoidable.

**Zoom**

- Except for captions and images of text, text is resizable and readable when zoomed to 200% without assistive technology.

**Movement**

- There is no content that blinks or flashes.

**Forms and Macros**

- Contact the [Agency Section 508 Program Manager](#) if the Excel file contains forms and/or macros.

**Embedded Media**

- See "[Creating Section 508 Conformant Multimedia](#)."