

Instructions to Vendors on US Section 508 VPAT Completion

**DIR would like to thank the Social Security Administration for information contained in this document.**

# Instructions to Vendor Offerings Applicable to EIR Accessibility and Section 508 Compliance

## **Instructions to Vendors for responding to the applicable Section 508 Standards**

Vendors are required to supply detailed information on how their proposed products, services, and solutions address the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (revised).

## **Section 508 Technical Quotation Instructions:**

For each electronic and information resource (EIR) product or service included in solicitation responses subject to Texas Administrative Codes 1 TAC 206 and 1 TAC 213 (which include the US Section 508 technical specifications), the Vendor shall provide documentation of how each requirement or specification is met.

It is the Vendor’s responsibility to maintain the integrity of any accessibility documentation provided to DIR of Texas state agencies / institutions of higher education. Any documentation shall be considered a self-attestation unless expressly affirmed otherwise.

If the Vendor plans to provide commercial off the shelf (COTS) software as part or all of a solicitation response, the Vendor shall provide a completed Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for each COTS product offered. For third party COTS products, the Vendor must obtain and submit VPATS or links to them from the third party as part of the solicitation response.

## **Instructions for completing a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT)**

The Vendor shall provide a complete description of how the EIR included in the solicitation response shall address all applicable 1TAC 206 / 1TAC 213 technical standards. The Vendor shall provide this information in a VPAT to document conformance to the applicable Section 508 Standards. The VPAT template can be obtained at ITI’s website:

<http://www.itic.org/dotAsset/5644ecd2-5024-417f-bc23-a52650f47ef8.doc>

The VPAT consists of a long series of tables. The initial one, the Summary Table, is used to provide a sense of your product’s overall “level-of-compliance” with Texas Administrative Codes 1TAC 206 and 1TAC 213 Accessibility Requirements. Subsequently, the Section 1194.xx Tables contain the detailed subparagraphs the Section 508 requirements are comprised of. It is within these tables you shall define in detail how your product did or did not comply with a specific requirement.

Use the following information to understand the use of the three columns in the VPAT’s tables:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Summary Table** | |
| **Column Name** | **Use** |
| **Criteria:** | Describes Subparts B, C, and D of the Section 508 Standards. |
| **Supporting Features:** | To ***Enter*** information summarizing a product’s overall “level-of support” for the corresponding Subpart or, when appropriate, to specify ***Not Applicable***. |
| **Remarks/Explanations:** | To ***Enter*** general comments regarding a product’s overall “level-of-compliance” with the ***Applicable*** Subpart. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 1194.xx Tables** | |
| **Column Name** | **Use** |
| **Criteria:** | Describes a specific guideline a Subpart is composed of. |
| **Supporting Features:** | To ***Enter*** information summarizing a product’s “level-of-support” for a specific guideline. |
| **Remarks/Explanations:** | To ***Enter*** detailed information on how the product **did** or **did not** support a specific guideline. |

The ***Supporting Features*** and ***Remarks/Explanations*** columns in the VPAT are used to document exactly how a product conforms or does not conform to the Section 508 standards. To promote consistency in Vendor responses, the columns shall be answered in the following manner:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Supporting Features (second column)** | |
| **Language** | **Description** |
| **Supports** | Product **FULLY** **meets** the letter and intent of the Criteria. |
| **Supports with Exceptions** | Product **does not** **ENTIRELY** meet the letter and intent of the Criteria, but does provide some level of access. |
| **Supports through Equivalent Facilitation** | Product(s) provide *alternative* methods to **meet** the intent of the Criteria. |
| **Does not Support** | Product **does not** meet the letter or intent of the Criteria. |
| **Not Applicable** | The Criteria **does not** apply to the product. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Remarks & Explanations (third column))** | |
| **If 2nd column states…** | **Then…** |
| **Supports** | List exactly **what** features of the product **do** meet and describe **how** they are used to support the Criteria. |
| **Supports with Exceptions** | List exactly **what** features of the product **do** meet and describe **how** they are used to support the Criteria.  **AND**  List exactly **what** parts of the product **do not** meet and describe **how** they fail to support the Criteria. |
| **Supports through Equivalent Facilitation** | List exactly **what** *other* methods exist in the product and describe **how** they are used to support the Criteria. |
| **Does not Support** | Describe exactly **how** the product **does not** support the Criteria. |
| **Not Applicable** | Describe exactly **why** the criteria are not applicable to the product. |

## **Quality standards relative to responses to applicable Section 508 standards**

When responding, the Vendor shall state exactly how the proposed EIR solution meets the applicable standards in the remarks/explanations column, or through additional narrative. In addition, all “not applicable” (N/A) responses shall be supported in the remarks/explanations column or through additional narrative. The Vendor is cautioned to address each requirement individually and with specificity, and to be clear whether conformance is achieved throughout the entire EIR solution (i.e. both user functionality and administrator functionality), or only in limited areas of the EIR solution.

**In addition, the Vendor shall also disclose the method used to validate conformance claims (i.e. expert review, manual testing, automated testing, no method used, other - please describe), and who validated conformance (Vendor, third party name, none).**

## **Additional Vendor requirements if testing is required**

Texas state agencies and state institutions of higher education reserve the right to perform testing on a Vendor’s proposed deliverables to ensure the accuracy of their response regarding conformance with the 1TAC 206 / 1TAC 213 technical standards before making an award.

Upon request for the opportunity to perform hands-on testing, the Vendor shall provide a demonstration product(s) or copy of their EIR solution so the agency may validate their claims of accessibility. If the Vendor’s EIR solution is comprised of commercially available products which shall be configured or modified, the agency may request a demonstration product(s) or copy of the product(s) to gauge the likelihood of a fully conforming EIR solution being delivered based on these products.

The EIR solution being provided for testing purposes shall be equivalent to the final commercially available release version in terms of functionality and features. Demonstration and/or trial versions of EIR solutions, therefore, shall **NOT** be considered for testing purposes. This is necessary since limits imposed in the functionality and features would detract from accurate testing of an EIR solution’s level of conformance. In addition to the actual EIR solution, the Vendor shall be prepared to provide upon request, a Test Plan illustrating “typical” user scenarios shall be included to ensure fair and accurate testing.