Eight Steps to Creating an Accessible PDF Form

When creating PDF forms, ensure you start with a document that is structured with accessibility features. The following steps are explained utilizing Adobe Acrobat Professional.

1. When creating a PDF form from an existing Word document:

· Open **Acrobat Professional** and click on **Prepare Form**

· Select **Use the current document or browse to a file**, find your document and click **Next**

2. Add new form elements

· Select **Add New Field** to add new form fields, such as; Text Fields, Check Boxes, Radio Buttons, List Boxes, Dropdown lists, etc.

· Right Click on the new or existing form element and choose **Properties**

· Provide a form element **Name** and **Tooltip**

· Control Text Field Appearance and Options

· Right Click on the **Text Field**, choose **Properties**

· Click on the **Appearance** tab and choose to add a border, underline, background color, as well as control the way the border appears

· Click on the **Options** tab to revise how the text will be displayed

· Ensure the font style and size meets department or agency requirements.

3. Add Read Only Text Field

· Place a new **Text Field** where the lengthy text begins

· Right Click on the new **Text Field** element and choose **Properties**

· Add the text in the **Tooltip** field.

· Select the **Read Only** checkbox

· **Close** Properties

4. Check Tab Order

· In the **Edit Form** menu, the **Fields** section will display the **Tab Order** of the form fields

· To make corrections, drag each form field to the proper spot in the **Tab Order** list

5. Tag the Form Fields

- In the tag tree, locate the text object associated to the form field
- Right click the tag object and select **Find ...**
- In the drop-down menu, select **Unmarked Annotations**
- Select **Find**
- **Find Next** until the targeted form field is highlighted
- Select **Tag Element**

6. Set the Title and Language of the Form
- Click **File** in the ribbon, select **Properties**
- Select the **Description** tab, enter **Title**
- Go to **Initial View** tab, under **Window Options**, set **Show** to **Document Title**
- To set the Language:
  - Choose the **Advanced** tab
  - Set the **Language** from the drop-down menu

7. Reader Extended Version (Skip this step 7 if form is a Statewide or DGS form)
- Click **File** in the ribbon, select **Save As**
- Select **Reader Extended PDF**, select **Enable More Tools**

8. Accessibility Testing
- In the **Tools** menu, select **Accessibility** drop down menu
- Click on **Full Check** to run the built-in Accessibility Checker
- Use Assistive Technology to test your document
- Preferably establish a testing team of Assistive Technology users
- It is best to use more than one tool to ensure accessibility. Do not rely solely on automated tools to check accessibility.

Source: DOR DAS