



Language & Branding Manual

The purpose of Language and Branding Manual is to ensure a required level of standards and conformity across the organization through the consistent use of language, format, and imagery when discussing accessABILITY, our services, and our commitment to consumers.

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Organization Mission & Overview

Our Mission:

To empower our peers with disabilities to lead and control independent lives fully included in community life.

Overview:

accessABILITY is an Indianapolis based nonprofit dedicated to assisting people with disabilities exercise their rights to establish and maintain control over their lives. As people with disabilities ourselves, we work alongside individuals to reach the level of independence and community access they desire. We know that no two journeys are ever the same, so we give a personalized approach by providing peer support, experience, and resources.

With no limits on who we serve, we advocate and work with all people with all disabilities, free of charge in Indianapolis and the seven surrounding counties.

accessABILITY also advocates on behalf of people with disabilities to governmental agencies, corporations, non-profits, and other systems to ensure the acceptance, respect, inclusion, and equal access of everyone. The result is that our communities are enriched through the full participation of all people.

Principles of Independent Living

accessABILITY holds our organization to the following core standards in all areas of practice. We work with consumers, the board, and our staff to continuously monitor every aspect of our performance against these standards.

Empowerment, Autonomy, and Independence

- People with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs and should take the lead on all decisions that affect their lives.
- The goal of working with individuals should *not* be to solve their problems, but rather to teach the skills and self-reliance that allows individuals to reach goals for themselves.

Disability Led

- People learn and grow by discussing their needs, concerns, and issues with people who have had similar experiences.
- The organizations best suited to support and assist individuals with disabilities are governed and operated by individuals with disabilities.
- People with disabilities should be front in discussions that impact their lives and community.

Access and Inclusion

- No person should be institutionalized or medicated solely on the basis of a disability.
- There should be no barriers to independence or inclusion. People with disabilities should be integrated in environments of leadership, education, transportation, employment, housing, etc.
- Systemic cross-disability advocacy efforts are needed to ensure that people with disabilities benefit from all that society has to offer.

Equity

- We advocate for equitable rights and access, not special treatment.
- Equal opportunities and rights are for ALL. There should be no segregation by disability or stereotype.
- We treat everyone as an individual, with respect, dignity and decency, regardless of your sexual orientation, race, religion/belief, gender, disability, age, marital and civil partnership status, and pregnancy.

Disability Pride

- We work with individuals to not just accept one's disability, but proudly incorporate it as a part of one's identity.
- "Disability" is not a negative word. It means we are more adaptable. We are proud of who we are; the barriers we have overcome have only made us stronger.
- The IL Movement is founded on the belief that people with disabilities, regardless of form, have a common history and a shared struggle, and that we are a community and a culture that will advance further banded together.

Services

accessABILITY provides five core services: Information and Referral, Independent Living Skills Training, Peer Support, Advocacy, and Transition Services. We also provide other services based on community need, including virtual support groups.

Core Consumer Services

Information and Referral: The "go-to" source for answers to your question. We provide connections and information on our services, civil rights, community resources, and any other issues affecting people with disabilities.

Independent Living Skills Training: We teach skills needed for independent living through personalized training and real work practice for those who are adapting to a new disability, experiencing independent living for the first time, or adjusting to change. We work with individuals in their preferred location, setting and achieving goals defined by them.

Peer Support: Our staff and volunteers are people with disabilities who work with our consumers to explore options, solve problems, and create a space of understanding.

Because of their own experiences, staff and volunteers provide unique, creative, and personal perspectives for others living with disabilities, creating an environment of true peer support.

Advocacy: accessABILITY advocates for people with disabilities on both a personalized level, working with individuals in exercising their rights to establish and maintain control over their lives, and on a systemic level, educating businesses, governmental agencies, and the public on the capabilities and needs of people with disabilities.

Adult and Senior Transition: accessABILITY facilitates the transition of people with disabilities from nursing homes and other institutions to home and community-based living environments. We also provide activism and support to those at risk of entering such facilities.

Youth Transition: accessABILITY works with young adults and their families in planning for life after high school. We help youth gain the knowledge and skills they need to attain independence, while also providing community-based experiences and access to supports to ensure a successful transition into adult life.

Additional Consumer Services

Visually Impaired and Blind Experience (VIBE): accessABILITY works with people who are visually impaired and blind to maintain and remain independent in their own environments. Staff work to identify and overcome barriers through supports from assistive technology, peer counseling, community programs, and more.

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivor Supports: We provide confidential support and resources for survivors of violence and sexual assault

Bilingual Advocate: Our agency provides our services in English and in Spanish to better extend our services in the community.

Housing Information: accessABILITY provides information and training to assist people with disabilities in searching for affordable and accessible housing.

Benefits Assistance: We assist people with the skills needed to navigate the complex government disability programs and laws in Indiana.

Virtual Consumer Support Group Services

Neurodiverse Peer Support Group: A peer-led, peer-supported safe space for learning and growing together. While we enjoy our social time, each month we cover a specific topic where we share resources, insight, and personal stories to grow as advocates.

The first Thursday of the month from 5:00 – 6:00 pm.

SPIRIT Fitness for All Club: Join us weekly as SPIRIT Club provides fun and accessible virtual exercise classes that promotes positive habits leading to a healthy lifestyle.

Every Wednesday at 10 AM.

External Fee for Services

Disability Education Training: Disability, education, and inclusion training personalized for each organization, modified to meet you where you are. We teach your organization how to interact and include people with disabilities both as employees and consumers. Topics include disability history, person first language, proper mannerisms, etc., with the goal of changing how disability is viewed and increasing comfortability in interaction with people with disabilities.

Reasonable Accommodations: We work with the individual and organization to adjust and modify aspects of the job to allow people with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their work efficiently and productively, all done with an educational perspective on what is "reasonable". Examples of reasonable accommodations are job restructuring, modifying work schedules, acquiring or modifying equipment or devices, adjusting tests and training materials, etc.

Accessibility Audits of Facility: Audit of the facility of your organization. We have accessibility experts go through the entire facility, then create a report of improvements to better include the disability community and ensure your space is ADA compliant. The report includes photographed documentation to show barriers and other problem areas, a written report detailing the completed assessment according to ADA and other accessibility criteria, prioritization of recommendations and action steps to remove barriers, and cost estimates and equipment recommendations for improving accessibility.

Accessibility Audits of Program or Website: Audit of a system, program or website done by accessibility experts. We approach the system from the perspective of all disabilities, and work to create a report on what you need to do to be more than just ADA compliant, and how to improve the program/website for people with disabilities to interact with your services. Audit reports typically include a summary of the findings, including all issues that have been pinpointed, ranked by priority; a full understanding of the complexity of the issues and how they impact the program/website; a set of recommendations with examples for implementation; and a list of the portions of the website that do not conform with the ADA guidelines.

Process of Working with Consumers

When individuals enter accessABILITY as consumers, they go through a process in order to reach their goals.

Information and Referral: Initial point of contact with the individual to gather information about their needs and goals. From there we either provide them with community

resources to meet their needs, or we pair them with an advocate from accessABILITY to create a long-term plan.

Consumer Meeting: Advocates will then have an initial introduction meeting with the consumer to learn more about their needs, identify barriers, and expand upon the consumer's dreams.

Set Goals: Consumers set attainable goals with their advocate, creating action steps and timelines for reaching those goals.

Work with Consumers: Advocates empower the consumer to achieve their goals, working alongside the consumer and providing resources so they can meet success.

Celebrate Success: Once goals are reached, time is spent celebrating success. We then reassess to see if the process needs to be repeated for new goals.

Accessibility Standards for Outreach

As a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting people with disabilities, we are committed to making our content as accessible as possible for all people regardless of age or disability. Our goal is to provide an easy-to-use website experience making our content and services accessible to everyone.

For Blind or Low Vision

- **Alternative Text:** Images, including images of text, need to be described so that screen readers can interpret the content.
- **Structure:** Screen readers need to know the structure of your document or webpage. Use built-in styles to tag paragraphs as headings or body text.
 - Screen readers can not interpret visual cues. Bold text may indicate that the text is a heading when someone is reading it, but it means nothing for those using a screen reader. The screen reader needs to be cued that the text is a heading.
- **Keyboard navigation:** Those who are blind cannot use a mouse to interact with their computers. They rely on keyboard navigation to find content.
 - Users need to be able to navigate throughout a webpage, form, or app using only their keyboard.
- **Audio Descriptions:** All videos and imagery will require audio descriptions.

For Deaf or Hard-of-hearing

- **Captioning:** Provide captioning for videos. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) can be used for live events.
- **Transcripts:** Provide transcripts for audio content.
- **ASL Interpreter:** In addition to closed captioning, you may also provide an ASL interpreter to add to the corner of videos.

Colorblindness & Contrast Issues

- Colorblindness: Do not use color as the only means of conveying information.
- Contrast Ratio: The contrast between the background and your foreground content must be sufficient so that the content is readable.
 - Contrast ratio is the measurement of difference between the background color and text. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) sets the standards for the contrast ratio.

Other Considerations

- Plain Language: Use plain language whenever possible. Plain language means that the content you provide can be understood by your audience the first time they read it.
- Dyslexia: People who are dyslexic have an easier time reading evenly spaced sans-serif fonts including, but not limited to, Arial, Verana, Tahoma, and Century Gothic. A font size of 12 – 14 is the smallest font you should use, as well.
- Seizure Warning: Flashing colors, images, or lights can trigger seizures in some individuals.
- Distractibility: Some animations and GIFs (moving images) can be distracting for those with ADHD.

Resources

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| • The Accessibility Cheat Sheet | • Colorcube color and contrast tool |
| • Digital Ally | • Color contrast checker |
| • The Ally Project | • Color blindness toll for images |
| • Alt-text decision tree | |
| • Tools for Closed Captioning Videos | |

Contact Information

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Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @abilityindiana

Branding

This section outlines how to externally present materials to create a cohesive look.

Logos

The following approved logos can be found on [Sharepoint](#).



The logo must always be clear and legible.

- Never place the logo on a busy, patterned background.
- Do not distort or stretch the size of the logo.
- Make sure the logo is a high resolution, don't use screenshots or download the logo from the website; Ask for a high-resolution file or download the images from SharePoint.
- Only use the logo in grayscale if a one-color logo is requested.

Colors

accessABILITY's primary colors can be found below. These colors should be the most used when creating outreach materials.



Teal

C70 M27 Y40 K2
R81 G147 B149
HEX #519395



Dark Blue

C98 M75 Y48 K48
R13 G35 B53
HEX #0d2335

The secondary color palate is designed to provide creative flexibility. These colors are complimentary to the primary colors and should be used to support the primary colors, *not* to replace them.

**Dusty Blue**

C37 M17 Y0 K45

R35 G45 B55

HEX #58748B

**Grey Cyan**

C10 M0 Y0 K30

R63 G70 B70

HEX #A0B2B2

**Gold**

C0 M10 Y60 K30

R70 G63 B28

HEX #B3A148

Typography

Marketing materials must follow the following fonts.

Heading:

Baskerville

Baskerville

Body Text:

Century Gothic

Century Gothic