

# Accessibility, language access, and inclusive operations

*Making documents, meetings, forms, systems, and contact points usable by people with disabilities and people who use languages other than English, as a matter of practice rather than exception.*

**Goals:** Communication and accessibility

---

## Why it matters

---

Inaccessible forms, unclear accessibility ownership, and translation gaps were among the most concrete barriers DSD staff named. Each one has a fix with an owner.

## Questions to begin with

---

- Who is responsible for accessibility of this item, and do they know it?
- Is this a vital document, and which languages and formats does it need?
- How will someone participate if the default format does not work for them?
- What does the process ask of people, and what can be removed?

## Work you can take forward

---

### Run an accessible and culturally responsive meeting

Purpose and materials in advance, accommodation language that does not force disclosure, several ways to participate, clear decisions and owners, accessible follow-up.

Supervisors and managers · Program and policy staff

- **Accessible and culturally responsive meetings: before, during, and after** — program page / library/ja-accessible-meetings
- **Access checks before a meeting, outreach, or session** — program page /library/ja-access-checks

**Ask:** What should I do before, during, and after a team meeting so everyone can actually take part?

### Make a document, form, or notice accessible and plain

Semantic structure, plain language, alternative formats, and a review before publication.

Communications and language access · Program and policy staff

- **Plain language and accessible documents checklist** — program page /library/ja-plain-language

- **Minnesota digital accessibility standard (MNIT)** — program page /library/ext-mn-accessibility
- **Plain language carries complexity: it does not remove it** — program page /library/lm-plain-language-carries-complexity

**Ask:** How do I write a plain-language notice without losing the details people need?

## Plan language and cultural access for a program or contact point

Languages, formats, interpreter availability at first contact, vital-document review, and trusted messengers planned together.

Communications and language access · Service delivery and support planning

- **Language and cultural access planning aid for a program or contact point** — program page /library/ja-language-cultural-access-planning
- **Language access checklist** — program page /library/ja-language-access-checklist
- **Working with a spoken-language interpreter** — program page /library/lm-interpreter

**Ask:** We are opening a new intake line. What language and cultural access planning should happen first?

## Tools and frameworks

---

- **Tool card: National CLAS Standards** — The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services, published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health. Public. Permitted use: cite, link, follow as a frame for language and cultural access planning.
- **Tool card: State of Minnesota accessibility standard** — The State of Minnesota digital accessibility standard, currently Section 508 plus WCAG 2.1 Level A and AA, and the accessible document guidance that accompanies it. Public. This program keeps WCAG 2.2 Level AA as its own stronger release target.

## In DSD work

---

One DSD adds division access practices, MnCHOICES and waiver examples, and DSD accommodation scenarios.

- MnCHOICES access and assessment
- Accessible documents and web content
- Sensory and communication accommodations
- Language access for waiver services

## Connected programs

- MnCHOICES assessment and access
- Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention and children's services

- Training, communication, and strategic communications

### **Situations to explore**

- A required form cannot be completed with a screen reader
- First contact happens in English only