

Reviewing a draft for equity, access, and plain language

You have a draft and want a structured way to check it for equity, access, plain language, sources, and burden before release.

Outcome: By the end, you will have a review record for a specific draft: what it asks of people, who may be excluded, access and language findings, source labels, changes made, and what remains for the owner.

Situations that may fit this path

- A document, notice, web page, or slide deck about to be released
- A draft someone asked you to check for equity or access
- Material that will reach the public or all staff

Six steps to work through in order

1. **Get a structured review** — Paste the draft into Ask and choose Review my draft. You will receive findings by category, questions for the author, and suggested changes, with the limits of the review stated. · **Ask: review my draft** — program page /ask?path=gp-9&mode=review
2. **Consider community context** (If relevant) — If the draft is aimed at or names particular Minnesota communities, read the relevant brief for naming, language, and access. · **Explore Minnesota Communities** — program page /minnesota-communities
3. **Choose practical resources** — Use the plain-language checklist, the language access checklist, and the process burden questions. · **Plain language and accessible documents** — program page /resources/ja-plain-language · **Language access checklist** — program page /resources/ja-language-access-checklist · **Journey and burden questions** — program page /resources/ja-process-burden
4. **Record your review** — Complete the review record. Do not paste confidential material. Use the downloaded checklist to write your answers in a tool you normally use. This page does not save them.
5. **Review your work** — Confirm findings are specific, sources are labeled, access and burden were checked, and the owner knows what remains.
6. **Return it to the owner** — The author or content owner decides what changes. Your review helps them; it does not approve the draft. · **Find the right person** — program page /support/right-person?matter=accessibility_barrier

What a useful result looks like

Still needs work

- Approved with no findings
- A rewrite that changes the meaning without telling the owner
- A reading-level number with no specific change

Ready to use

- Findings are specific and tied to who is affected
- Sources are labeled and unsupported claims are flagged
- The owner knows exactly what remains

Privacy

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Draft review record

Privacy

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Item	Detail
What the draft asks people to do (required)	Steps, documents, deadlines, and return methods.
Who may be excluded or burdened (required)	By language, disability, technology, time, trust, or place.
Access and plain-language findings (required)	Structure, reading level, formats, languages, alternative contact.
Sources and their authority labels (required)	Label each claim's source. Flag anything cited from memory.
Changes you suggest (required)	Specific and short. The owner decides.
Who else should review (required)	Language access, accessibility, communications, or the policy owner.
What you chose not to assume (required)	About who reads this and how.

Review your notes against

- Every follow-up has a named owner
- A next review date is set
- This is connected to your specific work

- Language, disability, and communication access were considered for this work
- You named who was involved and the role they had
- You noted what you chose not to assume
- Every source has an authority label and can be verified

Questions to bring to Ask

- Can you review this draft notice for plain language, access, and burden?
- What questions should I ask about a draft before it goes to all staff?
- How do I tell the author what needs to change without redoing their work?