

# Creating Accessible Documents

## Introduction

In April 2024, the Federal Government published updates to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The updates expand the ADA to cover web content and mobile apps. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA is the technical standard for state and local governments with these new rules going into effect in April 2026. With these updates, solicitation documents posted in eVP should meet the accessibility requirements. This guide will cover how to create accessible Word, PowerPoint, and PDF documents and how to remediate existing PDF documents. Additional information about making content accessible can be found on the [Section 508](#) website.



## Learning Objectives

At the end of this job aid, **you will be able to:**



Create Accessible PowerPoint Presentations.



Create Accessible Word Documents.



Create Accessible PDF Documents.

# Creating Accessible Documents

## Word & PowerPoint: Build it Accessible From the Start

1

When creating a solicitation document, there are several best practices to keep in mind to create an accessible document.

Practice	How To
Heading Styles	Use built-in Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. Do not skip levels (e.g., no H1 → H3). Format → Styles panel.
Alt Text on Images	Right-click image → Edit Alt Text. Describe the image's meaning. Leave blank only for decorative images.
Real Lists	Use the Home → Bullets or Numbering toolbar — never manually type • or 1. 2. 3.
Accessible Tables	Keep tables simple. Right-click top row → Table Properties → check “Repeat as header row.” Avoid merged/split cells.
Descriptive Hyperlinks	Use meaningful link text (e.g., “View STC search guide”) — never “Click here” or a bare URL.
Accessibility Checker	Word/PowerPoint → Review tab → Check Accessibility. Resolve all Errors before saving.

# Creating Accessible Documents

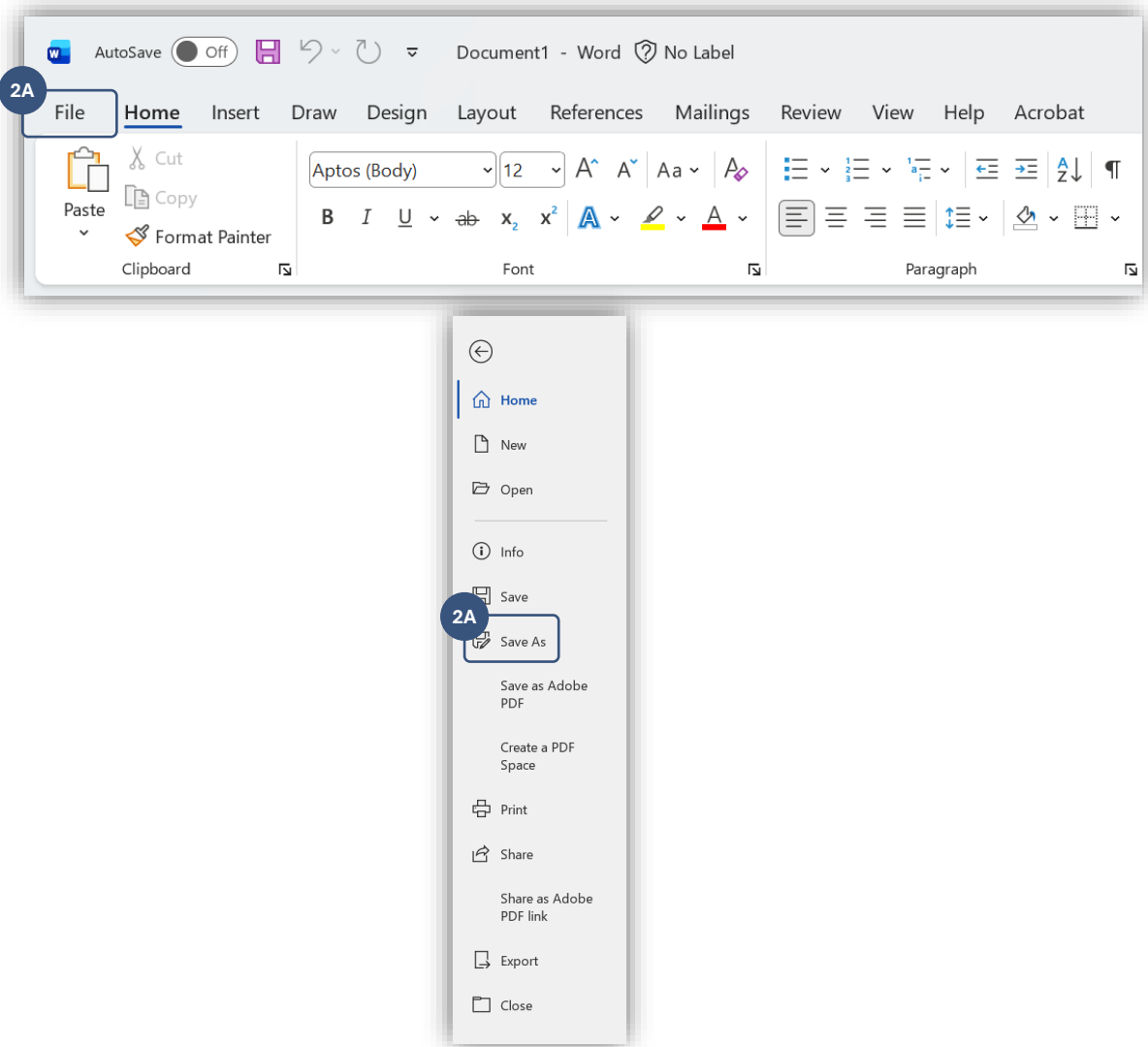
## Creating Accessible PDFs

2

When creating a PDF, **do not use the Print to PDF option**. The Print to PDF option will remove all of the accessibility tags from the document. The resulting file will be inaccessible, and screen readers are unable to properly read the document. Even a fully accessible Word document will become non-compliant when saved using the Print to PDF option.

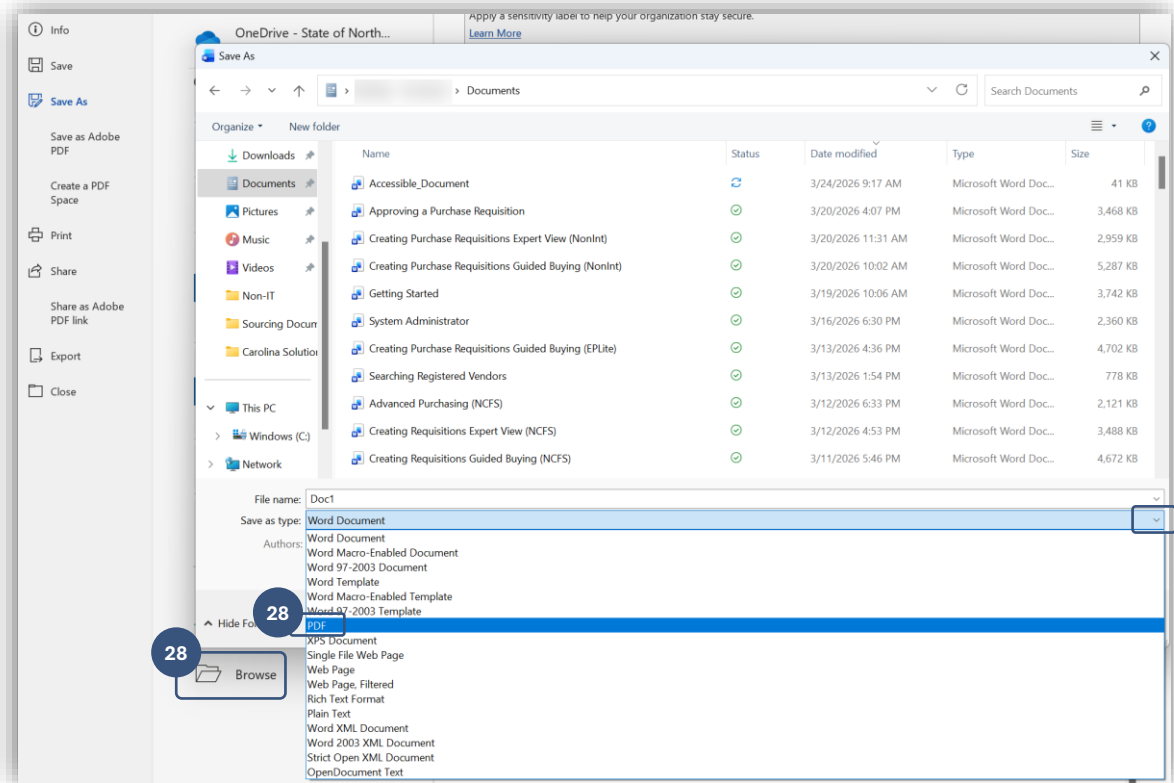
Instead of using the Print to PDF option, follow the instructions below to create an Accessible PDF:

### A. Click **File**, then **Save As**.

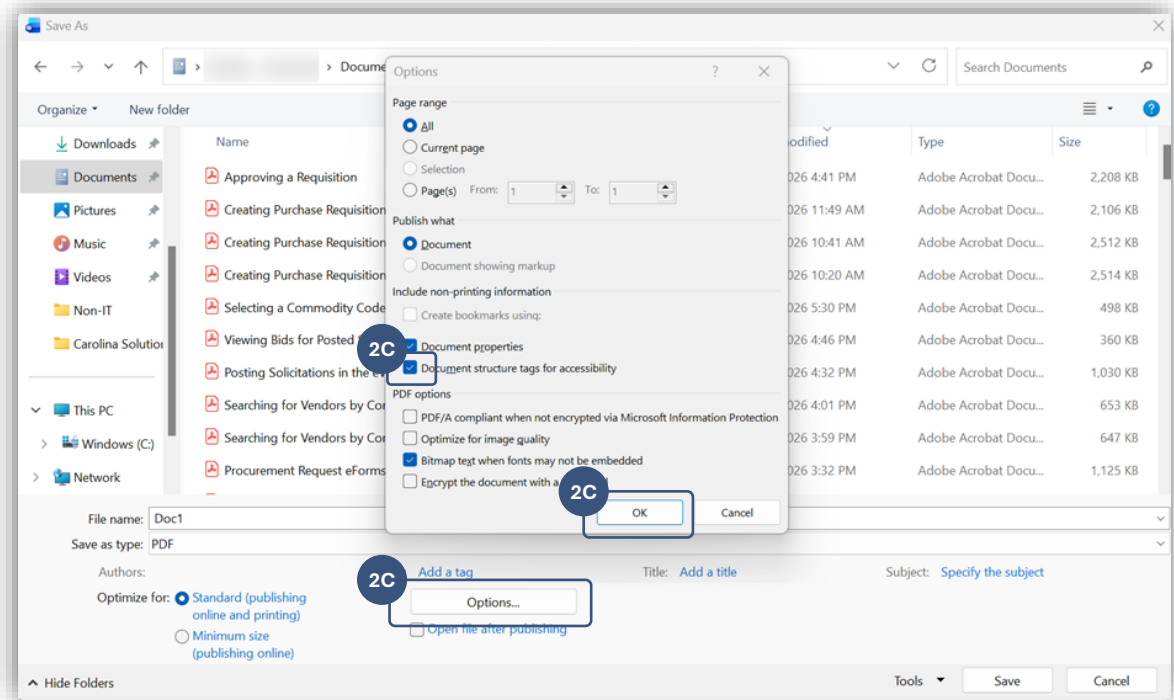


# Creating Accessible Documents

B. Select the **Browse** option and on the following popout, choose the **PDF** option in the **Save as type** dropdown.



C. Click on **More options** or **Options** and ensure that the **Document structure tags for accessibility** checkbox is checked, click the **OK** button, and select the **Save** button.



# Creating Accessible Documents

D. Open the newly saved file in Adobe Acrobat and run the **Accessibility check** to confirm that the document is accessible.

Practice	How To
DO NOT use “Print to PDF”	Print to PDF strips accessibility tags and creates inaccessible, untagged PDFs.
Correct Method: Save As PDF	File → Save As → select PDF → Options → ensure “Document structure tags for accessibility” is checked → Save → run Full Check in Acrobat.

Additional information about making content accessible can be found on the [Section 508](#) website.