# New Required Course *Section 508: What Is It and Why Is It Important?* for All Employees (Example)

1. Purpose. This is a request to obtain the [agency head or equivalent] approval to add the following course to [agency name or initials] ’s Mandatory Training Program.
2. Course information:
   1. Title: Section 508: What It Is and Why It’s Important?
   2. Synopsis: Introduction to Section 508 and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Explains what Section 508 is and why it’s important, shows how conformance can make ICT more accessible, reviews job-related responsibilities for meeting Section 508 standards, offers resources to help you meet your Section 508 responsibilities. By understanding and implementing Section 508 requirements properly, you can help ensure people with disabilities have equal access to ICT, and that your organization complies with all legal requirements for accessibility.

After completing this training, you will be able to do the following:

* + 1. Explain what Section 508 is, and when and how it applies.
    2. Explain the benefits of Section 508 conformance and the risks of non-conformance.
    3. Recognize what job-related responsibilities allow you to meet Section 508 standards.
    4. Identify and use resources to help you meet your Section 508 responsibilities.
  1. Justification: This course provides a foundational introduction to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and its application to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It outlines the purpose and importance of Section 508, demonstrates how conformance enhances accessibility, reviews employee responsibilities under the law, and directs learners to available support resources.

All personnel—regardless of role, supervisory status, or grade level—should complete accessibility awareness training and receive annual reinforcement of its significance and requirements. Role-specific training may be assigned as appropriate.

Employees who develop or distribute digital content (including documents, presentations, websites, and other electronic materials) must understand how to ensure their work is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Inaccessible content can impose substantial barriers and impede access to information, services, and opportunities.

General awareness of accessibility standards helps reduce the risk of non-compliance and mitigates the time, cost, and operational disruption associated with rework and remediation. Preventative training is far more efficient and effective than retroactive correction.

Although Section 508 guidance, tools, and job aids are available through [agency initials]’s intranet and Section508.gov, the absence of a formal training requirement contributes to continued noncompliance and inconsistent awareness of Section 508 obligations. Voluntary use of reference materials does not adequately convey the legal and operational importance of accessibility conformance.

The responsibility for ensuring accessible digital content ultimately rests with each federal agency. Without consistent training across the workforce, [agency initials] cannot fully meet its statutory responsibilities under Section 508, nor can it credibly serve as a model for other agencies in advancing ICT accessibility.

The Government-wide IT Accessibility Program at the General Services Administration (GSA) makes this course available to federal agencies at no cost through a data-sharing agreement—eliminating development and maintenance expenses while promoting a consistent understanding of IT accessibility across the federal workforce.

A number of federal agencies have already adopted this course—or their own equivalent—as mandatory annual training, signaling their commitment to accessibility across operations.

Requiring Section 508 awareness training underscores [agency initials]’s commitment to delivering accessible, high-quality digital services to the public and ensuring all employees understand and meet their obligations under federal accessibility law.

* 1. Frequency: Annually
  2. Audience: All [agency initials] employees
  3. Anticipated course length: One (1) hour

1. Authorizations and Recommendations:
   1. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d) mandates that when federal agencies “develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology,” they must ensure Federal employees with disabilities have access comparable to that of others.
   2. OMB Circular A-130, Managing Information as a Strategic Resource, Sec 5.d.5.c., Information systems, technologies, and processes shall facilitate accessibility under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; in particular, see specific electronic and IT accessibility requirements commonly known as “section 508” requirements (29 U.S.C. § 794d);
   3. M-24-08 Strengthening Digital Accessibility and the Management of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, Section F.,”provide training for the Federal workforce and contractors, as appropriate, on accessibility responsibilities and obligations;”
   4. FY 24 Governmentwide Section 508 Assessment, Recommendations, “Agencies should require annual Section 508 training for all employees who create, maintain, or otherwise contribute to the agencies’ digital content. An example of such training can be seen in Section 508: What It Is and Why It’s Important?”
2. Coordination: Upon approval, [name of the Section 508 program or equivalent] office will coordinate with the [name of the Office of Human Resources Management or equivalent] to develop course content and then add the course to [agency initials]’s Mandatory Training Program.
3. Completion monitoring and reporting: Once deployed, [name of Office of Human Resources Management or equivalent] will track completion and provide [name of course sponsoring office] with periodic reporting as appropriate and agreed upon.