



DOJ Extends ADA Web Accessibility Deadline to April 2027

Blogs

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On April 20, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an interim final rule extending the deadline for public colleges and universities to comply with updated ADA Title II web accessibility requirements. The original April 24, 2026 deadline has been pushed to April 27, 2027, with certain smaller institutions receiving an additional year, until April 26, 2028. The extension provides additional time, but does not change the scope of the underlying obligations or the risk of enforcement.

Background on the 2024 Rule

ADA Title II is designed to ensure that state and local government entities, including public universities, ensure that their programs and services are accessible to people with disabilities. This means that all digital content, including websites, mobile apps, PDFs, audio and video materials, and certain instructional content, must be designed so that everyone can access them regardless of ability, disability, or use of assistive technology.

The final 2024 rule included narrow exceptions for “archived” content. While the ADA has long required website accessibility, the new regulations are more stringent and require substantial changes to webpages and instructional content.

Private colleges and universities are subject to Title III of the ADA, which applies to “places of public accommodations,” such as businesses open to the public. Both public institutions covered under Title II, and private educational entities covered under Title III, risk legal action if they fail to meet ADA requirements.

DOJ’s Rationale for the Extension

In announcing the delay, DOJ acknowledged that it “overestimated the capabilities” of covered entities to meet the original timeline and underestimated the associated costs and administrative burdens. The Department stated it believes the additional time will promote predictability, allow entities to focus on compliance rather than litigation defenses, and ultimately support greater accessibility.

DOJ further stated that changes from the proposed rule, particularly the removal of certain course-content exceptions, may create uncertainty for institutions. The extended compliance period is intended to give public entities more time to assess the final rule and provide feedback.

While some public entities and higher-education groups had urged the extension due to staffing and technical constraints, disability advocates are criticizing the delay as an unconscionable undermining of access.

The interim final rule remains open for public comment through June 22, 2026.

What This Means for Institutions

Although the compliance deadline has been extended, institutions should not pause accessibility efforts. The rule's requirements remain unchanged, and enforcement risk persists, particularly given continued scrutiny from regulators and private plaintiffs.

Recommended Next Steps

Colleges and universities should continue progressing toward compliance ahead of the new deadline next year.

Key steps include:

- Conduct or update accessibility audits of websites, mobile apps, and digital content
- Prioritize high-traffic and student materials for updates
- Review third-party vendor platforms for compliance obligations
- Develop and implement an action plan consistent with the new deadlines
- Train faculty and staff on accessible course content creation

Related People



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