



CMS Section 508 Program Tip #4: Error Handling



This Monthly Tip Series falls under the Program Pillar of Program and Policy Administration.

Error handling carries a “high impact” consideration and should be prioritized during development and remediation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Accessible error handling ensures assistive technology users are made aware of needed corrections so that successful completion of a task is possible.

WHAT TO DO

1. Provide dynamic field validation when focus leaves a field. At the same time, ensure the visual presentation of the field’s error state, programmatic indication of its state and the visually displayed error message are updated.
2. For incorrect user input:
 - Use the aria-invalid attribute to indicate the field’s invalid state and set the value to "true".
 - Dynamically add the field’s error message to the DOM
 - Either change the background color or provide a thick red border to visually indicate the invalid state
 - Use ARIA-described by attribute to associate the field’s error message with the field
 - Set the value to the ID of the error message.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on error handling and related techniques, please visit the WCAG 2.0, Guideline 3.1.1, and Error Identification.

Disclaimer

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