



**Blackboard Collaborate  
Voluntary Product Accessibility Template  
December 2017**

**§ 1194.22 – Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications**  
**§ 1194.31 – Functional Performance Criteria**  
**§1194.41 – Information, Documentation and Support**

## Overview

The information contained within this Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) is the result of a third-party performing an audit. The audit tested the compliance of Collaborate web application against the applicable requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as Amended 1998<sup>1</sup>.

The testing methodology performed included extensive manual testing techniques, such as keyboard-only testing, color contrast evaluation, and testing using the high contrast setting for users who have low vision. It also included assistive technology testing with JAWS 18.0 (Windows) and VoiceOver (Mac OS X), which are both screen reading software used by people who are blind.

The purpose of the VPAT is to assist Federal contracting officials in making preliminary assessments regarding the availability of commercial electronic and information technology products and services with features that support accessibility. It is assumed that offerors will provide additional contact information to facilitate more detailed inquiries.

The first table of the report provides a summary view of the Section 508 Standards. The subsequent tables provide more detailed views of each subsection. There are three columns in each table. Column one of the Summary Table describes the subsections of Subparts B and C of the Standards. The second column describes the supporting features of the product or refers you to the corresponding detailed table, "e.g., equivalent facilitation." The third column contains any additional remarks and explanations regarding the product. In the subsequent tables, the first column contains the lettered paragraphs of the subsections. The second column describes the supporting features of the product with regard to that paragraph. The third column contains any additional remarks and explanations regarding the product.

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<sup>1</sup>§1194.22 – Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications  
§1194.31 Functional Performance Criteria  
§1194.41 – Information, Documentation and Support



## Compliance Summary

| Criteria   | Supported                       |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Section 1194.22 Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications</a> | <b>Supports with Exceptions</b> |
| <a href="#">Section 1194.31 Functional Performance Criteria</a>                              | <b>Supports with Exceptions</b> |
| <a href="#">Section 1194.41 Information, Documentation, and Support</a>                      | <b>Applicable – Not Tested</b>  |

## Support Levels

| Support Level  | Description  |
|--|--|
| <b>Supports</b>  | The application fully meets the letter and intent of the Criteria.   |
| <b>Supports with Exceptions/Minor Exceptions</b>                 | The application does not fully meet the letter and intent of the Criteria, but provides some level of access relative to the Criteria. |
| <b>Supports through Equivalent Facilitation</b>                  | The application provides an alternate way to meet the intent of the Criteria.  |
| <b>Supports when Combined with Compatible AT</b>                 | The application fully meets the letter and intent of the Criteria when used in combination with compatible ATs.                        |
| <b>Does Not Support</b>  | The application does not meet the letter or intent of the Criteria.  |
| <b>Not Applicable</b>  | The Criteria does not apply.   |
| <b>Not Applicable - Fundamental Alteration Exception Applies</b> | A Fundamental Alteration of the application is required to meet the Criteria.  |
| <b>Applicable – Not Tested</b>                                   | The Standard is applicable but was not tested.   |



## § 1194.22 Web-based Intranet and Internet Information and Applications

| Criteria  | Support Level                          | Remarks and Explanations  |
|---|--|---|
| <p>(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).</p>                         | <p><b>Supports with Exceptions</b></p> | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application provides alternative text for images, such as the emoticons, the controls for chat, participants, and settings.</p> <p>A rating of Supports with Exceptions has been given for the following reasons:</p> <p>The content placed in the white board is not identified to screen reader users.</p> <p>The button to add files has large text at the top of the control that reads "Add Files" with supplemental text beneath that that says "Drag image, PowerPoint, or PDF files. Or select to choose files." But screen readers only announce, "Add Files."</p> <p>In the Share Files panel, no contextual information is provided for screen reader users navigating to the Remove Attachment controls.</p> <p>The delete icon controls in the Breakout Groups panel do not have unique alternative text descriptions.</p> |
| <p>(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.</p>   | <p><b>Supports</b></p>                 | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain multimedia presentations.</p>  |
| <p>(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.</p> | <p><b>Supports with Exceptions</b></p> | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not exclusively use color to convey information.</p> <p>A rating of Supports with Exceptions has been given for the following reasons:</p>   |



| Criteria  | Support Level                          | Remarks and Explanations  |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | <p>The Auto-generated report textarea uses a grey color to denote that it is disabled, instead of using the disabled="true" attribute and value. When color is removed from the page, the textarea appears to be active.</p> <p>When viewing the Private Chat Tutorial in High Contrast Mode or with colors disabled via the browser's accessibility settings, the circular button controls to navigate to different tutorial sections are no longer displayed.</p> <p>When viewing the Detached Attendee Panel in High Contrast Mode or with colors disabled via the browser's accessibility settings, the button control to access list of users becomes difficult to see.</p> <p>When viewing the My Settings panel with colors disabled via the browser's accessibility settings, the visual focus of elements when navigating to different panel sections is no longer displayed.</p> <p>When colors are removed, the Polling panel does not display which is the currently selected option.</p> <p>When colors are removed, the Status and Feedback dialog does not display which is the currently selected status.</p> |
| <p>(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.</p> | <p><b>Supports with Exceptions</b></p> | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application is readable without requiring an associated style sheet.</p> <p>A rating of Supports with Exceptions has been given for the following reasons:</p>  |





| Criteria   | Support Level                   | Remarks and Explanations  |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
|  |                                 | <p>The CSS background images used with the expand and collapse functionality in the My Settings Panel are not visible without a stylesheet.</p> <p>The selected choice in the Polling panel is not visible when styles are removed from the page.</p> |
| (e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.  | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain server-side image maps.   |
| (f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.   | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain client-side image maps.   |
| (g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.  | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain data tables.  |
| (h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.   | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain complex data tables.  |
| (i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation  | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain frames.   |
| (j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.  | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not cause the page to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.  |
| (k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes. | <b>Supports</b>                 | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain a text-only page.   |
| (l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or  | <b>Supports with Exceptions</b> | The Blackboard Collaborate web application scripting languages  |



| Criteria  | Support Level          | Remarks and Explanations  |
|---|------------------------|---|
| <p>to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by Assistive Technology.</p>      |                        | <p>display content and create interface elements that contains functional text that is read by assistive technologies.</p> <p>A rating of Supports with Exceptions has been given for the following reasons:</p> <p>The whiteboard control that allows users to draw, add shapes, add text, drag content, etc. is not accessible via the keyboard. Keyboard-only and screen reader users are unable to place content on the white board with the keyboard.</p> <p>The Polling Option has a disabled state that causes the options not be rendered to screen reader users until enabled by the Moderator.</p> <p>The list of attachments in the Share Files panel includes custom controls that are not announced properly to screen readers.</p> <p>An aria-haspopup property has been incorrectly used with the "Tell me about Collaborate" and "Try upcoming Collaborate features" controls, as well as the "Find someone to chat with" form field control.</p> <p>The button to add files has large text at the top of the control that reads "Add Files" with supplemental text beneath that that says "Drag image, PowerPoint, or PDF files. Or select to choose files.", but only "Add Files" is announced by screen readers.</p> |
| <p>(m) When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a</p> | <p><b>Supports</b></p> | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application allows users to access the plug-in needed to support the Share Application feature in the Chrome and Firefox browsers.</p>  |



| Criteria   | Support Level   | Remarks and Explanations   |
|--|-----------------|--|
| link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).  |                 |  |
| (n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using Assistive Technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues. | <b>Supports</b> | The Blackboard Collaborate web application provides access to information necessary for people using assistive technologies to complete form fields. |
| (o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.   | <b>Supports</b> | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not contain repetitive navigation links.   |
| (p) When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.  | <b>Supports</b> | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not require a timed response.  |

*Note to 1194.22: The Board interprets paragraphs (a) through (k) of this section as consistent with the following priority 1 Checkpoints of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG 1.0) (May 5 1999) published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium: Paragraph (a) - 1.1, (b) - 1.4, (c) - 2.1, (d) - 6.1, (e) - 1.2, (f) - 9.1, (g) - 5.1, (h) - 5.2, (i) - 12.1, (j) - 7.1, (k) - 11.4.*



## § 1194.31 Functional Performance Criteria

| Criteria   | Support Level  | Remarks and Explanations  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>(a) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user vision shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are blind or visually impaired shall be provided.</p>  | <p><b>Supports with Exceptions/<br/>Fundamental Alteration<br/>Exception Applies</b></p> | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not support operation by users who are blind or by screen reader users due to the following accessibility violations:</p> <p>The accessibility issues listed in <a href="#">§1194.22(l)</a> affect people who are blind or who have visual impairments because these users navigate through the application exclusively with the keyboard.</p> |
| <p>(b) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require visual acuity greater than 20/70 shall be provided in audio and enlarged print output working together or independently, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are visually impaired shall be provided.</p> | <p><b>Supports with Exceptions</b></p>   | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application provides support for users who have a visual acuity greater than 20/70 or visually impaired. A rating of Supports with Exceptions is assigned because the color contrast noted in <a href="#">§1194.22 (c)</a> is not great enough for some of these users to interact with the elements.</p>   |
| <p>(c) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user hearing shall be provided, or support for Assistive Technology used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing shall be provided.</p>  | <p><b>Supports</b></p>   | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application contains a closed captioning method that allows users who are deaf or hard of hearing to follow the presentation in addition to a Chat function that allows all users to communicate via text.</p>  |
| <p>(d) Where audio information is important for the use of a product, at least one mode of operation and information retrieval shall be provided in an enhanced auditory fashion, or support for assistive hearing devices shall be provided.</p>  | <p><b>Supports through Equivalent Facilitation</b></p>                                   | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application does not have a direct function to control volume.</p> <p>A rating of Supports Equivalent Facilitation is given due to the fact that users can adjust the volume using the audio device controls on their PCs.</p>  |
| <p>(e) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require user speech shall be provided,</p>   | <p><b>Supports</b></p>   | <p>The Blackboard Collaborate web application contains a Chat function that allows users to communicate via text rather than speech.</p>  |





| Criteria  | Support Level                   | Remarks and Explanations  |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| or support for Assistive Technology used by people with disabilities shall be provided.   |                                 |   |
| (f) At least one mode of operation and information retrieval that does not require fine motor control or simultaneous actions and that is operable with limited reach and strength shall be provided. | <b>Supports with Exceptions</b> | The Blackboard Collaborate web application does provide keyboard access to the majority of functionality. A rating supports with exceptions has been given due to the limitations with the white board and plug-in, as noted in <a href="#">§1194.22(l)</a> . |

## § 1194.41 Information, Documentation and Support

| Criteria  | Support Level                 | Remarks and Explanations |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Product support documentation provided to end-users shall be made available in alternate formats upon request, at no additional charge  | <b>Applicable- Not Tested</b> |                          |
| (b) End-users shall have access to a description of the accessibility and compatibility features of products in alternate formats or alternate methods upon request, at no additional charge. | <b>Applicable- Not Tested</b> |                          |
| (c) Support services for products shall accommodate the communication needs of end-users with disabilities.   | <b>Applicable- Not Tested</b> |                          |