# Ensuring your projects are accessible

This quick reference guide provides advice on ensuring your projects
deliver print and online information that is accessible for disabled people.

## Engage with print disabled DPOs early at the start of the project

* + By engaging early with DPOs (Disabled Persons’ Organisations), you can allocate time and budget into your project.
	+ The DPOs will advise on:
* the appropriate alternate formats for the project
* the budget needed to produce alternate formats
* the timeframe needed to complete the alternate formats (usually a minimum of 4 weeks)
* the process for producing alternate formats and any testing as needed.
	+ The contact information for the print disabled DPOs is listed in “Useful Contacts”.

## Ensure any tender documents and contracts include accessibility

* + Accessibility is a non-negotiable requirement for potential contractors and providers. Contractors and providers must provide evidence that their products or services can comply with accessible requirements.
	+ Potential users can test for accessibility – talk to the DPOs if you need help with testing.

## Follow the process outlined by the DPOs for producing alternate formats

* Develop your content in plain language that is as concise as possible, being aware of avoiding deficit-based language.
* Use plain language, as it is easier to be translated into alternate formats, which also keeps the cost down.
* Produce the material in HTML format and use an accessible type face and layout. Graphs or pictures should be described and referenced in the text.

## Communicate, externally and internally, that alternate formats are available and where to find them.

## Encourage your audience to provide feedback and respond to feedback in a timely way.

* Feedback is a useful way to review how accessible a product or service is, and to find out more about your audience and their needs.

## Share your experiences with colleagues and provide training where needed.

# Prioritising accessible communications and information

The list below gives best practice examples information that should be prioritised when deciding on what needs to be made accessible. Each agency will have individual priorities so the list not exhaustive, nor is it in any order of priority.

Priority should be given to information that:

* is aimed specifically at disabled people or has a significant impact on disabled people and/or their families and/or whānau
* is needed to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (such as voting or paying tax)
* is needed to make an informed decision, receive payments or other services
* is of a personal or confidential nature (e.g. if it relates to medical or financial issues)
* could result in legal consequences or loss of rights if not acted upon (e.g. census or voting information)
* seeks a response from the public (e.g. consultation documents)
* is in response to correspondence from a disabled person who has expressed a preference for a particular format.

Where information is not considered a high priority, it will be necessary to assess how these need to be made accessible on a case-by-case basis.

For instance, it might be appropriate, to provide several lengthy documents in an accessible format to an individual who needs them to use in a court case.

Agencies might decide that all new documents should be made available in alternate formats, while recognising that some pre-existing documents may also be important enough to justify transcribing into alternate formats.

Under certain circumstances, it might be decided to provide a summary version of a longer document as a minimum alternative to providing the complete document e.g. documents longer than 10 pages.