

Preparing Documents for 508 Compliance

Child Care State Capacity Building Center and
National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance



What Is 508 Compliance?

Section 508, an amendment to the *United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, is a federal law mandating that all electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal Government be accessible to people with disabilities. Under Section 508, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

In the scope of our work, any product, document, or resource we place on the Child Care Technical Assistance (CCTA) website must be made compliant so that assistive technology can read the document for those with visual impairments.

Preparing a Document for 508 Coding

Before submitting a document for 508 compliance, it must be in its final form—ensure that the document has been reviewed by all necessary parties and all revisions have been made. Submit the file in its original form (Word, PPT, or Excel). Those coding your document will convert it into a PDF.

Any edits, small or large, made to the document after it has been submitted for 508 compliance will delay the completion of 508 compliance coding. *In most cases, changes made after beginning the 508 coding process will require recoding of the document in its entirety.*

Provide detailed descriptions of all [relevant images, graphs, and charts](#) in a comment balloon in the body of the Word, PPT, or Excel file. If necessary, the coder will contact you to clarify this information prior to coding.

If you have questions or need assistance with preparing documents for compliance, email OCCInfoServices@icfi.com with the subject line “508.”

Submitting a Document for 508 Coding

Send documents for 508 compliance to OCCInfoServices@icfi.com with the subject line “508.”

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Formatting Checklist

To ensure that your document is coded accurately and in a timely manner, please ensure you have completed the following items before submission. **You do not need to submit the completed checklist with your document; it is only for reference. However, the coder will scan the document against the checklist. If all items are not addressed, the document will be returned so you can address the incomplete items. This may cause a delay in the coding process.**

Item	Checked and Resolved
You have received all necessary approval, including approval from the Office of Child Care, if applicable	
The document has been copy edited and reviewed; final edits have been made	
It was created in the proper template (either for the Child Care State Capacity Building Center [SCBC] or the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance [ECQA Center])	
All hyperlinks are working correctly	
All tables and charts were created using the “Insert” function in Word	
For all tables in the document, the “Allow row to break across pages” option has been unchecked (this is within the table properties)	
For all tables in the document, the table header row is repeated at the top of each page	
For a document with a table of contents (TOC), the TOC was created using the TOC tool in Word rather than created manually	
All lists (bulleted or numbered lists of items) were created by applying the proper styles in Word	
References were created using the reference tool in Word	
All indentations that were created with the space bar have been deleted	
All manual spaces before paragraphs have been deleted	
The page numbers were created using the template style or by using the “Auto Insert Page Number” tool in Word	

More Information about Formatting for 508 Compliance

Describing Relevant Images, Graphs, and Charts

Descriptions will be used for alternate text, also known as, *alt text*. Alt text provides specific details about visual information for those with seeing impairments on the context, images may or may not require alt text (see the “Sample Graphic and Description” below for more information). A screen reader will read the provided alt text of the relevant image, graph, or chart for the listener. Note that *all* graphs and charts will require alt text to convey the data points.

This means that when submitting documents for coding, you must provide detailed descriptions or data points of all graphs, charts, and images that convey important information. Enter descriptions in a comment balloon or send more lengthy descriptions along with the document in the body of an email or as a separate attachment.

Relevant Images

Unless the image is integral to the document it does not require alt text. If the image contains information that is vital to the document, then it will require alt text. For example, a photograph of children and families inserted for visual appeal would not need a description. However, an image illustrating how two components of a system interact would need a description because the image represents important information. See the sample below for a sample of an image and its alt text.

Sample Graphic and Description



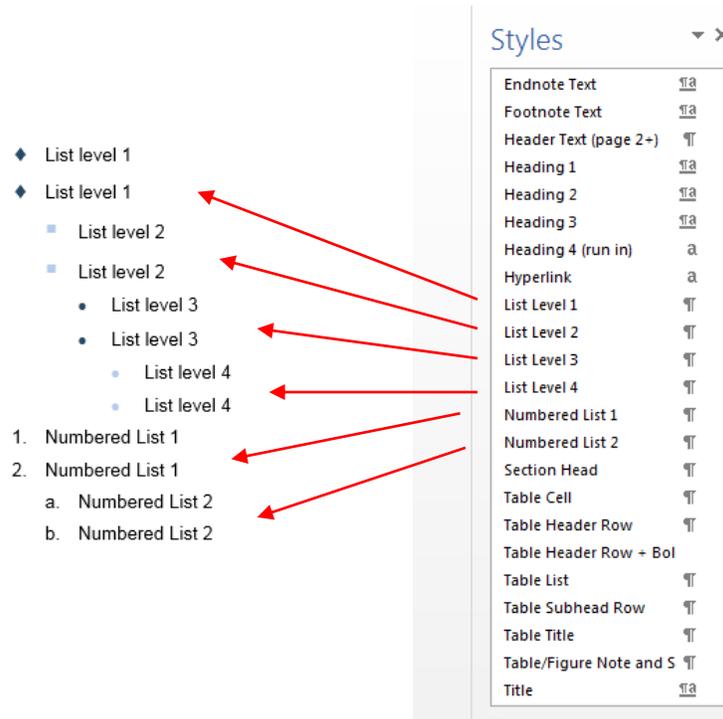
Description of Image (Alt Text)
Six webs stemming from Relationship-Based Care: Cultural Responsiveness, Individualized Care, and Inclusion of Children with Special Needs, Small Group Size, Primary Care, and Continuity of Care.

Source: Program for Infant/Toddler Care

Creating a List Using Styles

A **bulleted list** or **bullet list** is a list of items preceded with bullets instead of numbers or other objects. Below is an example of such a list.

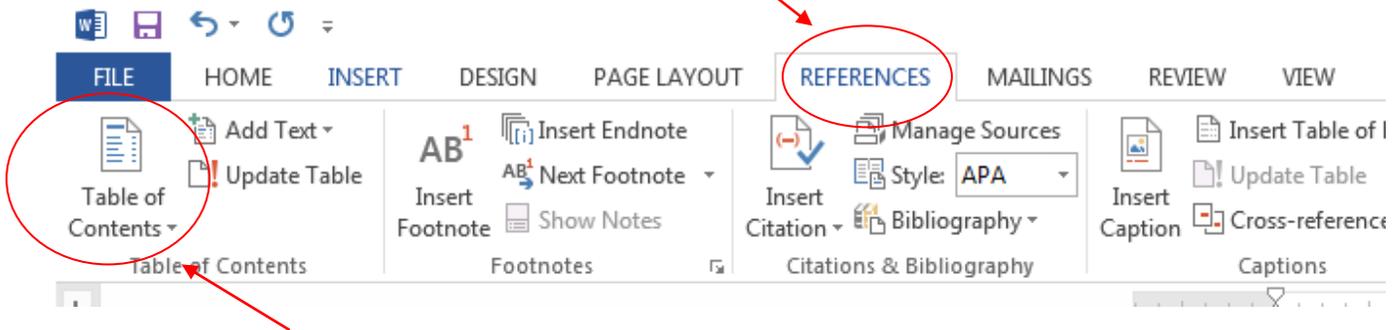
When making a list, follow styles in the template. Make sure you are using the correct list level or numbered list.



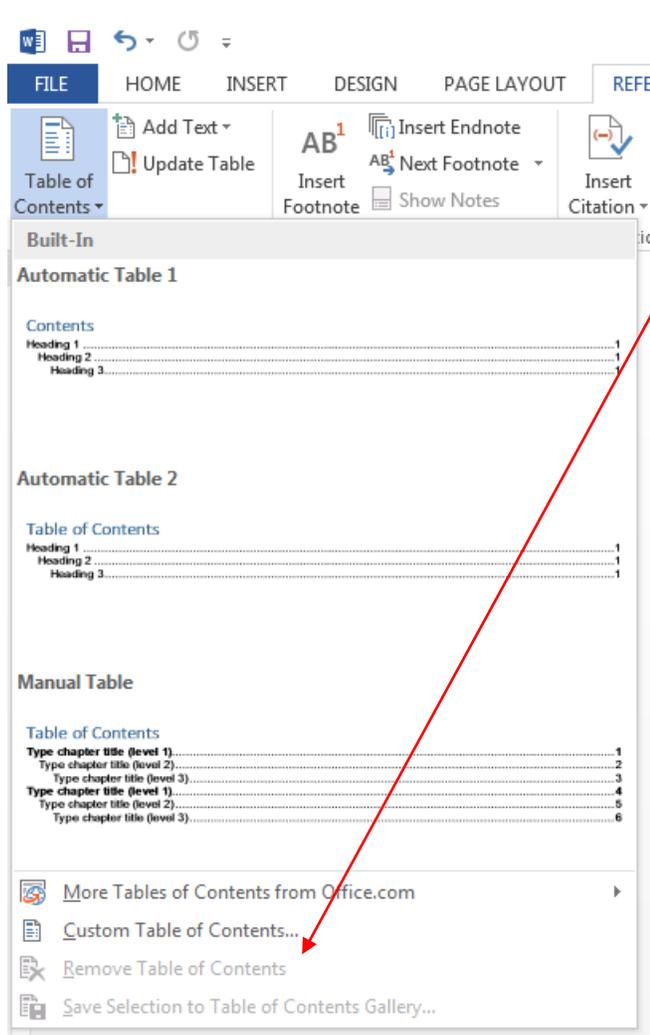
Creating a Table of Contents

It is essential to use the table of contents function in Word because when the document is converted into a PDF for 508 coding, the table of contents is automatically coded. Each item in the table of contents is automatically linked to its respective location in the document. Not using the table of contents function can delay coding.

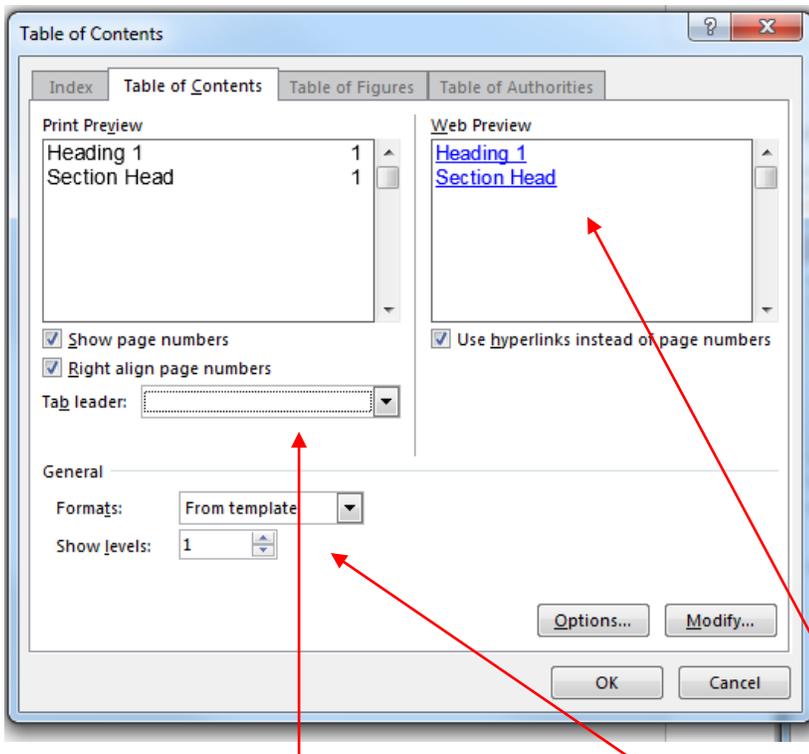
To create a table of contents, select the “References” tab.



Next, select the “Table of Contents” tab and then select “Custom Table of Contents.”



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Make sure you select none for tab leader. Also select the levels you want to show (e.g., “2” for headings and subheadings). Generally you will want to show at minimum Section Head and Heading Level 1.

For more guidance: [Table of Contents](#).

Resources

HHS.gov

For a more comprehensive explanation of 508 compliance and checklists visit [HHS.gov](#).

- ◆ HHS 508 checklist for Microsoft [Word](#).
- ◆ HHS 508 checklist for Microsoft [PowerPoint](#).
- ◆ HHS 508 checklist for [PDF](#) files.

Template Tips

Use our template tips document to assist you in creating your document. The templates and styles within the templates will help streamline the 508 coding process.

- ◆ [ECQA Center Template Tips](#) document is located on the workspace under the “Template Tips” folder under “Template Guidance.”
- ◆ [SCBC Template Tips](#) document is located on the workspace under the “Template Guidance” folder under “Protocols.”