



Kane County

KC Committee of the Whole

Agenda

Government Center
719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. A
Geneva, IL 60134

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

4:00 PM

County Board Room

- 1. Call To Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Remote Attendance Requests**
- 4. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 5. Approval of Minutes: April 22, 2025, June 24, 2025, September 23, 2025, December 10, 2025 & January 14, 2026**
- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Presentations/Discussion**
 - A. Update on Digital ADA Compliance**
- 8. Executive Session**
 - A. Release of Closed Session Minutes**
- 9. Open Session**
 - A. Vote on Release of Closed Session Minutes**
- 10. Adjournment**

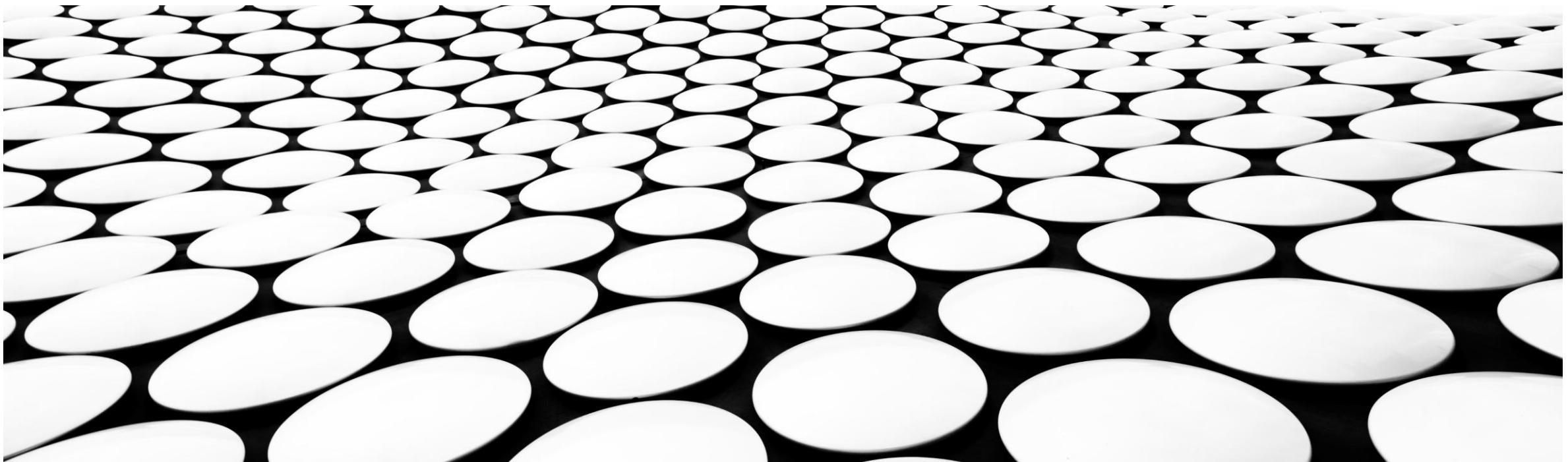
STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF KANE) SS.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION NO. TMP-26-117

UPDATE ON DIGITAL ADA COMPLIANCE

KANE COUNTY ADAPTING TO NEW WEB STANDARD

THE PLAN AND UPDATE ON THE COUNTY'S PROGRESS TO MEET DOJ'S APRIL 24, 2026 DEADLINE FOR WEB ACCESSIBILITY



OVERVIEW

In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a final rule under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), requiring state and local government websites and mobile applications to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA. This rule aims to ensure that digital content is accessible to individuals with disabilities, enhancing equitable access to public services. Compliance details are set for April 24, 2026, for entities serving populations of 50,000 or more. The rule includes exceptions for certain types of content, such as archived materials and preexisting documents.

For a full look at the entirety of WCAG 2.1 standards, please visit this website:

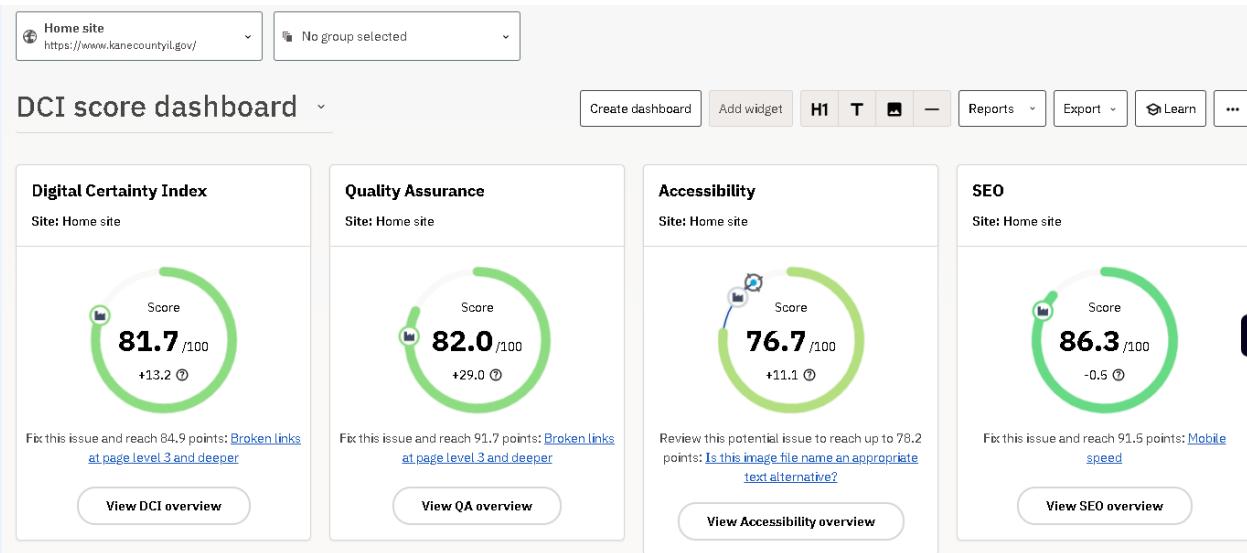
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1

(<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>)

MONITORING TOOLS AND EXAMPLES OF CURRENT WEBSITE COMPLIANCE



Silktide pictured above



SitelImprove pictured above

Since our last update, IT has been using two different services to monitor our public facing websites. These two tools are Silktide and SitelImprove. The combined use of these two tools are helping us see any problems concerning ADA compliance. We are searching for issues effecting both the infrastructure of websites and the content put on the websites. Our goal is to get the scores as high as possible and maintain the highest scores possible.

PROGRESS COMPLETED TO DATE

- Website Structure Improvements: Updated the county website framework to support ADA accessibility standards.
- Department Engagement: Met with offices and departments to communicate new accessibility requirements and discuss their websites.
- Training and Education: Participated in various webinars to stay informed on current ADA web compliance guidelines. Licensed software that includes training for county offices and departments.
- Vendor Coordination: Held discussions with vendors and service providers to look for tools and resources to help with accessibility objectives.
- Content Support: Assisting departments with questions, content reviews, tools and guidance to improve accessibility compliance.

The I.T. Department remains committed to helping ensure the county's website meets all new ADA accessibility requirements.

ARCHIVING PAST MATERIAL

Archived web content

State and local governments' websites often include a lot of content that is not currently used. This information may be outdated, not needed, or repeated somewhere else. Sometimes, this information is archived on the website.

Web content that meets **all four** of the following points would not need to meet WCAG 2.1, Level AA:

- The content was created before the date the state or local government must comply with this rule, or reproduces paper documents or the contents of other physical media (audiotapes, film negatives, and CD-ROMs for example) that were created before the government must comply with this rule, **AND**
- The content is kept only for reference, research, or recordkeeping, **AND**
- The content is kept in a special area for archived content, **AND**
- The content has not been changed since it was archived.

The exception does not apply unless all four points are present. The content generally must meet WCAG 2.1, Level AA unless another exception applies.

Example: Meeting minutes created after the date the county must comply with this rule would **not** fall under the exception even if they are posted in the “archive” section of the county’s website. The meeting minutes would probably have to comply with WCAG 2.1, Level AA, because this content was created after the time the county had to comply with this rule.



OUR PLAN FOR MEETING NOTICES, AGENDAS AND MINUTES

Since a large about of documents (more than 15,000 pdfs) are stored on the kanecountyil.gov website and are related to meeting minutes, we need to concentrate on how this effects our website's accessibility health. We should be able to lean into an existing solution – Legistar, to continue using its templates to create agendas, but only display them on the Legistar website, which will display the website content in a more compliant way. It's important to continue to show the meeting minutes in a transparent fashion, but be mindful of the new guidelines which could put the County at risk of penalties and fines.

We will be working on creating an archival website to show past year's agendas and meeting minutes.

Minutes and agendas are a high-traffic area for our public website



CONCERNS WITH AGENDA PACKETS AND MEETING MINUTES

It is important to stress one of the biggest challenges with the upcoming ADA mandate is agenda packets. Offices and departments are responsible and have the final authority over the content within the agenda (bid responses, contracts, documents, quotes, invoices, etc.), including presentations from internal and external groups. Ensuring this large amount of data would be compliant will be challenging for staff to create and maintain.

Solutions involving simplifying what is available on the public website will need to be considered.



ADA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

IT and State's Attorney's Office has collaborated together to create an ADA Accessibility Statement that will inform the public on our plan to continue to improve all websites and to keep on open communication to listen to the public should they need any special accommodations with Kane County websites.

We are also creating a new fillable form that will allow the public to let us know if there are any trouble areas on our websites or special accommodations they may need. We are planning to have the accessibility statement go to County Board for approval in the form of a resolution.

OFFICES AND DEPARTMENTS CONTROL THEIR CONTENT

It is important to remember offices and departments have and will maintain authority on what content and materials (including web pages, documents, images, etc.) are on their respective websites. IT will continue to maintain the infrastructure for the websites and give guidance where applicable on uploading new content and maintaining current content on the web sites.



NO MAGIC SOLUTION

IT has spent a good amount of time attending webinars and meeting with vendors such as Adobe to better understand the upcoming ADA guidelines and changes. IT has learned a good deal about expectations for maintaining accessible websites, but no single tool can completely remediate documents and webpages without internal staff reviewing the documents and pages. So many of the new guidelines require real people to be involved in deciding if the content should be archived, removed or updated. This new guideline will help staff take a good look at their current websites and decide what needs to be kept, but also to help make the websites easier to access and navigate while ensuring the content is up-to-date and accurate.



NEXT STEPS AND CONTINUED EFFORT

- We continue scanning all external, public-facing websites with our two web monitoring tools and make all necessary changes.
- Kane County Government staff work to review all content on websites and archive older materials, if necessary.
- Carefully consider where the most content will be funneling into websites and ensure the content is compliant and staff are aware and trained on what complaint webpages and content looks like.
- Consider moving all forms that are currently fillable forms and turn them into web forms using our service Laserfiche to do so. The public is better served using web-friendly forms that can be more easily filled out and submitted.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

- a. Non-compliance with WCAG 2.1 is considered a violation of Title II of the ADA, which requires governmental entities to provide equal access to services including digital platforms. A government's non-compliance with WCAG 2.1 could result in law suits filled by the DOJ or private persons against the governmental entity, with possible penalties being injunctive relief, awarding of attorneys fees, and/or being fined up to \$75,000 for an initial ADA violation, and \$150,000 for subsequent violations. Additionally, the governmental entity could face a negative public perception for its failure to be ADA compliant.