

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ACCESSIBILITY LAW IN THE U.S.



1972

Mills v. Board of Education: The U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia decides that every child, regardless of the type and severity of their disability, is entitled to a free public education.



1975

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act becomes law. It prohibits disabled children from being excluded from public schools and requires school districts to provide special services and teach children in a setting that resembles as closely as possible the regular school program.



1988

The Technology-Related Assistance Act for Individuals with Disabilities becomes law in the U.S., authorizing federal funding to state projects designed to facilitate access to assistive technology.



1998

President Clinton signs into law the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Amendments, which include Section 508. Section 508 requires access to the Federal government's electronic and information technology for employees and the public.

2008



The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 become law, broadening the scope of who is considered disabled under the law.

2012



Netflix announces it will offer closed captions on all TV and movie content starting September 2014 in response to a lawsuit ruling that Netflix and other online providers that serve the public are subject to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. This is the 1st ruling in the country to recognize that Internet-only businesses are covered by the act.

1973



The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the 1st civil rights protection for people with disabilities, becomes law. Section 504 of the Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

1979



Southeastern Community College v. Davis: U.S. Supreme Court rules that under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, programs receiving federal funds must make "reasonable modifications" to enable the participation of otherwise qualified disabled individuals.

1990



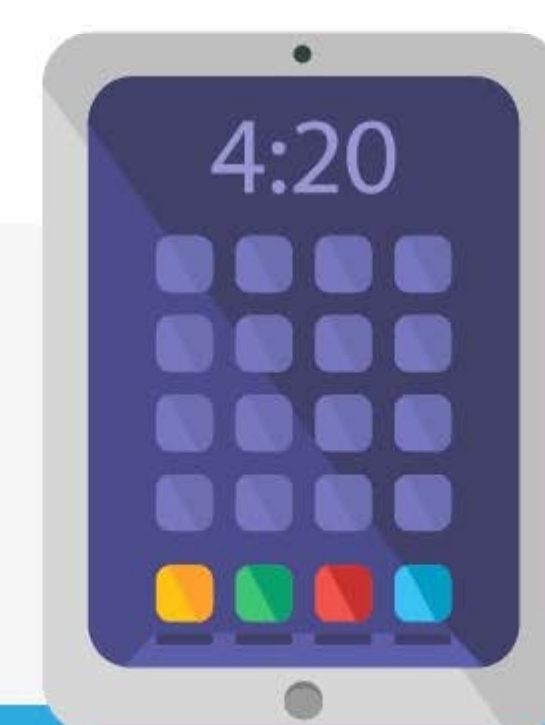
The Americans with Disabilities Act becomes law, the most comprehensive civil rights protection for people with disabilities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act is amended and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

2006



National Federation of the Blind v. Target Corporation: NFB sues Target for inaccessibility of its website for blind people and wins. Decision establishes that Title III's provisions prohibiting discrimination by "places of public accommodation" apply to websites and/or the Internet.

2010



The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, known as CVAA, is signed into law, requiring all unedited, full-length, short clip, and archival programs shown on TV with captions are also captioned when they are made available online.

2016



The U.S. Access Board approves the ICT Refresh for Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 508 standards now reflect WCAG 2.0 and take effect January 18, 2018.