# Microsoft Excel Accessibility Checklist

The following checklist should be used as a guideline for creating accessible Excel spreadsheets.

☐ **Specify table headers**
Use simple table structure with column header information. Header information is used to identify rows and columns for those using assistive technology.

☐ **Add titles to tables**
Add a table title in the first cell of the first column of the worksheet so those using assistive **technologies can find it easily.**

☐ **Avoid blank cells, rows and columns**
If you need blank cells, mark them with a minus sign, a zero or N/A for not applicable.

☐ **Avoid merging cells**
Merged cells can make it difficult for those using assistive technologies to navigate in the spreadsheet.

☐ **Do not use color alone to convey information**
Avoid using visual devices such as color, shading, patterns and borders to divide up data regions.

☐ **Give sheet tabs unique names and remove blank sheets**
This will aide in the navigation of the spreadsheet.

☐ **Every chart (e.g., bar graph, pie chart) must have a title, a legend, and axis labels (if applicable)**

☐ **Assign alternative text to all visual content**
Visual content in Excel includes pictures, clipart, SmartArt graphics, shapes, charts, videos, etc. In order for content to be accessible, alternative text must be added.

☐ **Make sure any videos in the spreadsheet have closed captions, and any audio has a transcript.**
Captions and/or transcripts (video/audio files) are essential components of multimedia access for individuals with hearing loss or auditory processing issues. Ensure that all videos have closed captions and audio description and all audio has a text transcript.

☐ **Provide meaningful text description of links to websites**
Screen reader users often list the hyperlinks in a file; a series of "click here" links is meaningless. "Sue's Ice Cream Shoppe" is more meaningful than http://www.sueics.com.

☐ **Run the Accessibility Checker to address any warnings or errors in your spreadsheet**
The Accessibility Checker tool in Excel finds accessibility issues in your spreadsheet. The tool generates a report of issues that could make your content difficult for people with disabilities to understand. Accessibility Checker also explains why you should fix these issues and how to fix them.

☐ **Test your file for accessibility using the *Read Out Load* feature in Adobe Acrobat Pro**
You can listen to your spreadsheet to test if it is readable in the *Read Out Load* feature in Adobe Acrobat Pro. *Read Out Load* is a Text-to-Speech tool.