

[Home](#) > [Publications](#) > [GP Solo](#) > [2014](#) > [March/April 2014: Disability Law](#)

## MAC USER: Accessibility Options for iOS and Mac

Vol. 31 No. 2

By Victoria L. Herring

Victoria L. Herring practices in Des Moines, Iowa, in an office that has used only Apple/Macs since the early 1980s.

With this issue involving topics related to disability law, I thought I would explore the many ways in which the Apple device universe works splendidly for those who may need the assistance. And that includes not only those in the disability community but also those of us who are aging, even gracefully, but who are finding the easy use of our eyes, ears, brains, etc., a bit compromised as we move along the aging path. I know I am having more issues with my eyesight, so I'm particularly interested in seeing how technology can solve these problems.



### Accessibility on a Mac

For instance, I'm composing this article on my MacBook Pro laptop, and because the 12-point font isn't quite distinguishable to me, I've increased the font size at this juncture to 18-point. It'll be easy to move it back down before sending it off for printing. Likewise, if I want to read an e-mail or web page or document that is in tiny type, I can just Zoom in and read the text easily. That's an assistive technology function you set up in the Mac OS System Preferences menu, under Accessibility; you set Zooming to occur when you hit a function key (such as Option) and use two fingers to scroll forward or backward. It takes some testing and getting used to, but it works for me.

In fact, as I sit here writing this article, I'm using my MacBook Pro computer to enter what I dictate into the article. It's not as easy as Dragon Dictation software, but sometimes it sure beats typing

## About GPSolo magazine

*GPSolo* magazine is published six times a year (January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December) by the ABA Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division.

GPSolo is devoted to themes of critical importance to your practice. Each issue contains articles exploring a particular topic of interest to solos, small firms, and general practitioners, as well as articles related to technology and practice management. And to keep you up to date, each issue contains five *Best of ABA Sections* digests, reprinting the top articles published by other ABA entities that will be of the greatest interest to you.

- [Visit the ABA Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division](#)
- [More publications from the Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division](#)

—and it's free. You just hit the function key [fn] quickly twice and dictate into the microphone.

## Accessibility on iOS

More interesting, however, for myself and for non-Mac users who do have iPhones or iPads is their ability, coupled with the iOS7 software's settings, to provide a whole gamut of accessible adjustments. An excellent resource on the use of assistive technologies on the iPhone is David Pogue's *iPhone: The Missing Manual, 7th Edition*, in which he discusses in some detail the various hardware and software technologies that provide disabled persons with the ability to use iOS devices. As Pogue says,

You won't believe the lengths to which Apple has gone to make the iPhone usable for people with vision, hearing or other physical impairments. If you're deaf you can have the LED flash to get your attention. If you're blind, you can literally turn the screen off and operate everything—do your email, surf the web, adjust settings, run apps—by tapping and letting the phone speak what you're touching, in whatever language your iPhone uses. It's pretty amazing.

To set up the accessibility options you find most useful, go to Settings > General > Accessibility. For instance, you can choose to activate VoiceOver or use a Bluetooth braille keyboard. Generally it's easy to test out these options, but I must report that this morning I decided to try VoiceOver on my iPad and promptly ended up preventing myself from using the iPad at all. I did figure the way out of it thanks to an answer to my query on the Apple Support Community Forum site (<https://discussions.apple.com>).

As on the Mac, the most useful iOS accessibility function I have found is Zoom. On the iPhone or iPad, double-tap with three fingers to zoom in, drag your fingers to move around the screen, and double-tap to zoom out.

Other functions I have found useful are Larger Type, which uses the Dynamic Text function to permit the fonts to become larger automatically, and Bold Text, which changes from the thin default text of iOS7 to a bold font I find easier to read. There is also an Invert Colors option, which shows black type as white on a black background and will allow flipping colors as well. I find the Bold Text option suffices for my use, but the combination of the two might work better for others.

There are a number of accessibility features for those who have hearing loss. The LED flash lets you know if a text, call, or e-mail has been received. Likewise, accessibility settings can render audio in mono rather than stereo or establish phone noise cancellation, both of which might be helpful. You can also set up

## Subscriptions

A subscription to *GPSolo* magazine is included with a \$45 [annual membership in the Solo, Small Firm, and General Practice Division](#). If you are not a member and belong to the ABA, you can join the Division by visiting the [ABA membership website](#) or calling the ABA Service Center at 800-285-2221.

Institutions and individuals not eligible for ABA membership may subscribe to GPSolo for \$135 per year, \$145 for residents outside the U.S. and its possessions. Per copy price for members and nonmembers is \$20. Requests for subscriptions and back issues should be made to the ABA Service Center at 800-285-2221 or by mail at 321 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60654-7598.

## More Information

- [Editorial Board](#)
- [Copyright information](#)
- [Reprint permission](#)
- [Advertise with us](#)
- [Writer's guidelines \[PDF\]](#)

## Contact Us

### Robert M. Salkin

Staff Editor  
American Bar  
Association  
321 N. Clark St.  
Chicago, IL 60654-

the iPhone or iPad to use subtitles and captioning whenever they're available; the font, size, color, and background of the captions can be controlled.

Although not strictly an accessibility feature, Shortcuts can prove quite helpful. For instance, rather than typing your full e-mail address, you can just use "zz". To create keyboard shortcuts on the iPhone and iPad, go to Settings > General > Shortcuts. And once you've set up abbreviations on the iPhone or iPad, they sync across all your iOS devices. For keyboard shortcuts on Mac computers, go to System Preferences > Language > Text.

Other iOS functions are specifically designed to help with mobility or dexterity issues. For instance, Assistive Touch allows you to create a special palette offering four ways to trigger various motions and gestures. Pogue's book explains these features in some detail.

### **Accessibility and the Law**

So why should you care about these technologies? Just ask a friend of mine, Anna Bradley, CEO of Criterion 508 Solutions, who has provided Section 508 compliance auditing, training, and strategic planning solutions to corporations since 2001. She summarized the legal lay of the land:

A number of laws require manufacturers, businesses, and other organizations to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. They include:

*Section 508 of the Workforce Rehabilitation Act, as Amended in 1998.* This legislation establishes the guidelines by which the accessibility of EIT is measured. The federal government and most states require that all EIT procured must comply with Section 508 standards. Otherwise, in many situations, these government entities are forbidden from purchasing the EIT.

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).* Increasingly, courts have ruled that the Internet is a "public space." Therefore, a business that offers services and products online must ensure that its website is accessible to people with visual, mobility, auditory, and cognitive disabilities. Further, Section 504 of the ADA requires that employers provide workplace accommodation to employees with disabilities. This includes appropriate assistive technologies such as screen readers, magnifiers, voice to text, braille output keyboards, keyboard-only navigation, etc. The company's software and web applications must be Section 508 compliant.

7598

Phone: 312-988-6076

Fax: 312-988-6081

**Jeffrey Allen**

Editor-in-Chief

**Kimberly Anderson**

Director

ABA Solo, Small Firm,  
and General Practice  
Division

*Final Rule to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.* Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended at 41 C.F.R. Part 60-741, prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment against individuals with disabilities and requires employers to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these individuals. The Final Rule to Section 503, announced August 27, 2013, strengthens the affirmative action provisions of the regulations and brings the nondiscrimination provisions into compliance with the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

The intersection of these laws and regulations is going to increase the pressure on organizations to ensure that their IT enterprise as a whole is accessible to people with disabilities. Failure to do so will likely result in claims of discrimination under the ADA or any one of these specific provisions.

### **Looking for Access**

Attorneys working with or for entities engaged in federal contracting will have to be on the lookout for compliance with these rules, just as counsel involved in discrimination and civil rights litigation will need to be informed. Plus, we ourselves may need assistive technologies to allow us to practice law in an independent and fulfilling manner.