

Common Accessible Form Errors and how to fix them

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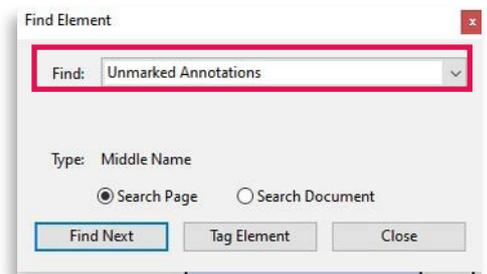
The following errors and solutions are the most common found in basic and intermediate forms. While this list is not exhaustive, it is designed to give you a path to finding solutions and can be used as a guide to fixing any form to conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Passing an automated checker is only a part of creating an accessible form.

What is an Accessible Form?

An accessible form is one that provides all necessary instructions and cues to allow the user to fill it in correctly. Each form control has associated labels and metadata to properly identify it, its purpose and the proper format required. Each field is in a logical order and is accessible using the keyboard only.

Error: Tagged Form Fields

Why: This error is the most common. When creating a form there are three steps. First, creating the fields. This is done in the source, manually or using auto-detect form fields. This creates the annotation and the visual field. Second is to create the <form> tag and move the OBJR into it in the tags tree. This step is usually the one people skip. The final step is assigning all the tag properties for name, tooltip and value.

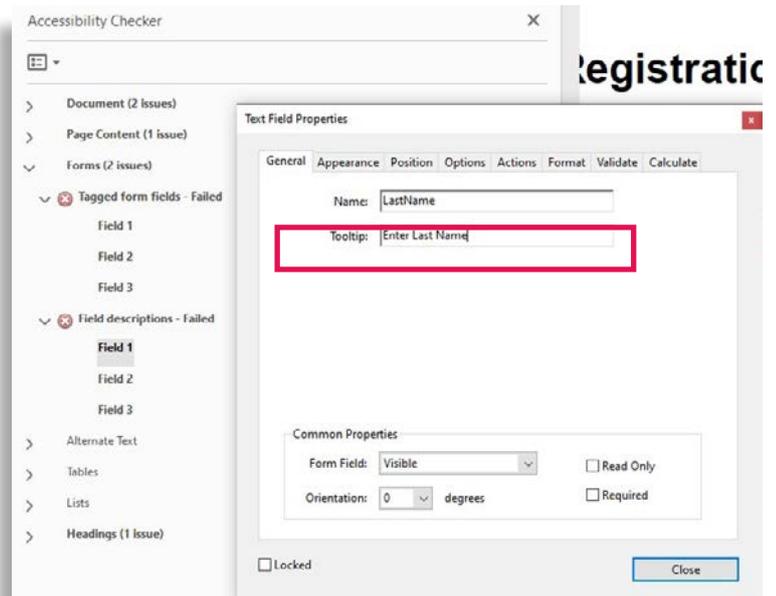


Solution: Place your cursor in the tags tree where the form field should appear. Create the form tag by right clicking and choosing **New > Tag** or select it if it exists. Right click on the <Form> tag and select **Find > Unmarked Annotation** and click Find Next and then Tag Element once it highlights the appropriate tag. Repeat for all missing form field tags.

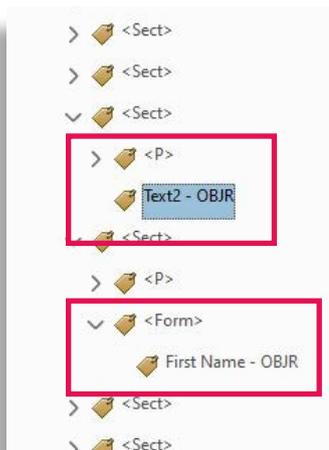
Error: Field Descriptions

Why: This is one of the easiest errors to fix. This happens because the **Tooltip** is missing. All form fields must have an associated instruction (**Tooltip**) that tells the user what is needed for the current field.

Solution: Right click on the form field missing the description and select **Properties**. Add an appropriate instruction to the **Tooltip** field. This tool tip helps assistive technology users identify the field purpose when they are in Focus Mode. This mode ignores all on-page text and only describes the form fields.



Error: Widget Annotation not nested inside Form element



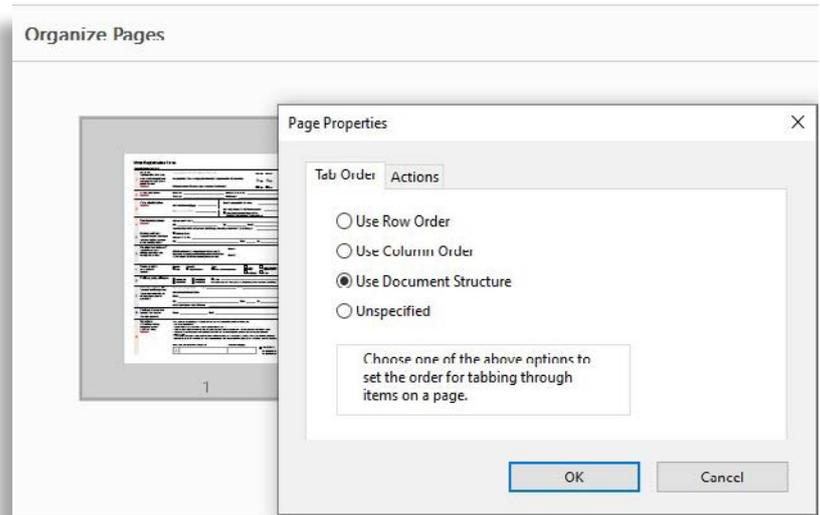
Why: This error appears when your OBJR form element is not nested inside a <Form> tag. This typically happens when editors are using the Find Unmarked Annotation tool and forget to add a <Form> tag. An OBJR form element must be a child of a <Form> tag.

Solution: Create a <Form> tag and pull the OBJR form element into the parent tag.

Error: Tab Order Failed or PAC 2021: Error while parsing the PDF Document (Invalid value for Tabs key.)

Why: This error happens because the tab order is not set correctly.

Solution: Open **Tools > Organize Pages**. Right click on any page and choose the **Use Document Structure** radio button and click OK.



Manual Checks for Accessible Forms

Item	Yes/No
Every field is keyboard navigable	
All form field names are unique (except radio button groups)	
Radio Button share Name but have unique Value	
Meaningful Tool Tip is present	
Form fields present in a logical sequence when using tab to navigate the field order	
Placeholder Text is avoided. Formats examples are present as live page text	
Required Fields are declared visually and programmatically	
Form contains no color-only cues (example: items in red are required)	
Form is free of buttons. Buttons only work inside Adobe Acrobat/Reader. Buttons do not work in a browser.	
Form fields have borders or shading that meet minimum color contrast standards	
Form text meets minimum color contrast standards	
Reader Extended mode is enabled to allow anyone using non DC versions of Adobe Reader to fill out the PDF Form	
Radio Buttons are round and Check Boxes are square (best practice for UI/UX)	

For more form accessibility tips and instruction visit <https://www.csun.edu/universal-design-center/pdf-form-accessibility>