



State of Ohio Administrative Policy

Executive Branch Cabinet Agency Web Site Standardization

No: Information Technology
IT-08

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Issued By:

Robert Blair, Director

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish Web site standardization requirements for executive branch cabinet agency Web sites. The intent of these requirements is to create a degree of consistency and predictability among **public-facing** Web pages while still providing executive branch cabinet agencies with the flexibility to design Web pages that fit their unique needs.

A glossary of terms found in this policy is located in Appendix A - Definitions. The first occurrence of a defined term is in **bold italics**.

2.0 Policy

Executive branch cabinet agencies shall meet the Web site standardization requirements outlined in this policy when developing and maintaining public-facing Web pages on **state-controlled** Web sites. The policy requirements address a number of areas, including:

- **Web Site Design:** Web site design requirements address areas such as Web site branding, headers, search capability, navigation, content area design, Web page background, and positioning (section 2.1).
- **Web Site Content:** Web site content requirements are minimal and address areas such as providing agency contact information and privacy notice requirements (section 2.2).
- **Fonts:** This section provides high-level guidance for Web site font selection (section 2.3).
- **Browser Compatibility:** Browser compatibility expectations are outlined in this section (section 2.4).

- **Web Site Accessibility:** The accessibility section requires that all agency Web pages meet the accessibility requirements outlined in Ohio Administrative Policy IT-09, "Web Site Accessibility" (section 2.5).
- **Domain Name Standardization:** The *domain name* standardization requirements outline the expectations with regard to the .gov Web site naming convention (section 2.6).

2.1 **Web Site Design:** Agencies shall comply with the following minimum requirements when designing public-facing, state-controlled Web sites:

2.1.1 **Branding:** Each agency shall have both agency and Ohio.gov branding in the header. This branding shall be consistent on all agency pages.

2.1.1.1 Ohio.gov branding shall comply with the style in effect on the front page of the Governor's Office Web site and shall provide a link to the Ohio.gov portal, <http://www.ohio.gov>. (Refer to design element 1 on Attachment 1.)

2.1.1.2 Agency branding shall be placed to the left of the header. (Refer to design element 2 on Attachment 1.) Agencies are permitted to use their own logos and branding. Agencies with subordinate agencies may use the subordinate agency brand in addition to a link to the agency home page.

2.1.1.3 Agency branding shall link to the home page of the agency's Web site. Subordinate agency branding may link to the subordinate agency home page.

2.1.2 **Web Page Header:** Each agency Web page header shall have a white background.

2.1.2.1 Agencies may place icon links to their social media instances on the Web page header (e.g., Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and Flickr). Social Media icon links shall be placed in a style consistent with that of the Governor's Office Web site. (Refer to design element 7 on Attachment 1.)

2.1.3 **Search Bar:** Each agency shall have a search bar that is the same in appearance and size as that found on the Governor's Office Web site. (Refer to design element 3 on Attachment 1.)

2.1.3.1 The search feature shall have the capability to perform searches within the agency Web site.

2.1.3.2 The search feature is not required to search any other agency Web sites or Ohio.gov.

2.1.3.3 The search bar appearance and functionality shall be consistent across all agency Web pages.

2.1.4 **Navigation**: Each agency shall provide consistent navigation on each Web page.

2.1.4.1 The primary navigation bar shall be implemented on all agency Web pages in a manner consistent with the style in effect on the Governor's Office Web site. (Refer to design element 4 on Attachment 1.) This navigation bar shall serve as the primary navigation for all agency Web pages.

2.1.4.1.1 The primary navigation bar will be about 36 px tall. Agencies may choose the fonts and colors and may implement a variety of dropdowns or megamenus from this navigation bar.

2.1.4.1.2 The primary navigation bar shall be populated with the agency-specific links, and shall remain consistent across all pages of a division or department.

2.1.4.1.3 The text links in the navigation bar shall be all capital letters, center-aligned and provide good contrast against the Web page background.

2.1.4.1.4 Primary navigation shall not be image or Flash based.

2.1.4.2 Navigation shall not be solely image-based. All images with hyperlink capability shall include the following:

2.1.4.2.1 An alternative text (alt text) description shall be provided for all images. The alt text shall include a brief description of the image and notify users that the image serves as a link.

2.1.4.2.2 All images used for navigation shall have an accompanying text link in close proximity, offering the same linking capability that the image provides. Essentially, the text link shall provide the descriptive text that identifies the intended target page.

2.1.4.3 Multimedia-based navigation (e.g., Macromedia Flash) is permitted, however, agencies shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- 2.1.4.3.1 Multimedia-based navigation shall never serve as the primary navigation on a Web page. Multimedia-based navigation shall be used within the context of general content or special pages subsidiary to primary navigation.
- 2.1.4.3.2 Multimedia-based navigation shall be accompanied by non-multimedia-based navigation for the same information. The complementary non-multi-media-based navigation shall either be on the same page as the multimedia-based navigation or a direct link shall be provided to a separate page.
- 2.1.5 **Content Area Design:** The layout and organization of each Web page content area shall remain primarily at the discretion of the agency, department or division. (Refer to design element 5 on Attachment 1.)
- 2.1.6 **Footer:** The bottom of each agency Web page shall contain a footer in a manner consistent with the style in effect on the Governor's Office Web site. (Refer to design element 6 on Attachment 1.)
 - 2.1.6.1 The content of the footer shall be consistent across all pages of the agency's Web site.
 - 2.1.6.2 Agencies may choose a non-white background color that complements the design of the Web page.
- 2.1.7 **Web Page Background:** The non-content Web page background shall be white.
- 2.1.8 **Positioning:** Agency Web sites shall be positioned within the center of the browser. A correct interpretation of this requirement shall result in a page with a clearly defined content section, centered within the browser, with both sides equally distant from the edge of the browser.
- 2.2 **Web Site Content:** Agencies shall comply with the following Web site content requirements.
 - 2.2.1 **Contact Page:** Each agency shall be required to maintain an accurate contact page containing the following information:
 - 2.2.1.1 **General Phone Number:** Agencies shall provide a general phone number on the contact page. This number shall be answered by a person during business hours.
 - 2.2.1.2 **Media Relations Phone Number:** Agencies shall consider providing a media relations phone number on the contact page.

- 2.2.1.3 **E-Mail Address/Submission Form:** Agencies shall provide an e-mail address or submission form for general concerns either directly on or linked from the contact page.
- 2.2.1.4 **Physical Mailing Address:** Agencies shall provide a physical mailing address on the contact page.
- 2.2.1.5 **Agency Updates:** Agencies shall provide a mechanism for constituents to sign-up for periodic agency updates, if desired.
- 2.2.1.6 **Placement:** The link to the contact page shall be included in the primary navigation bar. (Refer to design element 8 on Attachment 1.)
- 2.2.1.7 **Labeling:** Each agency's contact page shall be labeled "Contact."
- 2.2.2 **Privacy Notice:** Each agency Web site shall have a privacy notice. At a minimum, the privacy notice shall include the following elements:
 - 2.2.2.1 **Type of information being collected:** The privacy notice shall describe what personal information related to the user is captured by the Web site and why it is necessary.
 - 2.2.2.2 **Methods for collecting personal information:** The privacy notice shall provide an explanation of how the user's personal information is collected, including both *passive* and *active information collection*.
 - 2.2.2.3 **Use of collected personal information:** The privacy notice shall disclose uses of personal information collected through the Web site, including secondary uses, public record requirements, and the agencies or entities that will have access to the information.
 - 2.2.2.4 **Confidential Personal Information Policies:** Section 1347.15 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) requires each state agency to post on the Internet its policies adopted in accordance with that law. The privacy notice shall have a section labeled "Confidential Personal Information." The section will include links to the agency's administrative rules, policies and procedures issued in accordance with ORC 1347.15. If an agency does not maintain any confidential personal information under ORC 1347.15, it shall include a statement to that fact instead.

- 2.2.2.5 **Inspection and dispute of personal information:** Agencies shall inform Web site users that they may have rights under ORC sections 149.43, 1347.08, 1347.09, and 1347.15 with respect to inspecting, obtaining, correcting and disputing personal information collected, used or maintained on the Web site.
 - 2.2.2.6 **Contact information:** Agencies shall provide Web site users with an agency point of contact who addresses privacy questions. The contact information shall include the mailing address and at least one of the following: a telephone number, e-mail address or contact form.
 - 2.2.2.7 **Privacy Notice Updates:** The privacy notice shall be kept up-to-date to accurately reflect agency information practices. The privacy notice shall display the latest revision date.
 - 2.2.2.8 **Applicable Laws and Regulations:** Privacy notices shall be consistent with all applicable laws that regulate the collection, use and maintenance of personal information.
 - 2.2.2.9 **Placement and Labeling:** The link to the privacy notice shall be placed within the footer. (Refer to design element 6 on Attachment 1.) Each agency's privacy notice link shall be labeled as "privacy" or "privacy notice."
 - 2.2.2.10 **Privacy Notice Example:** For an example of a privacy notice that contains the required elements of the outlined above, agencies may reference the Ohio.gov privacy notice, located at <http://ohio.gov/policies/>.
- 2.3 **Fonts:** Agencies shall use standard Web-safe fonts. If necessary, agencies shall use open source or purchased Web fonts to ensure that browsers render the proper font.
 - 2.4 **Browser Compatibility:** Agency Web sites shall render properly in the current or immediately previous version of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, and Safari.
 - 2.5 **Web Site Accessibility:** Agency Web sites shall comply with the accessibility requirements outlined in Ohio Administrative Policy IT-09, "Web Site Accessibility."
 - 2.6 **Domain Name Standardization:** As a part of the effort to standardize around a common Ohio.gov look, feel and branding, each agency shall be required to have an Ohio.gov domain in accordance with the requirements outlined in Ohio Administrative Policy IT-06, "Ohio.gov Standardization & Registration of Internet Domain Names."

- 2.7 **Policy Exceptions:** Any requests for exceptions to the Web site standardization requirements outlined in this policy shall be reviewed by the Governor's Office.
- 2.8 **Procedures:** Executive branch cabinet agencies shall appoint a primary point of contact to communicate with the Governor's Office regarding the requirements of this policy. The point of contact shall be responsible for working with the Governor's Office to obtain agency Web site design concept approval and to promptly communicate any Web site re-design issues or concerns.
- 2.8.1 **Interim Design Concept Submission:** Executive branch cabinet agencies shall submit an interim design concept to the Governor's Office for approval. The interim design concept submission shall include a sample home page and internal page. This interim step will serve to ensure that all parties agree to the agency Web site design approach.
- 2.8.2 **Web Site Standardization Requirement Guidance:** For additional Web site standardization requirement guidance, agencies shall refer to the <http://Redesign.Ohio.gov>.
- 2.8.3 **Ongoing Web Site Updates:** After executive branch cabinet agencies meet the initial Web site re-design milestone deliverable dates, all future Web site design and maintenance efforts shall also meet the requirements outlined in this policy. The agency primary point of contact shall be responsible for obtaining the necessary design and exception request approvals from the Governor's Office.
- 2.8.4 **Deadline for Completion:** Executive branch cabinet agencies shall contact the Governor's Office to determine specific deadlines for the submission and approval of interim design concepts as well as for the launch of the Web site re-design.

3.0 Authority

ORC 125.02, 125.021, 125.023, 125.04, 125.041, 125.18

This state policy is applicable to all executive branch cabinet agencies, and all subordinate agencies, departments and divisions within those agencies. For the purposes of this policy, the terms "executive branch cabinet agency" or "agency" are used interchangeably to convey the stated policy scope.

The requirements outlined within the policy apply only to public-facing Web pages, which for the purposes of this policy does not include internal or external agency applications.

4.0 Revision History

Date	Description of Change
03/03/2008	Original policy.
1/06/2012	Policy revised to reflect changes in Ohio's Web site design requirements.
12/21/2012	Revised the policy to remove all Ohio.gov domain related requirements and replaced them with a reference to Ohio Administrative Policy IT-06, "Ohio.gov Standardization & Registration of Internet Domain Names." This update transfers all Ohio.gov related requirements to one statewide policy. Also, transferred the policy content into a new State of Ohio Administrative Policy Template. Re-numbered policy to IT-08 to be consistent with new numbering format.
12/21/2017	Scheduled policy review.

5.0 Inquiries

Direct inquiries regarding Web site design requirements and the approval process to:

Jon Keeling
Deputy Communications Director
Office of Governor John R. Kasich
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

614-995-1716 | Jon.Keeling@Governor.Ohio.gov

Direct inquiries about this policy to:

State IT Policy Manager
Enterprise IT Architecture & Policy
Investment and Governance Division
Office of Information Technology
Ohio Department of Administrative Services
30 East Broad Street, 39th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

614-466-6930 | State.ITPolicy.Manager@oit.ohio.gov

State of Ohio Administrative Policies may be found online at
www.das.ohio.gov/forStateAgencies/Policies.aspx

6.0 Attachments

Attachment 1 - Governor's Office Design Illustration. This is a screen capture of the Governor's Office home page, <http://www.governor.ohio.gov/>, which identifies each required design element.

Attachment 1 - Governor's Office Design Illustration

The illustration shows a website layout for the Governor's Office. At the top left is the Ohio State seal (2) and the text "JOHN R. KASICH GOVERNOR OF OHIO". To the right is the "Ohio.gov" logo (1) with links for "State Agencies" and "Online Services". A search bar (3) and social media icons for Twitter and YouTube (7) are also present. A red navigation bar (4) contains links for "HOME", "ABOUT", "ADMINISTRATION", "PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES", "MEDIA ROOM", "CONTACT", and "SHARE YOUR IDEAS". Below the navigation bar is a large image (5) of Governor Kasich signing a document, with a video player (6) below it showing a message from Governor Kasich and Lt. Governor Mary Taylor. To the right of the video player is a "Welcome" section with a video player and a "Watch the message from Gov. Kasich and Lt. Gov. Taylor!" link. Below the video player is a "News and Press Releases" section with a "subscribe to the news feed" link and two news items: "Kasich Appoints Blanchard To Coshocton County Court Of Common Pleas" and "NEWS: Ohio Approves Record Number of Jobs Projects". To the right of the news section is a "SHARE YOUR IDEAS ON ENERGY POLICY" button with an Ohio map icon. Below this is the "TRANSFORMING OHIO FOR GROWTH" logo with the tagline "RENEW. REFORM. REVIVE." and a "Meet Lt. Governor Mary Taylor" section with a photo of Mary Taylor. At the bottom is a footer (6) with "Governor John R. Kasich" and "Ohio.gov" on the left, and "Home | Privacy Notice | Contact" and "State Agencies | Online Services" on the right.

Appendix A - Definitions

- a. Active information collection. Data that is directly solicited from users by the Web site and is knowingly provided by users. Examples include surveys, registration forms and other types of user information collection tools.
- b. Domain name. A domain name is used to locate computers on the Internet and to allow users to reach Web sites. Each domain name has at least two components, the top level domain (TLD) name and the secondary level domain (SLD) name. In terms of Ohio.gov, “.gov” is the TLD and “Ohio” is the SLD. A third level domain may be added to further distinguish a SLD. For the purposes of this policy, executive branch cabinet agencies are required to have an Ohio.gov alias at the third level. Structurally, the domain name would conform to the following format: [Agency Name/Acronym].Ohio.gov. Refer to section 2.6, Domain Name Standardization, of this policy for specific domain name requirements.
- c. Passive information collection. Data that is automatically collected by the Web site. The user is not asked for passive information; it is collected as the user navigates the web site. Examples of passive information collection include data collected by cookies and log files.
- d. Public-facing Web pages. Public-facing Web pages are Web pages that are accessed via the World Wide Web by any Internet user throughout the world. Public-facing Web pages include information available to the general public, but do not include intranets, extranets, e-mail or applications.
- e. State-controlled Web sites. Web sites developed and maintained by Ohio agencies, or under contracts administered by Ohio agencies.

Appendix B - Resources

Document Name
<i>Additional Web site standardization requirement guidance</i> http://Redesign.Ohio.gov