1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish website standardization and content management requirements for executive branch cabinet agency websites. 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 align with the website design and content management standards defined by the InnovateOhio Platform team when developing and maintaining public-facing Web pages on state-controlled websites.

2.1 User Experience Digital Toolkit: Agencies shall utilize the InnovateOhio Platform’s User Experience Digital Toolkit to design their public facing Web pages. The toolkit includes the following:

- Style Guide (accessibility, color palette, typography, dependencies)
- User Interface Controls (e.g., ads grid, accordions, arrows and popovers, badges, breadcrumbs, buttons, card carousel, checkboxes, labels, left and main navigation, vector maps, etc.)
- Content Components (e.g., charts, icons, lists, tables, etc.)
- Page Examples (e.g., form, landing, login, password reset)
- Layout (cards, dividers, form, grid system)
2.2 **Branding:** Each agency shall have both agency and Ohio.gov branding. This branding shall be consistent on all agency pages.

2.2.1 Ohio.gov branding shall comply with the style in effect on the Ohio.gov home page.

2.2.2 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.

2.2.3 Agency branding shall link to the home page of the agency’s website. Subordinate agency branding may link to the subordinate agency home page.

2.3 **Social Media:** Agencies shall place icon links to their social media instances on their website (e.g., Twitter, YouTube, Facebook).

2.4 **Search Feature:** Each agency shall have a search feature available and utilize the InnovateOhio Platform search engine optimization templates.

2.4.1 The search feature shall have the capability to perform searches within the agency website.

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

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

2.5.1 The primary navigation bar shall be implemented on all agency Web pages.

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

2.5.3 Primary and secondary navigation shall be text-based; images or other formats shall not be used.

2.5.4 All images with hyperlink capability shall include an alternative text (alt text) description that conveys the action that will be initiated when the user clicks on the link (e.g., destination).
2.5.5 Navigation within self-contained or embedded content, such as interactive animations, video, or data visualizations, is permitted but should only be used within the context of the component.

2.6 **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.

2.7 **Website Content:** Agencies shall comply with the following website content requirements.

2.7.1 **Contact Page:** Each agency shall maintain an accurate contact page containing the following information:

- 2.7.1.1 A general phone number that is answered by a person during business hours.
- 2.7.1.2 A media relations phone number (if available).
- 2.7.1.3 An e-mail address or submission form for general concerns.
- 2.7.1.4 A physical mailing address.
- 2.7.1.5 Contact pages shall be labeled "Contact."

2.8 **Privacy Notice:** Agency websites shall provide a hyperlink to a privacy notice on every Web page. At a minimum, the privacy notice shall include the following elements:

- 2.8.1 **Type of information being collected:** The privacy notice shall describe what personal information related to the user is captured by the website and why it is necessary.

- 2.8.2 **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.

- 2.8.3 **Use of collected personal information:** The privacy notice shall disclose uses of personal information collected through the website, including secondary uses, public record requirements, and the agencies or entities that will have access to the information.

- 2.8.4 **Confidential Personal Information Policies:** Section 1347.15 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) requires each state agency to post on its’ website the 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.

2.8.5 **Inspection and dispute of personal information:** Agencies shall inform website 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 website.

2.8.6 **Contact information:** Agencies shall provide website 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.

2.8.7 **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.

2.8.8 **Applicable Laws and Regulations:** Privacy notices shall be consistent with all applicable laws that regulate the collection, use and maintenance of personal information.

2.8.9 **Labeling:** Each agency's privacy notice link shall be labeled as "privacy" or "privacy notice." (Refer to the footer on [Ohio.gov](https://ohio.gov) for an example of labeling.)

2.8.10 **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: [https://ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/site/home/privacy-notice-and-policies](https://ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/site/home/privacy-notice-and-policies).

2.9 **Content Management:** Agencies shall keep content up-to-date using the InnovateOhio Platform’s content management tool.

2.9.1 Agencies shall develop a process for selecting and training content coordinators who are responsible for maintaining agency website content.

2.10 **Mobile Ready:** Agencies shall ensure that InnovateOhio Platform mobile ready templates and components are used to create a responsive user experience on any device (e.g., mobile phones, tablets).
2.11 **Browser Compatibility:** Agency websites shall render properly in the current or immediately previous version of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari, and Edge.

2.12 **Website Accessibility:** Agency websites shall comply with the accessibility requirements outlined in Ohio Administrative Policy IT-09, “Website Accessibility.”

2.13 **Domain Name Standardization:** Each agency is 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."

2.14 **Website Standardization Requirement Guidance:** For additional website standardization requirement guidance, agencies shall refer to the InnovateOhio Platform User Experience Digital Toolkit Web page, https://ux.ohio.gov.

2.15 **InnovateOhio Platform Team Responsibilities:** The InnovateOhio Platform team shall:

- Oversee the State of Ohio’s digital presence and partner with executive branch cabinet agencies to ensure their websites align with statewide requirements;
- Maintain digital toolkit standards and resources;
- Support and provide agency’s with access to a website content management tool; and
- Communicate any substantive changes in website standards or content management to agencies and content coordinators in a timely manner.

3.0 **Authority**

ORC 125.02, 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03/03/2008</td>
<td>Original policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/06/2012</td>
<td>Policy revised to reflect changes in Ohio’s website design requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/21/2012</td>
<td>Revisited 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 &amp; 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/15/2020</td>
<td>Updated the policy to incorporate the InnovateOhio Platform tools, standards, and format. The policy was also modified to reflect the change in administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/06/2020</td>
<td>Updated the navigation requirements to reflect the current InnovateOhio Platform practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/06/2023</td>
<td>Scheduled policy review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.0 Inquiries

Direct inquiries regarding website design requirements to:

InnovateOhio Platform Team  
Office of Information Technology  
Ohio Department of Administrative Services  
30 W Spring Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Platform@InnovateOhio.gov

InnovateOhio Platform Team resources may be found online at https://innovateohio.gov/.

Direct inquiries about this policy to:

State IT Policy Manager  
Enterprise IT Architecture & Policy  
Office of Information Technology  
Ohio Department of Administrative Services  
30 East Broad Street, 39th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Appendix A - Definitions

a. **Active information collection.** Data that is directly solicited from users by the website and is knowingly provided by users. Examples include surveys, registration forms and other types of user information collection tools.

b. **Domain names.** A domain name is used to locate computers on the Internet and to allow users to reach websites. 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 2.13, Domain Name Standardization, of this policy for specific domain name requirements.

c. **InnovateOhio Platform:** The InnovateOhio Platform (IOP) was established as a result of Governor Mike DeWine’s issuance of Executive Order 2019-15D Modernizing Information Technology Systems in State Agencies. The IOP provides integrated and scalable capabilities that enable state agencies to become more customer-centric and data-driven, delivering on Innovate Ohio’s vision to better serve Ohioans. The platform creates an integrated customer experience that brings higher-quality services to the public.

d. **Passive information collection.** Data that is automatically collected by the website. The user is not asked for passive information; it is collected as the user navigates the website. Examples of passive information collection include data collected by cookies and log files.

e. **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.

f. **State-controlled websites.** Websites developed and maintained by Ohio agencies, or under contracts administered by Ohio agencies.
Appendix B - Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Name</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Additional Website standardization requirement guidance</em></td>
<td><a href="https://innovateohio.gov/">https://innovateohio.gov/</a> and <a href="https://ux.ohio.gov">https://ux.ohio.gov</a></td>
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</tbody>
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