



Administrative Policy No 15.18

Subject: Internet Design, Development, and Approval

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Authorizing Source: Chief Information Officer
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Approved By:


Chief Administrative Officer

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide direction for the design, development, review and approval of DSHS Internet Web sites and applications; and
2. State that DSHS determines what external content will be linked to from DSHS Web sites.

Applicability and Scope

This policy applies to all Internet Web sites and applications operated by DSHS.

Definitions

Accessible – A Web site is accessible when a person using Web browsing technology is able to visit a site and get a full and complete understanding of the information contained there, as well as have the full and complete ability to interact with the site. This includes people with one or more disabilities. The [W3C User Agent Accessibility Guidelines 1.0](#), the [DSHS NetGuide](#), and the [Department of Information Services \(DIS\) Accessibility Web site](#) contain more information about accessibility.

Administration – Management Operations, Government and Community Affairs or one of the DSHS Administrations. For the purposes of this policy, administration can also mean an organizational unit within an administration delegated responsibility for this policy by the administration.

DSHS Webmaster – The person responsible for oversight of the DSHS Internet and intranet sites.

External Content – Content or links to content provided or maintained by non-governmental entities.

Hosting – The housing of files that make up a Web site on a Web server. The host serves and maintains the files and ensures there is a constant, high-speed connection to the Internet.

Owner – Person(s) responsible for the approval, accuracy, authenticity, timeliness and maintenance of the information and content published on Administration Internet Web sites.

Priority 1 W3C Accessibility Checkpoints – The [W3C User Agent Accessibility Guidelines 1.0](#) is made up of twelve guidelines that state general principles for the development of accessible Web sites. Each guideline in turn is made up of several “checkpoint” definitions. Each checkpoint is assigned a priority that indicates its importance for users with disabilities. Priority 1 checkpoints must be satisfied; otherwise one or more groups of users with disabilities will find it impossible to access the Web. Satisfying this checkpoint is a basic requirement for enabling some people to access the Web site.

Teamsite – Content management software that utilizes a single user interface and common repository for shared data and graphics that allows DSHS to create, approve, publish and manage Web content quickly and efficiently. This software allows DSHS to build, deploy and integrate content management across the DSHS enterprise.

Usability – The measure of a Web site’s potential to accomplish the goals of the user. Factors used in determining a Web site’s usability include positive user experience, ease-of-use, visual consistency, and a clear, defined process for navigation.

Webmaster – Staff person(s) assigned responsibility for compliance with DSHS Internet policy and for the development and administration of sites or applications posted on the DSHS Internet site.

Web Site – Program-specific Internet Web sites operated by any administration within DSHS and linked to and from the DSHS Internet Web site (<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/>). These Web sites are located below the DSHS Home page level and are sometimes called sub-sites.

Policy

Responsibility:

Each DSHS Internet site must have an assigned owner. In addition, each administration must designate a Webmaster and assign this person responsibility for compliance with this policy.

Design and Development:

Design, development and usability of any DSHS Internet Web site or application must meet standards in the [DSHS NetGuide](#).

Testing Requirements:

The administration Webmaster, using the accessibility compliance tools documented in the [DSHS NetGuide](#), must test Internet sites and/or Internet applications and resolve any [Priority 1 W3C Accessibility Checkpoint](#) errors. Warning conditions should also be addressed as appropriate.

Maintenance Requirements:

It is the responsibility of the site owner to maintain the Internet site and keep it current by removing outdated information within 30 days of expiration.

Hosting Requirements:

Administrations within DSHS must host their Internet Web applications and sites on the DIS server or on an administration server if it adheres to the security standards found in the [DSHS Security Policy Manual](#). An outside Internet Service Provider (ISP) may not be used. All Internet sites developed and operated by administrations within DSHS must link to the DSHS Internet site (<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/>).

Web Site Publication:

All administrations must follow [DSHS NetGuide](#) review and publishing standards before their Web site or application will be linked to the DSHS Internet Web site. Internal, Communications and DSHS Webmaster reviews must all be completed.

Content Management:

The Teamsite Content Management tool is the only tool used to manage all DSHS Internet sites hosted by DIS.

External Content:

Each administration must designate staff to authorize and maintain links to external content. Staff are governed by state ethics laws when placing external links on DSHS Web sites. Unless needed to conduct DSHS business, staff will not place links to sites that:

- Are likely to offend a reasonable citizen or are profane in nature;
- Contain reference to illegal or undesirable practices or conduct;
- Endorse or oppose political candidates, bills under consideration by the Legislature or other positions not officially endorsed by DSHS;
- Promote discrimination that is prohibited by federal and state laws or departmental policy;
- Endorse businesses, products or services;
- Endorse or promote a religious affiliation; or
- Are considered inappropriate for government employees or government in general.

Each DSHS Web site must contain a disclaimer that tells the user that DSHS will not be held responsible for the content on external sites. DSHS can, at its sole discretion, remove external links from its Web pages.