Washington Department of Social and Health Services

Expert and Comparative Review

June 22, 2023

anthrotech

Contents

Goals

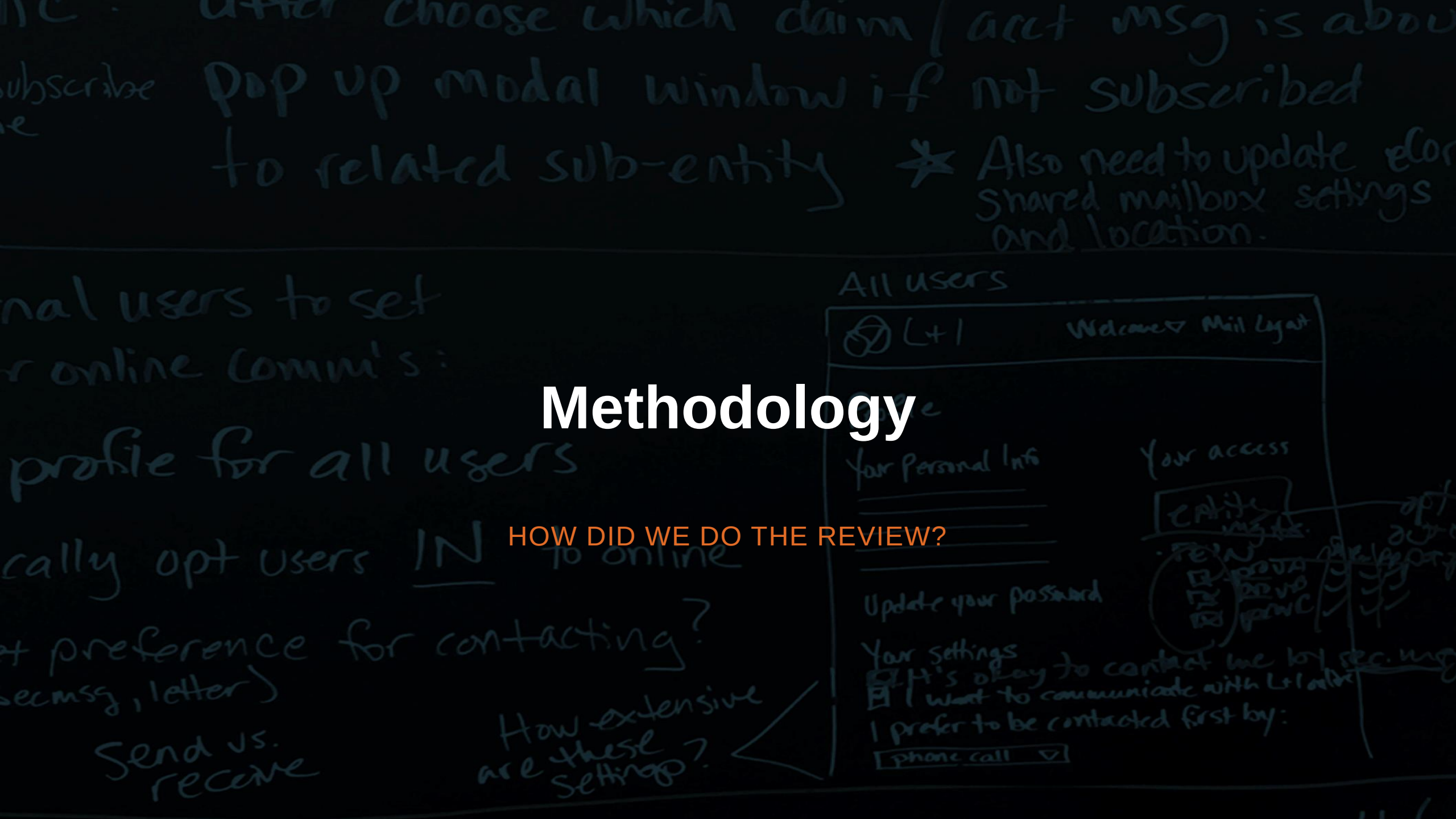
WHY DID WE DO THE REVIEW?

Expert and Comparative Review Goals

- Assess the usability and accessibility of the DSHS Contact Us page and Ask DSHS form to identify areas for improvement.
- Identify areas in which the DSHS Contact US page and the Ask DSHS form could introduce barriers for people with disabilities and recommend solutions.
- Identify and compare peer websites for ideas and opportunities.

Feature areas

- **Design/Navigation**
- **Accessibility**
- **DSHS Contact Us Page**
- **Ask DSHS Form**


Methodology
HOW DID WE DO THE REVIEW?

Accessibility Review Methodology

The accessibility review was conducted using W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), the most complete, relevant and up-to-date standards for web accessibility.

Tools used for testing

- **Keyboard-only navigation**
- **JAWS screen reader**
- **WebAIM's color contrast checker**

Accessibility Standards Used For Review

The 78 criteria in WCAG 2.1 are based on four main principles:

Principle	Description	Example
Perceivable	Users with different abilities can easily perceive the information presented.	Can blind users access the same information sighted users can?
Operable	Users with different abilities can operate the user interface (UI) components.	Can a user access all UI components using the keyboard alone?
Understandable	Users with different abilities can understand how to interact with UI components.	Can screen reader users identify the purpose of a link or a form field?
Robust	Content can adapt and remain accessible as users with different abilities interact with it using new technologies and devices.	Can users access content using different devices and assistive technologies?

UX and Comparative Review Methodology

Reviewed the DSHS Contact Us page, Ask DSHS form, and the peer sites using a combination of Anthro-Tech's own set of professional standards and other principles of UX design: Nielsen’s 10 Usability Standards, Nielsen's 10 Website Form Usability Standards, and UX Design's Best practices for form design.

Scenarios used for exploration

- **Becoming a paid caregiver**
- **Checking status of an application**
- **Requesting public records and data**
- **Housing assistance**
- **Finding a medical interpreter**

UX Standards Used For Review

General UX standards selected for review
Meets the users' needs
Speaks the users' language, doesn't use jargon
Easy to navigate
Provides relevant context at users' fingertips
Trustworthy, consistent, and secure
Transparent and communicative

Form-specific standards
Keep it short and use straightforward design
Ask the easy questions first and make sure it's easily navigable
Labels and placeholder text positioned clearly
Match fields to the type and size of the input
Distinguish optional and required fields
Explain any input or formatting requirements
Considerate when asking for sensitive information
Provide highly visible and specific error and feedback messages

Issue Severity

We used the following table to assess the severity of the identified issues:

Severity	Description	Criteria
Critical	Highest severity; indicates that this issue should take precedence over all others.	Some or all users may be prevented from accomplishing their goal.
Moderate	Indicates that the issue may have an undesirable service impact.	User experience may be impacted and it may cause hesitation or confusion, but it does not prevent the user from accomplishing their goal.
Minor	Indicates that the issue could have a minor impact on usability of the service.	User experience may be slightly impacted, but mainly due to small visual issues or typos.

Comparative Review Site Selection Criteria

- Serve a variety of audiences (both professional and consumer)
- Provides health and social services
- Has a Contact Us page and ideally a contact form as well
- All comparative sites evaluated using the same set of UX best practice standards as the DSHS Contact Us/Form

Washington State Dept. of Labor & Industries	https://lni.wa.gov/agency/contact/
WorkSafe BC	https://www.worksafebc.com/en/contact-us
Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services	https://www.mass.gov/service-details/health-and-human-services-contact-information
Rhode Island Department of Human Services	https://dhs.ri.gov/contact-us
California Department of Healthcare Services	https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Pages/contact_us.aspx

Contact Us Page Review

HIGHLIGHTS OF POSITIVE FINDINGS AND ISSUES

Praises – Contact Us Page

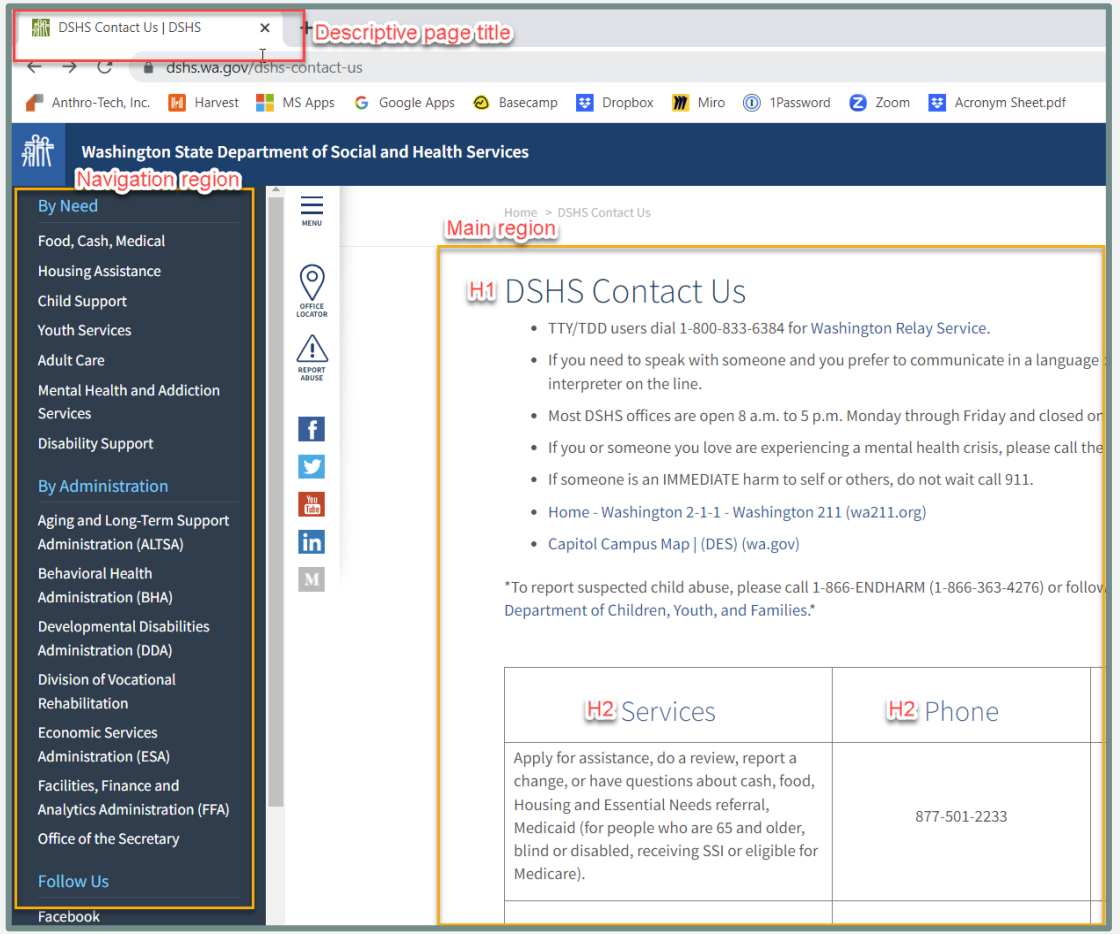
ACCESSIBILITY AND UX WINS

There are mechanisms to help screen reader users navigate content faster.

- The Contact US page has defined main content and navigation regions in HTML. Screen reader users can use shortcut keys to jump sections of content if they wish to instead of tabbing through each UI component in a sequence.

- Headings in the Contact Us page are nested correctly for the most part.

- Contact Us page and the Ask DSHS form have descriptive page titles.



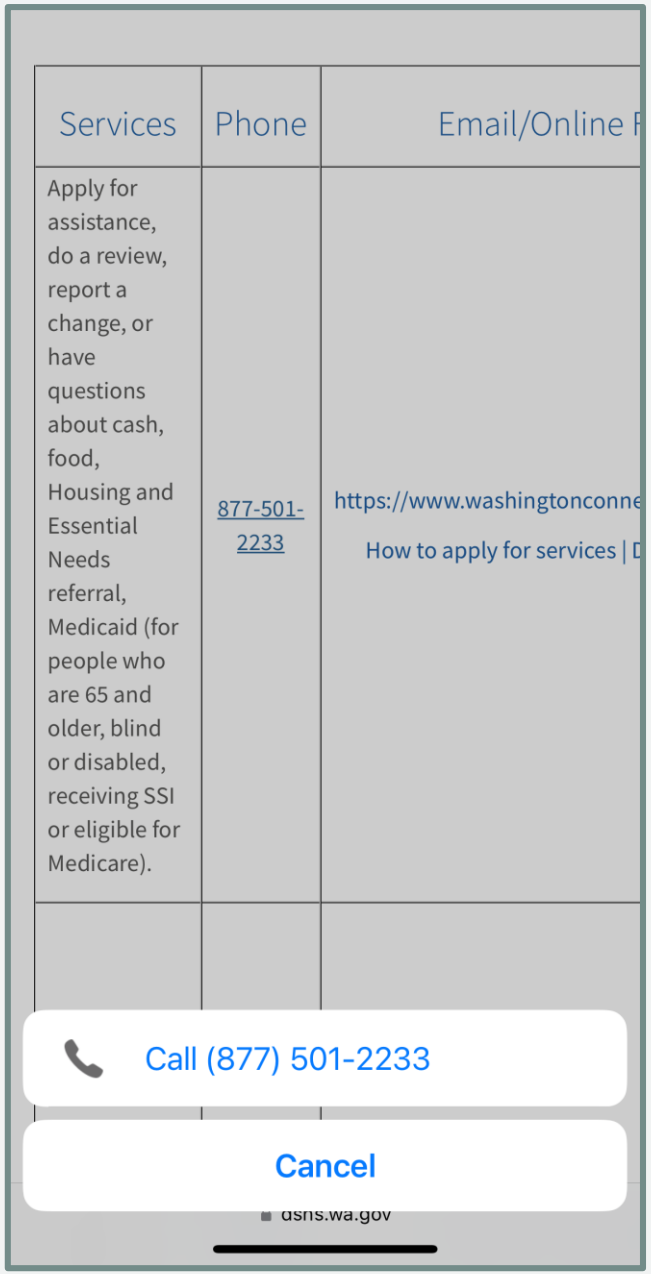
Contact information for different services includes the relevant information.

- Each service on the Contact Us page provides the relevant information at the user's fingertips so that it is simple and straightforward to reach out to a service when needed.
- For some services, the "Email/Online Form" column also contains helpful links, such as "how to apply for services."
- Additionally, the Services column sometimes provides additional relevant information about what users can expect to discuss.

Services	Phone	Email/Online Form	Address
Apply for assistance, do a review, report a change, or have questions about cash, food, Housing and Essential Needs referral, Medicaid (for people who are 65 and older, blind or disabled, receiving SSI or eligible for Medicare).	877-501-2233	https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/ How to apply for services | DSHS (wa.gov)	Find your local Community Services Office at Office Locator | DSHS (wa.gov)
Report a lost or stolen Quest/EBT card.	888-328-9271	Cardholder Portal (fisglobal.com)	Find your local Community Services Office at Office Locator | DSHS (wa.gov) EBT issuance hours are 9:00am-4:00pm Monday through Friday
Child Support Questions	800-442-KIDS (5437)	Division of Child Support | DSHS (wa.gov) Contact the Division of Child Support | DSHS (wa.gov)	
Report a complaint about a CSD staff member at an office, contact center, or other complaint about my experience.	800-865-7801	https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/csts/	
Report suspected abuse of an elderly or vulnerable adult.	877-734-6277	Email: apscentralintake@dshs.wa.gov Online: Report Concerns Involving Vulnerable Adults Website	Find your local Community Services Office at Office Locator | DSHS (wa.gov)

On mobile, it is easy to call services.

- Viewing the Contact Us page on mobile, all of the phone numbers are linked and will take users directly to their phone app to place the call.



Accessibility Issues – Contact Us Page

ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

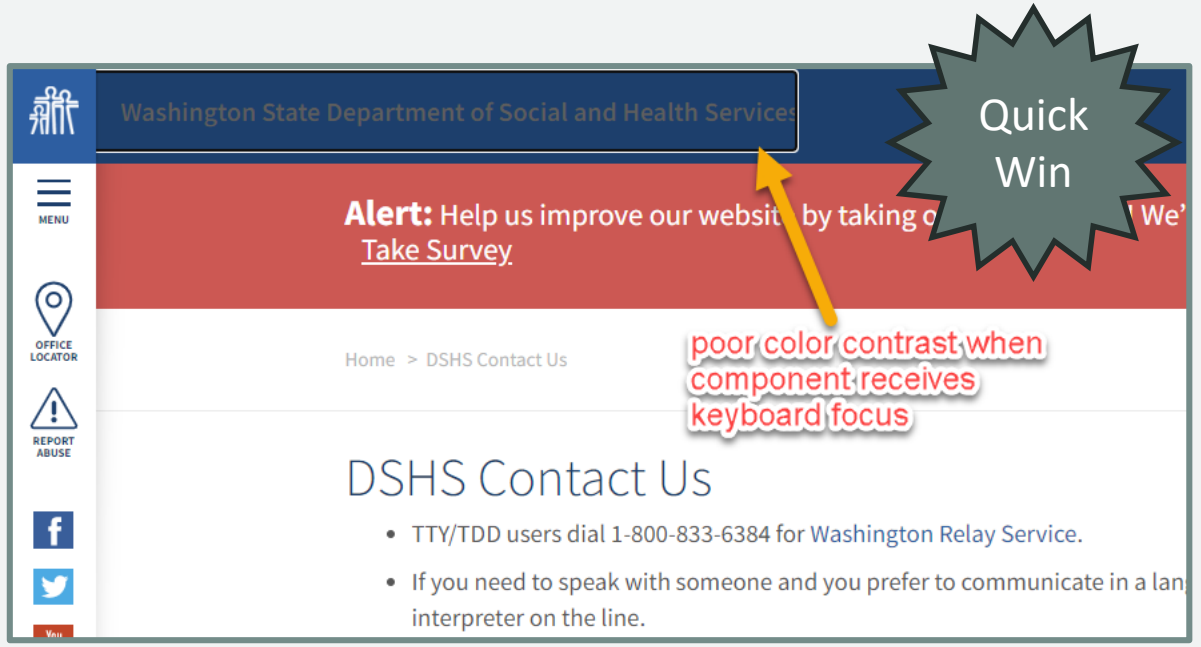
Keyboard focus lowers the color contrast ratio for some components.

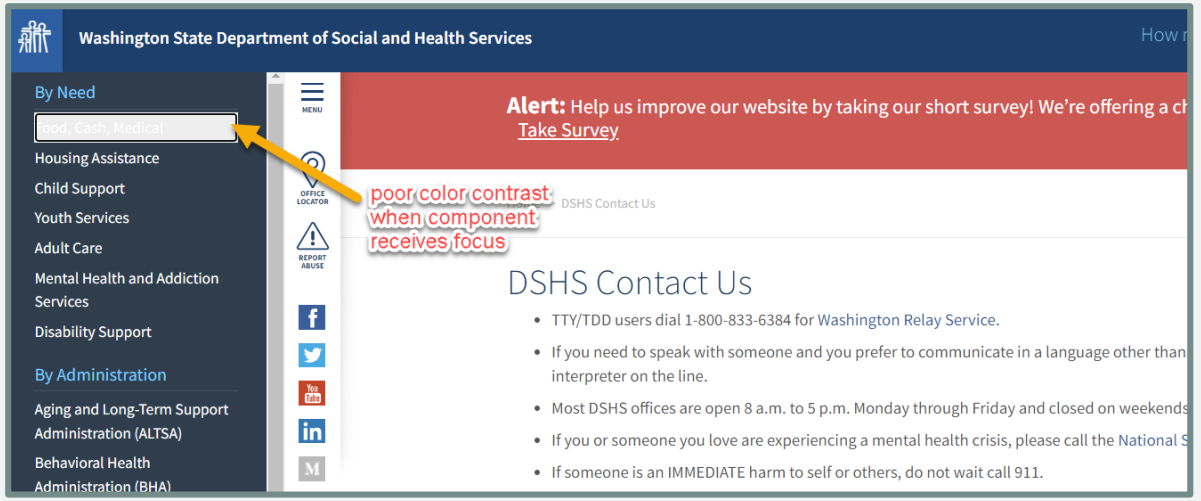
Description: When a keyboard user tabs through the UI, the foreground and background colors of some UI components change to low-contrast colors, making it hard for low vision users to read.

WCAG Standard: 1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum)

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Ensure that any changes in color when UI components receive keyboard focus passes the minimum contrast ratio of 4.5:1. Make use of a reliable color contrast checker tool to achieve this.





The top-left hamburger menu is not accessible for keyboard-only and screen reader users.

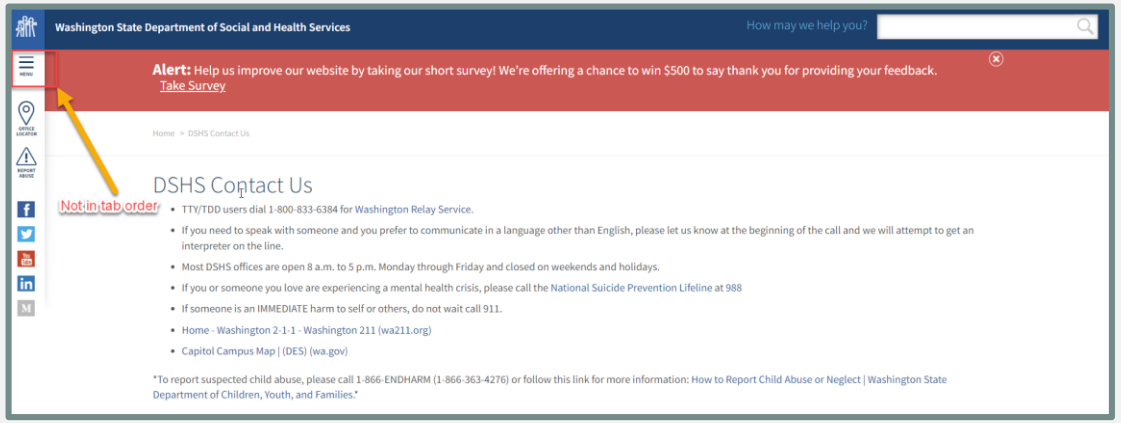
Quick Win

Description: The hamburger menu is not in the tab order; therefore, keyboard and screen reader users cannot tab to the menu.

WCAG Standard: 2.1 Keyboard accessible

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Use the HTML "tabindex" attribute to ensure that the menu component is in the correct tab order.



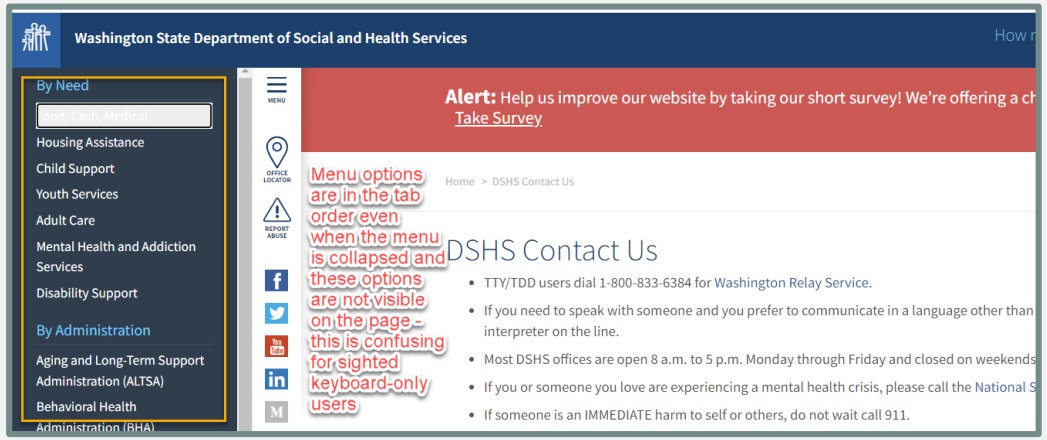
The keyboard focus disappears unexpectedly.

Description: The links in the side navigation panel are in the tab order (whether the panel is expanded or not). When the panel is collapsed, the keyboard focus disappears from the page as the user tabs through these navigation links that are not visible on the page. This can be a confusing experience for sighted keyboard-only users because they may not know where the keyboard control is.

WCAG Standard: 2.1 Keyboard accessible

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Ensure that only visible components on the page are in the tab order and receive keyboard focus.



“Skip to main content” is hidden when it receives keyboard focus.

Quick Win

Description: This link is used by blind screen reader and sighted keyboard-only users to skip blocks of content and navigate the page faster. Thus, it should become visible when it receives keyboard focus. Selecting the link also does not skip content but rather, the focus shifts to the next UI component.

WCAG Standard: 2.4.1 Bypass blocks

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Ensure that the “skip to main content” link becomes visible when it receives keyboard focus and that selecting it shifts the keyboard focus to the main region on the page.

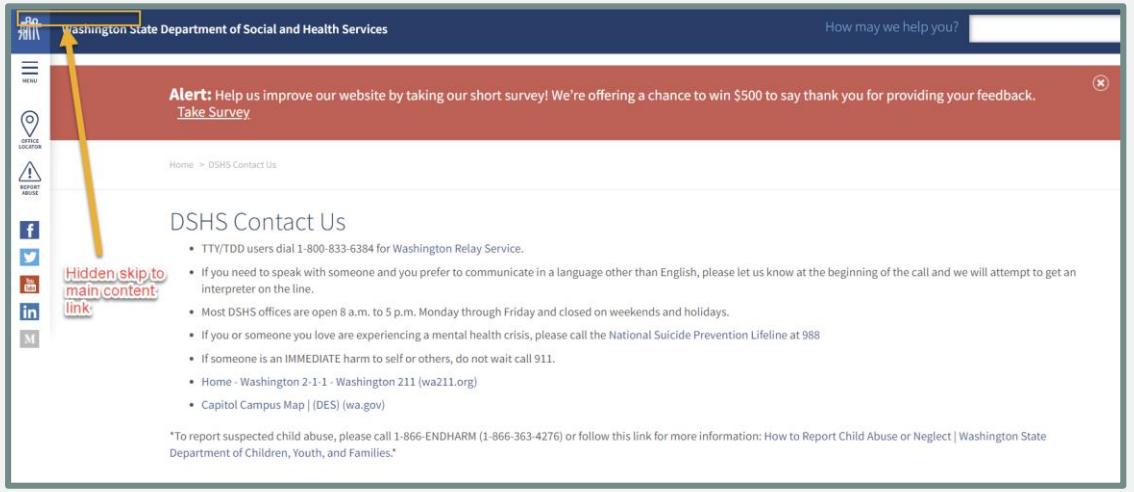


Table cells provide no context for screen reader users.

Description: The table on the page has table headers and table data; however, screen reader users have no information about which table header the data in the cell corresponds to, thus contributing to feeling lost or confused.

WCAG Standard: 1.3.1 Info and Relationships

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Make use of “scope” or “header” and “id” attributes in HTML to ensure that table headers and data cells are associated with one another to help screen reader users navigate the table efficiently. Also, add an HTML table caption that summarizes the table content.

Information on becoming a paid caregiver for a family member	866-214-9899	Email: CDWATalent@ConsumerDirectCare.com Online: Becoming a Paid Caregiver | DSHS (wa.gov) Careers - Consumer Direct Care Network Washington (consumerdirectwa.com)	
Information on the background check process.		Background Check Central Unit | DSHS (wa.gov) Contact BCCU | DSHS (wa.gov)	
Question about language testing, interpreter certifications, credits or testing, or medical interpretation	360-890-0672	dshsct@dshs.wa.gov	
Employment Verification for DSHS Employee	360-725-5830	hrmsunit@dshs.wa.gov	
Public Records Request	360-902-8484	dshspublicdisclosure@dshs.wa.gov Electronic DSHS Forms | DSHS (wa.gov)	DSHS Public Records Office Office of Information Governance P.O. Box 45131 Olympia, WA 98504-5131
Report a privacy violation (HIPAA or other information)		Privacy | DSHS (wa.gov) dshsprivacyofficer@dshs.wa.gov	DSHS Privacy Officer PO Box 45135 Olympia, WA 98504-5135
Other complaint or unresolved issue OR none of these resources match what I am looking for	800-737-0617	askdshs@dshs.wa.gov Ask DSHS form	Complaint Resolution DSHS Constituent Services P.O. Box 45131 Olympia, WA 98504-5131

Headings in the footer are not assigned HTML heading tags.

Quick Win

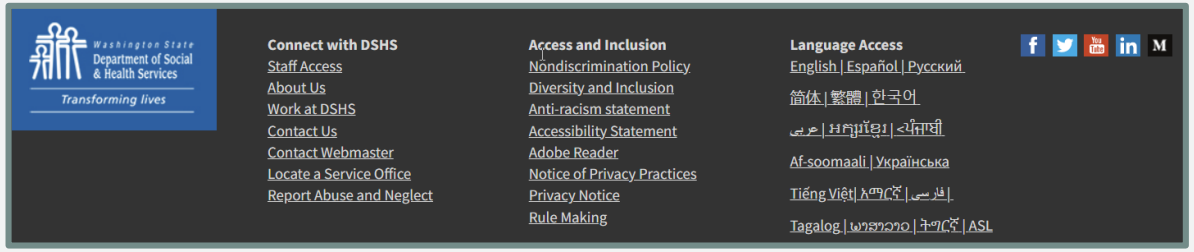
Description: Without HTML heading tags, screen reader users are unable to use headings to understand the hierarchy of content and navigate the page faster.

WCAG Standard: 2.4.6 Headings and Labels

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Assign heading level 2 tags to the following headings in the footer:

- Connect with DSHS
- Access and Inclusion
- Language Access.



UX Issues – Contact Us Page

UX ISSUES

The page lacks accessible language options.

Description: While there is a Language Access section in the footer, it takes users to a different page with some, but not all of the contact information that is on the main Contact Us page in English.

Standard: Matching between system and real world

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Create versions of the Contact Us page in different languages, and change the Language Access links to take users to the main Contact Us page in the appropriate language.

Español – Spanish

El DSHS presta servicios en el idioma de su preferencia. Para obtener más información sobre los tipos de servicios que préstamos, llame al 800-737-0617 de lunes a viernes, de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m.

Si le contesta una grabación, por favor deje un mensaje con su número de teléfono y el idioma que habla y le devolveremos la llamada con un intérprete en la línea. Los clientes y personas que sean sordos o sordociegos, o que tengan problemas de la audición o el habla, pueden llamarnos al 360-111-2222 a través de su proveedor de retransmisión favorito.

¿Qué tipos de servicios ofrece el DSHS?
- Beneficios de alimentos, en efectivo, de vivienda y médicos: 877-501-2233
- Manutención para niños: 800-442-5437
- Cuidado de adultos: 800-422-3263
- Protección para adultos: 866-363-4276
- Apoyos para discapacidad: 800-248-0949
- Rehabilitación vocacional: 800-637-5627

Para asegurarnos de que reciba los servicios que necesita, tendremos intérpretes para ayudarnos a comunicarnos con usted, traducir documentos, proporcionarle documentos con letra grande o en braille, proporcionarle versiones en audio de materiales escritos, y más. El Titulo VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles le prohíbe al DSHS discriminar debido a la raza, el color o el país de origen. Si usted solicitó servicios en su idioma de preferencia y no los ha recibido, o si siente que el DSHS lo ha discriminado, llame a Servicios al Ciudadano al 800-737-0617 o envíe su queja por correo electrónico a civil.rights@dshs.wa.gov.

También puede presentar una queja por discriminación en estas oficinas:
Oficina del Fiscal General del Estado de Washington (800-551-4636)
Comisión de Derechos Humanos del Estado de Washington (800-233-3247)
Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos de EE. UU. (800-368-1019).

The Contact Us page is only available in the footer.

Quick Win

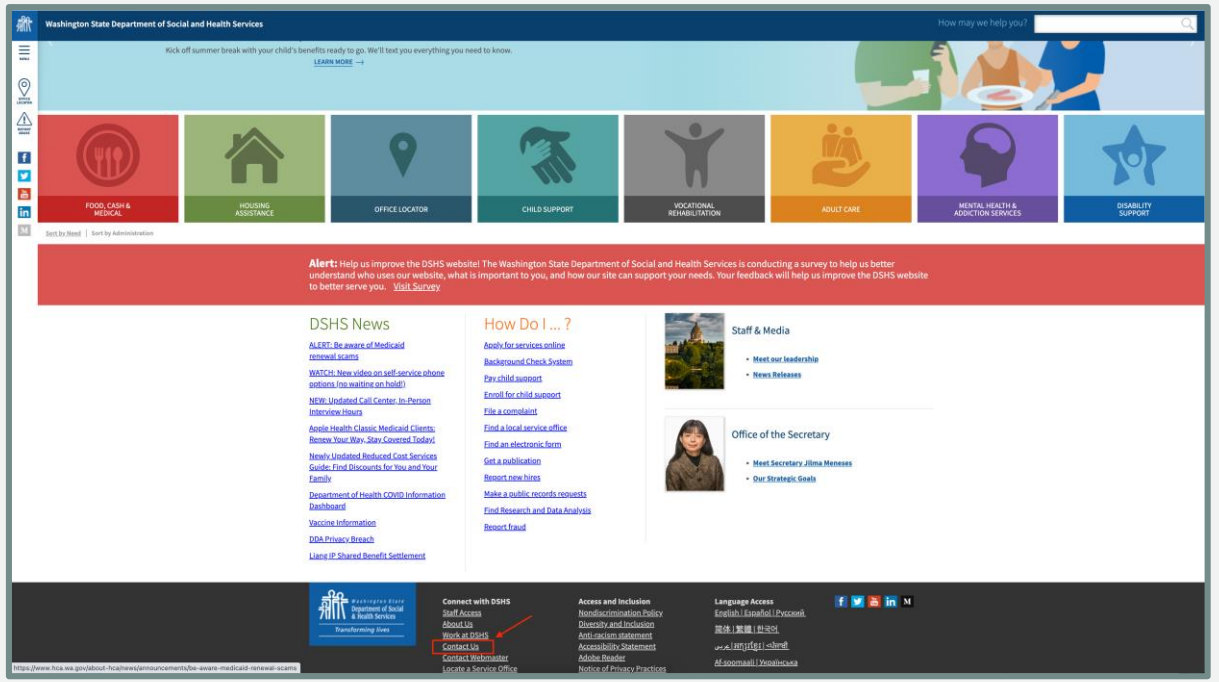
Description: There is only one perceivable way to access the Contact Us page - in the footer. Users generally expect to find a link in the footer, which is available on all pages; however there could be more and better visible access points.

Standard: Navigable

Severity: Moderate

Recommendations:

- Add Contact Us link to sidebar or header.
- Consider adding the general Constituents 800 number/email to the header so users can make calls right from the homepage.



There is no perceivable order to services listed.

Description: All of the services are clearly listed but not in any perceivable order; the general Constituents 800 number/email is at the bottom and hard to find.

Standard: Meet user needs

Severity: Moderate

- Move the general 800 number and TTY, Ask DSHS form link, and office locator to the top of the page.

- Group like services together under shared header to make it easier to identify services; place most frequently used first.

Quick Win

Information on becoming a paid caregiver for a family member	866-214-9899	Email: CDWATalent@ConsumerDirectCare.com Online: Becoming a Paid Caregiver | DSHS (wa.gov) Careers - Consumer Direct Care Network Washington (consumerdirectwa.com)	
Information on the background check process.		Background Check Central Unit | DSHS (wa.gov) Contact BCCU | DSHS (wa.gov)	
Question about language testing, interpreter certifications, credits or testing, or medical interpretation	360-890-0672	dshsct@dshs.wa.gov	
Employment Verification for DSHS Employee	360-725-5830	hrmsunit@dshs.wa.gov	
Public Records Request	360-902-8484	dshspublicdisclosure@dshs.wa.gov Electronic DSHS Forms | DSHS (wa.gov)	DSHS Public Records Office Office of Information Governance P.O. Box 45131 Olympia, WA 98504-5131
Report a privacy violation (HIPAA or other information)		Privacy | DSHS (wa.gov) dshsprivacyofficer@dshs.wa.gov	DSHS Privacy Officer PO Box 45135 Olympia, WA 98504-5135
Other complaint or unresolved issue OR none of these resources match what I am looking for	800-737-0617	askdshs@dshs.wa.gov Ask DSHS form	Complaint Resolution DSHS Constituent Services P.O. Box 45131 Olympia, WA 98504-5131

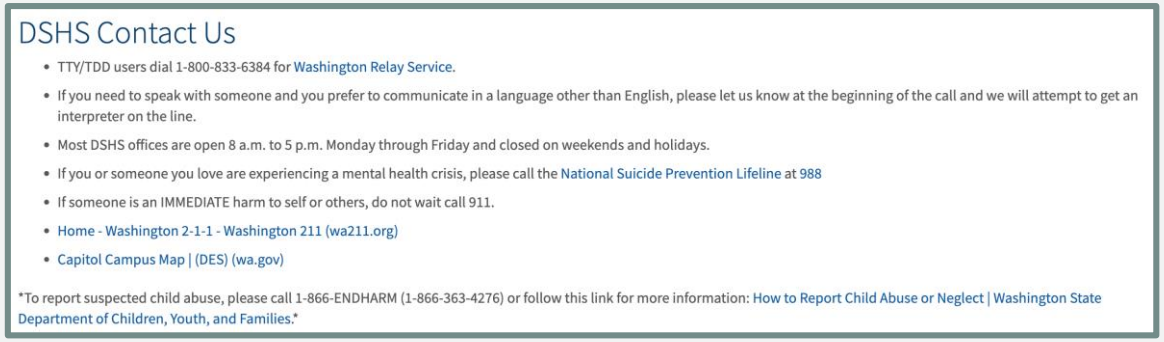
The list at the top does not highlight critical information.

Description: The list at the top includes some contact information, general agency information, and other hyperlinks, but it lacks organization, which makes it harder to see critical information, such as crisis lines.

Standard: Trustworthy and consistent

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Organize this information at the top as clearly defined icons; provide 800 number and TTY first, then provide an icon for the Office Locator and the Ask DSHS form. Also separate out crisis information (988, 911, ENDHARM lines) and bold/highlight them.


DSHS Contact Us

- TTY/TDD users dial 1-800-833-6384 for Washington Relay Service.
- If you need to speak with someone and you prefer to communicate in a language other than English, please let us know at the beginning of the call and we will attempt to get an interpreter on the line.
- Most DSHS offices are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and closed on weekends and holidays.
- If you or someone you love are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988
- If someone is an IMMEDIATE harm to self or others, do not wait call 911.
- Home - Washington 2-1-1 - Washington 211 (wa211.org)
- Capitol Campus Map | (DES) (wa.gov)

To report suspected child abuse, please call 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276) or follow this link for more information: How to Report Child Abuse or Neglect | Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

Services column provide some details, but not consistently.

Description: Some services provide details on the kinds of inquiries one should make with that contact (e.g., reporting abuse or apply for assistance), but in many cases it just lists the group name without additional context. This could cause users to call certain numbers with incorrect expectations.

Standard: Relevant context at fingertips

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Reorganize so they are grouped by like services. For example:

- Services and Benefits: Applying for assistance, housing/essential needs, Medicaid, lost/stolen EBT
- Healthcare questions: Info about becoming a paid caregiver, report a HIPAA violation

Child Support Questions
Report a complaint about a CSD staff member at an office, contact center, or other complaint about my experience.
Report suspected abuse of an elderly or vulnerable adult.
Report patient abuse or neglect at Western State Hospital
Information on becoming a paid caregiver for a family member
Information on the background check process.
Question about language testing, interpreter certifications, credits or testing, or medical interpretation
Employment Verification for DSHS Employee
Public Records Request
Report a privacy violation (HIPAA or other information)

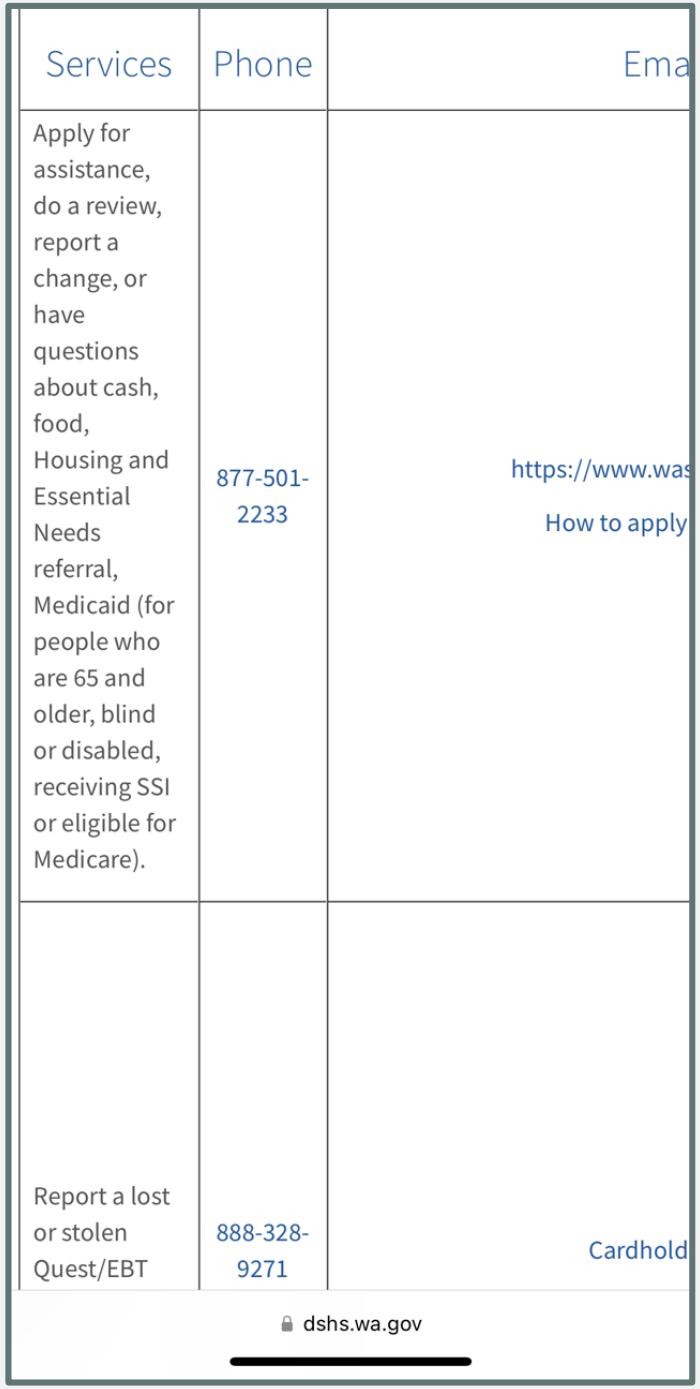
The page is difficult to navigate on a mobile device.

Description: On a mobile device, the Contact Us page does not scale correctly, leading users to have to scroll up, down, and left to right in order to see all of the content. This also means that information is not visible when looking at other information, which makes it hard for users to get the information that they need.

Standard: Navigable; Relevant context at fingertips

Severity: Moderate

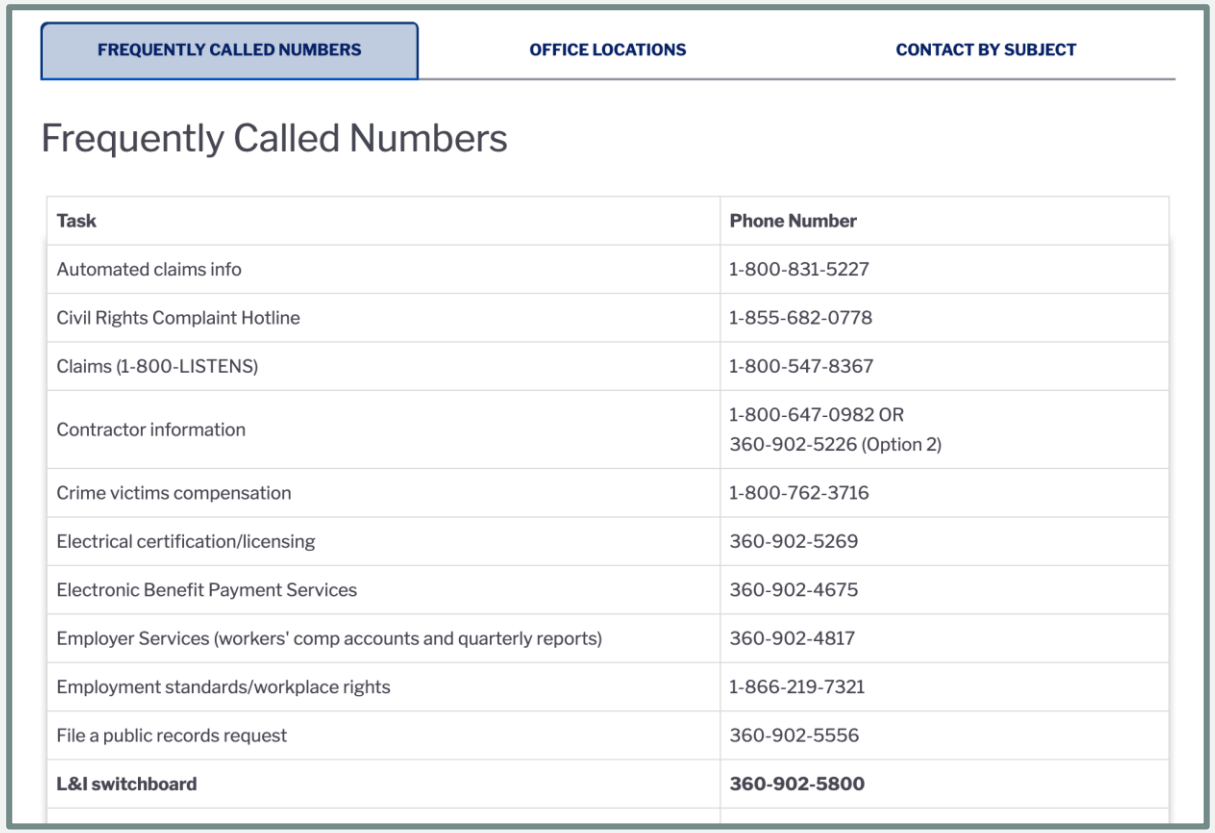
Recommendation: Rework the mobile version of the Contact Us page so that it formats correctly with all information visible for each row in the table without needing to scroll from side to side. Alternatively, move away from a table into a format that is more mobile friendly.



UX Contact Us Comparative Review

Page Organization – Washington Dept of Labor and Industries

- The L&I Contact Us page is organized across different tabs, helping to cut down on clutter while also allowing for multiple streams of information to remain on the same webpage/link.
- Frequently Called Numbers is the landing tab, allowing users to see immediately potentially most relevant numbers first.
- **Recommendation:** DSHS could consider a layout with distinct sections (such as important info at the top, like services in the middle, and remaining services at the bottom) to better organize contact information by different services.



FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS | OFFICE LOCATIONS | CONTACT BY SUBJECT

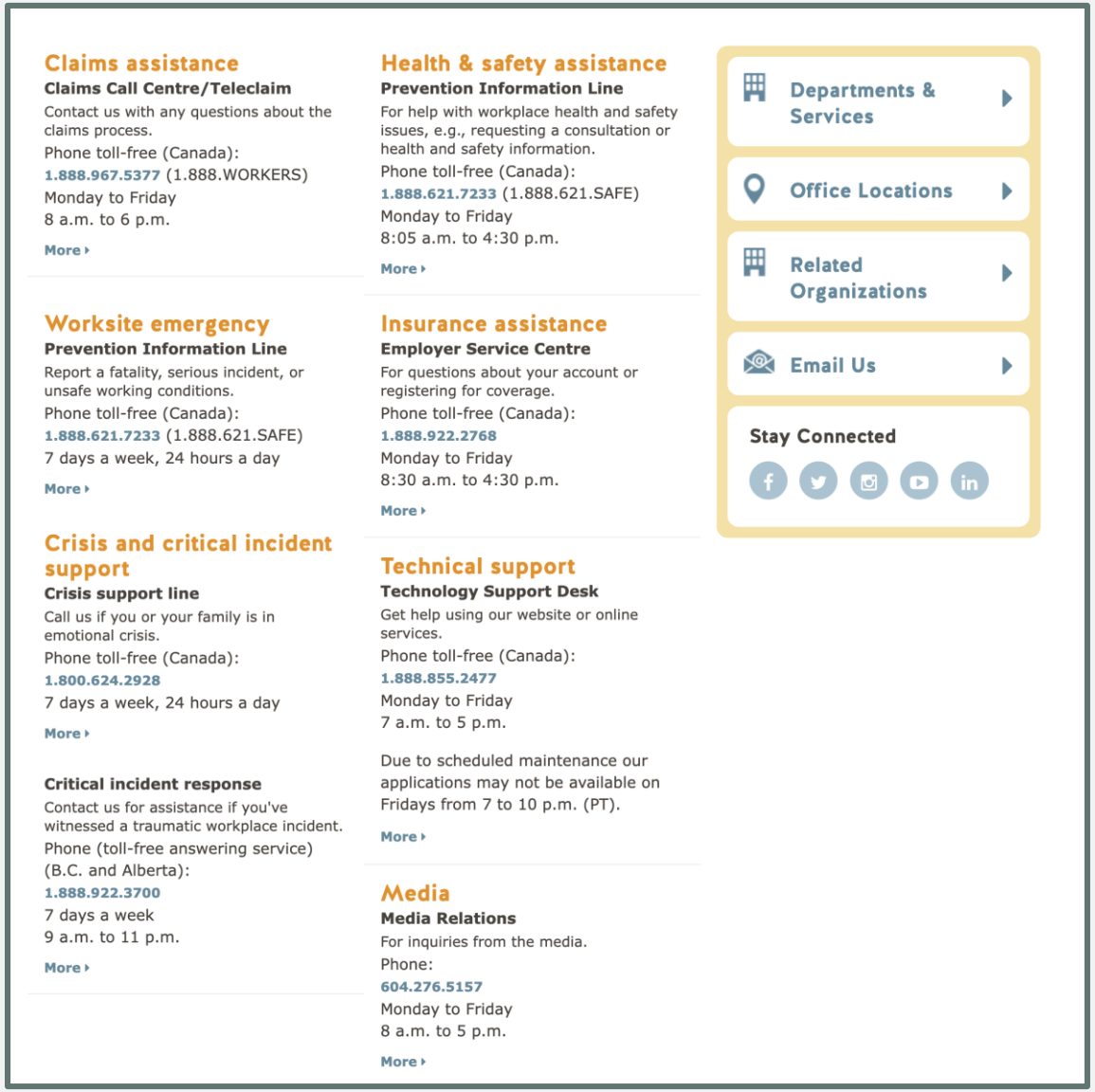
Frequently Called Numbers

Task	Phone Number
Automated claims info	1-800-831-5227
Civil Rights Complaint Hotline	1-855-682-0778
Claims (1-800-LISTENS)	1-800-547-8367
Contractor information	1-800-647-0982 OR 360-902-5226 (Option 2)
Crime victims compensation	1-800-762-3716
Electrical certification/licensing	360-902-5269
Electronic Benefit Payment Services	360-902-4675
Employer Services (workers' comp accounts and quarterly reports)	360-902-4817
Employment standards/workplace rights	1-866-219-7321
File a public records request	360-902-5556
L&I switchboard	**360-902-5800**

Page Organization – WorkSafe BC

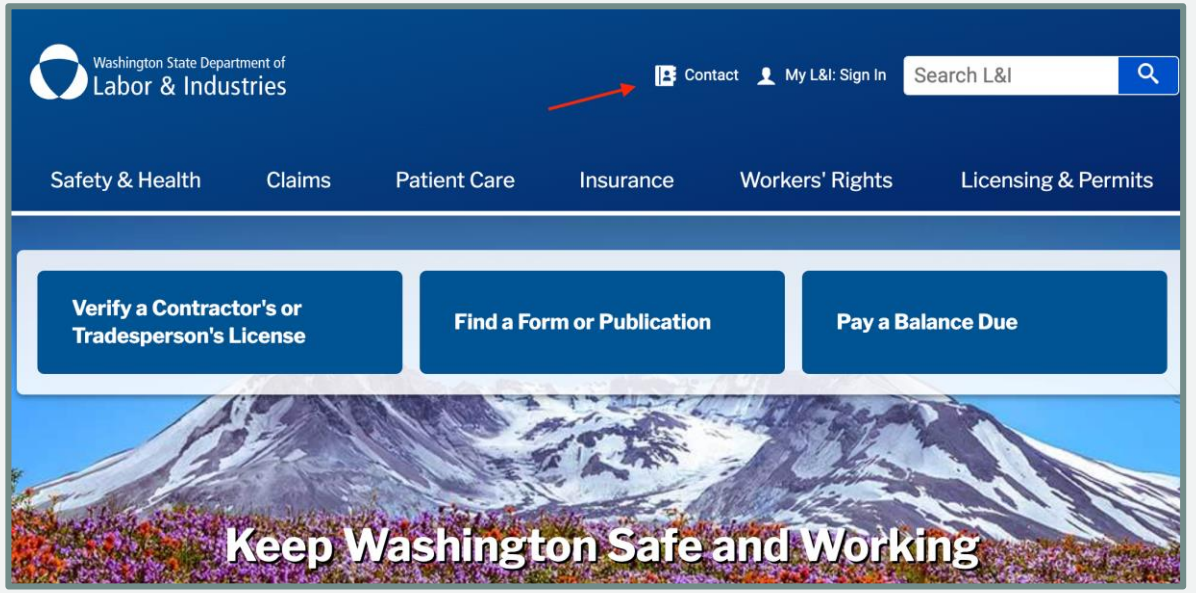
- The services are each organized into broader categories (particularly "Crisis and critical incident support" with multiple services listed underneath the header). These headers are bright and visible, making it easier for users to identify the appropriate part of the page to look at.

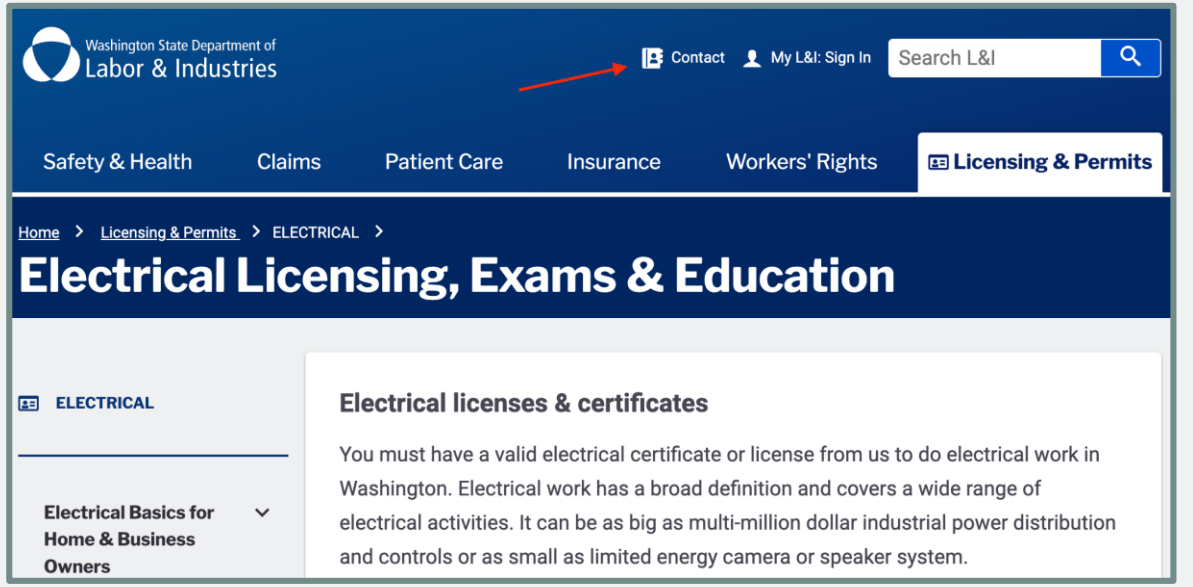
- **Recommendation:** If grouping together like services, consider following this approach (noticeable header with services underneath, a short description, and relevant contact information).



Navigability – Washington Dept of Labor & Industries

- The Contact Us link is both in the footer and header on every page across the site.
- **Recommendation:** To improve findability, DSHS could add a link in their header for an additional option.



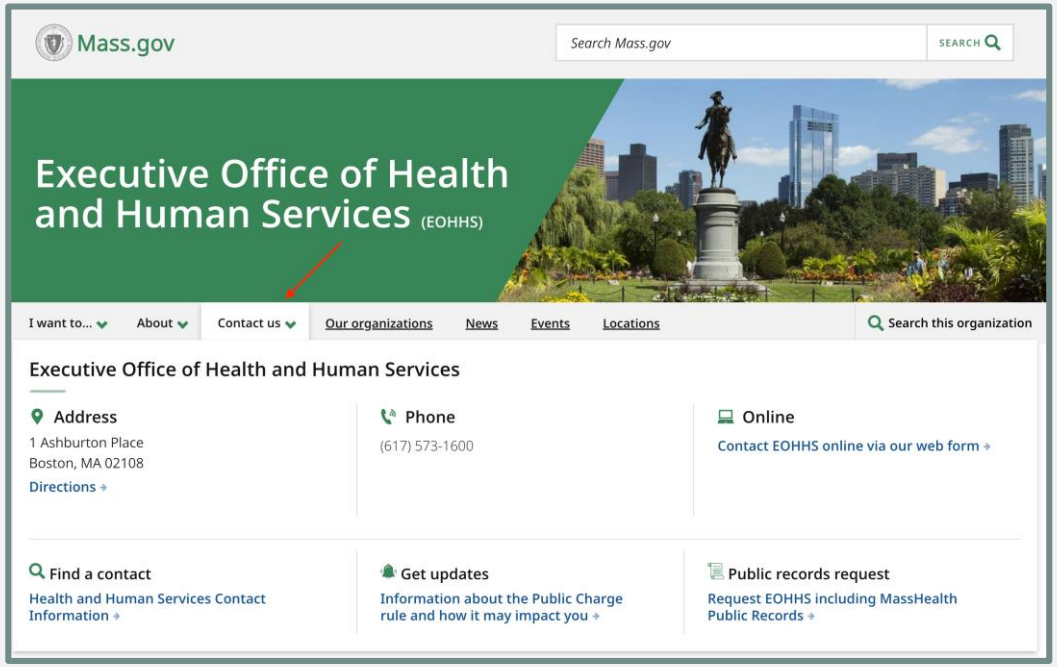


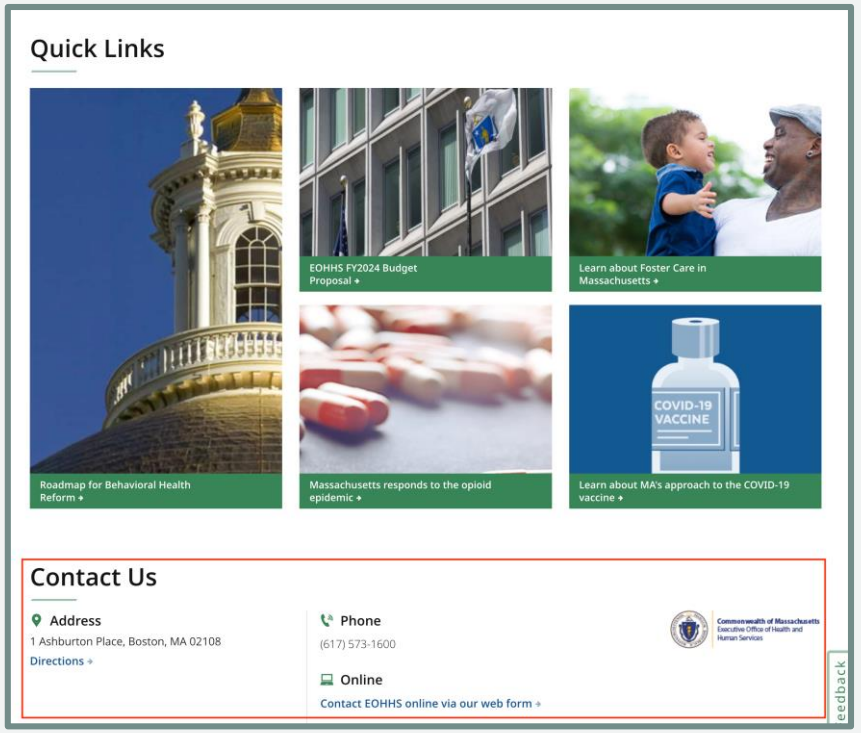
Navigability – Mass Office of Health and Human Services

- Contact Us link is a main header tab, which expands to a dropdown menu that provides the most important contact information and other resources without requiring users go to another page.

- The main contact information is also its own section on the homepage.

- **Recommendation:** DSHS could consider adding a Contact Us link to the main row of icons and/or sidebar as a similar dropdown or expanded menu that includes some contact info right on the homepage (although this should be considered in the wider context of how the site navigation works generally).





Ask DSHS Form Review

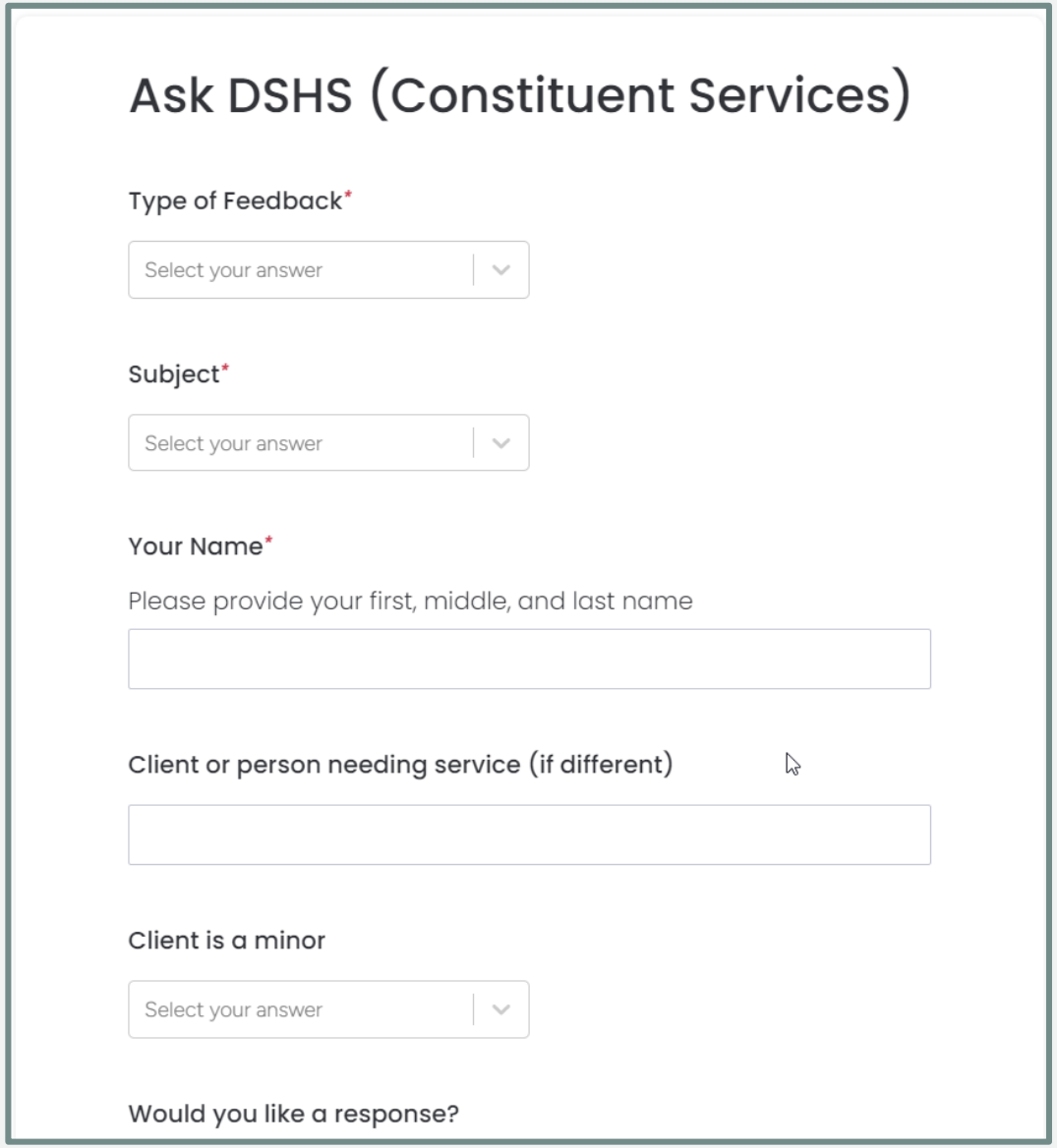
HIGHLIGHTS OF POSITIVE FINDINGS AND ISSUES

Praises – Ask DSHS Form

ACCESSIBILITY AND UX WINS

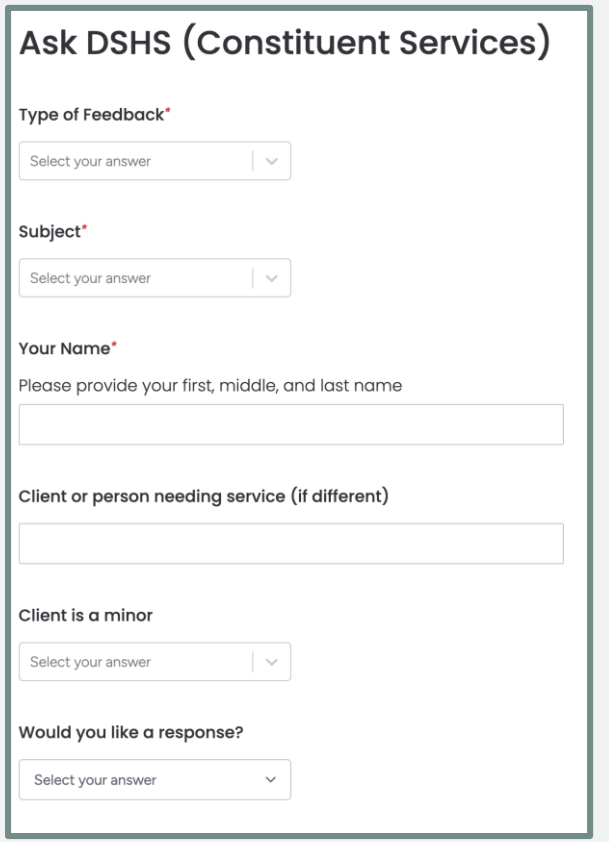
The Ask DSHS form has some accessible features.

- Each form field has a descriptive label that screen readers can read.
- The submit button is labeled correctly and passes the minimum required color contrast ratio for accessibility.
- It is easier to update and maintain the accessibility of online forms than PDF forms, which helps people with disabilities. Online forms are also easier to fill out and submit when using assistive technologies.



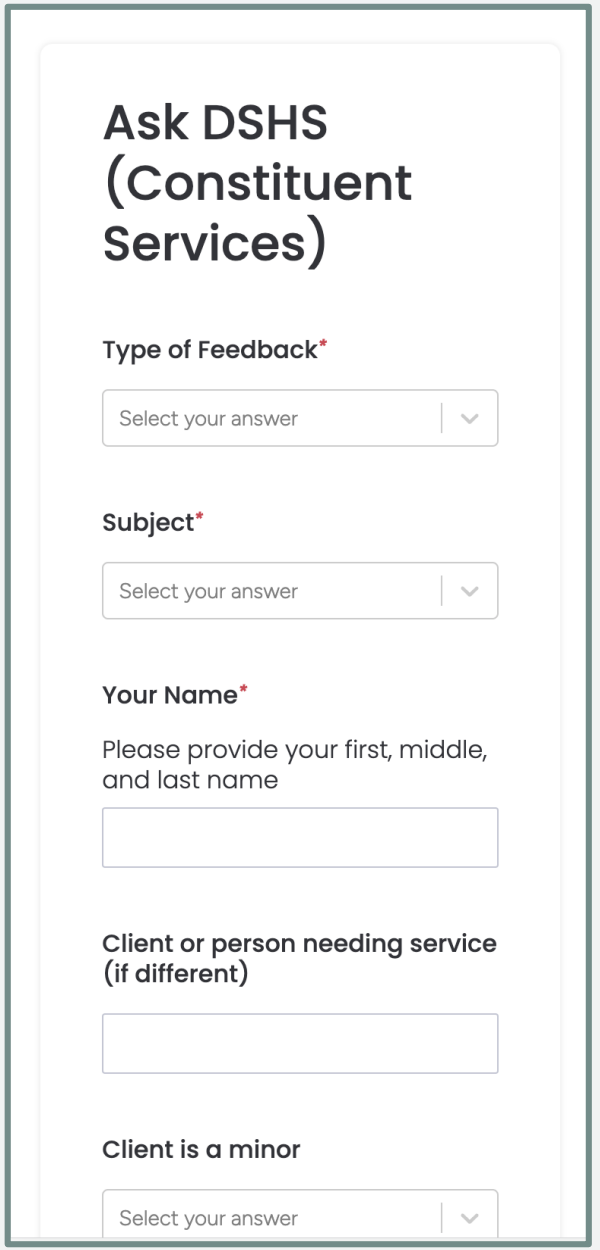
Ask DSHS form follows other specific best practices.

- The Ask DSHS form uses the correct positioning for field labels in that they are outside but still close to the input fields.
- The Ask DSHS form follows best practices and limits use of placeholder text.
- The Ask DSHS form uses good practice for highlighting error messaging for the email field, notifying users if an improper email address was used (i.e., without an '@').



On mobile, it is easy to fill out the Ask DSHS form.

- The current Mobile version of Ask DSHS form is formatted well and easy to use on a mobile device.



Accessibility Issues – Ask DSHS Form

ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

Screen reader does not recognize required fields as required.

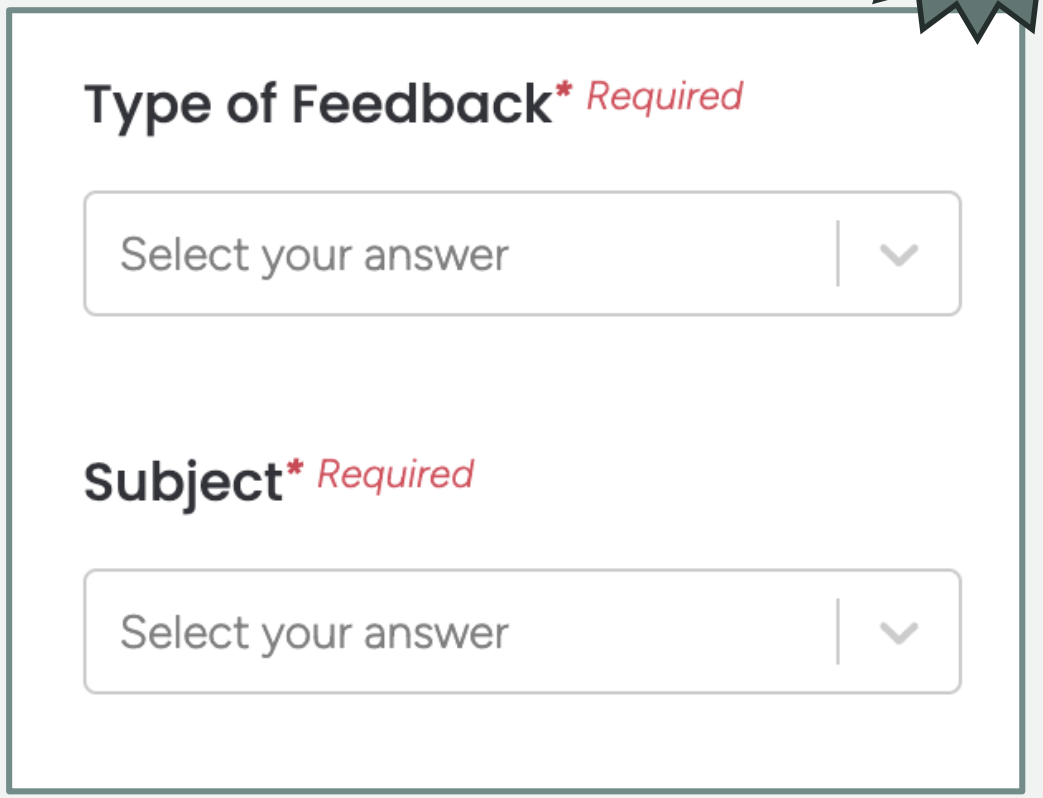
Description: Screen reader users, unlike sighted users, cannot make an informed decision in its current state about which form fields to fill out and which to leave blank.

WCAG Standard: 3.3.2 Labels or Instructions

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Make use of the "required" attribute in HTML to ensure that screen readers recognize which form fields are required and which are not. If that is not possible using monday.com forms, consider building a form in-house.

Quick Win



Screen reader does not read subtext of some form fields.

Quick Win

Description: These subtexts have important information about what kind of input is expected from the user, but the screen reader doesn't read them.

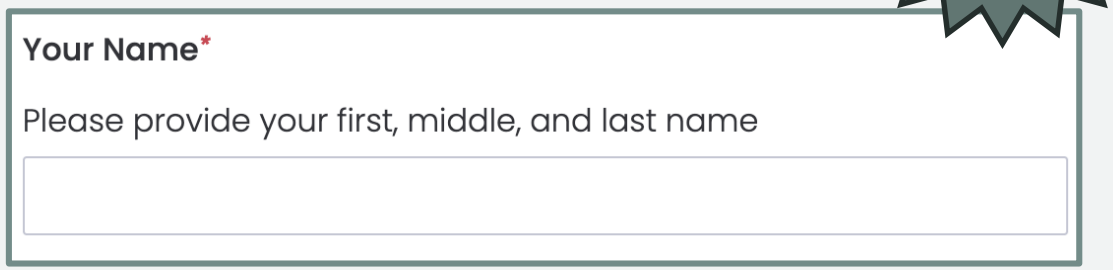
E.g., the screen reader doesn’t read:

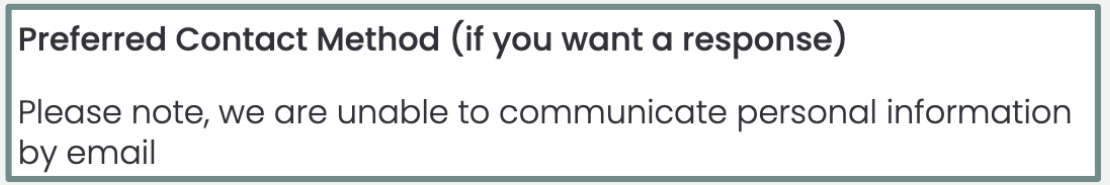
- "Please provide your first, middle, and last name."
- "Please note, we are unable to communicate personal information by email."

WCAG Standard: 3.3.2 Labels or Instructions

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Ensure that screen readers read the subtext for the fields along with the field label or consider removing the subtext entirely (e.g., by breaking up the name input field into three different fields – First Name, Middle Name and Last Name).





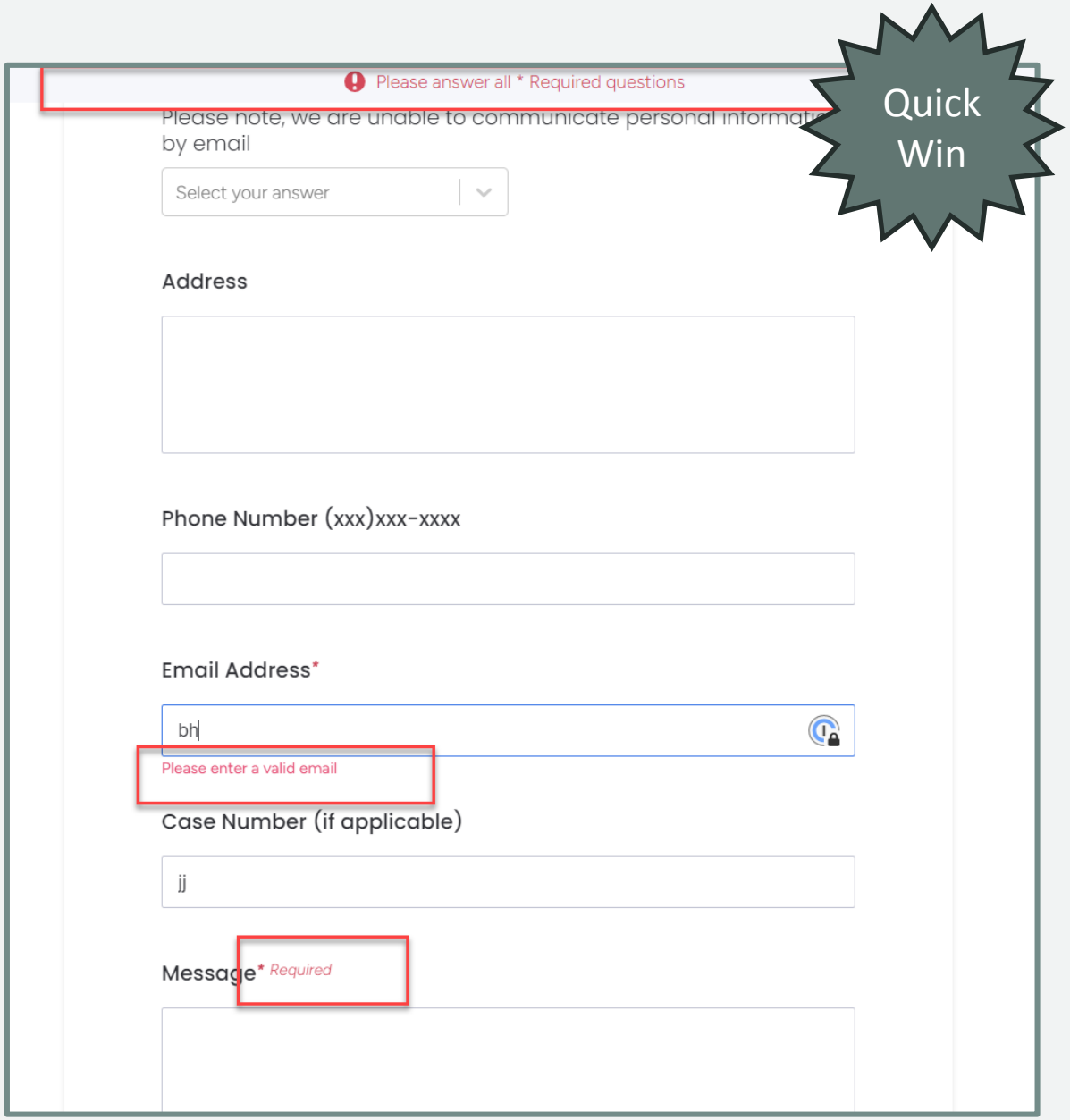
Screen readers don’t read red error text.

Description: When a user makes a mistake filling some form fields, instructions appear in red text notifying sighted users about what went wrong. These error messages don't receive keyboard focus; therefore, screen readers users are not notified of the errors. For this reason, blind users may struggle to enter correct information.

WCAG Standard: 3.3.3 Error Suggestion

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Make use of the "alert" method or the "autofocus" attribute in HTML to ensure that any alerts or error messages receive immediate focus when they appear to help screen reader users correct mistakes. If that is not possible using monday.com forms, consider building a form in-house.



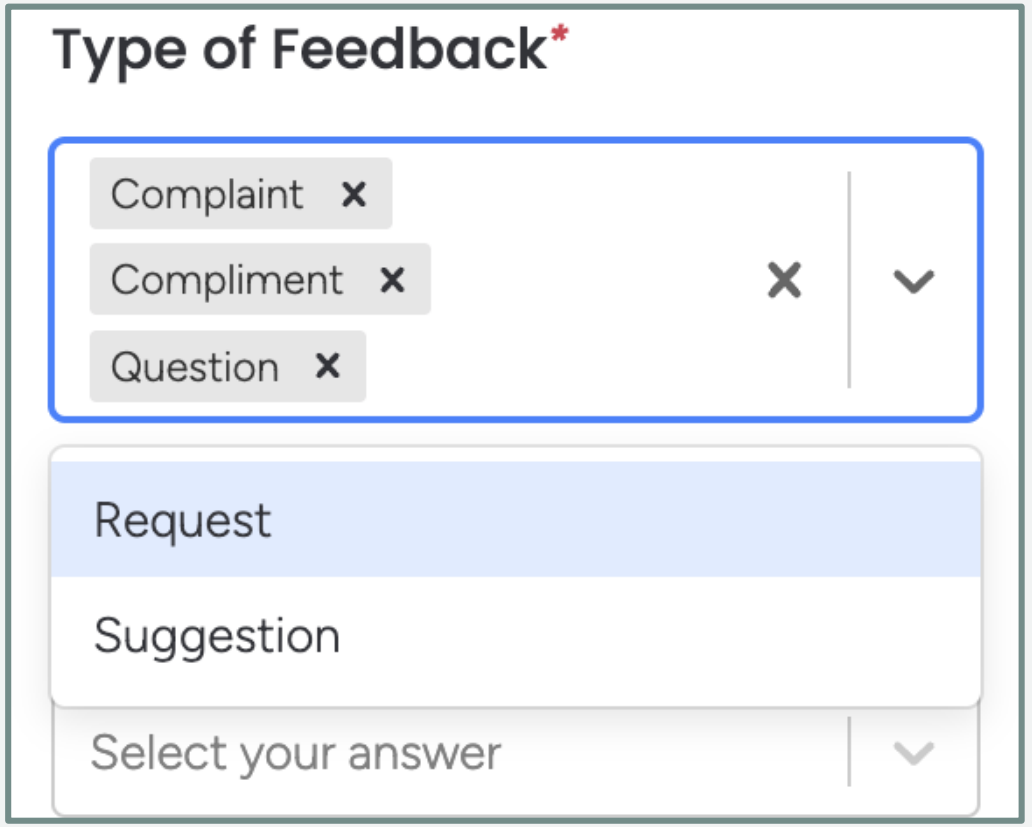
TAB key in “Type of feedback” adds additional options to the field.

Description: When a keyboard user selects an option in the dropdown and presses the TAB key, another option is added to the input field unexpectedly. To move to the next form field, a keyboard user needs to TAB away from the field using Shift+TAB and then TAB twice.

WCAG Standard: 2.1.2 No Keyboard Trap

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Ensure that keyboard-only users can easily tab to the next form field from the “Type of feedback” field and other similar combo box fields. If that is not possible using monday.com forms, consider building a form in-house.



UX Issues – Ask DSHS Form

UX ISSUES

Ask DSHS Form is inconsistent with the rest of DSHS.

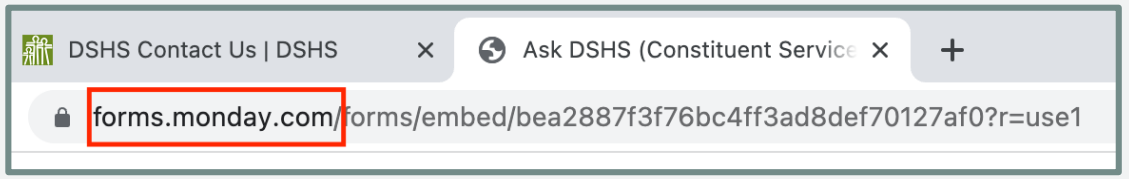
Description: The contact form takes users to a 3rd party website without warning, and the form itself lacks familiar branding. This may impact user trust, particularly as the form asks for sensitive information.

Standard: Trustworthy and consistent

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Move the Ask DSHS form to the Contact Us page so that users can immediately access it and it is associated with the rest of the agency.

-OR- Add content notifying users they will be brought to a 3rd party site and add consistent branding to the form on the 3rd party site.



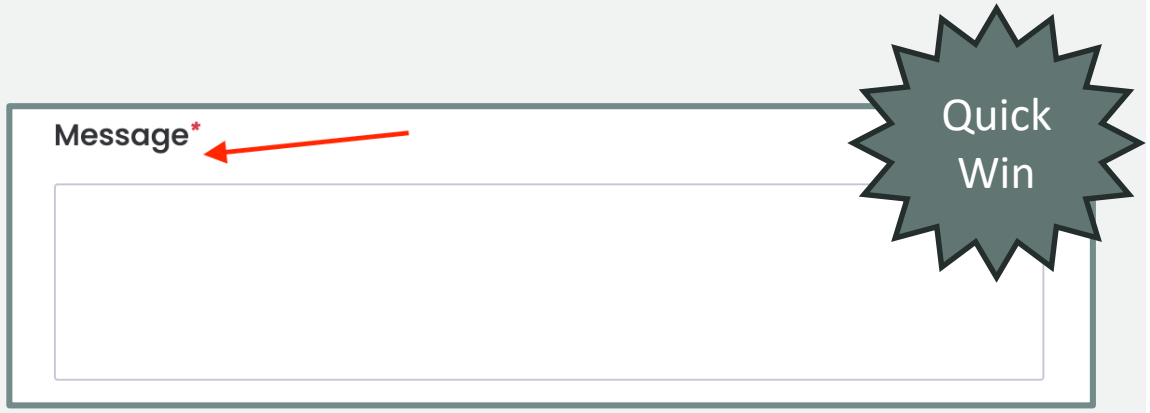
Ask DSHS Form lacks explanation for requesting sensitive information.

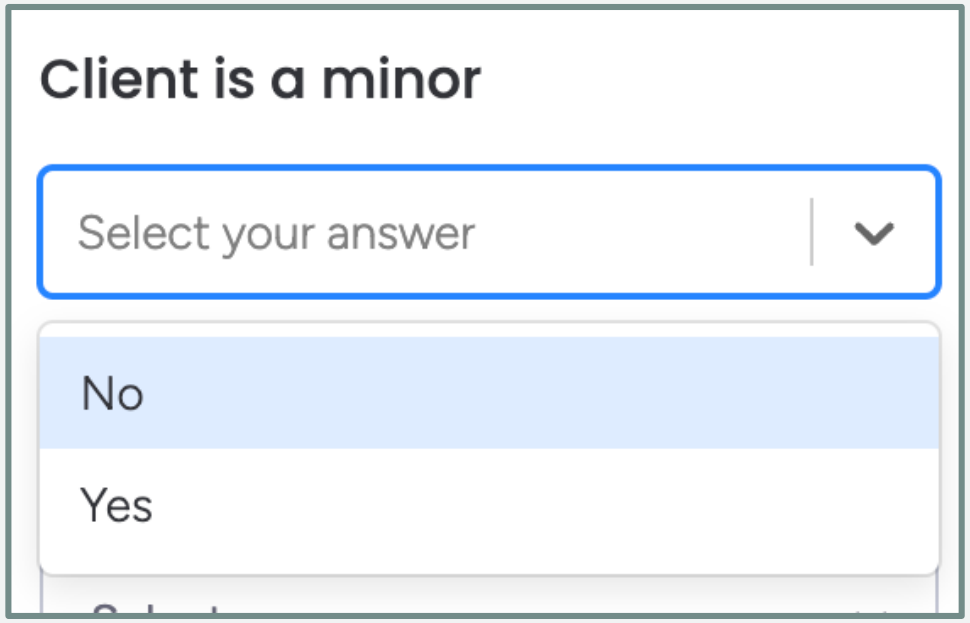
Description: There are a number of places where sensitive information is requested or may be entered (client address, whether client is a minor, and open-text message box). However, there is no language on any of these fields or the overall form about how the information is used and stored.

Standard: Asking for sensitive information

Severity: Critical

Recommendation: Explain how information will be used and stored, and who has access to it (if continuing to use a 3rd party site). For messages, provide examples/description of the kinds of things you expect people to put in there and what they should not include.





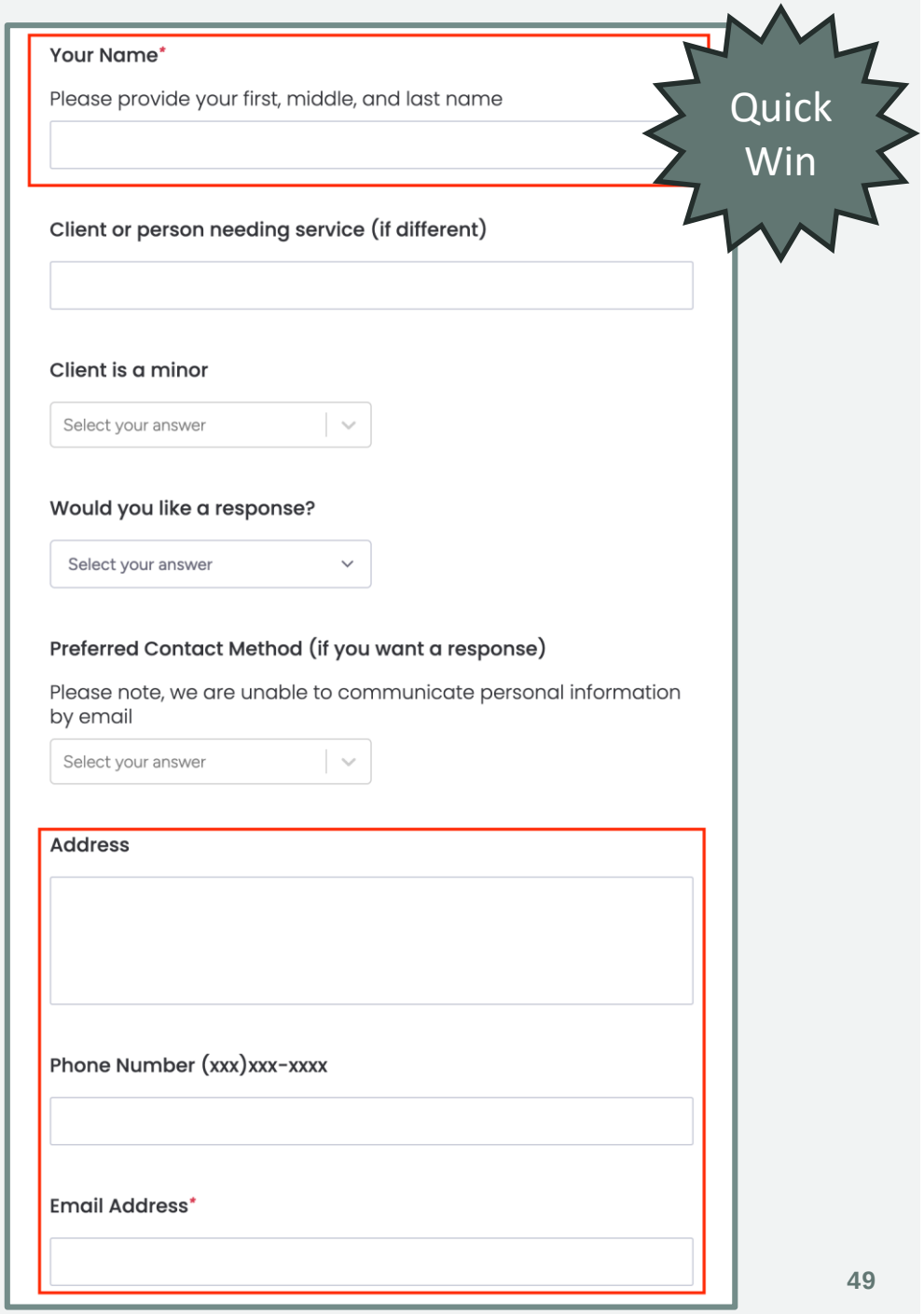
Ask DSHS Form is not organized with easy questions first.

Description: Currently, fields pertaining to the type of assistance needed are interspersed with fields asking for personal/contact information. This may add cognitive load for users to tack back and forth between simple and more complex/sensitive questions.

Standard: Ask the easy questions first and make sure it's easily navigable

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Reorder and group form by the different topics (e.g., personal information, service questions, contact method and message), with personal information questions at the top. This will help with user flows because the questions will be grouped by category and start with the easiest ones to answer first.



Some open fields are too general.

Description: The majority of fields are open text and ask for general information (e.g., Your Name, Address, Phone). While some provide helper text (e.g., Your name: First, Middle, Last) others do not specify the format or when you might choose to enter data into an optional field (e.g., Address is one open text box).

Standard: Explain any input or formatting requirements

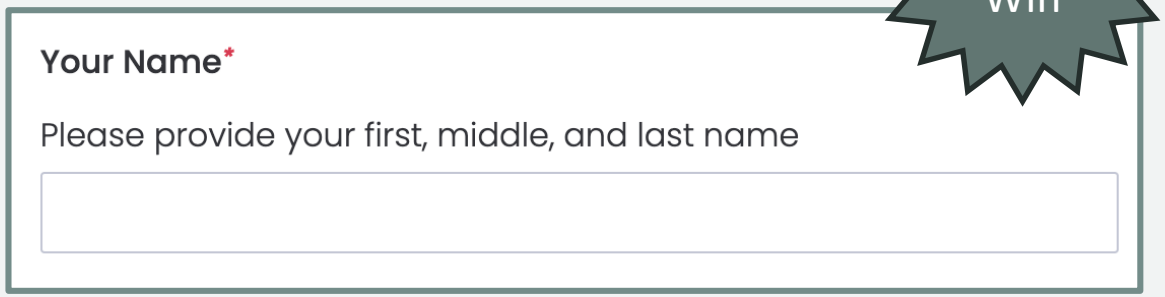
Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Break up questions into specific components (e.g., Address becomes separate fields for Address Line 1, City, Zip, etc.) to reduce possibility of error and improve structure of the data gathered.

-OR- Provide very clear explanation for how users should enter text into open fields.

In addition, help people understand when they may want to provide optional information to expedite their query.

Quick Win



Error messages are hard to notice.

Description: The form provides feedback when users do not fill in required fields with messaging at the top and "required" text. However, this could be more apparent and up front.

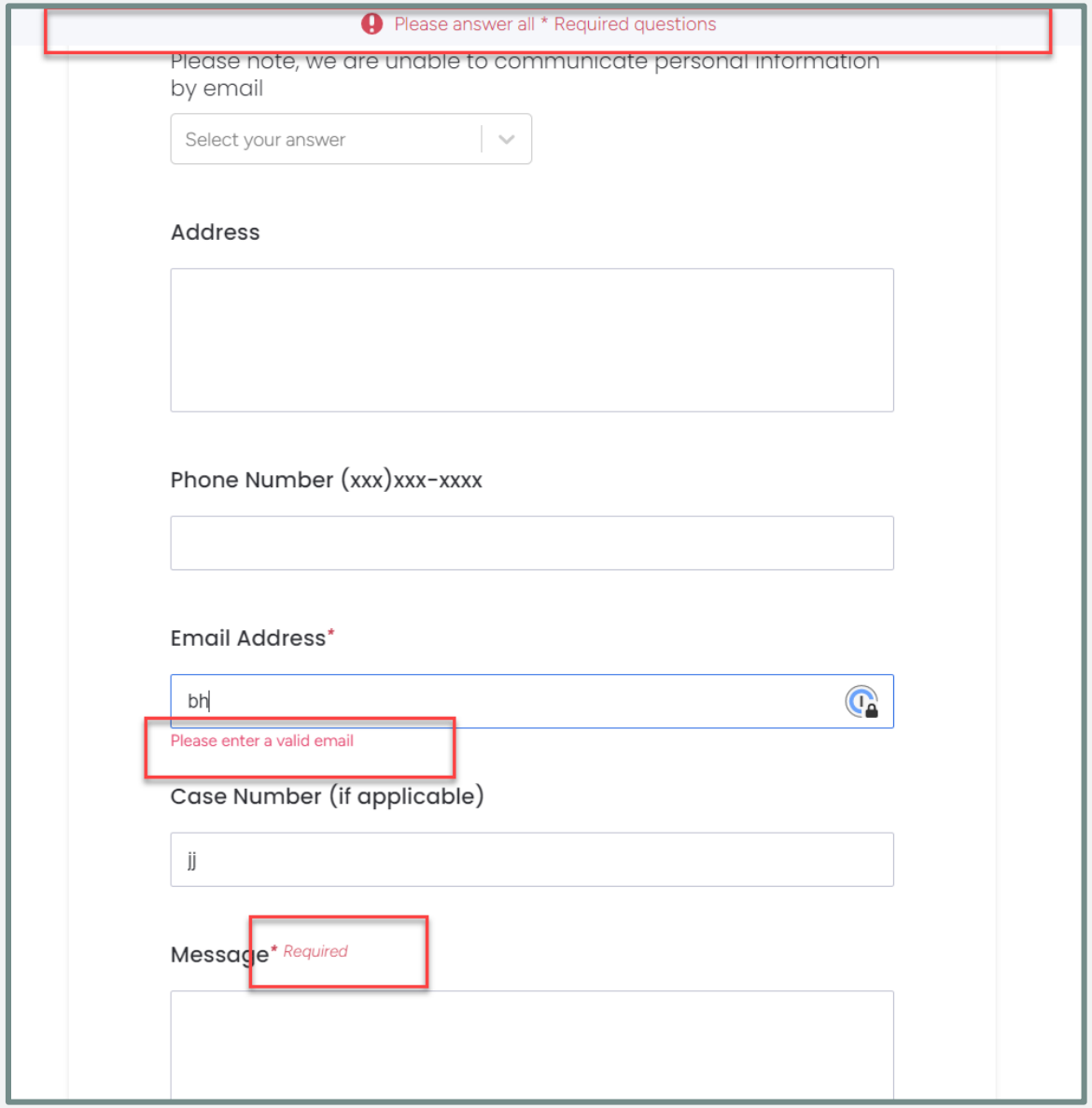
Standard: Provide highly visible and specific error and feedback messages

Severity: Moderate

Recommendation: Bold and highlight required fields in addition to "required' text.

Make "Please answer all * Required questions" more visible and consider adding a list at the top with the fields that still need information.

For all of these, be sure to use a darker shade of red that meets accessibility guidelines for color contrast.



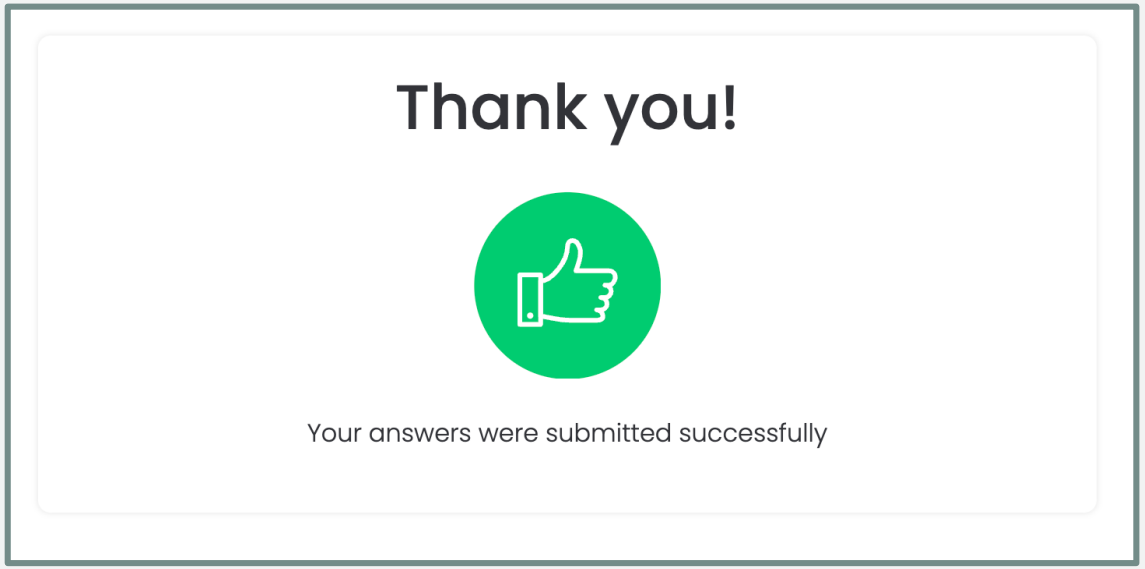
Users don't get a lot of feedback after submitting the form.

Description: Users see a large green "thumbs up," a great visual indicator of successful submitting the form. However, the only text accompanying this is "Your message was submitted successfully" without additional information on when users can expect a response and what happens next.

Standard: Provide highly visible and specific error and feedback messages

Severity: Moderate

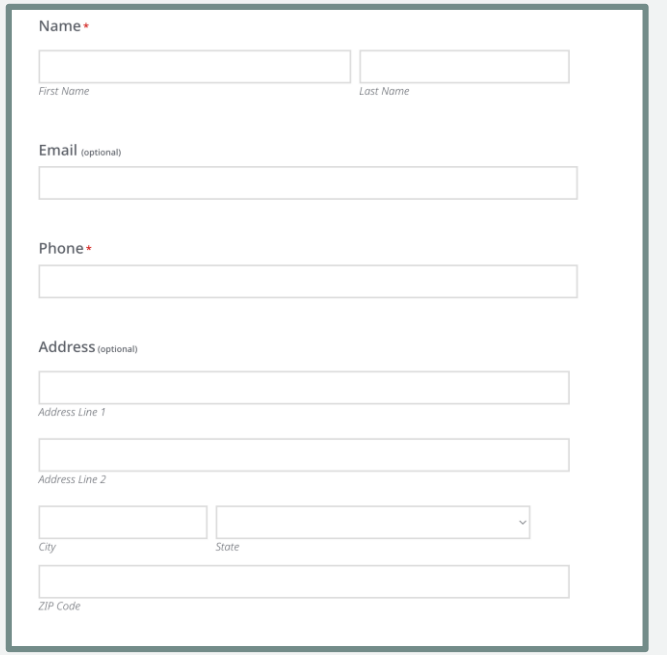
Recommendation: Add language informing users of when they should expect a response, if they wanted one, as well as any other pertinent information on what will happen with their form submission.

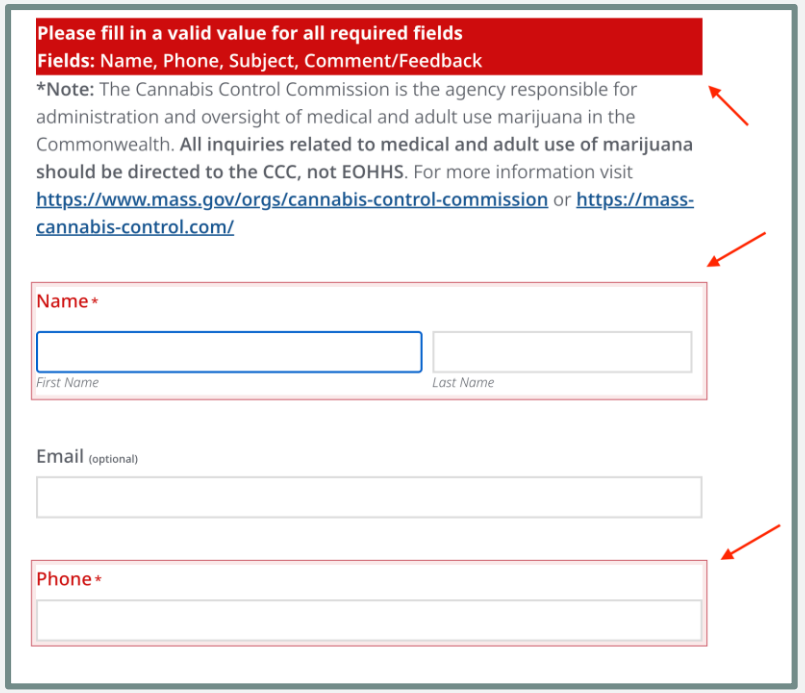


UX Contact Form Comparative Review

Contact Form– Mass Office of Health and Human Services

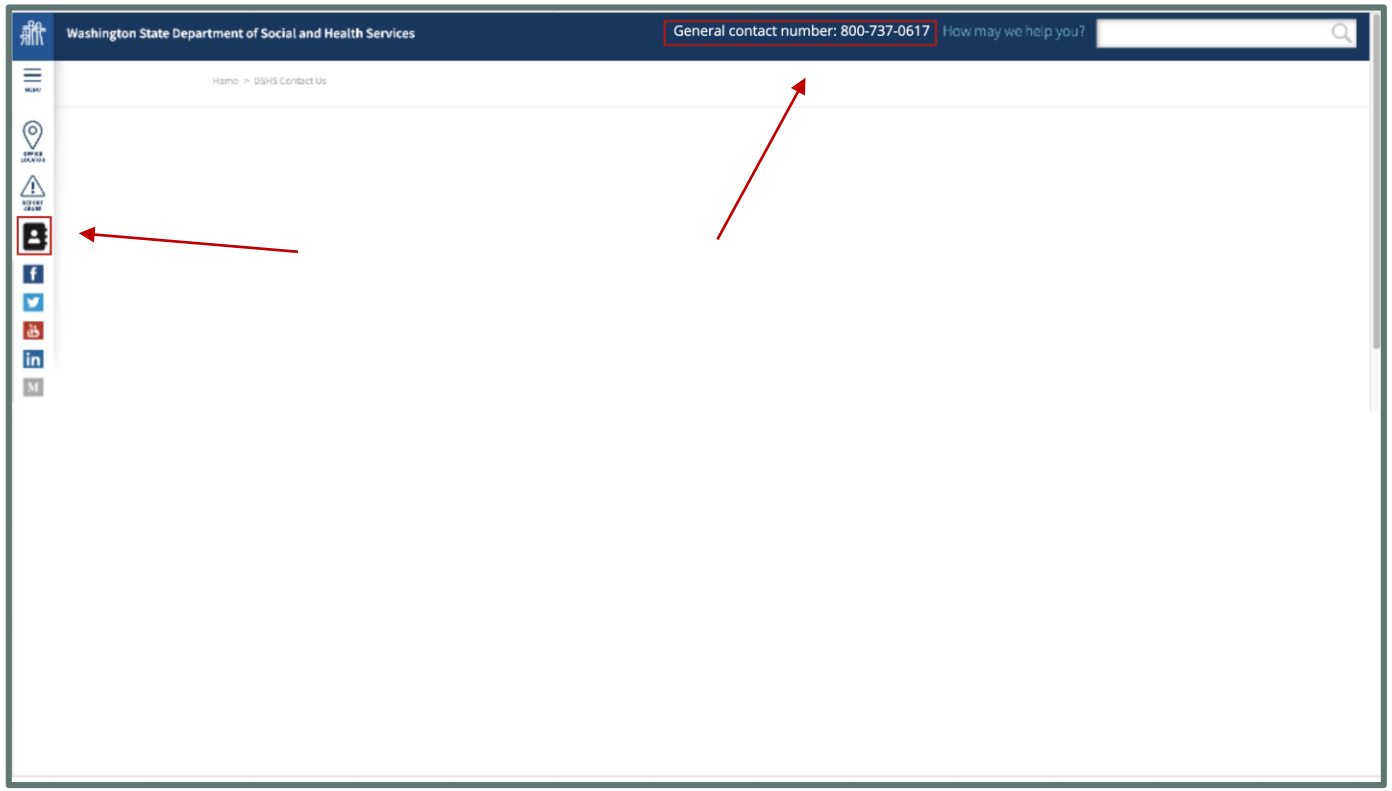
- Contact form is organized by personal and contact information first.
- The name and address fields are broken into specific components.
- Both required and optional fields are indicated, and error messages for missing required fields are bolded, bordered, and includes information at the top listing the fields that are still missing.
- **Recommendation:** Consider using a format like this, which follows best practices for asking easy questions first and providing a straightforward design with highly visible feedback messages.





Culminating Recommendation

Reimagined DSHS Contact Us Page (Navigation)

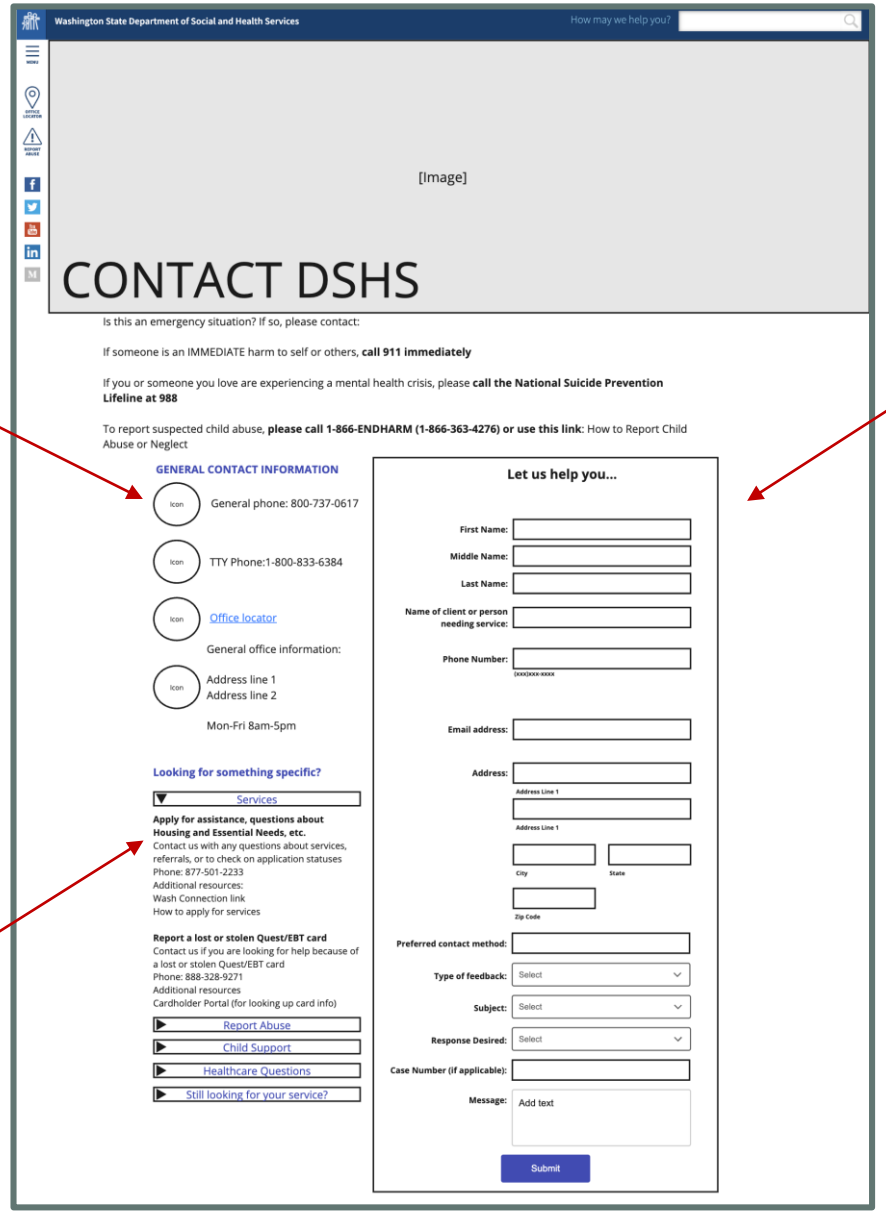


Reimagined DSHS Contact Us Page

Provides general (and easiest) contact methods right at the top.

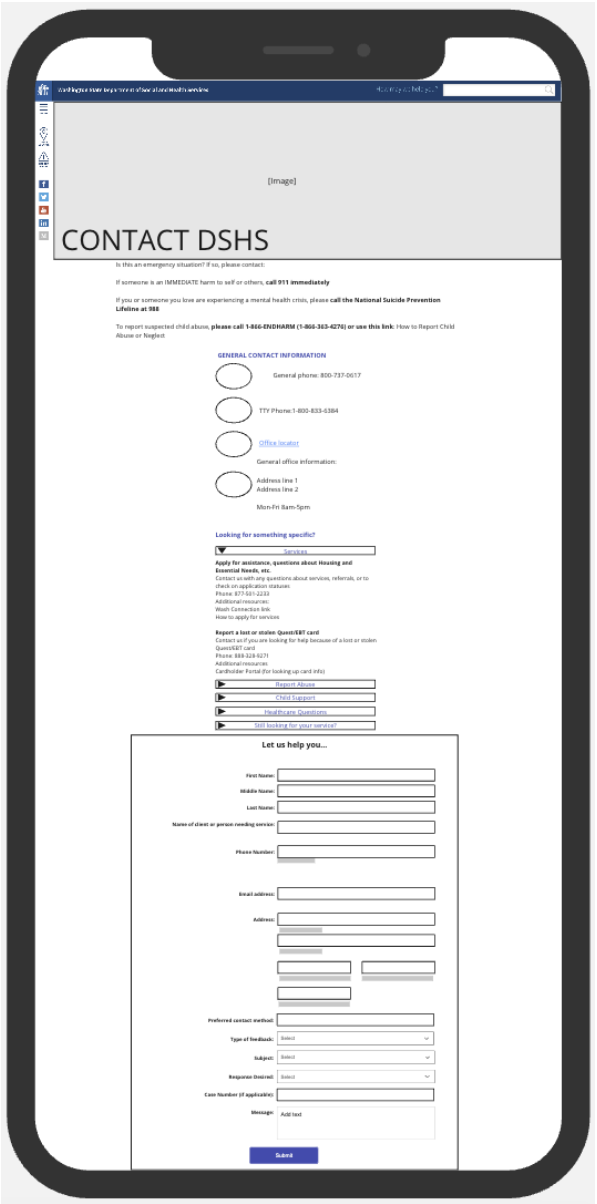
Grouping like services and making them accordions allows users to immediately identify the type of service they are looking for without distraction.

Embedding the contact form makes it easier for users to access, and builds trust.



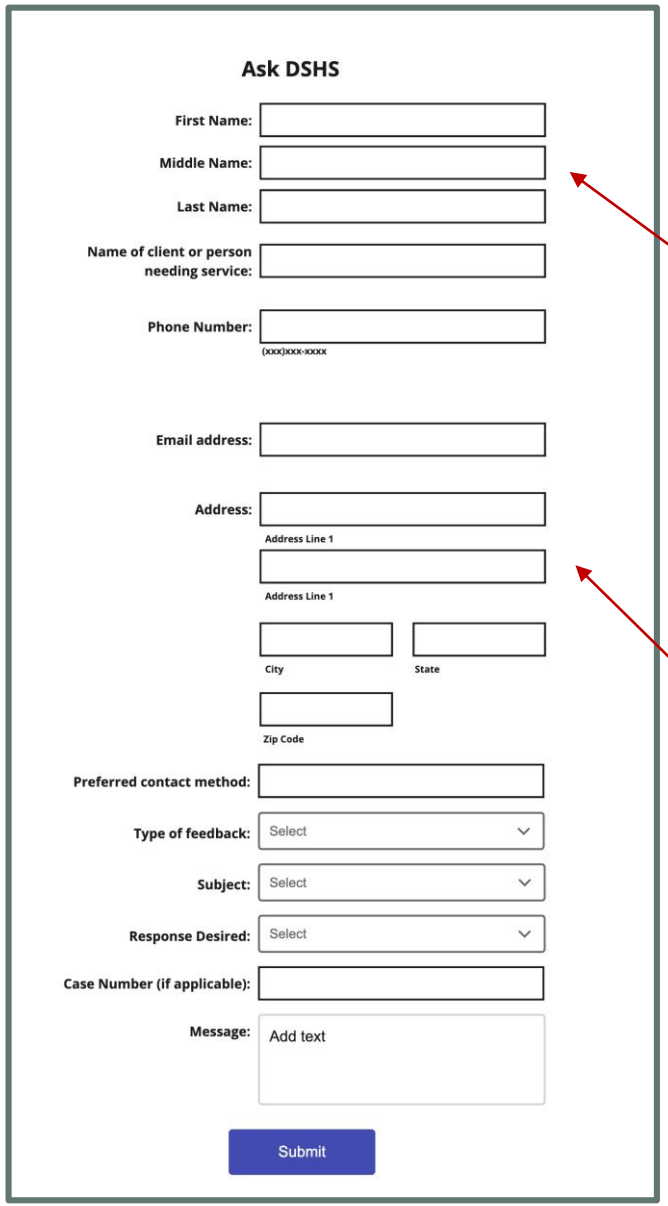
Reimagined DSHS Contact Us Page (mobile)

Largely keeps the same format



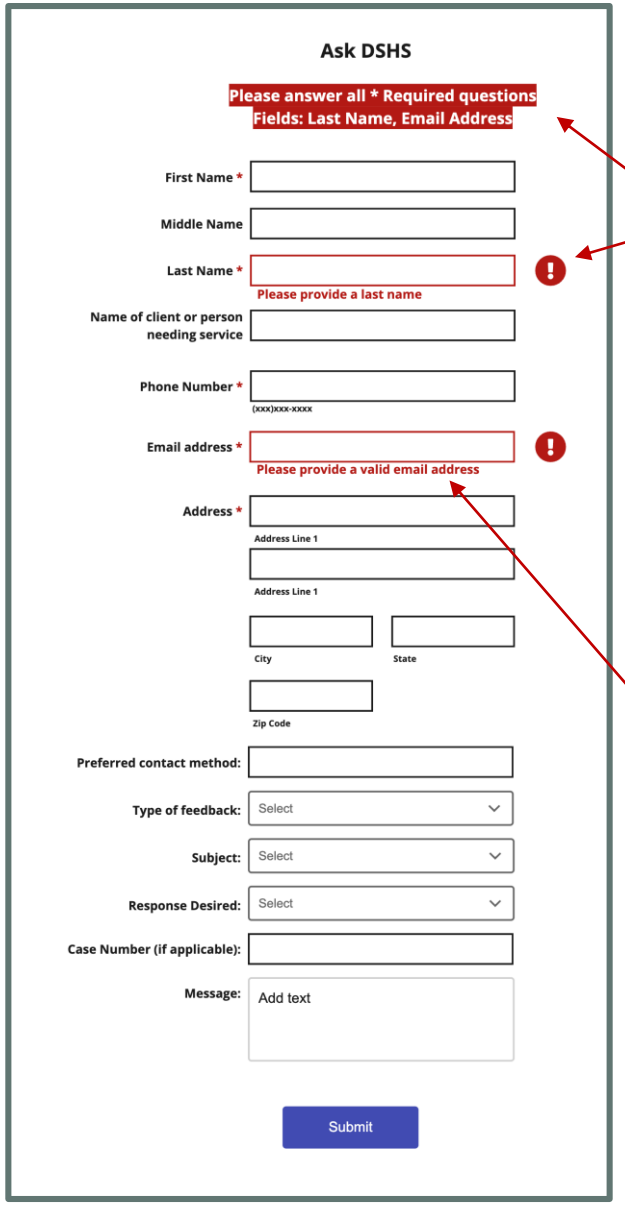
Moves Contact Form below page, to create a formatted single column mobile layout

Reimagined Ask DSHS contact form



Asks the easy questions first.

Breaking up into more specific fields will help reduce user error and help build better data storage.



A clear notice at the top and throughout that there are missing entries and lists at the top the fields that are still needed.

Text passes the minimum required accessible color contrast ratio of 4.5:1.

Next Steps

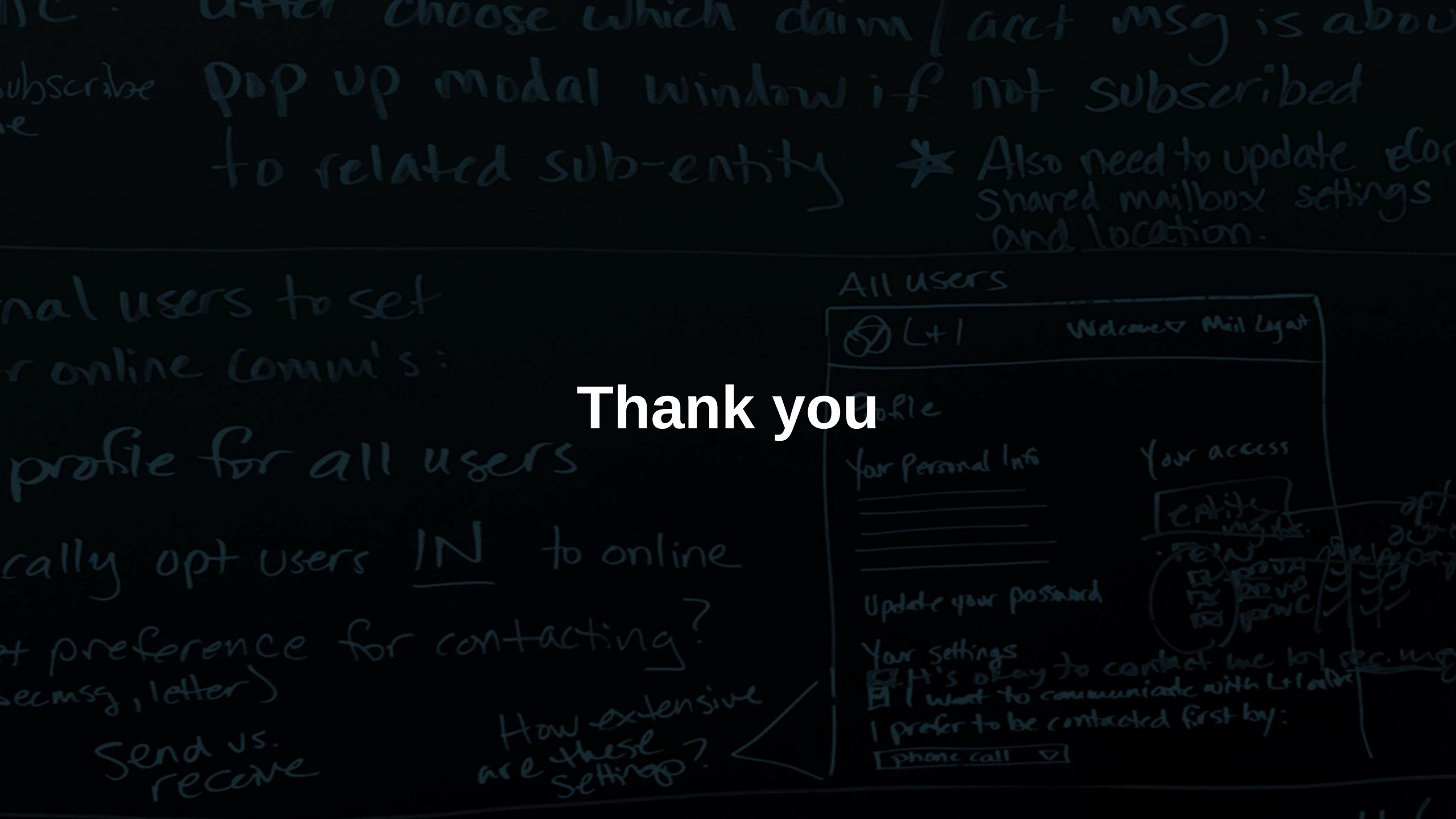
WHAT CAN DSHS DO WITH THIS REVIEW?

Use this review to support design and feature decisions.

As you consider redesigning the DSHS Contact Us page and Ask DSHS form…

- **Use the proposed culminating recommendations in this slide deck as a starting point or as the framework of your new page and form.**
- **Visit the comparative websites to:**
  - Get inspiration from the strong features for how elements should look/interact
  - Generate ideas for new features.
- **Use the best practices to ultimately guide how you implement design, navigation, content, and search and to avoid common pitfalls.**

Thank you


Pop up modal window if not subscribed
to related sub-entity
Also need to update
shared mailbox settings
and location.
All users
Update your password
Your settings
I prefer to be contacted first by:
phone call
How extensive are these settings?