

Maine State Web Standards

Statement of Purpose

The Web is one of the most important means by which the State communicates with the public. Often an agency's website is the only interface that a citizen or business has with a particular agency. As website usage by the public continues to grow, it is critical that Maine's state websites present a professional, user-friendly, integrated portal to state information and services.

All state websites must be accessible to the broadest possible audience and easy to understand and use.

The Internet should be used to facilitate cost-effective and efficient business. This means that the Internet should be seen as a tool for streamlining agency business practices, completing transactions without paper, reducing the number of paper forms and incoming calls, answering commonly asked questions, etc. Maintaining standards for consistent website design and management across the enterprise is necessary to meet the needs of the public and to provide the best possible electronic services.

Maine State's presence on the Internet must be professional, comprehensive, and coordinated.

While eGovernment Services within the Office of the CIO and the InforME Governing Board will provide general coordination, the ultimate stewardship of Maine's presence on the Internet rests with State agencies. It is each State agency's responsibility to contribute to a professional, appropriate, and coordinated presence for State of Maine on the Internet. The purpose of the State of Maine Web Standards is to:

- Reinforce Maine.gov identity and make it clear to users they are on a Maine state site
- Provide consistency and continuity in website appearance
- Improve the quality, usability and accessibility of State web sites and services for the public
- Ensure that critical state links appear on all agency sites
- Integrate agency sites, web applications and the portal, to support the "one government" approach and move away from bureaucratic separation of information
- Increase efficiency of website development and management by agencies

Scope

These standards apply to all Maine State Executive Branch agencies as well as those qualifying as semi-autonomous state agencies within 5 MRSA chapter 163. In addition, all sites and applications must comply with the [Digital Accessibility Policy of the State of Maine \(PDF\)](#).

Web Design and Content Requirements

Web design standards support the state's goals for user-friendly, professional quality, and accessible websites with an integrated portal to state information and services. In order to meet the needs of the public and provide the best possible electronic service, web standards must be maintained for consistent design across the enterprise. The required templates have been designed to meet industry standards for browser compatibility, usability, accessibility and provide a consistent look, layout, and style.

- Server-side Maine.gov header: Throughout the Maine.gov website, all pages will display the standard Maine.gov header that easily establishes the site as part of the State of Maine website and provides access to key state links. This header will be a small sliver to appear across the top of all agency pages and will be applied server-side by InforME to applicable sites on the state server. The header will include the Maine.gov logo, state search, and links to statewide information such as the state agency index, web policies, online services, and the Maine.gov home page.
- Design Templates: Agencies are required to use the standard agency website design templates in accordance with the Maine.gov Style Guide. These templates will provide a consistent layout and style across the entire Maine.gov enterprise. All new and redesigned sites must use the templates and follow the design standards. For existing sites, agencies must provide to the Office of eGovernment Services an implementation date. The Templates are available online (internal use only) at http://www.maine.gov/webmasters/agency_template/index.html.
- Style Guide: The Maine.gov Style Guide provides instructions and standards to accompany the required state agency website templates. The Style Guide provides detailed specification of the templates and instructions for using them. Agencies are required to follow the standards and specifications in the Style Guide for new and redesigned sites. For existing sites, agencies must provide to eGovernment Services an implementation date. The Style Guide is available online (internal use only) at http://www.maine.gov/webmasters/agency_template/styleguide/index.html.
- Contact Information: Each agency's website will have a "Contact Us" page easily accessed from the home page. Contact information should include: Mailing address, fax number, phone number, toll free number and TTY number if available, and an email address or web response form.

- Online Services: Each agency, when applicable, should have a page called "Online Services" that includes links to any e-government or interactive applications in which users can accomplish a transaction online with the agency.
- Agency Information: Each agency will have an "About Us" or "About [Agency]" page or section that describes the functions of the agency and may include but is not limited to: the agency's mission, vision, or purpose; organizational structure; staff; news releases; location; job opportunities.
- Site Map/Search: Each site should include a site map and site search. Typically, the site search and the Site Map link will be part of the Agency Header.
- Page Titles: Each agency will use unique and descriptive page titles for each web page.
- Page Width: Agency web pages must be viewable without horizontal scrolling by utilizing the formatting of templates provided by the standard style sheets in the approved Maine.gov Templates.
- Browser Compatibility: Externally-facing content must be compatible with the current manufacturer-supported versions of Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari. Internally-facing content must be compatible with the current manufacturer-supported versions of Microsoft Edge. Web content must not be dependent on the idiosyncrasies of any particular browser. All features should remain minimally usable with the older versions of said browsers. It is acceptable for some features to require a more recent browser version or plug-in for the maximal effect. Nevertheless, web content should still remain minimally usable even without the benefit of such an upgrade or plug-in. Further, any such upgrade or plug-in must be easily available for download without incurring any fees. It is acceptable for web content to have some minimal differences in look and feel across the spectrum of browsers and versions.
- Google Analytics: Maine.gov now tracks website usage using Google Analytics. Analytics enables web coordinators to analyze site traffic using easy-to-understand reports on visitors – where they come from, how they use the site, and much more. A few things to note:
 - Accounts are limited to web coordinators and are administered by request to InforME.
 - Google Analytics is a self-service tool; the Maine.gov Analytics access is limited to user accounts, since each sub-domain is a subset of the overall Maine.gov account. This means that some functionality, such as real-time statistics, is unavailable.
 - The Google Analytics tracking code is automatically added to site pages by InforME. There is no need to change any code within existing web pages.

Website Administration Requirements

- Portal Updates: Agencies should notify the Maine.gov portal when new services or sites are added, and when site structure is changed so that existing links to the site might be affected. Contact creative@informe.org to report changes.

- Site Management Plan: Agencies must develop a formal website management plan. This plan should identify roles and responsibilities, site monitoring and evaluation, content maintenance, oversight, user feedback and other aspects of site management.
- Webmaster Directory: All state employees who work on websites are required to be listed in the webmaster directory. This directory is a vehicle to disseminate information and maintain communication. Additionally, this directory is used to enhance server security by requiring webmasters be in the directory in order to obtain FTP access to the web server.
- Website Coordinators: Each agency is required to designate one or two individuals who will serve as the coordinators of all website activities for the agency, including ensuring that all state web standards and policies are met. The website coordinator will be the point of contact for both the eGov and InforME, will be responsible for the agency's Web Management Plan and will be responsible for keeping the agency's listings in the Webmaster Directory up to date.
- Approved Web Software: Drupal and the most current Adobe Dreamweaver version and are the only approved web-authoring software for state webmaster use. Agencies using other software must transition to Dreamweaver or Drupal.
- Backups: Agencies must maintain current backups of their web pages.

Resources

- Maine.gov Style Guide
- Template Kit
- Management Plan Template

Document Information

Latest Revision Date: January 3, 2020 - To update Document Information.

Waiver Process: See the [Waiver Policy](#)