

WEBSITE VISUAL STANDARDS AND FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

FACT SHEET

The website visual standards and functional requirements form part of [the Digital Services Policy Framework](#), which establishes expectations and provides guidance materials in the design, creation and management of government digital services, including websites.

Guidance materials consist of mandatory standards, best practice guides, reference factsheets, toolkits and processes.

This information relates to the visual standards and functional requirements.

What the standards are for

The standards establish a clear design and style requirements for agency websites to support a “one government” user experience. They replace the Common Website Elements Standards and Website Design Guide.

Who the standards apply to

The standard is available for use by any public body to maximise benefits to the community.

Agencies must apply these standards when:

- developing any new public facing websites
- there is significant redevelopment work including rebranding, restructure or major enhancements to websites
- transitioning to a new platform or a new content management system.

Agencies who believe that their website project cannot, should not or will not comply with these standards can [seek an exemption from the DG ICT Council](#).

The standards are optional for government advertising campaigns and Government Trading Enterprises.

Branding of internal applications

This standard is mandatory for all public facing website projects only; however agencies may choose to adopt this standard for their internal applications.

Why the standards been developed

The benefits to the community of a consistent user experience include:

- information and services are easy to identify as being from a trusted government source;
- information and services are presented seamlessly across the government as a whole, making it easier for the community to find information and interact with government; and
- a simple, clean and accessible design improves the usability of government websites, for example in regional areas with low bandwidth or for people with a disability who may experience difficulty using online services.

This approach is in line with many other Australian and international jurisdictions, including qld.gov.au, vic.gov.au, dta.gov.au, nsw.gov.au and GOV.UK.

Additional benefits for the public sector include:

- a reduction in agency spending in areas such as branding design, website visual design and development costs;
- strengthening of a trusted, consistent government brand;
- a better uptake of services by a broader range of people; and
- the standards align to and complement the [WA Government Website Style Standard](#) and support the Government's commitment to reduce advertising and communications expenditure.

How the standards were developed

The one government website user experience design was developed in partnership with a cross-agency user experience reference group from across government.

The whole-of-government digital services website – WA.gov.au, is an exemplar for these standards.

The standards are based on established web design conventions and have been extensively tested to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) level AA standard.

Why the design so simple

The design is based on usability and inclusivity, not aesthetics and meets the [Digital Services Design Principles](#).

The simple design means it operates on a low bandwidth making it more accessible for West Australians in regional or poor internet connection areas.

The design has been audited to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) level AA standard.

What happens if the visual design and functional standards aren't applied

The visual design and functional elements are mandatory under the Digital Services Policy, which forms part of the Digital WA Strategy.

Agencies who do not comply with the standard may be identified in the annual reporting process to Cabinet as part of the Digital WA Strategy initiative.

Contacts for help applying the standards

The [WA.gov.au website design style guide](#) details all the required style elements, for example: colours, typography, headings, links, icons and hover states.

Agencies who have further requirements not captured in the style guide can contact the Office of Digital Government's ServiceWA team by emailing dgov-strategy@dpc.wa.gov.au.

You can choose to implement the new standards immediately on existing websites.

Templates, theme and css

Whole of government templates, themes and css will be considered for future development as part of the ServiceWA program deliverables.

Funding to apply the new standards

Currently no funding is available from ServiceWA program to apply the new standard.

Agencies are not expected to immediately apply the visual standards and functional requirements, but must do so when:

- creating a new public facing website;
- undertaking significant redevelopment work, including rebranding, restructure or major enhancements to websites; and
- website projects involving transitioning to a new platform or a new content management system.

It is assumed that as part of the business case for any of the above activities, an agency would submit a request for funding as per their normal internal governance processes.

Requesting additional elements

Agencies who have further requirements not captured in the style guide can contact the ServiceWA team by emailing dgov-strategy@dpc.wa.gov.au.