



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **the Premier and Cabinet**  
**Office of Digital Government**

# Digital Services Policy Framework

## Domain Name Standard

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## Document Control

**Domain Name Standard:** Version 3.0 – October 2019

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**Contact:**

Office of Digital Government  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005  
Telephone: (08) 6552 5000  
Email: [dgov-strategy@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:dgov-strategy@dpc.wa.gov.au)

**Document version history**

Date	Author	Version	Revision Notes
2008	Office of e-Government	1.0	First release
2010	Public Sector Commission	2.0	Second release
2013	Department of Finance	2.1	Rebranded to Department of Finance
August 2017	Office of the GCIO	2.2	Rebranded to Office of the GCIO. Minor edits to facilitate moving content under the Digital Services Policy Framework (DSPF), including removing references to WGF PSC Circular.
April 2018	Office of the GCIO	2.3	Policy changed to a Standard to reflect inclusion in the DSPF. Expanded to include clear linkages to principles, standards and processes within the supporting guidance material, and to the outcomes of <i>Digital WA</i> .
October 2019	Office of Digital Government	3.0	Rebranded to Office of Digital Government. Included how to apply for a domain name and examples.



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## 1. Overview

A domain name is a friendly way to identify a string of unique nonsensical numbers which devices (like a computer) use to communicate with other devices over the internet.

A domain name can be used for different things, for example it can be used for a website, email address or to identify your brand. An example of a website domain name is [www.WA.gov.au](http://www.WA.gov.au).

Much like a business name, a domain name must be registered before you can use it. There are many different types of domain names, and different registration rules apply. The [wa.gov.au](http://wa.gov.au) domain for example is reserved for use by Western Australian state and local government entities only.

## 2. Definition of terms

Terms	Definitions
Domain name	Unique text descriptor for a service, website, application or network.
Top Level Domain (TLD)	There are many different types of domain names. The Top Level Domains (TLD) are the highest level in the Domain Name System (DNS) structure. Examples of TLDs include: .com, .au, .net, .org
Second level domain	Below the TLD is the second level domain. Examples of second level domains include: .com.au, gov.au, net.au
Third level domain	Directly below the second level in the DNS hierarchy is the third level domain, for example: wa.gov.au, edu.wa.au, telstra.com.au, abc.net.au, sbs.com.au
Fourth level domain	The next level down from the third level in the DNS hierarchy is the fourth level domain. Western Australian agency website generally uses a fourth level domain. Examples include: premiers.wa.gov.au, parliament.wa.gov.au, dpc.wa.gov.au, health.wa.gov.au
Subdomains	Domain names below the second level are often referred to as subdomains. Example 1: wa.gov.au 'wa' is a subdomain of the 'gov.au' domain. Example 2: premiers.wa.gov.au 'premiers' is a subdomain of the 'wa.gov.au' domain.

## 3. Purpose

The Domain Name Standard establishes the governance framework for the administration and management of the [wa.gov.au](http://wa.gov.au) domain.

## 4. Objectives

The Standard aims to:

- reduce the proliferation of domain names
- govern and manage the creation of wa.gov.au domain names
- enforce the use of the wa.gov.au in the Western Australian public sector
- promote the WA Government brand for all Western Australian public sector online information and services, and present them as the authoritative sources of trusted and accurate content.

## 5. Scope

This Standard applies to all entities as defined under Section 3 of the [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) (the Act). This includes all agencies except those listed in Schedule 1 of the Act.

This Standard covers the use of new domain name for any purpose by any of the above entities, and the management of any wa.gov.au domain name.

This Standard must be read in conjunction with the [gov.au Domain Policies](#).

### 5.1 Who can apply for a wa.gov.au domain?

Only entities established by an Act of Parliament or government regulation as a government department or agency; a local government entity; a statutory authority; or other defined government body within the Western Australian Government can apply for the wa.gov.au domain.

## 6. Out of scope

- Registration and management of non-wa.gov.au domain names e.g.: com.au, net.au, wa.edu.au
- Registration and management of wa.edu.au domain names, which are applicable to Education Institutions (e.g. Universities, schools, TAFEs). Application and registration of wa.edu.au domains are through [Education Services Australia Ltd](#).
- Registration and management of domain names by non-Western Australian Government entities.

## 7. Authority

The Western Australian Government Domain Name Standard underpins the [Digital Services Policy](#) and is a mandatory component of the [Digital Services Policy Framework](#) (DSPF).

## 8. Requirements

- 8.1 Western Australian public sector entities requiring a new domain name for any purpose<sup>1</sup> must register their domain names within the wa.gov.au domain.
- 8.2 Western Australian public sector entities requiring a domain name for a new website must comply with the [WA Public Sector Website Standard](#).
- 8.3 Western Australian public sector entities are required to decommission any domain names (including any associated subdomains) that are no longer required.

## 9. Approval authority and assessment of domain name applications

The Office of Digital Government (DGov) is the Western Australian Government Domain Provider, and has the delegated authority to assess individual domain name applications for the Western Australian Government. Domain names that do not comply with this Standard and other related policies and standards will not be approved.

Approvals are subject to verifying that you have:

- approval from your Director General or equivalent delegated authority
- provided evidence that your application meets the domain name policies and standards and the website considerations articulated in the [WA Public Sector Website Standard](#)
- clearly described a valid reason and purpose for the new domain.

DGov as the Western Australian Domain Name Administrator (WA DNA) will seek clarification from the domain name registrant if any of the above require more information or further clarity.

## 10. Domain name considerations

<b>Business need</b>	<b>Considerations and recommendations</b>
I want to register a new domain name for my agency's new website	Before applying for a new domain name for the purpose of a new website, refer to the <a href="#">Website Standard</a> for website requirements. Agency websites generally take on a fourth level domain name. For example, premier.wa.gov.au, dpc.wa.gov.au, treasury.wa.gov.au Western Australian public sector entities operating in a commercial or semi-commercial environment may apply for a non-Western Australian government domain (e.g. .com.au). Western Australian public sector entities looking to protect against the use of high profile government 'brands' in other domain spaces, can register extra domains outside of the Western Australian Government domain (for example westernaustralia.com). However, you should only promote the Western Australian government domain.

<sup>1</sup> A domain name can be used for a website, email address, brand and other specialised online functions such as virtual servers and identity management.

<b>Business need</b>	<b>Considerations and recommendations</b>										
<p>I want to register a new domain for a specific topic or initiative that is owned by my agency</p>	<p>It is not necessary to have a separate domain name for each product or service you offer.</p> <p>High-profile agency-specific initiatives or agency specific initiative at a whole of government level may warrant a separate domain name or short URL for promotional purposes, which can redirect to the content within the WA.gov.au website or agency website.</p> <p>Either a subdomain or subdirectory can be setup for this. Example of subdomain vs. subdirectory:</p>										
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="440 703 919 757"><b>Category</b></th> <th data-bbox="919 703 1394 757"><b>Example</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="440 757 919 882">Existing parent domain</td> <td data-bbox="919 757 1394 882">mainroads.wa.gov.au (this is an example of a fourth level domain name)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="440 882 919 1178">Subdomain (e.g. new-initiative.agencyname.wa.gov.au; new-initiative.wa.gov.au)  Typically known as sub-website, subdomains are indicated by the section to the left of the parent domain.</td> <td data-bbox="919 882 1394 1178"><b>Travelmap</b>.mainroads.wa.gov.au (this is an example of a fifth level domain name)  '<b>travelmap</b>' is a subdomain of 'mainroads.wa.gov.au'</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="440 1178 919 1406">Subdirectory (e.g. agencyname.wa.gov.au/new-initiative; wa.gov.au/new-initiative)  In its simplest form a subdirectory is a folder within your website. It is part of your existing website.</td> <td data-bbox="919 1178 1394 1406">mainroads.wa.gov.au/<b>UsingRoads</b>  '<b>UsingRoads</b>' is a folder within the mainroads.wa.gov.au website.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="440 1406 1394 1753"> <p>Whole of government campaign (i.e.: politically oriented campaign) or advertising websites are required adhere to the <a href="#">Premier's Circular 2017/02: Advertising and communications expenditure</a> and related policies.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Example</b>	Existing parent domain	mainroads.wa.gov.au (this is an example of a fourth level domain name)	Subdomain (e.g. new-initiative.agencyname.wa.gov.au; new-initiative.wa.gov.au)  Typically known as sub-website, subdomains are indicated by the section to the left of the parent domain.	<b>Travelmap</b> .mainroads.wa.gov.au (this is an example of a fifth level domain name)  ' <b>travelmap</b> ' is a subdomain of 'mainroads.wa.gov.au'	Subdirectory (e.g. agencyname.wa.gov.au/new-initiative; wa.gov.au/new-initiative)  In its simplest form a subdirectory is a folder within your website. It is part of your existing website.	mainroads.wa.gov.au/ <b>UsingRoads</b>  ' <b>UsingRoads</b> ' is a folder within the mainroads.wa.gov.au website.	<p>Whole of government campaign (i.e.: politically oriented campaign) or advertising websites are required adhere to the <a href="#">Premier's Circular 2017/02: Advertising and communications expenditure</a> and related policies.</p>	
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<b>Business need</b>	<b>Considerations and recommendations</b>
I want to register a domain name for my division or business unit within my agency	Your agency's website structure should be based on the services it offers rather than by its organisation structure.
I want to register a domain name for a new website. I am from a local government agency.	Local government entities are not within the scope of the <a href="#">Digital Services Policy</a> and the <a href="#">Digital Services Policy Framework</a> . However, local government entities can apply for the wa.gov.au domain. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Stirling - <a href="#">stirling.wa.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Town of Vincent - <a href="#">vincent.wa.gov.au</a></li> </ul>

## 11. How to apply for a wa.gov.au domain name

To apply for a new wa.gov.au domain:

1. Check the requirements of the
  - gov.au domain name [eligibility and allocation policy](#) criteria
  - Western Australian Government Domain Name standard (this document)
2. Check availability of the proposed domain name using [.au Whois Lookup](#)
3. If it is available, proceed with the registration by completing [the domain name registration form](#)
4. WA DNA will assess your domain name application and respond to the domain name registrant.

## 12. Related policies, standards and guidance

For guidance on domain name for the purpose of a new website, refer to the [Western Australian Public Sector Website Standard](#).

This standard should be read in conjunction with the [Digital Services Policy Framework](#) suite of policies, standards and guidance materials.

For guidance on information on name server changes, transfer of existing domain names and how to decommission domain names, refer to [WA DNA webpage](#).