New York State Information Technology Policy	No: NYS-P08-003
IT Policy: **Domain Names for State Government Agencies**	**Updated:** 12/27/2019
	Issued By: NYS Office of Information Technology Services **Owner:** WebNY/ Business Services

1.0 Purpose and Benefits

The purpose of this Information Technology Policy is to provide information regarding the use of domain names by state government entities for websites exposed to the Internet as well as intranet-only sites. This policy assures the assigned domain names are unique worldwide and appropriately reflect New York State government services and major programs. The use of the "ny.gov" domain provides for branding New York State government services available on the internet and enables customers to readily recognize official New York State government entity websites.

2.0 Authority

Section 103(10) of the State Technology Law provides the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) with the authority to establish statewide technology policies, including technology and security standards. *Section 2 of Executive Order No. 117* provides the State Chief Information Officer with the authority to oversee, direct and coordinate the establishment of information technology policies, protocols and standards for State government, including hardware, software, security and business re-engineering. Details regarding this authority can be found in NYS ITS Policy, *NYS-P08-002 Authority to Establish State Enterprise Information Technology (IT) Policy, Standards and Guidelines*.

ITS has secured the domain "ny.gov" for New York State government entity use, under Federal Management Regulation – 41 CFR Part 102 – 103. Further information can be found in CFR Part 102 – 103 at http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-7413.htm.

3.0 Scope

This standard applies to all "State Entities" (SE), defined as "State Government" entities as defined in Executive Order 117, established January 2002, or "State Agencies" as defined in Section 101 of the State Technology Law. This includes employees and all third parties (such as local governments, consultants, vendors, and contractors) that use or access any IT resource for which the SE has administrative responsibility, including systems managed or hosted by third parties on behalf of the SE. While an SE may adopt a different standard, it must include the requirements set forth in this one.

4.0 Information Statement

All state entity websites shall utilize a standard domain naming convention which is determined and enforced by ITS.

4.1 Domain Naming Convention

All domain names must:

- Be easily understood and recognizable by the citizens of New York State;
- Clearly communicate the purpose of the site;
- Be easy to type and avoid using confusing characters such as using zeroes (0) in place of the letter "O" or the number one (1) in place of the letter "L" (l).
- Contain no less than 10 but no more than 36 characters, including the ny.gov portion of the domain name (the "dots" are considered characters and are counted);
- Contain letters, numbers and dashes (-), but no other special characters are allowed such as underscores (_) and blank spaces;
- Avoid the use of acronyms whenever possible, unless the acronym meets one of the following conditions:
    a) The State government entity is commonly known by the acronym, or
    b) The acronym represents a commonly known major program. Major programs may be multiple or single agency programs but widely known to the general public. This program naming option is not intended for small, targeted audience programs. Web pages for such smaller programs must be part of the state government entities' main domain name pages (e.g., www.health.ny.gov/flu);
- Refrain from using general terms such as "licenses," "recreation," and "benefits" without an identifier because they do not represent a specific agency/program origin or service. For example, "DriversLicenses.ny.gov" would be allowed.
- Use short URLs over a separate or sub-domain address, for areas on the same website (e.g., use health.ny.gov/flu instead of flu.health.ny.gov).

4.2 Naming Patterns

4.2.1 Naming Patterns Within ny.gov Domain:

Within the ny.gov domain, the allowed naming patterns are:

"agency_name".ny.gov or

"program_name".ny.gov or

"application_name"."agency_name".ny.gov

"program_name"."agency_name".ny.gov

"agency_name".ny.gov/"program_name" or

"Microsoft_AD_domain".ny.gov

4.3   General Domain Requirements

In addition to the naming conventions, the following restrictions apply:

4.3.1   No Non-Government Advertisements

A dot-gov domain and the ny.gov sub-domain, may not be used to advertise for private individuals, firms, corporations, or imply in any way the federal or state government endorses or favors any specific commercial product, commodity, or service.

4.3.2   No Political or Campaign Information

The dot-gov domain, and the ny.gov sub-domain, is for the sole operation of government, not for use in any political, political party or campaign environment. No campaigning can be conducted with dot-gov domains. No dot-gov website may link, directly or indirectly, or refer to websites created or operated by a campaign or any campaign entity or political or campaign committee. Political sites, party names, or party acronyms cannot be used.

4.3.3   Two-Year Eligibility Period

All .gov domains are registered for a 2-year period. During this period, a review of eligibility and administrative information is required. If necessary, the dot-gov Registrar will contact the Administrative Point of Contact (APOC) for domains. APOC information MUST be kept current. The dot-gov Registrar may request an updated authorization letter, updated Domain Name Server (DNS) information, or other information. This information enables the federal government to ensure dot-gov domains provide secure, official websites and promote the best possible service to the general public.

4.4   Procedure to Request a Domain Name

State government entities must email webnysupport@its.ny.gov to obtain ITS approval before requesting any new third level domains (i.e. "agency_name".ny.gov or "program_name".ny.gov). ITS will review and respond to all requests within five (5) business days.

Once a domain has been determined and approved, the appropriate ITS Customer Relations Manager can submit a Service Request ticket to initiate the work required for set up in the ITSM service catalog: Network Services > DNS Entry.

4.5   Use of Approved Domains.

Agencies must use only ny.gov domains. It is highly discouraged to use any other top-level domain unless the agency head explicitly determines another domain is necessary for the proper performance of an agency function. The use of any other domain runs the risk of the domain being lost or acquired by another entity. The ny.gov address ensures the public that it is an official state site and can be trusted.

This requirement recognizes the proper performance of agency functions and includes an obligation for clear and unambiguous public notification of the agency's involvement in, or sponsorship of its information dissemination products including public websites. It also recognizes in certain limited circumstances other domains may be necessary for the proper performance of an agency function.

4.6 Link Change Notification

When a link on a ny.gov Internet domain makes the user leave a ny.gov Internet website, a notification or screen (i.e., a splash message) should alert users that they are leaving the official ny.gov Internet domain page. When a link on a ny.gov domain makes the user go to another ny.gov domain a notification or screen (i.e., a splash message) should not alert users that they are leaving the official ny.gov Internet domain page because the user is still within the ny.gov domain. (Example: governor.ny.gov linking to its.ny.gov)

5.0 Compliance

This policy shall take effect upon publication. Compliance is expected with all enterprise policies and standards. ITS may amend its policies and standards at any time; compliance with amended policies and standards is expected.

5.1. New York State Government Entity Compliance

Effective immediately, all new requests for state government entity Internet websites, and requests for domain names shall use domain names as described within this policy.

The following is required by all state government entities to be in compliance:

- Use of a ny.gov domain name for the state government entity's main public web site;
- Use of either www.ny.gov or the ITS approved ny.gov domain name for the primary website name must be provided on all documents, publications, correspondence, and public service information for the state government entity.
- State government entities must retire their legacy domain names immediately.

5.2. Federal Government compliance

Part 102-173.95 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Internet GOV Domain, states organizations that operate websites that are not in compliance with the conditions of use may have their domain name terminated.

Part 102-173.90 of the CFR, Internet GOV Domain, states that GSA reserves the right to deny use of domain names that are not in compliance with the CFR.

6.0 Definitions of Key Terms

Except for terms defined in this policy, all terms shall have the meanings found in http://www.its.ny.gov/glossary.

Term	Definition
Domain	A region of jurisdiction on the World Wide Web (Internet) for naming assignment. The General Services Administration is responsible for registrations in the dot-gov domain and has delegated this authority to the NYS CIO and Director of OFT for all state government entities.
Domain Name	A name assigned to an Internet server, requested from ITS by a state government entity.
State Government Entity	Shall have the same meaning as defined in Executive Order No. 117, first referenced above; and shall include all state agencies, departments, offices, divisions, boards, bureaus, commissions and other entities over which the Governor has executive power and the State University of New York, City University of New York and all public benefit corporations the heads of which are appointed by the Governor; provided, however, that universities shall be included within this definition to the extent of business and administrative functions of such universities common to State government.

7.0 Contact Information

Submit all inquiries and requests for future enhancements to the policy owner at:

WebNY | Business Services
Reference: NYS-P08-003
NYS Office of Information Technology Services
State Capitol, ESP, P.O. Box 2062
Albany, NY 12220
Telephone 518-457-3300
Email: webnysupport@its.ny.gov

Statewide technology policies, standards, and guidelines may be found at the following website: http://www.its.ny.gov/tables/technologypolicyindex

8.0 Revision History

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every two years to ensure relevancy.

Date	Description of Change	Reviewer
10/27/2008	Issued policy	CIO/OFT

05/17/2010	Section 2.3.4 revised to remove suggestion of splash page or pop up so that agencies are not instructed on a particular technology or method in meeting the requirement. This will also remove any conflict with the NYS P08-005 Accessibility of Web Based Information & Applications which requires that any instructions or alerts be readable by screen readers for the blind and visually impaired.	CIO/OFT
09/12/2012	Reformatted and updated to reflect current CIO, agency name, logo and style.	CIO/OFT
11/27/2012	Republished	CIO/OFT
10/06/2017	Updated domain name options and approval process; policy format	WebNY Enterprise Platform Service Bureau
07/03/2018	Section 4.1, number of characters increased from 26 to 36.	WebNY Business Services
12/27/2019	Updated authority, scope, and procedure to request a domain name.	WebNY Business Services
05/25/2021	Updated Scope language	Chief Technology Office

9.0 Related Documents