

Policies, Standards and Guidelines Notice of Approval

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	Effective Date: 06-15-2014	Revision Date:
	Title: State of MS Domain Name Policy	

Notice is hereby given, that the above specified document meets the requirements of the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services Policies, Standards and Procedures Program, thereby warranting approval for implementation, effective immediately.



Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Information
Technology Services

June 15, 2014

Date of Signature

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1. **AUTHORITY**

The provisions of Mississippi Code § 25-53-5 detail the powers and duties of the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS), including the authority to develop statewide or interagency information services and technical policies, standards, and procedures.

ITS is the authoritative source for registration of the second-level and third-level .GOV domain for the state. The following second-level domains are reserved and approved for Mississippi state and local government use: **ms.gov, mississippi.gov, and state.ms.us**. At the federal level, the General Services Administration (GSA) manages the top-level .GOV domain and NeuStar Inc. administers the .US domain.

2. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to define statewide standards for Internet top-level, sub-domain, and host domains within the ms.gov, mississippi.gov, and state.ms.us state domains so that citizens can access government information and services in a consistent, efficient, and easy-to-use manner.

3. **SCOPE**

These standards apply to all entities and institutions that operate, manage, or use IT services or equipment for official state business or to support critical state business functions. Pre-existing Internet domain and host names that fall outside the scope of supported domains must conform to this policy upon their next renewal or name change. Those operating outside the standards are solely responsible for the administration of their Internet domain and host names (including the timely migration to the ms.gov domain(s) in a manner that is not disruptive to the state enterprise).

4. **POLICY**

This document describes the Internet Domain Name System (DNS) and the State of Mississippi's Domain and Host Naming Standards, which are designed to:

- Provide for users, domain and host names that clearly indicate the legitimacy and authority of government Web applications, services, and information, (including, but not limited to those that include transactions involving personally identifiable information and financial payments),
- Provide agency domain administrators with clear written naming standards to follow when requesting Internet domain and host names, and
- Provide the ITS state Internet domain administrator with standards from which decisions can be made regarding requests for Internet domain and host names and naming structures.

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5. STANDARD

In most cases, ITS will not make determinations on the appropriateness of selected domain names, but will reserve the right not to assign names on a case-by-case basis.

Use of spaces and underscores within domain names are prohibited.

5.1 STATE GOVERNMENT DOMAIN NAME REGISTRATION

Delegation of sub-domains will no longer be granted. ITS will administer all DNS (such as ms.gov or state.ms.us), including sub-domains, viewable by the public.

5.1.1 STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCY

- A. An agency name can be the full or partial name or the official or common acronym of the state agency or institution. URLs that reflect an agency “brand” are also allowable.
- B. Agency names may include “ms” or “m” as a prefix. However, considering that ms.gov or state.ms.us must be used, this redundant usage is not recommended.
- C. Where multiple names are chosen, one is to be considered primary, for use to promote the site, and any others must redirect to that name.

URL Examples:

ITS.ms.gov
 InformationTechnologyServices.ms.gov
 MDITS.ms.gov
 DepartmentOfInformationTechnologyServices.ms.gov
 therez.ms.gov

5.1.2 STATE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

- A. A program name can be the full or partial name or the official or common acronym of the state agency or institution.
- B. A program name may include “m” or “ms” as a prefix. However, considering that ms.gov must be used, this redundant usage is not recommended.

URL Examples:

EGOV.ms.gov
 MSGIS.ms.gov

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5.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DOMAIN NAME REGISTRATION

Delegation of sub-domains will no longer be granted. ITS will administer all DNS (such as ms.gov or state.ms.us), including sub-domains, viewable by the public.

5.2.1 TOWN OR CITY

- A. Cities and towns may ONLY register for a domain name representing their city or town.
- B. The domain must include the city or town name.
- C. Redundancy by the inclusion of the word “city” within the domain name is optional and may be used at the discretion of the local government.
- D. Cities and towns may NOT register a local program or initiative, such as a local fire department, police department, library, etc. Therefore, no other characters (beside the city or town name and possibly “townof”) may appear in the domain name.

URL Examples:

jackson.ms.gov
 gulfport.city.ms.gov
 townofabbeyville.ms.gov

5.2.2 COUNTY

- A. At this time, counties may only register for one domain name and it must represent their entire county.
- B. The domain must be registered as the county’s name followed by “.county”.
- C. Counties may NOT register a local program or initiative, such as a local fire department, police department, library, etc. Therefore, no other characters (beside the county’s name) may appear in the domain name.

URL Examples:

prentiss.county.ms.gov
 hinds.county.ms.gov
 quitman.county.ms.gov

In order for a domain entry to be pointed to equipment, the equipment must be State owned and/or located within the State network boundaries. In instances where equipment is outside the State network boundaries, the ITS F5 will be the target of the domain entry and act as a proxy in order to get data from the outside equipment.

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6. GUIDELINE

For information or questions concerning the registration process contact:

ITS Technical Support Service Center:

Phone: (601) 432-8080

E-mail: service.center@its.ms.gov

Online: <https://servicedesk.dc.ms.gov> (ACE Login Required)

After contacting the Service Center, an official request for inclusion of an address must be submitted on official letterhead of the entity and signed by the highest-ranking official or officer of the entity.

6.1 AUTHORIZED REQUESTER

6.1.2 State Government Agency, Institution, or Program Authorization

For state government agencies, institutions, or programs, ITS will accept authorization from the agency Executive Director (or equivalent official) or highest-ranking information technology (IT) official with appointed authority from the Executive Director.

6.1.3 City and Town Authorization

For cities and towns, ITS will accept authorization from the Mayor (or equivalent official) or highest-ranking information technology (IT) official with appointed authority from the Mayor.

6.1.4 County Authorization

For counties, ITS will accept authorization from the President of the County Board of Supervisors (or equivalent official) or highest-ranking information technology (IT) official with appointed authority from the Board of Supervisors.

7. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Domain Name System (DNS): A general-purpose distributed, replicated, data query service chiefly used on the Internet for translating hostnames into Internet addresses. Also, the style of hostname used on the Internet, though such a name is properly called a fully qualified domain name. DNS can be configured to use a sequence of name servers, based on the domains in the name being looked for, until a match is found.

General Services Administration (GSA): In 1997 the Federal Networking Council with guidance in the form of Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) informational RFC 2146 delegated GSA the authority to manage and administer the “.gov” internet domain, providing and/or coordinating services for the NSFNet community. See <https://www.dotgov.gov>.

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Host Domain: Within the Internet, domains are defined by the IP address. All devices sharing a common part of the IP address are said to be in the same domain; each host has a unique IP address.

Sub Domain: A sub-domain is commonly used to assign unique names to individual agencies or institutions, departments, functions, or services. For example, given the name www.ms.gov, examples of sub-domains would be www.its.ms.gov, www.mdot.ms.gov, and www.mdhs.state.ms.us.

Top Level Domain (TLD): The rightmost portion of a host name, such as “.gov,” is name of the top-level domain to which the host computer belongs. In addition to the “.gov” domain, for use by government entities, there are more than 200 other top-level domains, called generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs). Most generic Top-Level Domains are country codes managed by national registries. A few are global top-level domains.

Universal Resource Location (URL) a.k.a. Uniform Resource Identifiers (URI): A standard way of specifying the location of an object, typically a Web page, on the Internet. They are used in HTML documents to specify the target of a hyperlink, which is often another HTML document, possibly stored on another computer. See <http://www.w3.org/Addressing/>.