Administrative Policy No. 15.18.01

Subject:	Standards for Internet Websites and Public-Facing Web Applications
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Authorizing Source:	Office of the Secretary Senior Director, Office of Communications and Government Affairs
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Approved By:	**Original approved by Pearlette J. Ramos** Senior Director, Office of Public Integrity

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Purpose

This policy establishes requirements for the creation, management, and oversight of public-facing websites and web applications within DSHS. It ensures all such projects meet agency standards, legal requirements, and security protocols while mandating Web Services Team's involvement at every stage. The policy applies to all websites under the public facing dshs.wa.gov domain, regardless of branding, to prevent unauthorized or unmanaged websites. DSHS has a centralized team responsible for maintaining high-quality standards to best serve our customers, clients, partners, and interested parties while protecting the DSHS brand and ensuring security, accessibility, and analytics across all DSHS properties.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS administrations, programs, teams, employees, and partners who need public-facing websites, building public-facing websites or digital applications must adhere to this policy. This includes any site hosted under dshs.wa.gov, regardless of whether they visibly reference DSHS branding.

Additional Guidance

[Administrative Policy 7.02](#)

Administrative Policy 7.21
Administrative Policy 15.28
WaTech Policy USER-01 Digital Accessibility

Policy

Any website or web application under the dshs.wa.gov domain (including subdomains) must be developed in coordination with the DSHS Web services team at webservicesunit@dshs.wa.gov. While DSHS employees can be involved in website management, Web services must be included throughout the entire process—from initial planning through ongoing maintenance. The Web Services manager must have full administrative access to any DSHS-managed website to ensure security, compliance, and continuity of operations.

Programs must consult Web services before entering any website procurement process, vendor contract, or third-party service agreement. Any website incorporating a DSHS logo, imagery, or trademark must receive Web Services approval. Failure to meet these requirements could result in the site being brought under Web Services' management retroactively, at the program's expense.

Any website using a DSHS logo, image, icon, or any DSHS trademark, must follow the DSHS Style Guide, and obtain permission via Web services. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the site being brought under Web services' management retroactively, at the program's expense. All websites and web applications must also comply with legal and policy requirements, including but not limited to WaTech Policy User-01, Digital Accessibility, at a minimum.

Responsibility

The Web Services Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing all website procurement, development, and maintenance.
- Reviewing, approving, and granting administrative access to all public-facing websites and web applications within DSHS
- Ensuring compliance with DSHS branding, artificial intelligence (A.I.), security, accessibility of all DSHS-owned websites, and contracting policies as they relate to web services.

DSHS Administrations, Programs, Teams, employees, and stakeholders are responsible for:

- Involving Web Services before starting any website or web application project that involves public-facing websites and web applications within DSHS.
- Not entering into web development or maintenance contracts, unless they have first consulted with Web Services as required by this policy.

- Complying with all legal contracting limitations, including those outlined in DSHS Administrative Policies (suggest listing the appropriate administrative policies under [Chapter 13 contracts and licenses).](#)