

		GEORGIA TECHNOLOGY AUTHORITY	
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POC for Changes:	GTA Chief Technology Officer		
Synopsis:	Naming and approval of State of Georgia government web sites		

PURPOSE

This standard outlines the naming and approval requirements for the State of Georgia second level domains of "georgia.gov" and "ga.gov". State of Georgia government web sites and email systems are eligible to use second level domains of "georgia.gov" and "ga.gov" in naming. Use of the "georgia.gov" domain is not limited to sites administered in GTA's enterprise content management system (Portal) but State entities using these domain names apart from the Portal must redirect to servers in other environments.

Benefits of having a well established managed domain name such as "georgia.gov" include the following:

- The name assures citizens that they are accessing an official State of Georgia branded web site. Web sites without "Georgia" or another state name are used by the federal government (cdc.gov, whitehouse.gov).
- Search engines award higher page ranking by longevity of service and number of external links. Georgia.gov has been in use since 2001 and is linked by many external sites. A brand new domain would take a while to climb the page ranks and achieve priority in searches.

SCOPE and AUTHORITY

See "Information Technology Policies, Standards and Guidelines" (PM-04-001) and Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 50-25-4(a)(15), (23), (29).

STANDARD

Standards for domain naming in the "georgia.gov" and "ga.gov" domain are as follows. For simplicity purposes all references to "georgia.gov" herein apply equally to "ga.gov".

1. GTA as Domain Name Registrar - GTA is the trustee and provider of the State of Georgia's web presence using the "georgia.gov" domain. GTA shall manage and authorize the usage of third and subsequent level domain names under the "georgia.gov" second-level domain. All sub-domains of "georgia.gov" (third and fourth levels) must be registered and approved through the GTA.

2. Eligibility for Domain Name Reservation and/or Use - Eligibility for usage of sub-domains of the "georgia.gov" and "ga.gov" names is limited to State of Georgia government entities.
3. Domain Management - Entities approved to use third or subsequent-level names of "georgia.gov" shall manage the use of those sub-domains and the paths located within such sub-domains according to GTA's policies and standards. Sub-domains may be assigned to a third-party or a non-State owned server only with prior approval of GTA based on request by the responsible State entity.
4. Domain Name Protection - To maintain the integrity of government information and the trusted brand associated with the "georgia.gov" portal, all entities with a "georgia.gov" presence shall protect their domain names in top level domains (such as .com, .org, .net, etc.) in order to prevent cybersquatting and reduce the occurrence of citizen confusion and fraud.
5. Naming Conventions - The following additional general rules apply:
 - a. It is the requesting entity's responsibility to ensure that it has the right to use the name it is requesting.
 - b. Obscene names are not permitted.
 - c. Permissible characters are letters and digits. Hyphens are not allowed. Letters must be all lowercase.
 - d. Approved names shall be of the form "*yourorg*.georgia.gov" where "*yourorg*" is a string of characters (usually an acronym) that represents the name or identity of the requesting entity and "*yourorg*" is limited in length to fewer than 10 characters.
 - e. Third and subsequent level domain names may not use the word "georgia". Since the second-level domain already uses the word "georgia" any further use is redundant.
 - f. Third-level domain names may be further subdivided into a fourth level as deemed necessary for administrative purposes. Fourth levels are usually reserved for divisions and offices within the entity registering the third level, and should be used for entire portions of web-sites. Individual pages should have specific addresses and should not be represented by an entire sub-domain.
6. Email Address Use
 - a. The name "ga.gov" is available for e-mail addresses (name@*yourorg*.ga.gov) by eligible entities and may be requested from GTA. The e-mail address should use the same naming convention as the organization's third-level domain name character string (jdoe@gta.ga.gov).
 - b. All e-mail addresses using the "georgia.gov" name space are reserved for Governor's office staff and portal-specific uses (ex. help@georgia.gov, privacy@georgia.gov, etc.).
7. Domain Name Server - All third-level domain names must point to a uniquely named server that has a direct address and a unique IP address.
8. Secure Socket Layer Certificate - GTA will assist requestors with domain authorization for Secure Socket Layer certificates issued against

"georgia.gov" sub-domains. (GTA will also assist requestors with domain authorization for SSL certificates issued against "state.ga.us" sub-domains.)

9. Other Second Level ".gov" Domains - The ".gov" domain is administered by the Federal General Services Administration (GSA). The GSA requires approval from the State CIO or the Governor before granting a second-level name to the ".gov" domain. GTA will not approve any new second-level ".gov" domains.
10. Disputes - Domain name disputes and disputes on all matters related to registration and subsequent use of an assigned "georgia.gov" domain name shall be addressed by GTA's Chief Technology Officer. The Chief Technology Officer's decisions are subject to appeal to the State CIO. The State CIO is the final authority on all matters relating to registration and subsequent use of "georgia.gov" domain names.

EXCEPTIONS and SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Entities may request exceptions to this standard at any time. GTA will work with entities requesting specific domain naming to understand if the reasons for the exception outweigh the benefits of consistency and predictability gained from adherence to the guidelines.

TERMS and DEFINITIONS

1. **Domain Name** - The identification label that defines a realm of administrative autonomy, authority or control in the Internet.
2. **First-level or Top-Level Domain** - The dominant name in a domain name series, includes generic top level domains such as com, net, org and gov. The owner of the top-level domain ".gov" is the United States Government, General Services Administration (GSA).
3. **Second-Level Domains** - "two.gov" (e.g., "georgia.gov"). The second-level domain of "two.gov" is obtained through GSA.
4. **Third-Level Domains** - "three.two.gov" (e.g., gta.georgia.gov). The third-level domain of "georgia.gov" is obtained through and registered with GTA, trustee (owner) of "georgia.gov".
5. **Fourth-Level Domains** - "four.three.two.gov" (e.g., policies.gta.georgia.gov). The fourth-level domain name is obtained through the owner of the third-level domain but must still be registered by GTA.

REFERENCES

1. "Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act", (ACPA), 15 U.S.C. § 1125(d).
2. "Gov Internet Program Guidelines", General Services Administration,
<https://www.dotgov.gov/portal/web/dotgov/program-guidelines>

Note: Version .03 incorporates revisions to domain name eligibility criteria and clarifies language.