Internet and Email Domain Name Management Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Internet and Email Domain Name Management policy is to provide guidance regarding Internet domain management, registration, and naming to ensure uniformity across Texas state agencies.

The Texas Department of Information Resources, on behalf of the State of Texas, provides management, registration, and authorization for the use of *texas.gov* and *state.tx.us* domain names. Additionally, the state's Chief Information Officer (CIO) provides authorization to eligible entities seeking a *.gov* domain name in Texas.

DIR manages the *state.tx.us* domain name in conformance with Internet technical document [Request for Comment (RFC) 1480](#), which prescribes conventions for naming Internet domains for state governments, counties, cities, libraries, and other entities located in the United States. Since 2002, the *.us* domain is available for any U.S. entity to purchase, and is no longer limited to government entities.

DIR manages the *texas.gov* domain name in accordance with the authority and naming convention provided to states in [Federal Management Regulation (FMR) 41 CFR part 102–173](#). Section 102–173.35 authorizes states' CIOs to approve the use of the *.gov* domain. Because the *.gov* Domain Naming System structure is exclusive to government use, public trust and citizen confidence will be strengthened in the knowledge that they are using an official Texas government website when accessing a *texas.gov* site.

Scope

This policy provides information regarding the management and registration of Internet domains and sets forth criteria for establishing public-facing domain names. This policy applies to Texas state agencies, as defined in [Texas Administrative Code, Section 206.3,](#) counties and municipalities, as defined in Texas Local Government Code, Sections [71.001](#) and [1.005](#) respectively.

State Agencies

Texas.gov has been designated as the primary, outwardly facing domain name for Texas government entities. Texas state agencies are strongly recommended to migrate to *[agencyacronym].texas.gov* within a fiscally responsible and practical time frame.

DIR, on behalf of the State of Texas, provides the authorization, management, and registration of the *tx.gov*, *texas.gov*, and *state.tx.us* domain names in accordance with DIR administrative rule and policy. DIR authorizes eligible entities' requests for *.gov* domain names in accordance with FMR 41 CFR part 102–173.

The State of Texas, effective with the adoption date of this policy, will not issue any new *state.tx.us* domain names to state agencies.

DIR is committed to continuing support for the *.tx.us* domain name for other Texas government entities, registration for councils of government, and other eligible jurisdictions that currently use or elect to acquire and use the naming convention *[jurisdictionacronym].[jursidictionname].tx.us*.

Institutions of Higher Education
Based on RFC 1480, Texas Institutions of Higher Education should continue using the *.edu* domain.

Counties, Municipalities, and Local Government Entities
The *texas.gov* domain is available for counties and municipalities in Texas. Use of the *texas.gov* domain convention by county or municipal governments is voluntary. Government entities with pre-existing domain names utilizing *.com*, *.org*, or other top-level domain names, traditionally used by non-governmental entities, should evaluate the domain names for their benefit, risk, and cost.

.GOV
The General Services Administration (GSA) manages the registration services for the .gov domain throughout the U.S. The Texas CIO must authorize the request for any Texas agency.gov domain and registration with the GSA. Registration of a .gov domain name requires an annual fee (41 CFR Part 102–173).

Policy

1. **Management**
   DIR provides Domain Name Registration services within the *texas.gov* and *state.tx.us* domains for Texas state agencies and within the *state.tx.us* domain for other Texas government entities.

   Registration services are provided at no cost to these organizations. DIR is responsible for authorizing and delegating third-level domains for *texas.gov* and fourth-level domains for *state.tx.us*.

2. **Registration**
   Upon request by a state agency or county or municipal government, DIR will review the requested domain name. If approved, DIR will authorize and delegate the requested domain name to serve as the third-level domain name for the *texas.gov* identifier. State agency management of sub-domains must comply with State of Texas website standards (1 TAC 206) and applicable email standards. If an agency determines a second-level *.gov* domain is necessary for the proper performance of an agency function, the head of the agency must submit a request with justification for the *.gov* domain to DIR. GSA requires the authorization of the Texas CIO prior to the issuance of a *.gov* domain.

3. **Eligibility Period**
   A *texas.gov* domain name in conformance with the Domain Naming Convention in this policy will be registered for an indefinite term. Domain Names that are authorized but are in exception to the specified Domain Naming Convention are subject to periodic review.

All agencies should periodically contact the registrar at *Registrar@dir.texas.gov* to update administrative information or other information pertinent to the continued authorization of the domain name. This information enables DIR to ensure the *texas.gov* domain provides secure, official websites and promote the best possible service to Texas citizens.

4. **Domain Naming Convention**

   For state agencies within the *texas.gov* domain, the standard agency designation must be its agency acronym, shown as *[agencyacronym].texas.gov*. Use of the agency name in lieu of the agency acronym may be considered provided the terminology is singularly unique to the agency and is recognizable by the public.

   For Texas counties requesting the *texas.gov* domain, the registration must follow the naming standard: name of county followed by *county.texas.gov* (e.g., *dallascounty.texas.gov*, *tomgreencounty.texas.gov*).

   For municipalities requesting the *texas.gov* domain, the registration must follow the naming standard: *[nameofcity].texas.gov.*

5. **Domain Naming Convention Exceptions**

   Domain names that do not meet the prescribed Domain Naming Convention — *[agencyacronym].texas.gov* or *[agencyname].texas.gov* — are considered exceptions to the policy. General terms such as "recreation," "benefits," or "eligibility" without a unique agency identifier are considered exceptions because they do not meet the policy naming convention and do not singularly represent a specific agency/program origin or service.

   An agency head or designee must approve the agency's request for a domain name that is an exception to the specified naming convention. An exception request must acknowledge on the DIR registration form that the requested domain name is not in conformance with the policy and must provide the name of the agency head or designee who has approved the request. DIR consideration of an exception request will adhere to the *Domain Name Exception Request Process.*

   No exceptions will be made for local government entities.

   If an exception is approved, the agency must follow the same registration process for all domain names available on the DIR website.

6. **Electronic Mail (email) Naming Convention**

   As agencies migrate to the *texas.gov* domain, it is expected that agency email addresses will also be migrated to the *texas.gov* domain naming convention. The recommended personal naming convention for email is *[firstname.lastname]@[agencyacronym].texas.gov*.

Definitions and Acronyms

Domain

A region of jurisdiction on the Internet for naming assignment. DIR is responsible for registrations in the *texas.gov* and *state.tx.us* domains for state agencies and other Texas government entities. The General Services Administration is responsible for registrations in the *.gov* domain.

Domain Name

A name assigned to an Internet server that locates the organization or entity on the Internet. Internet Domain Name servers have registries of Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers that relate to the readable text name.

Domain Name System (DNS)

The Domain Name System helps users find their way around the Internet. It translates domain names into the numerical (binary) identifiers associated with networking equipment for the purpose of locating and addressing these devices worldwide.

.gov

This refers to the subscript of those domains ending with *.gov*. The *.gov* domain hosts only official, government sites at the federal-, state- and local-government levels, including federally recognized Indian tribes, known as Native Sovereign Nations (NSNs). The *.gov* domain provides the official and trusted Internet presence for these government entities.

Registrar

An organization that manages and reserves Internet domain names in accordance with the guidelines of the designated domain name registries (accredited by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) or national country code top-level domain (ccTLD) authority). The Registrar is responsible for maintaining domain name record information about each domain name and managing registration, expiration, re-registration, and the fee collection processes.

Second-level, third-level, and subdomains

The domain name system is designed as a hierarchy. The root is the highest level of the hierarchy, followed by the top-level domain, followed by the second-level domain, then the third-level domain. For example, for the domain "agency.texas.gov," "agency" is the third-level domain, "texas" is the second-level domain, "gov" is the top-level domain, and the "." is the root. Within the hierarchy, sub-domains exist at any level below the top-level domain.

References

- Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)
- Texas Government Code, Section 2054.051 (General Duties of DIR)
- Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Chapter 206 (State Web Sites)
- RFC 1480
- 41 CFR Part 102–173

Version History

Version 1.3 – August 30, 2017 – Policy amended to authorize municipal domain registration.

Version 1.2 – March 17, 2015 – Updated links and references.

Version 1.1 – August 26, 2014 – Policy amended to authorize county domain registration.

Version 1.0 – November 24, 2010 – Policy adopted; replaces SRRPUB07 and SRRPUB10.