

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

20 September 2016

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2016-_____

FOR : HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES AND AGENCIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND -CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS, INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATIONS, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS, STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES; LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : INTERNET DOMAIN NAMES SYSTEM (IDNS) POLICY FOR .GOV.PH DOMAIN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Section 1. BACKGROUND

1. To make Internet service more accessible to the general public, a global system of Internet domain is established and maintained.
2. The Internet Domain Name System (IDNS) is a recognized system for assigning addresses to web servers or Internet servers.
3. In the Philippine setting, the .gov.ph domain is provided to government agencies that want to publish materials associated with the Philippine Government.
4. The Administrative Order for the National Government Portal (NGP) specifies the creation of a DNS policy. Government web systems like the NGP will benefit greatly from DNS since it is used to unify and at the same time manage the gov.ph domains of hosted agencies.
5. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) shall be in charge of administering .gov.ph domains.

Section 2. OBJECTIVES

The IDNS Policy for .gov.ph domain is created to:

- a) Set out national rules and principles for registering and managing government domain names;
- b) Restrict the registration to comply with the approved structure of the Philippine Government according to the Republic Act (RA)

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No. 10717, otherwise known as the General Appropriations Act of 2016;

- c) Provide the step-by-step procedures on how to apply for a .gov.ph domain, appeal against rejection of the application, and make changes to or cancel the .gov.ph domain;
- d) Specify the organizations that are eligible and not eligible for registration under .gov.ph domain; and
- e) Provide the standard exceptions for registration under .gov.ph domain.

Section 3. SCOPE

1. The .gov.ph domain is for registration of the Philippine Government agencies on the national and local levels.
2. This Circular shall cover the registration of National Level Philippine Government Departments, Agencies, and Instrumentalities, as embodied in RA 10717.
3. Registration for local government units other than Provinces and Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs) shall be governed by a separate policy document to be issued by the DICT.

Section 4. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **Agency:** refers to any of the various units of the Government, including a department, bureau, office, instrumentality, or government-owned or controlled corporation.
2. **Agency NGP Team:** group primarily in charge of the agency's web presence. Assists the executive in checking the compliance of web content to NGP standards. Also uploads them to the NGP once approved.
3. **Internet Domain:** refers to a distinct subset of the Internet with addresses sharing a common suffix or under the control of a particular organization or individual.
4. **Internet Directory:** refers to a distinct subset of the Internet wherein content under the control of a particular organization or individual are organized into subsets within the same website.

5. **Subdirectory:** refers to a directory below another directory in a hierarchy.
6. **Subdomain:** refers to an Internet domain that is part of a primary domain.
7. **Uniform (or universal) resource locator (URL):** the address of a web page.

Section 5. ELIGIBILITY

1. The registration under the .gov.ph domain shall conform with the recognized Philippine Government structure as mentioned in the RA No. 10717.
2. Following are the eligible and non-eligible organizations for registration under the .gov.ph domain, including the standard exceptions:

A) Organizations Eligible for Registration Under .gov.ph Domain

- I. Top-level Organizations and Independent Agencies and Organizations

Top-level organizations (e.g., those with initials in Roman numerals, such as “VI. Department of Budget and Management”) and independent agencies and organizations (e.g., “National Computer Center” and other non-indented listings unless prohibited below), as listed in the RA No. 10651, shall be eligible for registration directly under the .gov.ph domain.

- II. Autonomous Law Enforcement Components of the Top-level Organization and All Government-Owned and -Controlled Corporations (GOCCs)

Autonomous law enforcement components of the top-level organization (e.g., National Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Internal Revenue) and all GOCCs (e.g., Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System) shall be eligible for registration.

- III. Cross-agency Collaborative Organizations

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Cross-agency collaborative organizations (e.g., Inter-Agency Council, Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC)) shall be eligible for registration under the .gov.ph domain upon presentation of their charter documents and are the only non-GAA listed organizations eligible for registration under the .gov.ph domain.

IV. Developed Government Applications, Services or Infrastructures

The developed government applications, services or infrastructures (e.g., liham.gov.ph, pki.gov.ph, proman.gov.ph) shall be eligible to register under the .gov.ph domain.

V. Provinces

The provinces of the Republic of the Philippines listed on the website of the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) shall be eligible for registration under the .gov.ph domain (e.g., provincename.gov.ph).

VI. Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs)

HUCs (e.g., nameofHUC.gov.ph) shall be allowed to register under the .gov.ph domain.

B) Organizations Not Eligible for Registration Under .gov.ph primary Domain

I. Subsidiaries, Attached Agencies, Non-Autonomous Components of Top-Level or Other Entities

Subsidiaries, attached agencies, non-autonomous components of top-level or other entities shall not be eligible for separate registration. Government organizations (such as the GO-IT) shall register under the org.ph domain. International organizations shall not be eligible for registration under the .gov.ph domain.

II. Organizations Listed as "Government Funded Organizations"

Organizations listed as "Government Funded Organizations" shall not be eligible for registration under .gov.ph and shall register under .org.ph or other appropriate top-level domain.

III. Organizations Subsidiary to “Department of National Defense”

Organizations subsidiary to “Department of National Defense” shall register under the .mil.ph domain.

IV. State Universities, Colleges and Public Schools

State Universities, colleges and public schools shall register under the .edu.ph domain (e.g., nameofSUC.edu.ph).

C) Standard Exceptions

The only standard exceptions to these rules are changes to governmental structure due to statutory, regulatory or executive directives not yet reflected in the RA No. 10717. The requesting agency should provide documentation in one of the above forms to request an exception. Other requests for exception shall be referred to the DICT.

Section 6. RULES ON NAMING STRATEGY

1. The domain names are intellectual properties that have financial as well as strategic value. It is therefore recommended that agencies shall make a plan on how to manage and use the domain names that they wish to register.
2. In case an agency reserves the equivalent non-gov.ph domain, the agency's domain name shall not redirect to anything other than the homepage of the agency's .gov.ph domain.

Section 7. NAMING PRINCIPLES

1. To make the government URLs more consistent, easy to guess and readable for the general public, agencies shall adhere to the naming principles discussed below. These principles are of vital importance to:
 - I. Let users know what to expect from the website;
 - II. Help people get more effective search results when they key in an inquiry; and
 - III. Define what government URLs should be.
2. Avoid Acronyms

Government URLs shall not use acronyms or abbreviations in order to make them easier to understand. This is unless the agency is already known by said acronym.

3. Underscores are Not Allowed

To avoid confusion, underscores shall no longer be allowed in government URLs.

4. Describe the Main Purpose

Instead of vague or ambiguous term, a government URL shall clearly define what the purpose of their website is and what people should expect when they visit.

5. Choose URLs that are consistent with current naming conventions.

In case there are several URLs to choose from, the government URL that is more consistent with the current naming conventions shall be the one selected. This will make it easier for the general public to remember.

6. Use Easily Identifiable Names

If the organization is known by a certain short name or acronym, this shall be the one used as the primary URL. This shall be used when the real word URL is very long and confusing.

7. Remove Unnecessary Words

Prepositions and conjunctions may be deleted to make the name simpler.

8. Use Short URLs

The shortest name that can be used in a URL shall be applied.

9. Use URLs that are Easy to Verbalize

The government URLs are not just used online, they are also mentioned in ordinary conversations. Since this is the case, the government URLs shall be easy to verbalize to reduce human error.

Below are examples of proper domain names:

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1. www.naturalresources.gov.ph (for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources);
2. www.education.gov.ph (for the Department of Education);
3. www.trade.gov.ph (for the Department of Trade);
4. www.finance.gov.ph (for the Department of Finance); or
5. www.tourism.gov.ph (for the Department of Tourism).

Section 8. DEFENSIVE REGISTRATION

As part of safety and security, closely related or similar domain names shall also be registered to the same agency. For example, the agency shall also own the corresponding generic top-level domains (gTLDs) (.com, .org, .info, .ph) as well as the second level domains (.com.ph, .org.ph). This is a strategic move to prevent the following:

1. Typosquatting: The use of common versions or misspelling of the domain name to confuse people;
2. Cybersquatting: The act of purchasing domain names to sell back at exorbitant rates later; or
3. Cybersmearing: The use of websites to spread false information.

Section 9. SUB-DIRECTORIES AND SUB-DOMAINS

A. Sub-Directories: This is a label which is given to a page or group of pages within a website. Sub-directories involve placing the entity name after a slash from the main URL. Agency data such as spreadsheets and statistics shall be stored in this format.

Example: “www.gov.ph/data” where the “data” folder is a sub-directory of “www.gov.ph”.

B. Sub-Domains: These are actually separate websites in themselves functioning in relation to the main site. Sub-domains involve placing the entity name separated by a dot “.” from the main URL. Agency services such as those that involve transactions shall be stored in this format. Other items not compatible with a sub-directory format shall also be stored in this way.

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Example: “www.dict.gov.ph” where “services” is a sub-domain of “www.gov.ph”.

C. These agencies, offices, and other entities are encouraged to utilize these rules in sorting their data and services respectively into either sub-directories or sub-domains:

1. The attached agencies of the National Government Agencies;
2. The regional offices of the NGAs, based from the list of the Philippine Statistics Authority;
3. The provinces’ cities / municipalities;
4. The programs / projects (government-wide, department-wide or agency-wide); and
5. In case a blog for the agency is hosted on the main website of the agency, it shall follow the proper form when incorporating the blog.

D. Attached agencies must course their applications for a .gov.ph domain name through their mother agencies. They shall also utilize the sub-domain system when applying for the said .gov.ph name.

Section 10. PROCEDURES TO APPLY FOR A .GOV.PH NAME

The agency shall adhere to the following procedures when applying for a .gov.ph domain:

1. The agency shall download the appropriate form at dns.gov.ph. The Domain Application Form shall be attached as Annex A to this document.
2. The agency requesting for a gov.ph domain registration shall be required to submit an official letter written in the agency's letterhead requesting the registration of that agency's particular domain name by fax or digitally signed email.

The letter shall be signed by any of the following:

- a) Agency Head; or
- b) Chief Information Officer; or
- c) Management Information System (MIS) Head.

The request letter should be addressed to:

gov.ph Administrator

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Department of Information and Communications Technology
UPOU Bldg, C.P. Garcia Ave,
Diliman, Quezon City,
PHILIPPINES 1101
Fax: +63-2-925-8598
Email: dns@dict.dost.gov.ph

- II. Upon receiving the application form, the gov.ph administrator shall have ten (10) working days to review and to approve or disapprove the application for the domain name.
 - a) If the application is approved, the administrator must inform the agency via official email through their authorized contact person.
 - b) If the applications is rejected, the administrator must inform the agency via official email through their authorized contact person.
 - i. The notification must state the reason for the rejection of the application.
 - ii. An agency shall be given three (3) working days to appeal the rejection of their application. The gov.ph administrator shall decide on this appeal within five (5) working days.
 - iii. Agencies that do not wish to contest the rejection of their application may re-apply for a different domain name, following the same procedure as outlined in this Section.

3. .gov.ph Domain Registry Modification

- I. The agency shall send the accomplished .gov.ph Domain Registry Modification Form (refer to Annex B) to the gov.ph Administrator to modify any of the following:
 - a) name
 - b) server information
 - c) authorized contact persons.
- II. Upon submission, the gov.ph Administrator shall have five (5) working days to implement the changes requested by the applicant. After making the requested changes, the gov.ph must notify the applicant via official email through their authorized contact person.

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4. .gov.ph Domain Deactivation
 - I. The agency shall send the .gov.ph Domain Deactivation Form (refer to Annex C) containing the .gov.ph domain name and the reason for deactivation of domain through this fax number: +63-2-925-8598.
 - II. The .gov.ph domain administrator shall send an email notification to confirm the agency's request. Upon confirmation, the gov.ph Administrator shall have three (3) days to deactivate the domain. Upon deactivation, the .gov.ph Administrator shall inform the requesting agency of the successful deactivation of the domain name.
 - III. Concerns regarding the request shall be emailed to dns@dict.gov.ph.
 - IV. The DICT may also deactivate a domain that has been inactive for more than three (3) months. A domain is considered inactive if no new content has been added to the site during the past 3 months or if the domain redirects to an empty page. Appeals regarding this deactivation may be emailed to dns@dict.gov.ph.
 - V. The DICT may also utilize DNS to deactivate agency domains due to noncompliance. Grounds for deactivation include non-migration to a gov.ph domain within 6 months of this policy's effectiveness or any violation of the conventions set in this policy.

Section 11. NAMING AND APPROVALS COMMITTEE

The DICT is in-charge of delegating .gov.ph domains. To register for a .gov.ph domain, refer to Section 10.

Section 12. TRANSITION

A. This DNS policy shall follow the timeline set by the AO on the National Government Portal. The stipulations of this circular shall be included in the NGP transition training. Agencies shall follow the NGP migration timeline as detailed below:

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1. *Phase 1: Training (Six months)* - The DICT shall provide agencies covered by this Administrative Order with NGP transition training. This training will require Agencies to submit an NGP transition plan and a draft website. It will also cover the supporting policies of this Order: the Uniform Web Content Policy, Open Data Policy, and AR. This phase shall cover the first six (6) months following the effectivity of this Order;
2. *Phase 2: Migration (One year)* - During this phase, agencies are expected to work toward migrating their web content into the NGP following their transition plans. The DICT shall provide support and shall conduct monitoring of agencies during this period. This phase shall last one (1) year after the agency training in Phase one. Agencies are expected to submit monthly progress reports to the DICT during Phase 2; and
3. *Phase 3: Finalization (One year with an additional one year allowance when deemed necessary)* - During this phase, agencies formally complete their migration into the NGP. Agencies shall submit progress reports to DICT twice a year while in this phase.

Regional and Provincial Offices (ROs and POs) shall form their own NGP staff. The staff shall join Phase One (transition training).

Agencies currently relying on third-parties for their website maintenance shall have to wait until their contracts with the said third-parties lapse. These shall then form their NGP team afterwards and join Phase One (transition training).

Section 13. POLICY REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This IDNS Policy shall be reviewed and evaluated at least once a year by DICT based on its effectiveness and impact on technical processes.

Section 14. REPEAL

All other rules and regulations inconsistent with this Memorandum Circular are hereby deemed repealed.

Section 15. SEPARABILITY

If any provision of this Department order is declared void or unconstitutional, the remaining portions or provisions hereof shall continue to be valid and effective.

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Section 16. EFFECTIVITY

This memorandum circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette and in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation and submission to the Office of the National Administrative Registry (ONAR).

Recommending Approval:

DENIS F. VILLORENTE

Undersecretary

Department of Information and Communications Technology

Approved By:

RODOLFO A. SALALIMA

Secretary

Department of Information and Communications Technology

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Annex A: .gov.ph Domain Application Form

COMPLETE NAME OF ORGANIZATION		
COMPLETE ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION		
TELEPHONE NUMBER		
FAX NUMBER		
REQUESTED .GOV.PH DOMAIN NAME		
PURPOSE OF REQUEST (if your request is an inter-agency initiative or for a project, please include the purpose of the initiative/project. You can use separate paper if the space provided is not enough.)		
NAME SERVER INFORMATION		
	HOSTNAME OF PRIMARY NAME SERVER	IP ADDRESS OF PRIMARY NAME SERVER
	HOSTNAME OF SECONDARY NAME SERVER	IP ADDRESS OF SECONDARY NAME SERVER
	HOSTNAMES OF OTHER NAME SERVERS (if applicable)	IP ADDRESS OF OTHER NAME SERVERS
	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
AUTHORIZE CONTACT PERSONS		
NAME:	POSITION:	EMAIL ADDRESS:
NAME:	POSITION:	EMAIL ADDRESS:

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I hereby certify that the information provided above are true and correct.

NAME AND SIGNATURE
HEAD OF THE
ORGANIZATION

DATE

NOTE: Please wait for an email notification from the .gov.ph Domain Administrator regarding your application. The notice will be emailed to the authorized contact persons you indicated in this form.

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Annex B: .gov.ph Domain Registry Modification Form

CHANGE IS APPLICABLE FOR (select which is applicable):

NAME SERVER INFORMATION

AUTHORIZED CONTACT PERSONS

COMPLETE NAME OF ORGANIZATION		
COMPLETE ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION		
TELEPHONE NUMBER		
FAX NUMBER		
.GOV.PH DOMAIN NAME		
NAME SERVER INFORMATION: (indicate new name server information)		
	HOSTNAME OF PRIMARY NAME SERVER	IP ADDRESS OF PRIMARY NAME SERVER
	HOSTNAME OF SECONDARY NAME SERVER	IP ADDRESS OF SECONDARY NAME SERVER
	HOSTNAMES OF OTHER NAME SERVERS	IP ADDRESS OF OTHER NAME SERVERS
	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
AUTHORIZE CONTACT PERSONS (indicate new authorize contact person.)		
NAME:	POSITION:	EMAIL ADDRESS:
NAME:	POSITION:	EMAIL ADDRESS:

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I hereby certify that the information provided above are true and correct.

NAME AND SIGNATURE AUTHORIZED
CONTACT PERSON or HEAD OF THE
ORGANIZATION

DATE

NOTE: Please wait for an email notification from the .gov.ph Domain Administrator regarding your application. The notice will be emailed to the authorized contact persons you indicated in this form.

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Annex C: .gov.ph Domain Deactivation Form

COMPLETE NAME OF ORGANIZATION	
COMPLETE ADDRESS OF ORGANIZATION	
TELEPHONE NUMBER	
FAX NUMBER	
REASON FOR DEACTIVATION OF DOMAIN	

I hereby certify that the information provided above are true and correct.

NAME AND SIGNATURE
HEAD OF THE
ORGANIZATION

DATE

NOTE: Please wait for an email notification from the .gov.ph Domain Administrator regarding your application. The notice will be emailed to the authorized contact persons you indicated in this form.

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Annex D: URLs for the Philippine Government Agencies

Agency	Primary URL	Alias
Department of Agriculture	http://agriculture.gov.ph	http://da.gov.ph
Department of Agrarian Reform	http://agrarianreform.gov.ph	http://dar.gov.ph
Department of Budget and Management	http://budgetandmanagement.gov.ph	http://dbm.gov.ph
Department of Education	http://education.gov.ph	http://deped.gov.ph
Department of Environment and Natural Resources	http://environment.gov.ph	http://denr.gov.ph
Department of Foreign Affairs	http://foreignaffairs.gov.ph	http://dfa.gov.ph
Department of the Interior and Local Government	http://interiorandlocalgovernment.gov.ph	http://dilg.gov.ph
Department of National Defense	http://nationaldefense.gov.ph	http://dnd.gov.ph
Department of Energy	http://energy.gov.ph	http://doe.gov.ph
Department of Finance	http://finance.gov.ph	http://dof.gov.ph
Department of Health	http://health.gov.ph	http://doh.gov.ph
Department of Justice	http://justice.gov.ph	http://doj.gov.ph
Department of Labor and Employment	http://laborandemployment.gov.ph	http://dole.gov.ph
Dept of Science and Technology	http://scienceandtechnology.gov.ph	
Department of Tourism	http://tourism.gov.ph	http://dot.gov.ph
Department of Transportation and Communication	http://transportationandcommunication.gov.ph	http://dotc.gov.ph
Department of Social Welfare and Development	http://socialwelfareanddevelopment.gov.ph	http://dswd.gov.ph
Department of Trade and Industry	http://tradeandindustry.gov.ph	http://dti.gov.ph
Department of Public Works and Highways	http://publicworksandhighways.gov.ph	http://dpwh.gov.ph
National Economic and Development Authority	http://economicanddevelopment.gov.ph	http://neda.gov.ph