

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Recovery.gov
Recommended Guidelines for Related State Web Pages**

This guidance is to encourage the creation of a rational network of websites to provide transparency in the workings of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act), based on best practices in web content management. Federal recovery pages are mandated by OMB Guidance; these recommendations for state and local jurisdictions are intended to achieve the same goals through voluntary collaboration in implementing the Recovery Act.

States are not required to develop websites dedicated to Recovery Act efforts; in fact, proliferation of websites is discouraged. States are encouraged to leverage existing websites and add key entry pages in a manner similar to what OMB is requiring of Federal agencies.

The purpose of these recommended guidelines is to encourage the states to make it easy for their citizens to follow the Recovery Act developments by using a similar web interface to the federal Recovery.gov pages, to suggest content that is reasonably consistent across the federal and state governments, and to provide a place for posting the reports the states will be required to file under the Act as recipients of this federal funding.

www.recovery.gov will leverage Federal agency and recipient-reported information to create fully integrated Federal agency, and state-specific summary pages, including links to Federal agency and state recovery key entry pages.

States are encouraged to mirror the structure of the www.recovery.gov site. Just as www.recovery.gov features data and information from, and links to, Federal agencies and states, state recovery sites should feature data and information from, and links to, every participating state agency, locality and municipality in the state.

Consistent Web Addresses: www.stateURL/recovery

Each state should dedicate a page of its primary website to Recovery Act activities entitled “[State Name] Information Related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009”.

These pages should be consistently identified with a URL that identifies the state’s Recovery Act page with a “recovery” standard extension, i.e., www.stateURL/recovery. States are encouraged to create their recovery-related page as soon as practicable after their certification of acceptance of Recovery Act funds.

Recovery.gov will link to the main Recovery Act pages for the states as well as federal agencies. Recovery Act information from state agencies should be integrated into the state's Recovery Act page in a manner similar to how www.recovery.gov is displaying Federal agency and state information.

It is recommended that all related web pages be assigned a naming convention that clearly identifies official pages where recovery-related information is posted. The following convention is recommended:

www.stateURL/recovery/agency or program, where the agency or program refers to the state agency that is receiving funding.

Reports filed relevant to these pages should follow the same naming conventions as the federal recovery pages spelled out in the OMB guidance. For the states, this would be, for example:

www.stateURL.gov/recovery/agency/year/month/date/reporttype

Use of these consistent URLs will connect the state pages back to recovery.gov as well as the federal agencies providing their funding.

Consistent Content

In order to facilitate transparency to the public, states should follow some minimum common formats for their Recovery Act pages. These main recovery pages should provide all relevant information for their states' Recovery Act related endeavors. These include:

- **Page titles.** To help the public find the information via commercial and government search engines, states should use a consistent page title for their main Recovery Act page ("State X Information Related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009").
- **Main headings.** Each state's Recovery Act key entry page should include the following main headings:
 - "Overview of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). The Recovery Act signed into law by President Obama on February 17th, 2009 includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need."
 - "Implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act)". States should include a short paragraph or bullets giving an overview of implementation of the Recovery Act for your state.
 - "State Plans and Reports". This section should include state plans and reports as required by the Recovery Act, or as determined by the state.

- “Learn more about our programs”. States should use this section to highlight state agency and program plans and other programmatic activities. There are no specific formatting requirements for this section.
- **Links to other state and federal websites.** The state’s Recovery.gov entry page should provide easy access to all the other prominent online resources and state activities related to the Recovery Act. These should include such connections as links to
 - **Recovery.gov.** States should include the “Recovery.gov” graphic prominently on all of their Recovery pages, linked to www.recovery.gov. The graphic can be found at <https://max.omb.gov/community/x/7QCtDw>.
 - **Legislation.** States should include a link to the Recovery Act legislation on their main Recovery page. The URL is:
http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h1enr.pdf
 - **How to apply.** States should have prominent links to Grants.gov, FBO.gov, and similar state websites so that people and entities that want to apply or bid for grants, contracts, loans or loan guarantees have a clear and consistent avenue to learn more and act.
 - **The state’s inspector general.** Include a link to the IG’s website to allow for fraud reporting and easy access to IG reports.
- **Transparency & reporting.** States will also be using the web for transparency and reporting that is required for compliance with the Recovery Act.

Additional best practices

States should have a prominent link to their Recovery Act key entry page from their home page and from other relevant sections of their site where visitors are likely to look for this information. For example, states should link to their Recovery Act pages from their “Performance and Budget” page and their “Grants” page, where applicable. States should also link to their Recovery Act page from relevant program areas that are receiving funding from Recovery Act.

- Content should be written in plain language and follow government-wide best practices for plain language (see: http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/managing_content/writing_and_editing.shtml)
- States are encouraged to ensure that all content, including printable reports, is accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with state-specific procedures. While Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is applicable to Federal Government websites, many states have enacted similar rules. States should ensure that large documents are presented in a way for users to easily scan their contents and download them.

- To ensure maximum transparency and accountability, states should provide contact information for the person or office responsible for maintaining their Recovery Act content. States should also provide contact information for the office of the senior accountable state official responsible for Recovery Act activities.
- As they develop their web content, states should follow general government-wide web best practices developed by the Federal Web Managers Council, published on WebContent.gov:
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/reqs_bestpractices/best_practices.shtml

Questions

Questions about these guidelines should be directed to recoveryconcern@gsa.gov.