

House IT Policy 003.0

The United States House of Representatives Information Technology Policy for Official Website Domain Names

Version:	2.0
Approved:	January 2017
Approval Authority:	The United States House of Representatives Committee on House Administration

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
	1.1 SCOPE	3
2	Definitions.....	3
	2.1 HOUSE ENTITY	3
	2.2 EMPLOYING AUTHORITY	3
	2.3 WEBSITE	3
	2.4 DOMAIN NAMES	4
	2.5 HOUSE.GOV DOMAIN.....	4
	2.6 VIRTUAL DIRECTORIES	4
	2.7 POINT OF CONTACT FOR DOMAIN REGISTRATIONS	4
3	Policy	4
	3.1 DOMAIN NAME CONVENTIONS	4
	3.2 DOMAIN NAME RESTRICTIONS	5
	3.3 LOCATION OF THE HOUSE.GOV DOMAIN AND HOUSE WEBSITES.....	5
	3.4 SECURE SOCKETS LAYER (SSL)	5
4	Requesting House Domain Names	5
	4.1 JOINT COMMITTEES AND HOUSE COMMISSIONS.....	6
	4.2 SUBCOMMITTEES	6
	4.3 MINORITY COMMITTEE OFFICES.....	6
	4.4 MEMBER AND STAFF ORGANIZATIONS	6
	4.5 INTERNAL DOMAIN NAMES.....	7
5	Compliance	7
6	Authority.....	7

1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard naming convention for all official U.S. House of Representatives (House) domains names. This policy affects website domain names for Members, Committees, Leadership and other House entities. This policy supplements regulations issued by the Committee on House Administration, such as the Member’s Congressional Handbook, the Committee Handbook, and the Eligible Congressional Member Organizations Handbook.

1.1 Scope

This document sets forth requirements for the creation and use of website domain names in the House. This policy is applicable to all House entities as defined in section 2.1 regardless of the service or intended use.

2 Definitions

2.1 House Entity

As it relates to this policy, a “House entity” is any organization that uses House authorized information technology (IT) infrastructure to deliver services either internally to the House or externally to constituents or the general public. These organizations generally include all Members, Committees, Leadership, Officers and Officials of the House.

2.2 Employing Authority

As it relates to this policy, an “Employing Authority” includes any personal Office of a Member of the House, a Committee of the House, or any other House Entity headed by a person with the final authority to appoint, hire, discharge, and set the terms, conditions, or privileges of the employment of an employee of the House of Representatives.

2.3 Website

A website is a collection of files or information on a particular topic that includes a default location called a home page. For example, most organizations that operate a website publish a single address that directs visitors to their home page. Navigation on the home page provides a mechanism to browse all of the information and files on the site. For example, the website for U.S. House of Representatives has the home page address of <https://www.house.gov>.

2.4 Domain Names

Domain names provide a user friendly, easy to remember name to help locate services or resources over the internet or network. Domains can also be subdivided into smaller domains, often called subdomains. Examples of domain names used in the House include *house.gov* and *saa.house.gov*. The *saa.house.gov* site would also be considered a subdomain of the broader *house.gov* domain.

2.5 house.gov Domain

The House of Representatives has registered the domain *house.gov* with the General Services Administration (GSA), which is the organization responsible for managing the top-level *.gov* domain. The House has full control over the *house.gov* domain and can create any number of subdomains that reflect the various entities and organizations that encompass the House.

For example, the House has created the domain names *cha.house.gov* for the Committee on House Administration and *cao.house.gov* for the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

2.6 Virtual Directories

Virtual directories are shortcuts created on a web server to assist with subdividing a website into different entities or subordinate sites. In the *house.gov* domain, virtual directories perform a similar function as subdomains by helping to uniquely identify an Office's website. For example, the House created the virtual directory <https://www.house.gov/cha> for the Committee on House Administration.

For the purpose of this policy, virtual directories created immediately under *House.gov* must adhere to the same conventions and restrictions as domain names.

2.7 Point of Contact for Domain Registrations

The CAO shall provide to the domain registration authority an Administrative, Technical and Billing Point of Contact (POC) for all domain name registrations and SSL Certificates for House offices.

3 Policy

3.1 Domain Name Conventions

All domains created under this policy shall be in the form of *officeName.house.gov* or *serviceName.house.gov*.

For example:

- *cao.house.gov*
- *memberName.house.gov*
- *cha.house.gov*
- *peoplesoft.house.gov*

Domain names may be further subdivided into subdomains provided those names are compliant with the restrictions and polices outlined within this document and are subdivided by using a dash between the subdomain names.

For example:

- *majority-CommitteeName.house.gov*

3.2 Domain Name Restrictions

All domain names created under this policy must:

- be recognizably derivative or representative of the name of the entity requesting the domain;
- not be a slogan;
- not imply in any manner that the House endorses or favors any specific commercial product, commodity, or service.

3.3 Location of the house.gov Domain and House Websites

The house.gov and all subdomains must be located within the House's approved internet protocol (IP) range. The external hosting of House.gov domains is not permitted except in very limited circumstances and require pre-approval by the CAO Chief Information Officer (CIO).

All House websites must be located within the house.gov domain.

3.4 Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) and Subdomains

Per the House Information Security Publication (HISPUB) 007.1.15, all public House websites must be SSL enabled and accessible only by the HTTPS protocol.

4 Requesting House Domain Names

Any Employing Authority may request a unique domain name within house.gov to provide an address for their website and associated services. The Committee on House Administration must approve all requests for a domain name that does not conform to the standard naming convention. The CAO will coordinate the exception request on behalf of the employing authority upon request.

4.1 Joint Committees and House Commissions

Joint Committees and Commissions that encompass a membership beyond just the House institution require CHA approval.

4.2 Subcommittees

Under this policy, Subcommittees are not considered Employing Authorities. The Chair of the full Committee may request a domain in the following format that is clearly derivative of the existing Committee domain name that identifies the Subcommittee as part of the full Committee.

For example:

- *subcommitteeName-CommitteeName.house.gov*

4.3 Minority Committee Offices

Under this policy, Minority Committee Offices are not considered Employing Authorities. However, Ranking Members of the full Committee may request a domain in the following format that is clearly derivative of the existing Committee domain and identifies the Minority office as part of the Full Committee.

For example:

- *minority-CommitteeName.house.gov*
- *partyName-CommitteeName.house.gov*

4.4 Member and Staff Organizations

For the purposes of this policy, Eligible Congressional Member Organizations (ECMO's)¹ are considered employee authorities. CHA recognized Eligible Congressional Member Organizations ECMO's may request domain names in the following format:

- *ECMOName.House.gov*

CHA recognized Congressional Member Organizations (CMO's) and Congressional Staff Organizations (CSO's) are not permitted to request a unique domain name directly under house.gov. However, Members may request a subdomain of their existing domain name to support a CMO or CSO they have sponsored. Such as when a Member requires a section of their website be dedicated to caucus activities.

For example:

¹ ECMO's are limited by House Rules. Please review the Eligible Congressional Member Organizations Handbook at the Committee on House Administration website at <https://cha.house.gov> or contact the Committee at 202 225-8281 for more information.

- *caucusName-MemberName.house.gov*

4.5 Internal Domain Names

Some House Entities may wish to deploy Intranets or other services that are only accessible internally within the House network using an internal domain name. The same policies that apply to external domain names also apply to internal domain names, with the following exceptions.

1. Officers of the House may deploy Intranet websites and services that use domain names derivative of the service they are providing.

For example:

serviceName.house.gov

2. CHA recognized and approved Congressional Member Organizations (CMO's) and Congressional Staff Organizations (CSO's) may request unique internal domain names directly under the house.gov domain for internal use.

For example:

congressionalMemberOrgName.house.gov

5 Compliance

All official House domain names, excluding previously approved domain name exceptions, must comply with this policy.

6 Authority

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, House Information Resources (HIR) serves as implementing authority for all House domain name requests.