

# Web Leads monthly meeting

July 23, 2025

# Welcome and kickoff

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Marcy Jacobs - [marcy.jacobs@maryland.gov](mailto:marcy.jacobs@maryland.gov)

# Agenda

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- Welcome and kickoff
- SharePoint 'Toolshell' vulnerability
- Maryland CMS migration roadmap and expectations
- Accessibility policy update
- New Playbook plays
- Spotlights:
  - DVMF: Improving UX and Content
  - Code for America recap

## MDDS / DoIT Presenters

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- Marcy Jacobs: DoIT Dep. Sec., CDXO
- James Saunders: MD CISO
- Andrew Drummond: Dir., Accessibility
- Andrew White: Information Architect
- David Holmes: Sr. Dir., Engineering
- Hilary Shutak: MEWS Pgm. Mgr.
- Jeffrey Pass: Sr. Dir., Web Experience
- Elizabeth Hunt: Sr. UX/Service Designer
- Syed Azeem: Dir. of Platforms

## Lullabot Presenters

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- Laura Donelan: Sr. Technical Proj. Mgr.
- Brenna Love: Sr. Technical Proj. Mgr.
- Darren Petersen: VP of Projects
- Matthew Tift: Lead Engineer

# SharePoint 'Toolshell' vulnerability

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James Saunders (State CISO)

David Holmes - [david.holmes@maryland.gov](mailto:david.holmes@maryland.gov)

# SharePoint 'Toolshell' Vulnerability

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- What happened
- What have we done in response
- What is the risk to agencies
- How would agencies know if you have been impacted
- What can/should agencies be doing

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your agency or organization's Information Security Officer (ISO) and the ISO Program at [state.iso@maryland.gov](mailto:state.iso@maryland.gov).

# Maryland CMS migration roadmap and expectations

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## MDDS:

- Jeffrey Pass - [jeffrey.pass@maryland.gov](mailto:jeffrey.pass@maryland.gov)
- Hilary Shutak - [hilary.shutak@maryland.gov](mailto:hilary.shutak@maryland.gov)

## Lullabot:

- Laura Donelan - [laura.donelan@lullabot.com](mailto:laura.donelan@lullabot.com)
- Matthew Tift - [matthew.tift@lullabot.com](mailto:matthew.tift@lullabot.com)
- Brenna Love - [brenna.love@lullabot.com](mailto:brenna.love@lullabot.com)
- Darren Petersen - [darren.petersen@lullabot.com](mailto:darren.petersen@lullabot.com)

# Drupal Security

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- Dedicated Security Team
- Regular security updates
- Open-source transparency
- Secure coding standards
- Robust access control and permissions
- Security-focused modules

# Introductions

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**Hilary Shutak**  
Program and Project Manager  
(MDDS)



**Laura Donelan**  
Sr. Technical Project Manager  
(Lullabot)



# Goals for today...

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- Recap
- Migration roadmap update and process
- What can you do now to get ready?

# Recap

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## Our Charge

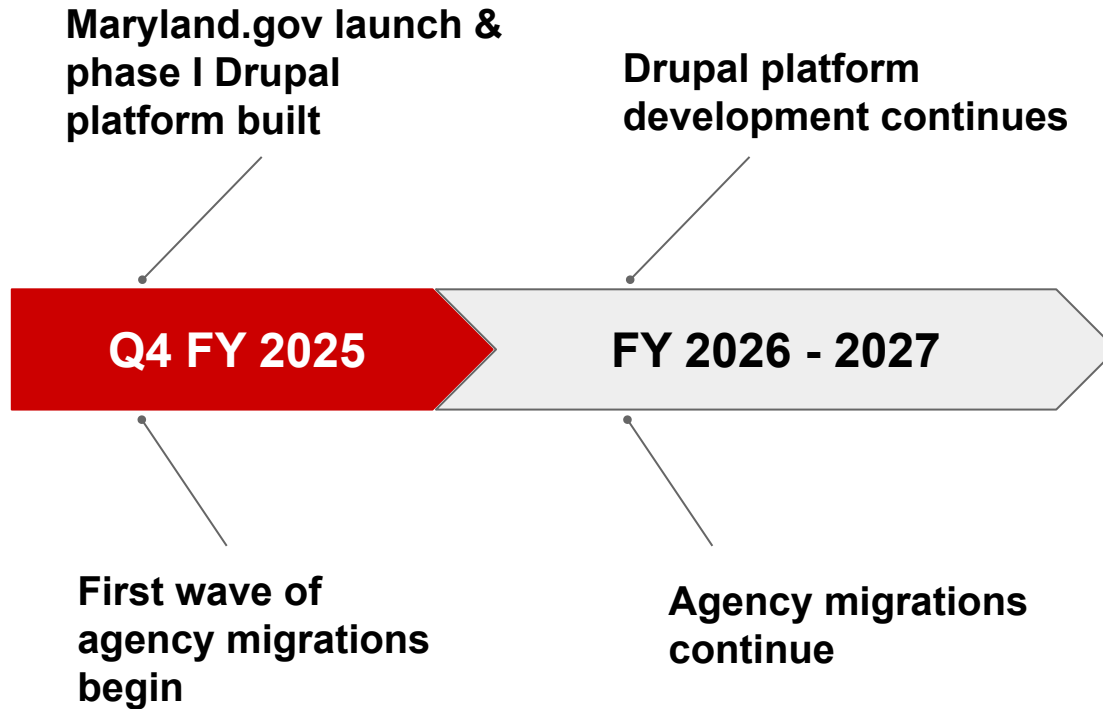
- **Gov. Moore** - [transform Maryland's digital experience to meet the needs of residents](#)
- **User Centered** - use human-centered design to achieve agency & constituent goals
- **Accessible** - ensure equal access
- **Reduce Cost, Increase Security** - modern, secure, and centralized solutions

## Our Challenges

- ~117 DoIT-hosted sites (and ~551k artifacts)
  - Loss of Sharepoint platform support after June 2026
  - Total web pages: ~43k
  - Total PDFs: ~261k (most not accessible)
  - Total Other Artifacts (images, docs, CSS) ~289.2k
- We're launching the new Maryland.gov and basic (phase I) Drupal CMS this fall, and **we need to work together to meet our goals, cut costs, and shorten our timeline**

# Draft Migration Roadmap for DoIT-Hosted Sites

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Your migration could look like:

## Small Sites (63)

Total artifacts: 1-1,499

Supported by MDDS

## Medium-Large Sites (25)

Total artifacts: 1,500-9,999

Supported by MDDS, vendor partner (Lullabot, contractuals, other), or combo

## Very Large Sites (29)

Total artifacts: 10,000+

Support determined on a case-by-case basis

# Migration process

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- **We are partners!**
- Agency **active participation** and **timely responses** are required to stay on schedule
  - Small to medium-sized sites - schedule is typical
  - Large sites - schedule will be reviewed case-by-case

# Week 0 - Pre-kickoff

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- All teams will have some homework to prepare for the kickoff
- MDDS and our vendor partners will be:
  - Inventorying and reviewing your site
  - Pulling available site usage data
  - Preparing for the kickoff

## Agency Role:

- Gather your team
- Identify what works well? Pain points?
- Identify content and assets you must keep (PDFs, documents, images, plus any legislative or regulatory requirements)
- Begin remediating assets for accessibility

# Weeks 1 & 2

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- Kickoff meeting
- Discuss your goals, audience, and navigation
- Begin review of your current pages and assets (Content Audit Workbook)
- Begin review your new information architecture and top-level sitemap (Content Matrix)

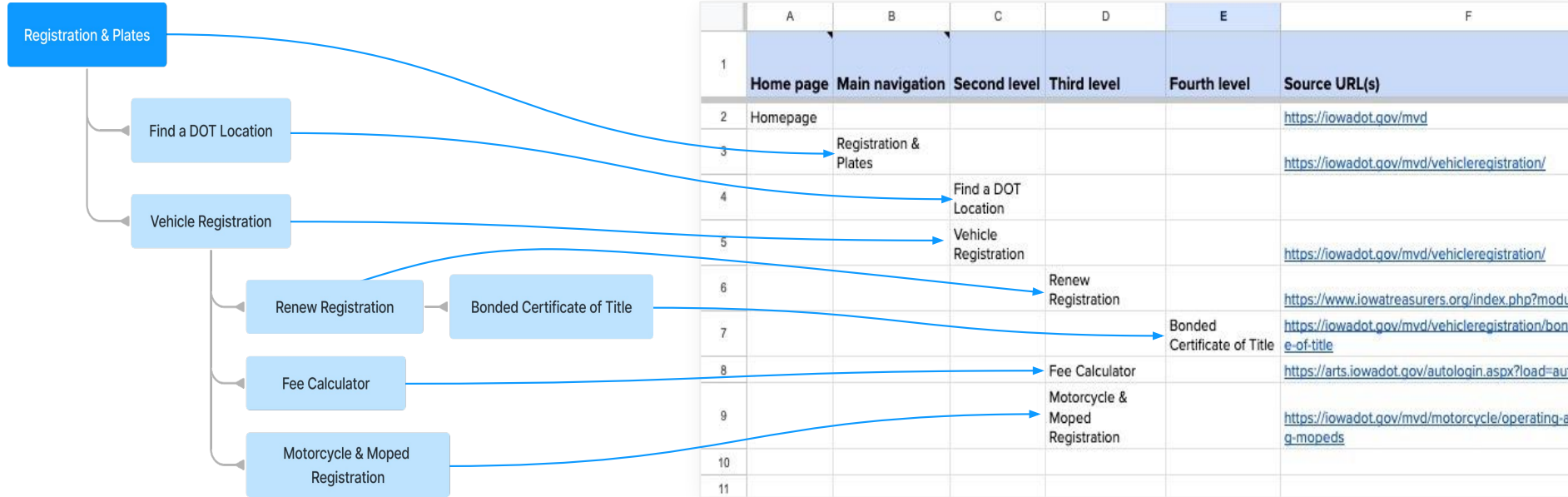
## Agency Role:

- Attend meetings
- Review and work through content audit workbook
- Provide input on new information architecture (IA) and top-level sitemap

# Content Audit Workbook example

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Page information				Review criteria					Decisions & comments		Responsibilities
2	Page title <i>The title of this page.</i>	Page URL <i>The URL to this page.</i>	GA page views <i>Google Analytics (1 year prior to scan).</i>	Reading level <i>Aim for grade 8 or below.</i>	Audience <i>Who is this content for and how will it serve them? Consider the key audience goals and tasks.</i>	Up to date <i>Content is current and up-to-date, meeting current needs and requirements.</i>	Accuracy <i>Content should be accurate, free of errors, and leads audiences to the correct next action.</i>	Uniqueness <i>Content should be unique - a single page that doesn't exist somewhere else in the same or similar format.</i>	High quality <i>Grade the page on a scale of 1-5 (1 = low, 5 = high), e.g. does it meet your business and audience goals? Does it align with brand messaging?</i>	Keep, edit, delete or consolidate? <i>If consolidating, note what page to combine it with.</i>	Notes, questions, comments <i>Leave any notes, gut reactions, thoughts about the content, its value, or quality.</i>	Site Section
3	Homepage	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com">http://www.mywebsite.com</a>	25,625	10th to 12th Grade	All	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	Keep	Revise content so it's easier to read. Break some information into different parts for better visibility on homepage	Division A
4	Interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-1">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-1</a>	20,425	8th to 9th Grade	Customers	No	Yes	Yes	3	Edit	Needs to be refreshed, content is outdated. Review for quality and improve reading level of content	Division A
5	Another interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-2">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-2</a>	18,725	College	Vendors	No	No	Yes	2	Edit	Need to refresh content. Vendor process has changed. Review with subject matter expert	Division C
6	Another interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-3">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-3</a>	5,425	8th to 9th Grade	Customers	No	Yes	No	3	Combine	Combine with primary customer page (row 4), as this content is redundant. Review all content for jargon and improve readability and layout of page.	Division D
7	Another interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-4">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-4</a>	825	College	Unclear	No	No	Yes	1 (Low)	Delete	This page is outdated (more than 3 years old) and references a process that no longer exists. Delete	Division E
8	Another interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-5">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-5</a>	16,625	10th to 12th Grade	Customers	Yes	Yes	Yes	5 (High)	Keep	No changes needed, new page. Meets reading level. Transfer to new site as-is	Division F
9	Another interior page	<a href="http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-6">http://www.mywebsite.com/interior-page-6</a>	152	8th to 9th Grade	Customers	No	No	No	1 (Low)	Delete	No longer needed, old content, outdated info. Delete	Division G
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												
21												

# Content Matrix example





# Week 3

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- Finalize Content Audit Workbook
- Continue review of Content Matrix
- Begin migration planning
- Begin exploring and training in the Drupal environment

## Agency Role:

- Attend meetings
- Complete content audit workbook
- Review and provide input on content matrix
- Begin onboarding into the Drupal environment

# Weeks 4+

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- Finalize Content Matrix
- Continue migration planning
- Review homepage mockup

## Agency Role:

- Attend meetings
- Approve content matrix
- Provide input on homepage mockup

# Content Migration

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- Finalize migration plan
- Review, edit, and rewrite content
- Migrate content
- Finalize redirect map
- Plan for long-term content maintenance

## Agency Role:

- Review, edit, and rewrite content
- Migrate select content
- Approve redirect map
- Identify long-term owner to maintain your content/website

# What you can do now

Pre-kickoff activities to focus on

# Gather your team

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- Gather & document accurate stakeholder information
- Decision makers
- Subject matter experts
- Content managers

# Identify successes & pain points

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- Ask your stakeholders:
  - What is working well?
  - What are your known pain points?
- What feedback are you hearing through your call center?
- What problems are you seeing with submitted forms?
  - Are instructions unclear?
- Has research been done?
- Are there regulations & legislative requirements for your content?
  - What content are you required to keep on your site?
  - For how long?

# Clean up your content

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- Identify content (pages, files, images) you **must keep**. Only keep content that is:
  - Required by law, regulation, or policy
  - Current and timely
  - Accessible
  - Unique
  - Accurate
  - Relevant (aligned with a user need or task)
  - Receives high traffic and engagement
- Make edits to existing content
- Remediate documents for accessibility
- Subject matter experts are responsible

# Questions?

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# Accessibility update

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Andrew Drummond - [andrew.drummond2@maryland.gov](mailto:andrew.drummond2@maryland.gov)

# ADA Title II Final Rule

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- On April 24, 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) released its final rule on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - Title II requires state and local governments to make sure that their services, programs, and activities are accessible to people with disabilities
- All state and local government websites and mobile applications must conform to WCAG 2.1, Level AA standards by April 24, 2026

**Agencies are responsible for the accessibility of their content.**

Your agency (and the state) could be sued for inaccessible content after 4/24/26.  
Start with removing as many files as possible that are no longer helpful or relevant.

# ADA Title II Exceptions

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## Exceptions:

- Archived web content
- Pre-existing conventional electronic documents
- Third party content that is posted outside contractual or other legal arrangement made with the government entity
- Individualized documents that are password protected
- Pre-existing social media posts

# Archiving Electronic Documents & Content

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- For DoIT managed sites we will be working with agencies to create dedicated agency archive page(s) with specific guidance to aid with ADA compliance
- For Non-DoIT managed sites, DoIT will provide specific guidance to assist with the creation of compliant site archives
- Interim guidance will be released shortly to discuss clearing ROT documents and content

# DSCI Service Members & Internships

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- An affordable way to add accessibility focused staff to your agency
- Build capacity within your agency around document remediation
- DoIT and MDoD will provide accessibility-related professional development for any potential new hires

# Application Testing Requirements

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- The requirements template will be completed by the requesting agency
- Information shared with MDDS will better prep the team to test your web or mobile application
- Coming in August

# PDF Hackathon

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- MDDS will be hosting the state's first accessibility hackathon
- PDF remediation training provided to agency teams
- Teams and individuals once trained will compete against each other to see how many pages they can clear
- Event to be held at the State House in Annapolis
- Coming this fall - exact date TBC

# New Digital Playbook content

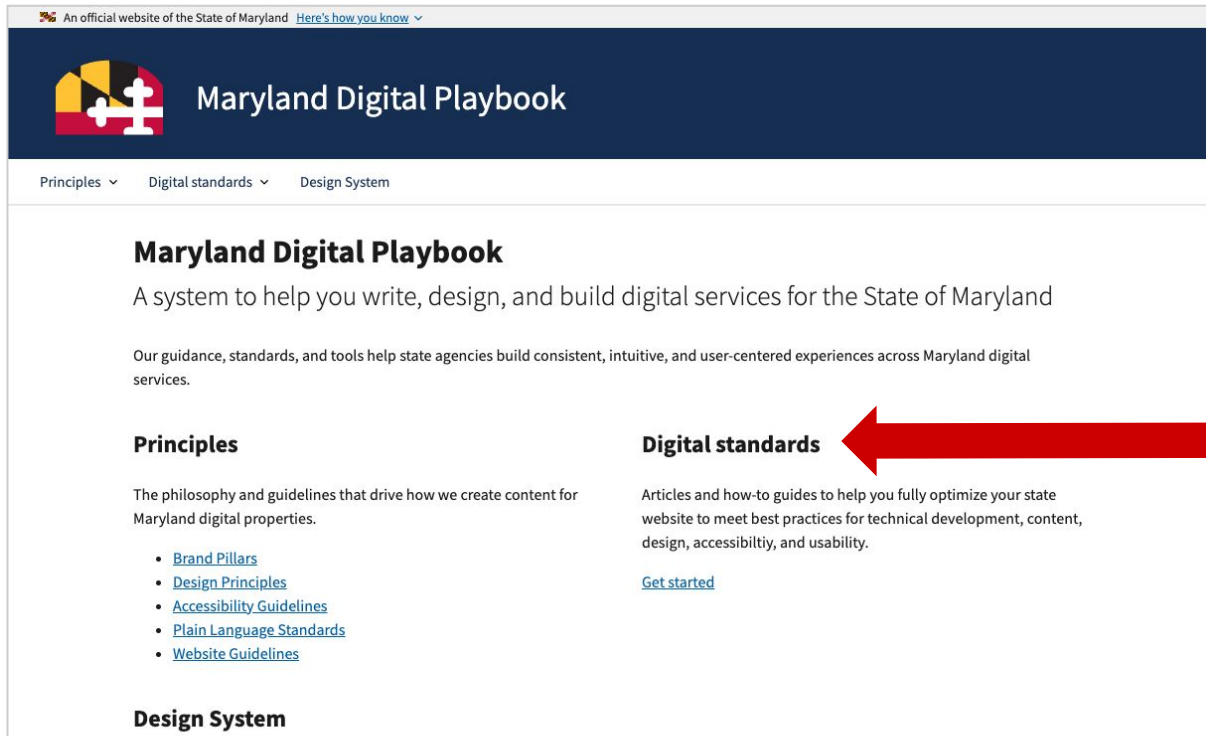
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Elizabeth Hunt - [elizabeth.hunt1@maryland.gov](mailto:elizabeth.hunt1@maryland.gov)

Jeffrey Pass - [jeffrey.pass@maryland.gov](mailto:jeffrey.pass@maryland.gov)



# New section - Digital standards



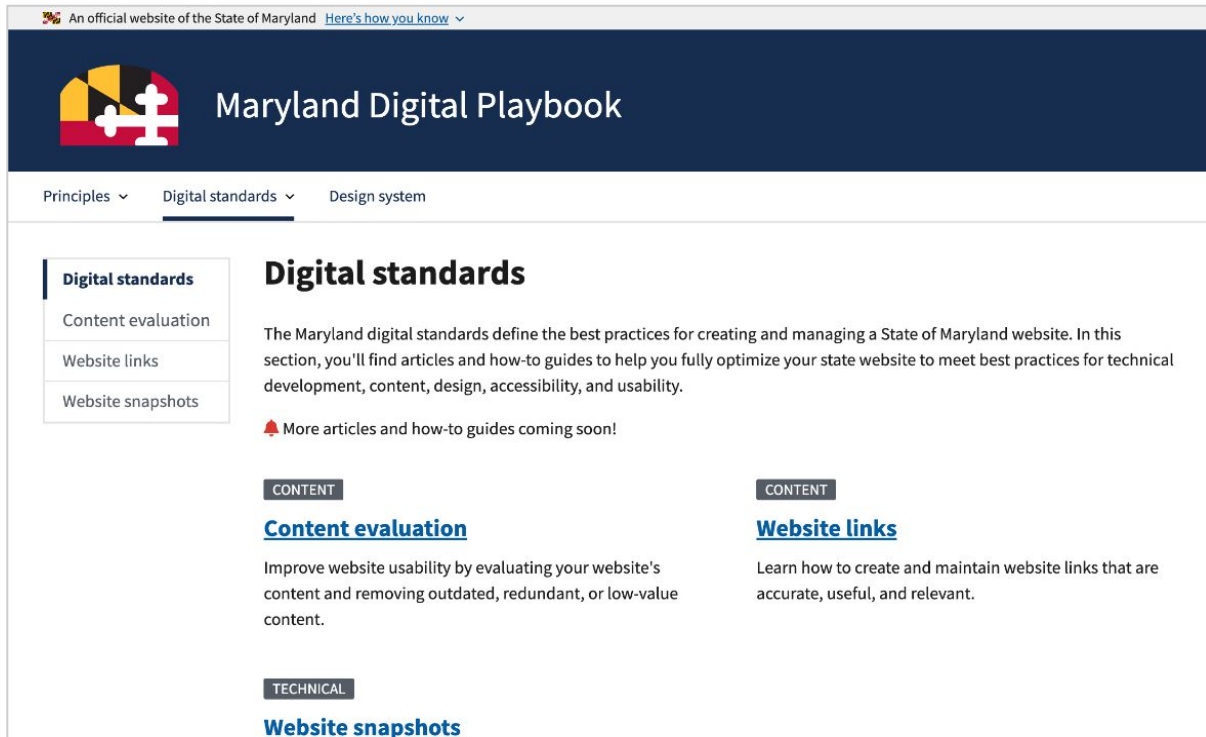
Principles = the “why”. The foundation for what we do

Design System = the “what”. The experience we want to provide for constituents

Digital standards = the “how”. The nuts and bolts of how to manage a State of Maryland website

[digital.maryland.gov](https://digital.maryland.gov)

# New section - Digital standards (detail)



Articles and how-to guides

Content to help you optimize your site – to improve its content, design, accessibility, and usability

[digital.maryland.gov](https://digital.maryland.gov)

# Digital standards - How-to guide

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## How to request an archival snapshot of your website

### 1 Plan when to submit a request

The MSA team typically completes an archival snapshot in two to four weeks. Plan to submit your request for an archival snapshot based on your website's size and complexity.

- Small sites: At least two weeks in advance
- Large/Complex sites: At least one month in advance

### 2 Request an archival snapshot

Submit your request via email to the Web Archiving Team—[Christopher Schini](#) and [Andrew Forscherler](#).

**Include the following in your email:**

- **Subject:** "Request for website archive snapshot for [AGENCY]"
- **Body:**
  - The website name and website URL (web address)
  - List any hidden content that should be included in the request
  - List any content that requires authentication to view/access and should be included in the request
  - The requested turnaround time for completing the archival snapshot
  - The name and email/phone of a contact person for the request, if the contact person is someone other than the email sender
  - Any other information that would help the MSA team create an archival snapshot

### 3 Respond to requests for more information while the MSA processes your

**Topic:** A specific State process or procedure

**Format:** Step-by-step instructions

# Digital standards - Article

## Good website links = Good usability and accessibility

A website link is an invitation and a promise to website visitors.

- Good website links are accurate, useful, and relevant. They tell people what to expect when they click the links. Knowing where a link will lead helps people find the information they need.
- Poor website links can lead people on a wild goose chase. People must click on inaccurate or poorly described links to discover that the next page does not contain the information they are looking for.

## How to write effective website links

### Write accurate and descriptive link text

- Use meaningful, concise words that clearly describe the link's destination—link text should aim to describe the content of the destination page.
- **Tip:** Match link text to the title of the destination page or file. People can be sure they've landed on the right destination page/file when the destination page/file title matches the words used in the link text they clicked on to get there.

### Use plain language and action verbs

- Use language that is commonly known and understood by your primary audience.
- Use action verbs as link text, for example, "Explore the Archives" vs using a noun like "Archives".
- **Tip:** When linking to technical or complex content, add additional description to help people decide if clicking this link is right for them.

### Check links regularly

- **Monthly:** Check for broken links on high-traffic website pages.

Check for broken links

Update or remove outdated links

Use links to external sites thoughtfully


Resources

**Topic:** A specific subject within the larger categories of technology, content, design, accessibility, or usability

**Format:** Non-sequential guidance

# Digital standards - Future

An official website of the State of Maryland [Here's how you know](#) ▾



## Maryland Digital Playbook

Principles ▾ Digital standards ▾ Design System

**Digital standards**

Website links

Website snapshots

### Digital standards

The Maryland Digital Standards define the requirements for creating and managing a State of Maryland website. In this section, you'll find articles and how-to guides to help you fully optimize your state website to meet best practices for technical development, content, design, accessibility, and usability.

🔔 More articles and how-to guides coming soon!

TECHNICAL

#### [Website snapshots](#)

Learn how to request an archival snapshot of your website from the Maryland State Archives.

CONTENT

#### [Website links](#)

Learn how to create and maintain website links that are accurate, useful, and relevant.

Many more articles and how-to guides to help you optimize your websites.

If you have a suggestion for an Article or How-to Guide, email Elizabeth Hunt at [elizabeth.hunt1@maryland.gov](mailto:elizabeth.hunt1@maryland.gov)

[digital.maryland.gov](https://digital.maryland.gov)

# Spotlight: Improving UX and Content

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Andrew White - [andrew.white1@maryland.gov](mailto:andrew.white1@maryland.gov)

Small Scale

Large Scale

# Sample Project Process

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**Discovery & strategy**



**User experience & content**



**Implementation, content  
migration, and training**

Kickoff survey and/or stakeholder  
interviews

Sitemap, homepage mockup,  
limited content support,  
limited user research

New Drupal site + hosting, Drupal  
training, limited migration support,  
no custom development

Kickoff survey, user interviews,  
strategy workshops, and/or other  
research activities

Sitemap, homepage + other  
mockups, moderate content  
support, some user research

New Drupal site + hosting, Drupal  
training, some migration support,  
limited custom development

# What does this phase look like?

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## We want to answer:

How will content on the site be organized and labeled?

How will visitors navigate from page to page? How will key pages work?

What copy and content will go into the new site?

What content will be retired, rewritten in plain language or made accessible?

### User experience & content

Sitemap, homepage mockup,  
limited content support,  
limited user research

Sitemap, homepage + other  
mockups, moderate content  
support, some user research



# Project Spotlight: DVMF

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The Department of Veterans and Military Families provides access to critical services, including healthcare, financial assistance, disability assistance, and educational/employment support.

With partnership between DVMF, USDR and DoIT, a new website will make it easier for veterans and their families to receive benefits.

Phase 3 of this project started in April, **with a focus on User Experience and Content.**



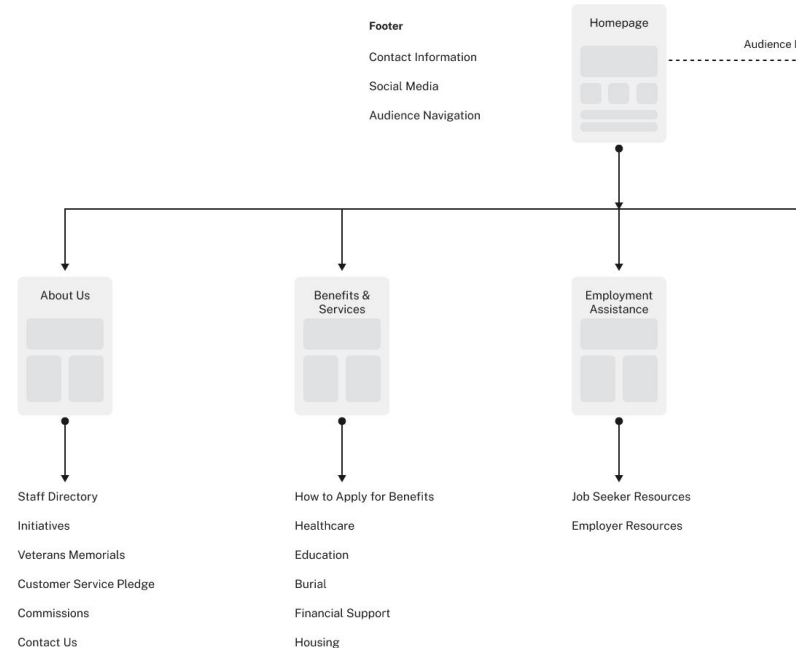
# Step 1: Baseline IA

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The Baseline Information Architecture (IA) shows how content on your website will be organized and labeled in the site header and footer.

## For DVMF:

- Focused site around top tasks for Veterans
- Reduced total pages by 50%
- Categorized key benefits and services using plain language rather than insider terminology
- Added “portal pages” for supporting secondary audiences

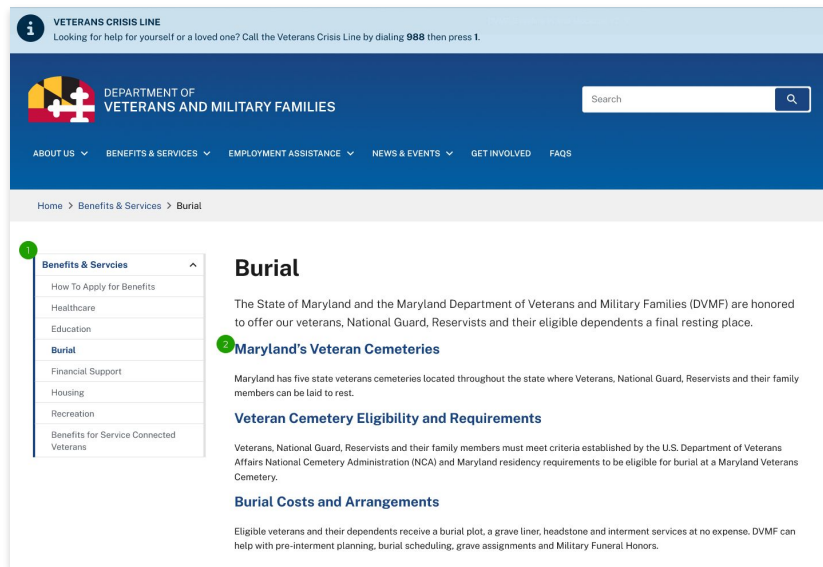


# Step 2: Mockups

Mockups provide a visual of what your site may look like and how it will work, to set the stage for creating content. They may be grayscale wireframes to focus on how it works, or may be a full color representation of the exact look and feel.

## For DVMF:

- Provided personalization (who am I? and what do I want to do?) on the Homepage
- Highlighted critical support services for those in need
- Simplified the amount of words for scannability



# Step 3: Full Sitemap

The full sitemap is a detailed spreadsheet that lists every page on your new site, using the Baseline IA as a starting point. The sitemap also includes recommendations for pages to retire, create or consolidate.

## For DVMF:

- Reduced total pages from 106 to 53 (50%)
- Built a sitemap for copywriting and content migration tracking

#	Level	L1	L2	L3	Current URL
2.0	L1	Benefits & Services			<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/benefits/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/benefits/</a>
2.1	L2		How to Apply		<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/benefits/page/2/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/benefits/page/2/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/common-va-benefits-handbooks/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/common-va-benefits-handbooks/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/maryland-department-of-veterans-affairs-service-benefits-program/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/maryland-department-of-veterans-affairs-service-benefits-program/</a>
2.2	L2		Healthcare		<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/health/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/category/services/health/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/wellness-and-behavioral-health-services/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/wellness-and-behavioral-health-services/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/enroll-in-va-healthcare-information-for-returning-veterans-and-women-veterans-online-portals/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/enroll-in-va-healthcare-information-for-returning-veterans-and-women-veterans-online-portals/</a>
2.2.1	L3			Suicid	<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/suicide-prevention-resources/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/suicide-prevention-resources/</a>
2.2.2	L3			Health	<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/pact-act/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/pact-act/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/benefits-broken-down-by-service-era/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/benefits-broken-down-by-service-era/</a>
2.2.3	L3			Charl	<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/camp-lejeune-water-exposure/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/camp-lejeune-water-exposure/</a> <a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/marylands-department-of-veterans-affairs-charlotte-hall-veterans-home/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/marylands-department-of-veterans-affairs-charlotte-hall-veterans-home/</a>
2.3	L2		Education		<a href="https://veterans.maryland.gov/education-supports-and-scholarships/">https://veterans.maryland.gov/education-supports-and-scholarships/</a>

# Step 4: Content

Once the sitemap is approved, we create documents to outline the copy and website widgets that will be included on each page. Content creation will be owned by a combination of your agency, MDDS and/or a vendor.

## For DVMF:

- Wrote all pages using plain language best practices
- Batched copy for weekly review
- Collaborated between subject matter experts to balance simplicity with accuracy

### Retirement Pay and Pension Tax Deductions and Exclusions

#### Military Retirement Pay Income Tax Deduction

**If a veteran or spouse of a military retiree receives military retirement income, they'll be able to subtract up to \$12,500 with an increase to the first \$20,000 for individuals who are at least 55 years old on the last day of the taxable year of your military retirement income from your federal adjusted gross income before determining your Maryland tax.**

Veterans or spouses of military retirees that receive military retirement income may subtract some of their retirement income from their federal adjusted gross income before determining Maryland tax.


- Taxpayers **at least 55 years of age** on the last day of the taxable year may subtract up to **\$20,000** of military retirement income, received in the taxable year.
- Taxpayers **under the age of 55** on the last day of the taxable year may subtract up to **\$12,500** of military retirement income received in the taxable year.

To subtract the military retirement income, complete **Maryland Form 502** and follow the instructions included in the Maryland resident tax booklet for line 13.


#### Eligibility

The retirement income must have been received as a result of any of the following military service:

- Induction into the U.S. Armed forces for training and service under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 or a subsequent Act of similar nature

 **Marisa Ahmed**  
2:18 PM May 6

Is \$12500 the max? What does an increase to the first 20K mean?

 **Dana Burl - DVMF-**  
5:25 PM May 12

Taxpayers at least 55 years of age on the last day of the taxable year may subtract up to \$20,000 of military retirement income, received in the taxable year. Taxpayers under the age of 55 on the last day of the taxable year may subtract up to \$12,500 of military retirement income received in the taxable year.

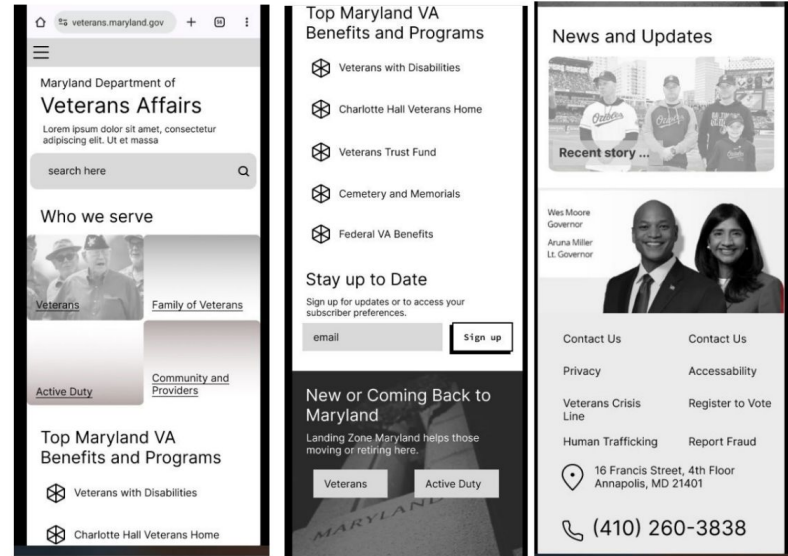
# Step 5+: Research

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User feedback is valuable! We may recommend any variety of user research activities, including card sorts, tree tests, usability testing, and more.

## For DVMF:

- Usability testing happened in Phase 2 on an early prototype
- Recommendations were incorporated into the Phase 3 Baseline IA and Mockups



# What does this mean for my agency?

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**Each of these steps will be a part of your site's redesign.**



**The extent of each may vary depending on your site's size and complexity.**



**Don't worry.** We'll guide you through each activity with your agency's stakeholders and goals in mind.

# Q&A and discussion



# Future meeting schedule (subject to change, bold indicates in person)

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## Web Leads Meeting

**August 12th, 12:30-2 pm (in person, Crownsville)**

September 17th, 12-1:30 pm (virtual)

**October 14th, 12:30-2 pm (in person, Crownsville)**

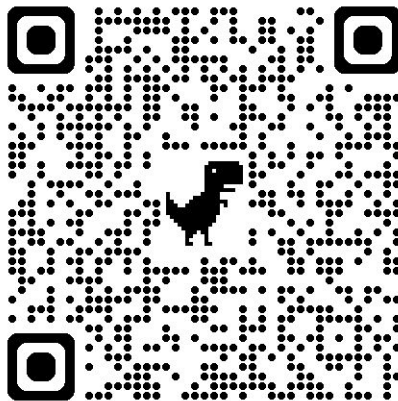
November 19th, 12:30-2 pm (virtual)

**December 9th, 12:30-2 pm (in person, Crownsville)**

## MDDS/Web Leads Open Office Hours

August 1, 9:00 am (virtual)

Thank you  
See you August 12th (in Crownsville)  
[Feedback Survey](#)



Survey link <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSealPQqTdaGCWbauXDTsIYOm7TMRaDkeS6dhEblkpj6wTSg/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=102462883119528328330>