CLF 3.0 Navigation and Taxonomy

Introduction

Delaware state agencies have established a tradition of consistent navigation across all state agency web sites by adopting and adhering to a Common Look and Feel that includes consistent navigation conventions. Visitors to the state's web sites have grown accustomed to finding information within a standard taxonomy that organizes information into the general headings of **Home**, **Services**, and **Information**. CLF 3.0 retains the overall structure of this approach, but includes more flexibility, allowing webmasters to adapt the CLF navigation to their individual agencies.

CLF 3.0 navigation is divided into four distinct sections: Header, Side-Nav, Agency-Footer, and Footer. The Header and Footer are maintained and edited by GIC and, in most cases, provided as centrally-maintained automatic include files. Agency web masters will not need to worry about these. The Side-Nav and Agency-Footer will be edited and controlled by the agency web masters, subject to the guidance in this document.

Header

The header provides the basic statewide branding critical to a successful Common Look and Feel approach. It should not be modified by agency staff. The header includes a global search box that will search the agency site on which it is found (the default), all state web sites, or the state's Phone Directory Search application. Users choose which search to use by selecting a radio button. The header also includes a state-level Services & Information drop-down drawer that includes many of the links found on the delaware.gov portal page. This is known as the "portal to go" and is provided as a server-side include file by the GIC.

Side-Nav

The left-side navigation column used in previous versions of CLF has been carried over, expanded in some areas, and simplified in others. It consists of sections titled Home, Services and Navigation. This column includes templates for inclusion of graphic links to applicable social media sites and for graphic "badges" that can be used to advertise featured content.

The left-side navigation column is maintained as its own server-side include file by each individual agency. As a general rule, agencies should maintain a level of discipline to protect against the list of services growing too long and negatively impacting usability for the public.

Home

Items under the Home section are common components that provide basic information about the agency. For most web sites, the following list of labels describes all of the links that should be included under the Home section[1]. Though none of these are required, if a link on the left-side navigation is included, and it fits one of the descriptions below, it must be included in the Home section using the label listed here. Links and labels not listed here are more likely to belong in the Services or Information sections.

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[1] For top-level web sites, such as those for elected officials or department-level sites, there may be other items that will fit under "home," though great care should be taken to limit the number of links at this level.

- About – A page describing the agency, including items such as mission, director's message, performance measures or other descriptive details.
- Mission – An agency mission statement can also stand on its own as a separate link.
As a general rule, if an agency has an "about" page, a separate mission page is not needed.
- Director's Message – A message from the agency director or cabinet secretary can also stand on its own as a separate link.
- Performance Measures – An agency's performance measures can stand also standon its own as a separate link.
- Newsroom – A link to a page holding news releases or a link to the news.delaware.gov page for the agency.[2]
- Contact – A listing of telephone and e-mail contacts for the agency. This should be a high-level listing and should guide the user to the best entry point for the general public. This page can include links to the agency's entries on the Phone Directory Search application.
- Office Locations – A page including office location and address information. This can be dynamically generated from the Phone Directory using scripting available from the GIC.
- Divisions – A listing of the Divisions (and/or offices) within a department.
- Programs – A listing of the program offices within a Division or other subset of a Department. This should not be confused with a listing of services offered by the agency.
- Public Meetings – A listing of public meetings hosted by the agency. If an agency has public meetings and they are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), then the agency must publish those meetings on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar.[3] This link should be a link to the Public Meeting Calendar.
- Events – A listing of events related to the interests or mission of the agency. The "Events" link should be not be to agency public meetings, but to events hosted by entities outside the agency.
- Employment – A link to a listing of employment opportunities within an agency. This can be a link directly to the Delaware Employment Link listing for that agency.[4]
- Help – A guide to using the agency web site or a collection of frequently-asked questions. These are not to be linked-to as "FAQs."
- Forms/Documents – A link to a listing of forms and/or documents for the agency. This link can be called either "Forms," "Documents" or "Forms & Documents."
- Related Links – A link to a list of related links. Great care should be taken with this sort of list, as it can easily become stale or filled with broken links.

Services

There are no required elements for the Services section, but items here should link to high-level services provided by the agency to the public. These may be on-line services or services offered in person at agency offices. Examples of such services include license renewal, filing of taxes, application for benefits, etc. The list of services should be limited to only major services provided to the public, though each agency's approach to this portion of the navigation will differ.

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[2] See http://news.delaware.gov
[3] See http://calendar.delaware.gov. Agencies that do not already have a calendar on this system can get access by contacting the Government Information Center (GIC).
[4] See *Linking to Delaware Employment Link*

Information

Items in the Information section should link to information about the mission, activities or audience/clientele. Examples include fees, supporting data and documentation, publications, and similar informational content.

Quick Links

The left-side navigation column provides an area for agencies to add a maximum of three "quick links" that don't necessarily fit into "home," "services," or "information." These should be links to resources outside of the agency that would be of interest/use to visitors to the agency home page.

Social Media Links

The left-side navigation column is preset with graphic elements that can serve as links to the following social media sites, if appropriate to the agency: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, and Youtube. The graphics adhere to the logo-use and graphics requirements of each of these platforms. Additional social media links may be added as new platforms become common in the future, though agencies will need to be careful not to overload this section of the web page and should consider removing links to social media sites that are in decline.

Badges

The left-side column template includes templates for two graphic "badges" that can be used to advertise featured content. These should be used carefully, as they can lead to an overcrowded feeling on the left-nav. In no case should more than two badges be used on any web sites left-side navigation.

Agency Footer

The Agency Footer is an agency-specific footer that can be configured to meet the design needs of an individual agency web site (or can use standard layout colors provided by GIC). The agency footer allows for a small logo for agency branding, an agency name (with link) on one line, and up to three links to items within the agency's navigation structure on a second line. There are also two small buttons; one can be used for an agency RSS feed (if appropriate) and the other provides a standard "share" tool.

CLF Footer

The common CLF 3.0 footer "closes out" a web page and completes the statewide "Delaware" branding by closing the window defined by the header and providing common, statewide links to the delaware.gov portal, the state's web privacy statement, a standard translation site, a contact page for all state web sites and the phone directory search tool. It should not be modified by agency staff.