

# State of Michigan Marketing URLs

## Introduction:

State of Michigan (SOM) Marketing URL Definition: A Web address implemented within the SOM Web Content Management System (WCMS) that redirects a user to another SOM webpage, site, or application (target path).

Also known as: “redirect” or “short URL”

Purpose: To enhance user experience by providing shorter URLs which are easier to remember, type and/or speak.

## Requirements:

These are the basic requirements for creating Marketing URLs.

- No special characters (#, @, %, \$, /, etc.)
- No spaces
- Target path must be SOM Web page, site, or application

## Best Practices:

Marketing URLs are intended to make it easier to advertise services, programs, or other high traffic areas of the State’s website or other services. They are not intended as a shortcut to buried content or assets. A typical usage of a Marketing URL should direct the person to an information-rich web page.

When reviewing Marketing URLs, eMichigan will take these factors into account:

- Agency or industry-specific
  - Generic terms are reserved for the SOM enterprise
    - Include agency acronym with generic terms
    - Examples:
      - [www.michigan.gov/mdocjobs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdocjobs)
      - [www.michigan.gov/mspjobs](http://www.michigan.gov/mspjobs)
  - Ensure term(s) used align with industry standards
    - User-friendliness should take priority over business unit terminology
- URLs are not case-sensitive, they work if any letter is typed in upper case
  - Marketing URLs are created as lower case
    - [/agscannerlaw](#)
  - Any variation will work
    - [/AGscannerlaw](#)
    - [/AGScannerLaw](#)
    - [/aGsCaNnErLaW](#)

- Target path should not be an asset (PDF, Word document, etc.) and preferably not a content item (article page). Content can be expired or deleted, and the Marketing URL will result in a 404 – File Not Found.
  - If target path is a content page, any user should be able to navigate to and from the page without the Marketing URL
- Acronyms, in general, are allowed.
  - /lias (Life Insurance Annuity Search)
  - /csi (Cyber Safety Initiative)
- Pointing to other State of Michigan servers (SOM-hosted applications) is allowed.
  - /charitysearch points to <https://www.ag.state.mi.us/CharitableTrust>
  - /mibridges points to <https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/>
- Variations will be reviewed and allowed on a case-by-case basis
  - /agcomplaint is the base request
  - /agcomplaints is a variation that the public might type

## SOM Considerations:

Marketing URL requests are reviewed from a State of Michigan perspective. All agencies must be considered when requests are made. It is preferred the agency acronym (and/or the acronym of the program) is included in the Marketing URL.

One- or two-word generic URLs will be researched prior to implementation to ensure the term is not commonly used for another agency's program or service. eMichigan will typically perform a search using Google or Bing to review the top search results from the requested word(s). A search on the Michigan.gov home page will also be reviewed, as the results will contain information from the entire suite of Michigan.gov websites.

Based on those reviews, eMichigan may accept the usage of the word(s) in the Marketing URL if doing so is determined not to be confusing or cause issues for our users.

Examples:

- /onlineservices would be used for statewide services. This would not be granted.
- /requirements is too generic, /mdotrequirements would be better.
- /directory is too generic, a better choice would be /socialservicesdirectory.

Also, eMichigan will typically look at the landing page to make sure that title text or the first paragraph use the same words as the Marketing URL. It would be disorienting for users to use a Marketing URL, then land on a page that is not the implied context from the Marketing URL.

## Request:

Marketing URL Requests are to be requested by Michigan.gov Website Administrators. The requests are in Helix using the "Request Marketing URL/Redirect" request form. Reserve your Marketing URL as soon as possible. eMichigan can "park" a Marketing URL while you're preparing your site, page, and/or application.

Site Administrators - Steps prior to sending request to eMichigan:

- Verify compliance with "Requirements" and "Best Practices" above
- Verify URL requested is not already in use  
Verify a similar URL is not already in use by reviewing the list of redirects that has been provided to Site Administrators
- Site Administrators – the following is an example of what is needed for the Marketing URL Request:
- Marketing URL/Redirect Path Requested
  - Example: [www.michigan.gov/businesss](http://www.michigan.gov/businesss)
- Target path (URL of Web page, site, or application)
  - Example: <https://www.michigan.gov/som/business>
- Purpose/Goal of this request

## SOM Standards related to URLs:

- [1345.00.10 Michigan.gov Domain Standard](#)
- [1345.00.12 Internet Domian Management Standard](#)