

Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System

Web Standards, Guidelines & Procedures

Audiences of the Libraries' Web pages include the citizens of the four counties served by the member libraries of PPLCS, as well as diverse users from across the state, country, and world. This document brings together standards, guidelines, and procedures for the creation and maintenance of a coherent and effective Library Web Presence. Library web developers are expected to ensure that their pages are consistent with its provisions.

A. STANDARDS

The purpose of this section is to ensure the Libraries are in compliance with PPLCS web standards. In addition, library specific standards, designed to ensure that the site as a whole is managed properly and functions in an orderly manner, are set forth. Adherence to these standards is required.

PPLCS Standards:

1. Acceptable Use

All pages shall comply with relevant items in [PPLCS Acceptable Use Policy](#).

Of particular relevance to web pages are the following:

Official pages (including departments, centers, institutes, etc.) represent the library and are intended for the official business functions of the library. The following information must be readily accessible on the main page:

- The name of the unit or group represented by the page;
- A means of contacting the person(s) responsible for maintaining the page content;
- The date of last revision
- The PPLCS word mark
- An active link to the PPLCS home page

2. Copyright

PPLCS standards on copyright are as follows:

“Users of PPLCS computing resources must comply with federal and state laws, PPLCS policies, and the terms of applicable contracts including software licenses while using library computing resources... [Including] copyright. Users are responsible for ascertaining what authorizations are necessary and for obtaining them before using computing resources.” See the [complete PPLCS Acceptable Use Policy](#) for more information.

3. PPLCS Identification

PPLCS Graphics standards and policies require the use of the official PPLCS wordmark.

Library Standards:

The following elements are required on all Library web pages:

1. Contact Information

The name and email address of the functional web contact shall be in the footer of each page. If the functional web contact is not the page's creator, both names should appear.

2. Date Last Updated

The date the page was last updated or reviewed shall be in the footer of each page.

3. Libraries Identification

Every page shall have a clear and prominent indication that it is a part of the library's website.

4. Copyright

Every page shall have a copyright statement as part of the footer information, as follows:

Copyright (c) 1999-2002 Washington County Libraries. [All Rights Reserved](#)

The date given shall be the year the page was created and spanning intervening years through the present.

Use of any and all images, designs, and text copied from other sources must adhere to copyright and licensing guidelines.

- a) Written permission is required for the use materials for which you are not the author or creator.
- b) Clear designation of copyright should be given in the form: © Copyright, [Copyright holder], [YEAR]

Material created by staff for use on the Library's website is considered work done "for hire" and is therefore copyrighted by the Library. When a staff member leaves Library employment, future use of any such material may be negotiated.

5. Navigation

Every page shall have a prominent link to the Library's top level home page, and, if the page represents a unit lower than department level, a link to the department of which the unit is a member.

6. Only active web files are to be stored on the web server.

Outdated web pages or non-web related files should be stored on the staff member's desktop or the appropriate file server.

7. Americans with Disability Act Accommodations

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) roughly states that for publicly accessible areas. "reasonable accommodations" for disabled individuals must be made. The "Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)" was created to promote and achieve Web functionality. The PPLCS libraries will assist people with visual, aural, or physical disabilities by the following types of User friendly internet.

- Simple navigation
- Large buttons
- Readable font such as Ariel

- Clear and precise presentation

B. GUIDELINES

These guidelines represent a set of recommended “best practices” for Library web page developers. They have been drafted in an effort to achieve consistency and continuity in design and appearance, while encouraging creative contributions from all staff. It is assumed that they will evolve over time, and that some of them may become Web Standards.

Guidelines:

1. Accessibility

PPLCS’s Accessibility Use Guidelines are at this time “STRONGLY recommended.” There are indications that they may become mandatory in order to comply with federal requirements for grant funds. The complete guidelines are found at

2. Design and Navigation

- Limit use of animation and unnecessary graphics.
- Keep pages smaller than 50 kilobytes for faster loading over modem.

3. Code

- Simple, easily understood HTML or XHTML is to be preferred. Any complex code should be amply annotated so that others are able to easily maintain it.
- If scripts are used, they should be fully annotated. If they are taken from other sources, the source should be clearly indicated.
- All pages should have meaningful **<TITLE>** fields in the **<HEAD>** segment of the code in order to ease the creation of useful bookmarks.
- Descriptive headings should be used to introduce the document or sections of the document. Search engines weight the relevance of documents based on words in headings. Use the **<META KEYWORDS>** tag to define additional keywords if necessary.

2. Maintenance

- All pages should be checked for timeliness of content at least once per quarter. Update the date in the page footer to indicate the page was checked, even if no change was made.
- All pages should be checked for broken links at least once per quarter. Do not depend on link checkers alone to do this. Broken link reports issued by the Webmaster's office or from user feedback should be dealt with promptly.
- Any links resulting in “redirects” should be corrected.
- Outdated files should be removed from the server.

C. PROCEDURES

The following procedures represent the practical “how to” of preparing web content and making it available within the Library’s particular networked environment. While not required, things will work better if these procedures are followed.

1. Page/Site Creation

- All web pages/sites should be created on the creator’s own desktop. It is never a good idea to work on “live” web files.
- Links to common Library graphics should be made to master copies a single location, i.e., `<a img src=/images/picture.jpg>` . Do not link to copies of the images in other locations.
- All links to files elsewhere on the server should be relative, not absolute, and not local.

Example : `mypage.html`

NOT `http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/mydept/mypage.html`

OR `\\file:\server\folder\mydept\mypage.html`

- Pages may be created either using authoring tools or text editors. The following recommendations are supported:
 - **Netscape Composer** – If you have only a few pages with very simple navigation, and/or no experience with writing HTML.
 - **FrontPage** – if you have a more complex site and want to manage the pages in a groups or “site”, and/or have experience with FrontPage.
 - **DreamWeaver** – if you have a very complex site and want to use advanced features that do not rely on FrontPage Extensions.
 - **Text Editor** – If you already know HTML and are more comfortable just typing code, use NotePad or WordPad.
 - NOT recommended: Microsoft Word
- If your authoring tool has a spell checker, use it.

2. Page/Site Publishing

- In order to publish, you must have permissions to the appropriate folder. The Administrative Web Contact requests these permissions from the Webmaster.
- A copy of all web files published to the server by a developer should be kept on the desktop of the developer.
- Newly created files may be directly drag/dropped into the appropriate folder on the server. Revised files should be slightly renamed, then drag/dropped to the server for testing. If testing goes well, delete the old version and rename the new one.

3. Page/Site Maintenance

- All revision of web pages should be done on the maintainer’s desktop; revisions should NEVER be done on live web files.

- If more than one person maintains the files, be sure to copy a fresh set of files before revising, in order not to lose revision made by others.
- Be sure to include the date any revisions were made. If others revise the same files, include reviser's initials after the revision date.

4. **Support**

- PLAN's Technical Consultant is available for support.
- Training will be available from the following sources:
 - PLAN
 - Webjunction
 - Tutorial Sites Online
 - Other Library Staff Development opportunities