Content Guide: princeedwardisland.ca

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Version 7.4

Table of Contents

Content Checklist

Follow this **Content Guide** to help you create great client-centered website content that is accessible, clear and concise, useful and informative, well-organized, and easy-to-scan. Review this checklist for each content piece to confirm it is ready to be available to the public.

Is this content useful, necessary and complete?

- ☐ Is this information essential and relevant for PEI citizens or businesses?
- ☐ Is it written with a clear sense of the target audience?
- ☐ Does this content provide complete, current, and accurate information?
- ☐ If required, does this page provide everything necessary to complete a transaction?
- ☐ Is the most important information in the first paragraph?
- ☐ Do all links, images and PDFs add value to the information? Are links working properly?

Is this content easy to read and understand?

- ☐ Is the language active and direct?
- ☐ Are headings written clearly and from the user's perspective?
- ☐ Do headings directly relate to the content? Will a reader know what the page is about based solely on the title?
- ☐ Are headings or bulleted lists used to break lengthy content into sections?

Is this content easy to find through navigation and search?

- ☐ Is this content logically and appropriately tagged?
- ☐ Is link text descriptive? Will the visitor know where the link is going?
- ☐ Is the relevant information present or will visitors need to click to other pages to find what is needed?
- ☐ Is content easy to scan with key words used in image captions and headings?

Is this content accessible?

- ☐ Does each caption and summary meet accessibility standards?
- ☐ Does every image have alternative text for accessibility requirements?
- ☐ Are tables used appropriately? Are they accessible? Are they responsive on a mobile device?

Does this content following the standards for style and format?

- ☐ Is information presented according to   Content Guide templates?
- ☐ Are headings sized appropriately?
- ☐ Has the content been checked for reading level, proper spelling, punctuation and grammar?
- ☐ Are files associated with this page named correctly?

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This *Content Guide* was created to ensure content is consistent throughout the Government of Prince Edward Island (GPEI) website, *princeedwardisland.ca.* It recommends a style, language and format for **writing** excellent web content and offers helpful tips for creating accurate, reliable, up-to-date content that is easy to find, easy to read and easy to understand.

This is a guide for **content,** not for design or web publishing. For GPEI visual standards and publishing instructions, refer to other documents provided.

1.2 Recommendations vs. requirements

This guide follows best practice for writing and maintaining web content. Adhere to as many of the guidelines and recommendations as possible to ensure our government site is consistent, professional, and easy-to-use.

While the web is flexible and sometimes a different approach can work, this exclamation point icon to the left indicates a **requirement**. These mostly pertain to provincial standards such as **accessibility** and our goal to achieve consistency and professionalism across princeedwardisland.ca.

2 Planning and maintaining your content

2.1 Information architecture

Understanding the way the GPEI website is organized may help you plan and manage your content. The site's information architecture (IA)—a roadmap for its structure—has four main segments: About PEI; Residents; Business; and Government as well as several topics and subtopics.

Each topic or subtopic page is an automated index or landing page that draws content from a comprehensive content database. A click on "Residents" on the homepage will take the user to a page of topics relevant to residents. A click on "Seniors" will go to a more senior-specific list of topics.

Having a sense of the whole site, in particular the topics and subtopics, will help you plan and place new content appropriately.

2.2 Reviewing content

It is necessary to review your content regularly. The government website is like a large document with many diverse contributors. Your information may be posted to the site with content of a similar topic from another department. As the volume of information pages increases, it is possible to lose track of content. Reviewing and maintaining web content is important to keeping the site a manageable size. A massive, sprawling website does not serve the user — ever.

Review all your content regularly. If no one has visited your page since the previous review, flag it for removal.

2.2.1 ROT: Redundant, outdated, or trivial

The Internet doesn't expire. Pages of past programs or events can exist unnoticed for years. The site is not for storing historical documents. Archived information belongs in a storage cabinet elsewhere.

 Use ROT to review your content and flag to remove pages that:

- offer similar information more succinctly elsewhere;
- duplicate information that already exists;
- apply to a program, grant or service no longer offered;
- are provided on a different (or more qualified) website; or
- do not belong on a government website (How to Cook a Turkey, etc.).

2.2.2 Combining similar pages

If you have pages with similar or related information, consider combining the content into a single page. This will simplify the IA and navigation, improve user experience, and reduce the number of pages in your Drupal workbench.

Alternatively, if you have content that must be tagged to more than one topic or is specific to more than one audience, consider separating the information into more than one content page.

Examples:

Information about preventing an illness and information about managing that illness should **not** be contained in the same information page. The subtopic is different. The targeted reader may be different too; someone who does not want to get the illness and someone who already has the illness.

An information page about the benefits of hiking in the woods may be posted for general residents. If that page contains information about a hike specifically for seniors, a separate information page about a hike for seniors could be created and posted for that audience.

2.2.3   Prioritizing popular or task-based content
Back to Top

If your content inventory becomes too cumbersome to manage, a thorough review may be necessary. Give priority to pages that:

- help users accomplish tasks;
- provide vital information;
- are essential to navigation and flow; and
- are visited frequently, based on analytics.

3   Accessibility
Back to Top

The Government of Prince Edward Island is committed to providing web content that is **accessible for all** including readers with

- visual impairment or a learning disability;

- low literacy level or limited English language ability; or

- a small screen or mobile device.

3.1   Accessibility standards
Back to Top

Creating accessible content in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) improves user experience for **all site visitors**, not just people with a disability. At minimum, all new web pages must conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A and, if possible, to WCAG Level AA standards.

Government departments and organizations shall meet the requirement as follows:

All content on *princeedwardisland.ca* must conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A, (with limited exception) to the greatest extent possible.

Exceptions

While we strive to adhere to the accepted guidelines and standards for accessibility and usability, it is not always possible to do so in all areas of the website.

3.1.1 Achieving accessibility standards
Back to Top

The government website has **design elements** necessary for accessibility. To **create content** that achieves accessibility standards, address the following key content items:

1. **Effective writing** - Clear, simple language is easier to understand. Organize content so it is concise but complete. Highlight key information to facilitate scanning and improve listening for a visually impaired person using a screen reader.

2. **Formatted headings and subheadings** - Screen readers identify font hierarchy within a page. The font for headings and subheadings is larger than body text so screen readers will give them greater importance. Well-organized content with clear headings for each section improves accessibility.

3. **Alternate text and captions for images (non-text elements)** - This applies primarily to photos and tables, but also to logos, banners, graphs, and charts. Alternative text and captions enable screen-reading software to process non-text elements, describing the image and offering context to users with visual impairments.

4. **Limited use of tables, charts and PDFs** – These elements can be cumbersome for screen readers and are not practical for mobile devices. Use tables for **data only** and apply informative captions and summaries. If you need a table for layout, you may have too much information.

   Typically, charts are imported as images which will not appear on a mobile device. Consider the following options to achieve accessibility standards:

- Use the functionality of Office software (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) to insert Alt Text as a built-in option to make a simple chart accessible.

- Present the data in a table on your page.

- Consider Open Data.

Similar principals apply to PDF documents. Usually a PDF contains more content than necessary with images that are irrelevant. **Screen readers cannot process a PDF file saved (or scanned) as an image**; it must be readable text.

Improve Accessibility of PDFs

For expert design services, provide your Word file and images, along with the Alt Text, to Creative Services.

Client Services staff design with Adobe InDesign using client-supplied Word files. Alt text can be added to images and export web-ready .pdf files using customized Adobe Acrobat settings for accessibility and interactivity.

Did you know?

Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat have accessibility tools built into the software.

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5. **Useful, descriptive links** – Choose link text that will make sense when read out of context. Link text should let readers know where they are going when they select a link so they can decide if they want to go there. "Download" or "click here" does not describe what the reader will find. It is more useful to use: Download our brochure about the Seniors Housing Program.

4 Creating a positive user experience

Back to Top

People will come to *princeedwardisland.ca* with one of two expectations; **get information** or **complete an action**. They will want to accomplish their mission accurately and efficiently. Our task is to ensure their experience is positive and successful.

4.1 Effective web writing

Back to Top

Most visitors will scan the page rather than read the text line by line. Information must be easy to find, logically and intuitively organized, and easy to digest. A reader should not have to read content more than once to understand it.

Your responsibility as a content provider is to present current, accurate information in a **simple, direct, easy-to-read** format.

Some practical tips for writing web content include:

- Write for your intended target audience.

- Use simple, direct, active sentences with an active voice.

- Limit paragraphs to four or five sentences.

- Break information into logical sections with clear headings.

- Use bulleted lists to present detailed information.

- Avoid using jargon and bureaucratic language.

- Express complex topics with simple language.

4.2 Audience

Before you begin to write any piece of content consider who you are writing for, what information that person will need or want, and how he or she will search for this information.

Assume your reader does not know the topic or the process, and may not know how to navigate the Government of Prince Edward Island website. Present your topic in a way that is easy to read and understand and is organized logically so it is easy to find. It may be helpful to keep in mind that your audience is a resident or business owner not a fellow colleague in government.

4.2.1 Residents

Residents will come to *princeedwardisland.ca* for information related to a specific topic such as education or health. Because most residents are familiar with PEI, its government and culture, it is unnecessary to provide general background on this. Avoid drowning your content with information about government, your department or agency, or other irrelevant information. Determine the specific information a PEI resident will need related to that topic and then provide it clearly and concisely.

For example, a resident searching how to get their water tested does not need to know how many years government has been providing this service or what year the provincial lab was opened. Content should clearly state the steps to collect the sample, where to take the sample for testing, the fee for service and number of days to get results.

At times, you will direct content to a specific audience or special interest group, i.e. newcomers, seniors or youth. A different approach may be necessary.

Newcomers may not have the language competency or in-depth knowledge of Prince Edward Island, seniors may not need legal age requirements. If you are writing specifically for a resident sub-group, keep **their** interests and background in mind.

Technical or scientific language is appropriate for presenting information to a technical or scientific reader. However, if a general audience also wants or needs this information, it must be written in accessible language.

4.2.2   Business owners
Back to Top

Content in the business gateway, specifically for current and future business owners, contains information necessary for starting, operating and growing a business in the province. Language level can be rated higher because content may include business terms however information still must be clear and concise but thorough and well organized. Business operators want to access information efficiently.

4.2.3   Out-of province
Back to Top

While the main audiences of *princeedwardisland.ca* are PEI residents and business owners, some readers will be from outside the province. Information specifically for tourists is available on the Tourism PEI website. *About PEI* provides information for someone interested in learning about PEI, considering moving to PEI, or planning to work or study in PEI.

Write content with visitors in mind, i.e. readers looking for more information about PEI and readers with reduced competency for English. (Much of this content is managed corporately.)

4.3 Voice and tone
Back to Top

Government web content should imitate the personality of an employee providing service to a client in person or on the phone: friendly and professional, positive and sincere, and, above all, helpful.

- **Create** a tone that is **professional**, **trustworthy** and **genuine**.
- **Refrain from** using **institutional language** and **avoid jargon**.
- Use **active voice** that is **conversational**, **consistent** and **straightforward**.

4.4   Pronouns

4.4.1   Audience = You
Back to Top

To create a client-centered approach, use second-person pronouns "you" and "your" to refer to your audience.

Example:

Use: "To have your water tested, take your sample to. . ."

Versus: "Residents needing their water tested may drop off samples at . . ."

Using "you" and "your" in headings and content helps pull readers into the web page; helps them identify with the content and guides them to what they need to do.

Headings: If the headings are in the form of questions, replace "you" with "I" to give the reader a further personal connection.

Example: How can I pay my bill?

4.4.2   GPEI ≠We
Back to Top

Client-centered content focuses on the reader's request or action rather than government's action. Addressing readers as "you" helps personalize the government website for the audience and helps keep our content on the client-centered track.

When appropriate, refer to the Government of Prince Edward Island as **the Government of Prince Edward Island.** Don't use pronouns like **"we," "us,"** or **"our."** Refer to departments, agencies, boards, commissions, councils, and crown corporations by their names, especially on first mention. Introduce the acronym in brackets before using it to refer to any of these groups.

Example:

The Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy (TIE)

Note: In general, avoid using department names in content. It contradicts our client-centered focus and occupies valuable page space. It is difficult to manage following government reorganization and department name changes. It is redundant because department contact details appear automatically on the right side of the page.

4.4.3 Gender-neutral pronouns
Back to Top

Choose gender-neutral terms when referring to titles, roles, or occupations:

Use spokesperson, businessperson, chair, police officer, or sales associate; **not** spokesman, business woman, chairwoman, policeman, or salesman.

Avoid common gendered terms like "average man", "mankind", "layman", etc., as these terms all have a neutral equivalent (average person, humankind, and non-specialist).

Avoid specifying gender when using pronouns to refer to individuals:

- Personal pronoun: "you/your"

  Gendered: A resident must submit **his** application for ...
  Gender-neutral: Submit **your** application for ...

- Article or plural pronoun: "an/the" or "their"

  Gendered: A resident must submit **his** application for ...
  Gender-neutral: A resident must submit **an/the** application for ... or
  Resident**s** must submit **their** application**s** for ...

- Both the masculine and feminine pronoun: "his or her"

  Gendered: A resident must submit **his** application for ...
  Gender-neutral: A resident must submit **his or her** application for...

The Government of Canada Language Portal offers examples and guidelines at "Guidelines for gender-neutral language".

4.5 Information structure

Present information according to the following information structure to improve:

- **Mobile experience** –It is easier to scroll through a single page of information on a mobile device.

- **User outcomes** – It is more efficient and convenient to find the form and its necessary supporting information in one place.

- **Scanning –** Strong headlines and headings facilitate scanning.

4.5.1 The inverted pyramid

Typical web readers scan pages for information and rarely read to the end of the page unless they are really interested in the content.

Web writers, like journalists, start with the main point, add supporting information in the order that is relevant to the reader and add background details later or not at all. Starting with a strong first sentence or two also drives search engine optimization. The structure which places key information near the top is called the **inverted pyramid**. Readers glancing at the page will find the necessary details without needing to scroll through the entire page.

Example: PEI Health Card

Now	Edited
First paragraph: The Prince Edward Island Health Card is designed to provide eligible residents with coverage for basic hospital and medical treatment.	**First paragraph**: You must have a valid PEI Health Card to be covered for basic hospital and medical treatment.
Second paragraph: Health PEI is responsible for issuing Health Cards under the PEI Hospital and Medical Services Plan. Private insurance companies offer coverage for health services which are not covered in the Provincial plan.	**Second paragraph**: You are eligible for a PEI Health Card if you are a permanent PEI resident who resides in the province more than six months each year. You are not eligible for a PEI Health Card

Now	Edited
	if you are: • a foreign student without work visa, transient or visitor to PEI; • Canadian Armed Forces member; • incarcerated in a federal penitentiary; or • eligible for services through VAC or Workers Compensation.
Third paragraph: Health PEI may review the medical necessity of the services supplied, and may refer problem cases to its Health Services Payment Advisory Committee for recommendation. Health PEI's Medical Director assesses applications for out-of-province services.	**Third paragraph**: Private insurance companies cover many health services not covered through the PEI Health Card.

After writing a first draft, edit harshly. Cut, cut, cut. Identify unnecessary words or details and remove them.

4.5.2   Strong opening sentences
Back to Top

When a reader searches a topic or clicks on a subtopic heading in *princeedwardisland.ca*, a list of titles appears with the URL address and the first few lines of content. A strong opening sentence or two may provide a scanning reader with the key piece of information they are seeking. It will also help a reader decide if they want to open the page for more information.

4.5.3   Providing all the information on one page
Back to Top

Visitors at *princeedwardisland.ca* should not have to navigate around or click through several pages to find what they need. All or most of the vital information

about a topic should be contained on one page. Someone applying for funding should find an explanation of the program, eligibility and application requirements, and necessary supporting information on one page with a link to the application form.

4.5.4 Headlines and headings

Organize content in logical sections with an appropriate heading to guide readers through the text. As readers **scan** your pages, their eyes will naturally fall on the largest text.

Effective headings contain relevant information that accurately describes the text that follows and uses key words that are search-engine friendly.

Where appropriate, write headings in the form of a question or a verb phrase (call to action) from the reader's point of view. Question format is more commonly used throughout *princeedwardisland.ca*.

Strong	Weak
When is Access PEI open?	Hours of Operation
Contact Access PEI Charlottetown	Contact information
What do I need to apply online?	Click here to apply
How much will I pay for my fishing licence?	Will you be charged for it?
What additional information do I need to apply?	Frequently Asked Questions

***Templates** at the back of this guide will help you organize your content so that key information is on one page with appropriate headings.

4.6 Creating readable content

4.6.1 Simple, clear language

Use simple words that are familiar to your reader and a sentence structure that is clear and free from unnecessary words.

Examples: Both examples below provide the reader with the same necessary detail.

- You may include your resume to support your application.

- Before you submit your final copy of your application it is highly recommended that you include the most recent copy of your resume to make sure the members of the selection committee have a chance to review your skills and place you in a position most suited to your needs.

4.6.2   Active writing
Back to Top

Write using **active** voice rather than passive. Readers engage better with active speech; it is clearer, more direct and usually requires fewer words.

In a passive sentence, the subject **receives** the action. (The <u>boy</u> was bitten by the dog.)

In an active sentence, the subject **performs** the action (verb). (The <u>dog</u> bit the boy.)

To change a sentence from passive to active, find who or what is performing the action and make it the subject. **Hint**: In passive construction, the word "by" usually precedes the person or thing performing the action, in **bold** font below.

> **Examples:**
>
> **Passive:** In the spring, properties are *cleaned up* by **Islanders**.
> Leaves *are raked*, and sticks and branches *are gathered*.
> **Active:** In the spring, **Islanders** *clean up* their properties. **They**
> *rake* leaves and *gather* sticks and branches.
>
> **Passive:** The Drug Cost Assistance Program is funded by the
> **provincial government**.
> **Active:** The **provincial government** funds the Drug Cost
> Assistance Program.

In the following example the subject of the sentence, the client, is implied:

> **Passive:** Information about fishing in PEI can be found at the PEI Angling
> Resource Centre.
> **Active: Option #1:** Find information about fishing in PEI at the PEI
> Angling Resource Centre. **Option #2:** For information about fishing in
> PEI, go to the PEI Angling Resource Centre

4.6.3 Appropriate content length

4.6.3.1 Sentences and paragraphs
Back to Top

Best practices for web writing suggest the following:

- Keep sentences between 8–12 words.
- Use 3–4 sentences for each paragraph.
- Limit each section to 3–5 paragraphs.

4.6.3.2 Page length
Back to Top

The length of your page does not matter as long as your content provides all of the relevant information required to answer the question or complete the service. For lengthy content, provide a structure that makes it easy for readers to scan the information.

- Follow the templates provided to present content in a consistent structure.

- Break lengthy pages into sections with appropriate headings.

- Present a list of multiple items or phrases as a bulleted list.

4.6.4 Grade reading level
Back to Top

Write clearly, simply and to the point to achieve readable content for all audiences. The Government of PEI recommends writing content at reading levels for audiences as follows:

- **Newcomer** or English as an Additional Language audience, Grade 4 level or lower;
- **Public**, Grade 6 level or lower;
- **Business audience**, Grade 8 level or lower.

Determining readability

- *Microsoft Word* has a **readability statistics** tool to measure the reading level for each document.

  To check your readability statistics:

  o Click on the Word button and click **"Word Options."**
  o Select **"Proofing"** and check both **"Check grammar with spelling"** and **"Show readability statistics"** then click **"OK"** to save your changes.
  o Run **Spelling & Grammar** (under "Review" tab) and follow the prompts to correct spelling and grammar errors.

  A "Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level" number indicates the approximate reading level of your document. For example, a Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level of 6.7 means a person with a Grade 6 reading level can understand the text.

4.7 Highlight key information to facilitate scanning
Back to Top

Readers will scan through your page and focus on words and phrases that:

- stand out from the bulk of text on the page;

- accompany images; and

- contain key words or phrases they are searching.

Format your content to make it easier to skim.

4.7.1 Formatting
Back to Top

Use font in **bold** or *italics* to highlight key information and facilitate scanning. Do not use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.

Consider **bold** font to highlight key information:

- important dates or deadlines;
- specific requirements for applications (e.g. driver's licence, health card); or
- fees.

  Examples:
  If you are out of the province when your licence expires and will return within six months, a **one-time licence extension** is available

for up to **six months** maximum.

The annual fee to register your family pet is **$50**.

Use *italics* to highlight something *not ordinary* or an **exception**.

Examples:

- You *do not need to pass a vision test* if your licence has been expired for less than one year.
- Use the Corporate Registry Database to search for businesses that are *only* registered in PEI.

4.7.2 Images

Think carefully before using an image. Only use an image when it **adds value** to your content, not to make your content look visually appealing.

Images may distract the viewer from the important written message and can make it cumbersome to access information quickly. Most importantly, images **do not** appear on a mobile device.

Does the image clarify your information? Using an image of the insect to describe potato pests, may add useful clarification. Using an image of youth playing basketball to describe a recreation facility is not useful.

4.7.2.1 Using images for a slider

If your content will be used on a slider page, an appropriate image is required with content to support it. Not every photo is suitable for a slider. For clarity, refer to slider governance and instructions.

Any time you use an image, ensure it is a web-friendly **size and format** (JPG, GIF, or PNG) and include **captions and alternative text** for each image.

4.7.2.2 Captions

⚠ **You must include a caption for every image.**

Typically, readers are drawn to a photo as they scan the page. (This is why an image can distract the reader from the information.)Then they may read its caption, which should—rather than describing the image—provide key information that is already contained in the content page.

Example: Driver Education Program

The following image will add no value to the information page about driver education but may be suitable as a slider image. If it is used, the caption should be taken, directly or paraphrased, from the content contained in the information page that supports it.

Once you successfully complete the Driver Education Program
you must pass a road test before earning your drivers' licence.

4.7.2.3 Image captions on a mobile device
Back to Top

Images in *princeedwardisland.ca* **disappear** when the content is viewed on small mobile devices. When choosing to add an image, consider that users of smart phones and users with a visual impairment will not be able to see it. Images should add value and supplement an existing content page, not replace it. If the image caption provides new or additional information that does not also appear somewhere in the body of the text, a mobile device will not display it.

The screen shot below is a primary image of a Summerside turbine with an image caption, "The Summerside Wind Farm's four turbines create 12 MWs of electricity, which provides power for the entire city." Mobile users will not get this interesting fact unless it is included in the body of the content page.

Summerside Wind Farm

The Summerside Wind Farm's four turbines create 12 MWs of electricity, which provides power for the entire city.

4.7.2.4 Alt text
Back to Top

Screen-reading software processes non-text elements (including images) as text for visually impaired users. The information you provide in the "alt text" field of the image will be read aloud to these readers. Image "alt text" gives context, so the language you choose is very important.

 You must include alt text for every image.

Alt tags need to explain and describe the image in brief. Screen readers will also read the photo captions, so don't repeat information from the caption in the "alt" tag. (These have a limit of 255 characters.)

Examples below:

Suggested caption:

Honourable John K. Doe, Premier of Prince Edward Island

Suggested alt text:

Head shot photo of Premier John Doe smiling

Suggested caption:

Muskrats are common throughout Prince Edward Island.

Suggested alt text:

This is a photo of a muskrat with a brown pelt and long tail standing in the snow.

Suggested caption:

Prince Edward Island is the smallest province in Canada and one of four Atlantic Provinces.

Alt text:

Map of North America highlighting where Prince Edward Island is positioned off the coast of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

While the above explains and highlights how to use images in an accessible website, there is no really accessible way to place an image with text on a site. **Avoid** using **text-based images** in your content.

4.7.2.5 Permission for use of images
Back to Top

All images used on the *princeedwardisland.ca* **must** have appropriate permission and should be locally sourced; stock photos are **not** acceptable. *Communications and Public Engagement* can provide licensed photos. If you request permission to use another owner's photo, you are required to inform the owner that, once it is posted to the website, anyone may duplicate, reproduce or use the image for other purposes.

Information on image copyright is available at: https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/website-disclaimer-and-copyright-policy.

4.7.3   Accessible headings
Back to Top

Headings impact accessibility. A screen reader will differentiate headings from body (paragraph) text and will determine the level of the content's importance based on the level of **H tag** applied.

<H> Tags

The <h1> tag is automatically applied to page titles. Use the <h2> tag for primary headings that break your content into sections. Example: Am I eligible for funding? How do I apply? For subheadings underneath your primary headings, <h3> <h4> <h5> <h6> are used with decreasing importance.

The tags must be used in sequential order to meet accessibility standards. An <h1> must be followed by an <h2> even if you like the look of <h3> better.

4.7.4   Lists
Back to Top

Important information can get lost in content that is detail heavy. Long blocks of text obscure rather than highlight important details.

Breaking detail-heavy content into a bulleted list will make the information easier to understand. Highlighting key phrases in **bold font** will make content easier to scan.

> **Example:** Health PEI - "Visiting the Emergency Department"
> *(https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-pei/visiting-emergency-department)*
>
> Some examples of an **urgent medical condition** include:
>
> - discomfort or **tightness in the chest;**
> - unusual **shortness of breath;**
> - **abdominal pain;**
> - **prolonged** and **persistent headache or dizziness;**
> - an injury that may require **stitches** or may involve a **broken bone;**
> - **prolonged diarrhea or vomiting** (especially a child); or
> - a **fever of 38°C** (100.4°F) **or higher (for a baby under six months**).

A reader, possibly in distress, can skim the above text to quickly grab essential information.

4.8 Writing with key words and searchable phrasing
[Back to Top](#)

Most readers will enter a word or phrase into search rather than browse a site to find the information they want. Think about the words or phrasing a reader might use in their search. Then think like Google when writing content. Repeat key phrases a few times and use the most important words in your page title and section headings.

Tips for incorporating key words into your content:

1. Identify a single phrase that summarizes the content.
2. Use the phrase in the page title.
3. Repeat the phrase (or parts of it) in a heading.
4. Use similar phrases throughout the document.
5. Use key phrases in links, if possible.

For more information on search engine optimization (SEO), see [Section 6](#).

4.9 Links and linking – best practices

4.9.1 Make links meaningful

Most web users recognize coloured font or underlined text as a link. It is not necessary to tell a reader to "Click here," "Follow this link," or "Go to this page." To make links **meaningful,** use link text that clearly indicates where the reader will go with a click or what "more" is about.

Label the link with words that still make sense when pulled out of context. Explain the required action (i.e. complete the form) and match the content at the link's destination (i.e. the name of the form or service) so that your readers will know they arrived where they wanted to go, i.e. "Complete the form to get your water tested."

In the examples below, a screen reader reading the "weak" links on the left would not provide enough information to a visually impaired user. The "strong" links on the right **set an expectation** for the content contained in the link, which benefits **all** users.

Examples:

Weak	Strong
Click here for more information.	Seniors' Housing Program brochure.
You can find frequently asked questions about soil, feed, and water testing by going to the following page.	Learn more about soil, feed, and water tests.
To learn more about foster parenting, go to this link.	Find answers to common questions about being a foster parent.
Follow this link to learn about PEI Flavours.	For a detailed schedule of events and to get tickets visit fallflavours.ca.

4.9.2 Linking to external sites

It is not necessary to provide links to external sites; most readers search through Google. Any external link from *princeedwardisland.ca* must be very **high value**, providing

information assessed and acknowledged as something important for your content and of high interest to your audience.

> **Example:**
>
> **Preventing Fraud, Scams and Financial Abuse** (content for seniors)
>
> Becoming an informed senior is your best defence against fraud, scams or financial abuse. The following information will help you protect yourself from financial crimes and offer useful tips for you to respond to a suspected fraud. Yes: [What Every Canadian Should Know About Financial Abuse](#)
>
> No: [Toronto Police Community Handbook](#)

A **reliable link** to the federal government forum for seniors may offer useful information related to your topic. A link to a content-heavy PDF created for Toronto residents, also related to your content, is not a high-value link (although you may find some information in the document to strengthen your content).

4.9.3   Choosing how much text to link and where to place it
[Back to Top](#)

The title and placement of a link can strengthen its usefulness and affect the flow of content. An embedded or mid-sentence link may distract the reader from your information. A reader who follows your mid-sentence link to another page may not return to your content page.

Try to place the link at the **end of the sentence** or **just below your content**. Also, if it is a short sentence, link the full sentence rather than part of a sentence. This works better for screen readers and readers in general.

> **Example #1:**
>
> **Avoid:**
>
> There are many environmental advantages to planting trees. Acadian Forest tree species that are suitable for a PEI climate are produced at the [J. Frank Gaudet Tree Nursery](#) and available for purchase in [garden centres and nurseries](#) across the province. The [Trees and Shrubs](#) database may help you find which trees will grow successfully on your property.
>
> **Consider:**
>
> There are many environmental advantages to planting trees. Acadian Forest tree species suitable for a PEI climate are produced at the J. Frank Gaudet Nursery and available for purchase in garden centres and nurseries across

the province. To find which trees will grow successfully on your property, search the [Trees and Shrubs database.](#)

For a list of nursery or garden centres where you can purchase products from the database, go to [Trees and Shrubs](#). (Another option is to add this list as a resource.)

Example #2:

Avoid:

- Include a completed [Canada Select Rating and Licence Fee application [PDF|1.5mb]](#) and a full payment to Tourism and Culture.
- Include full payment and a completed Canada Select Rating and Licence Fee [application](#).
- To register your tourist accommodation, [apply here.](#)

Consider:

- To register your tourist accommodation, submit full payment and a completed [Canada Select Rating and Licence Fee application [PDF|1.5mb]](#).

- To register your tourist accommodation for Canada Select rating, submit a completed application with full payment to Tourism and Culture.
    [Canada Select Rating and Licence Fee application [PDF|1.5mb]](#)

4.9.4   Linking to files
[Back to Top](#)

If you link to a file (PDF, DOC, JPG, etc.), be mindful that not every user has a device or Internet connection capable of handling the file. Mobile users don't want to open a 500KB document and some viewers don't have Microsoft Word.

Include a PDF icon and approximate size in brackets beside the link (if the file size is larger than 500 KB). To determine the file size, right click on the document and select "Document Properties".

Example: To help you prepare for medical care in the event that you are unable to communicate, download the   [Advance Care Planning Workbook PDF| 656KB]().

Note: By uploading files in formats other than PDF or RTF, you are accepting the risk that the files may not be accessible to all public users.

4.10 Tables – layout vs. data tables
[Back to Top]()

You should not have to use a **layout table** to control formatting (visual presentation of information on a page). Layout tables are not suitable for visually impaired readers because a screen reader may alter the order and meaning of information. If you think a layout table is necessary, consider presenting your information in a different way.

All tables on *princeedwardisland.ca* should be **data tables** with appropriate captions and labels on rows and columns to meet accessibility standards. Labels or headers on data table rows and columns help readers scan for information and enable screen readers to process information in the correct order.

Web AIM (accessibility in mind) is an external site providing more detail in [Creating Accessible Tables.]() *http://webaim.org/techniques/tables/*

4.10.1 Useful tables
[Back to Top]()

Before you create a table for your content, consider the following:

- Is it necessary? Could the information be presented in a linear (list) format?

- Will a screen reader present the information in the correct sequence?

- Will the table appear correctly on a mobile platform?

- Is this table for design rather than clarity?

If you create a data table, use the simplest table configuration possible. Avoid unnecessary columns and rows and ensure the information is close to its heading to retain its context.

4.10.2 Labeling rows, columns and headers
[Back to Top]()

To facilitate scanning for information, all columns and rows in a table should be labeled. It's simply not enough to assume that your readers will understand the data; you also need to identify the table headers, whether used in a row or column.

Example of table with row header:

Seniors Centre	Phone Number
Charlottetown	(902) 368-5996
Summerside	(902) 432-2740
Montague	(902) 838-0190
O'Leary	(902) 859-8824

Example of table with column header:

Date	March 18	April 4	May 26
Products Sold	25,000	10,000	5,000
Total Revenue	$5,000	$2,000	$1,000

4.10.3 Table captions
Back to Top

Every table requires a caption that provides a title or overview of the table. A screen reader will read the text as a "table caption," so a visually impaired reader will know that a table follows.

Seniors Centre	Phone number
Charlottetown	(902) 368-5996
Summerside	(902) 432-2740
Montague	(902) 838-0190
O'Leary	(902) 859-8824

Caption: Contact numbers for seniors centres in PEI.

4.10.3.1 Table summaries
Back to Top

(!) A table must have a summary to be fully accessible. The summary describes the format of the table and explains how to read the table.

Using the same sample as above, the table is completely accessible with a summary as follows.

Seniors Centre	Phone number
Charlottetown	(902) 368-5996
Summerside	(902) 432-2740
Montague	(902) 838-0190
O'Leary	(902) 859-8824

Caption: Contact numbers for seniors centres
Summary: Seniors centres in communities throughout Prince Edward Island are listed in the first column; phone numbers are listed in the second.

5   Spelling and grammar

5.1 Creating reliable, consistent, quality content

Our goal as content creators is to provide current, reliable and accurate information in a clear and consistent format. Like any government or institutional website, we will strive for a personal, client-centered tone with a high professional standard. We cannot achieve any of this if we post content with errors in grammar and spelling, inconsistent formatting (outlined in a separate document) and conflicting use of language rules. This Content Guide is based on best practice for web writing and follows the Canadian government English-language editorial style guide, ***The Canadian Style***. Refer to *Appendix A* for ***French*** content rules, which differ from English rules in many instances.

5.2 Proper titles and names

5.2.1 Ministers and departments

Refer to a minister using the office and then the name.

Example:

Department of Economic Development and Tourism Minister Mary Smith

 or: the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, Mary Smith

After the first attribution, refer to her as "the minister" or "Ms. Smith."

5.2.2   Members of the Legislative Assembly
Back to Top

Refer to MLAs by their district and then their title.

> **Example:** Vernon River - Stratford MLA John Smith

5.3   Capitalization

5.3.1   Headline capitalization and punctuation
Back to Top

Use **title** capitalization for the headlines at the top of your content (page title) and **sentence** capitalization for the headings (subheadings) inside your content. Do not use ALL CAPITALS.

If your heading is a sentence, you do not need the period at the end. However, if your heading is a **question**, you **do** need the question mark at the end.

> **Example#1**
> **Headline:** Preparing for a Hospital Stay (Title Capitalization, no punctuation)
> **Heading:** Helpful tips for packing (Sentence capitalization, no punctuation)
>
> **Example #2**
> **Headline:** Register Your Motor Vehicle Online (Title Capitalization, no punctuation)
> **Heading:** What do I need to renew my registration online? (Sentence capitalization with question mark)

5.3.2   General rules for capitalization

5.3.2.1 Government
Back to Top

Capitalize "Government of Prince Edward Island" and "Government" or "Province of Prince Edward Island and "the Province" when referring to the official title. When used in a general context, capitals are not used.

> **Examples:**

- o The Government of Prince Edward Island announces ...
- o The provincial government shares the cost of the program

5.3.2.2 Legislation
Back to Top

Capitalize and italicize the proper titles of laws.

Example: The *Public Health Act*

5.3.2.3 Proper nouns
Back to Top

Capitalize the names of places, people and boards or committees, unless used in general context.

Examples:

- o The English Language School Board, or the Board voted unanimously
- o The issue was raised at the board meeting last week.

5.3.2.4 Job titles
Back to Top

Capitalize titles that refer to a specific person even if the name is not used but inferred, but not when used in a general context or as an occupation title.

Examples:

- o Deputy Minister Sally Smith addressed the teachers.
- o According to the Deputy Minister, this is common practice.
- o Every deputy minister is a member of the senior management team.
- o The Minister signed the document after discussing it with ministers in other provinces.
- o A minister must sign the document.
- o Chief Electoral Officer, John Doe
- o The chief electoral officer tossed the coin.
- o We are confident Professor Jane Smith is not related to John Smith, professor of mathematics.

Capitalize forms of address or respect, even in plural form, but not titles in plural:

Examples:

- o Your Honour, Your Excellencies, His Worship, Their Royal Highnesses
- o Lieutenant Governor Jane Doe welcomed the lieutenant governors of NS and NB.

5.3.2.5 Nouns

In general, capitalize a noun when a number follows it (**Article 3, Phase 1,** and **Grade 3**) but use lowercase for plural (**articles 1–3,** or **grades 7–9**).

5.3.2.6 Bulleted lists

Rules vary for capitalizing a bulleted list, also called a vertical list. In general, the following practice is suggested.

Capitalize the beginning of each item in a list that meets the criteria listed below:

- The list follows an introduction that is a complete sentence like the one above.

- The item is a full sentence that stands alone, without the introductory statement.

- Items are easier grasped separately than together.

Use **lower case** for items that:

- follow a lead-in that is an incomplete sentence,

- may be a complete sentence but do not make sense without the lead-in, or

- consist of single words or simple phrases, similar to a grocery list.

Punctuating a bulleted list

- Punctuation may be eliminated if items are brief.

- Complete sentences should be punctuated, starting with a capital and ending with a period or question mark.

- Use a semicolon (;) at the end of each item if internal punctuation is used in one or more items or if the list ends with "and" or "or."

- If a comma or semicolon is used after each item, put a period after the final item.

Do not capitalize:
- application and permit names, unless the form contains the name for a particular program
    - Complete the application for burning authorization and removal.
    - Apply for a fishing permit.
    - Complete the Senior Islander of the Year Award nomination form.

5.4 Abbreviations

Spell out the phrase in the first instance followed by the acronym in brackets when the acronym is not widely known.

> **Example**: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) works closely with the Government of Prince Edward Island...

Common acronyms (HST, G8, EU, NAFTA, PDF, and WTO) can be used without spelling out the words on first mention.

> **Example:** Charlottetown will host two NHL pre-season games in September.

5.5 Numbers and symbols

Refer to *Appendix A* for presenting numbers and symbols in French content. Use numerals for numbers 10 and over (unless they begin a sentence).

> **Examples:**

- There were **23** books on the shelf

- There were **six** books on the shelf.

Spell all numbers that begin a sentence, as well as any related number that closely follows it in the sentence, even if it is higher than 10.

- **Ten** of the children are age **twelve**.

If it is cumbersome to begin a sentence with a written number, consider rewording the sentence so the number is not at the start.

> Example:

- **Rather than:** Three hundred and fifty people are expected.

- **Consider:** As many as 350 people are expected.

Mathematical content

Use numerals to express percentages and other statistical or technical information, measures and quantity of more than two elements, or numbers with decimal markers. Otherwise follow the rule of spelling numbers under 10.

- The item weighed **32kg,** which was an increase of **5** percent.

- She is six feet tall. Her sister is 5 feet 11 inches tall.

- It cost **$5.98/m^2**.

Multiple-digit numbers

Numbers with four digits or more require a comma every three digits. A combination of number and written text is used for millions or higher.

> **Example:** The city has 140,000 residents and 1.1 million visitors.

Sums of money

Only include a decimal with cent figures that are **not** zero.

> **Examples:** Use $100, $2 million or $49.95, but not $49.00.

Note: Refer to *Appendix A* for **French** content rules related to sums of money.

Symbols

In most cases, avoid symbols to abbreviate words.

- Use **"per cent"** rather than "percent" or "%." To avoid ambiguity, write: "increased to 15 per cent from 10," rather than "increased from 10 to 15 per cent".

- Use "and" rather than the ampersand (&) to abbreviate the word unless it is part of a recognized title, i.e. A&W.

Exception:

- **Degrees:** Use the degree symbol (°) to express temperature, rather than the word. (Alt+248). **Example:** The temperature must be above 10° for painting.

Use the **en-dash (–)** to denote a range rather than the hyphen (-). Note: Capitalize "grade" when followed by a number unless it is plural.

- Children in Grade 1, grades 7–9, and people aged 35–50 should have the vaccine.

5.6 Telephone numbers
Back to Top

Use the following standard format to display local, long-distance, and toll-free numbers in **English** content. Refer to *Appendix A* for **French** formatting rules.

- Always include the area code and use parentheses to separate it from the telephone number.
- Use a hyphen to separate the first three digits from the last four.
- Toll-free numbers should include the long-distance code "1."

Telephone: (902) 368-4000

Toll-free: 1-800-555-1212

- Display the full number 1-887-734-7529 if you use numbers with letters, e.g. 1-887- PEIPLAY; the word is not functional on a mobile device.

5.7 Spacing and punctuation
Back to Top

Only use a single space after a period or question mark.

Avoid exclamation points. Yes, they're fun! But they're not appropriate for a government website. Emoticons :(aren't either.

Place commas, periods, and questions marks inside the quotation marks.

Example: People live "in," not "on," Prince Edward Island, although we live on an island.

5.8   Pleasantries
Back to Top

Minimize the use of "please" and "sorry" in your content.

5.9   Time, dates and seasons
Back to Top

For time of day, use **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.** on the full hour but use **8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** if not on the full hour. (Refer to *Appendix A* for expressing and formatting **time of day** in *French*.)

Write month/year dates without a comma.

Example: January 2003.

Use an en-dash (–) between inclusive dates:

Example: 1998–99, 2002–2003

Use *Canadian Press* style for dates. When referring only to the month, spell it out.

Example: The committee will receive applications in December.

Write longer dates as month/day/year with commas before and after the year:

Example: Children born before January 1, 1987 are not eligible for this deduction.

Seasons are lower case (unless at the start of a sentence).

Example: The non-profit organization provided 330 grants in winter 2008.

5.10   Commonly confused or misspelled words
Back to Top

This is a list of unusual spellings and commonly misused words. You may want to build on this list based on terms commonly used or misused for your own work unit. When the option presents, always choose the Canadian spelling.

Correct word or term (A-Z)	Notes
Act, act	Use lower case when referring generally to a piece of legislation. When referring to the proper name, capitalize and italicize, e.g. Government passed amendments to the *School Act.* The act outlines the role of the school council.
a.m., p.m.	lower case with periods for time
affect (v.) / effect (n.)	The decision will **affect** youth and have an **effect** on families.
a lot	two words, not one
bylaw	Both bylaw and by-law are correct. For consistency, choose no hyphen.
counselor/counsellor/councilor	Counselor is the American spelling for one who gives advice. Counsellor is the non American spelling. Councilor is a member of a governing body.

Correct word or term (A-Z)	Notes
centre vs. center	Use "centre" for buildings and "center" to mean "middle"
child care (n.)	
coordinate	
defence	not defense (American spelling)
e.g., i.e.	Use e.g. as "for example"; i.e. means "that is" which offers further explanation or clarification. **Examples:** PEI produces many potato varieties, e.g. Russet Burbank, Netted Gems and Yukon Gold. Provincial government employees have switched to summer hours, i.e. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
email	not e-mail
emigrate, immigrate	*Emigrate* means leaving a country, whereas *immigrate* means to arrive and settle from another native country.
farther, further	*Farther* describes a measured distance; *further* is something additional (time, amounts, or abstract measurements). **Example**: Souris is **farther** from Charlottetown than Montague. This policy needs **further** discussion.
federal	lower case unless it is part of a proper name
government	lower case unless it is part of a proper name
health care (n.)/Health Card	You need a PEI Health Card in order for health care to be covered in PEI.
home page	
honour, honourable; not honor, honorable (American)	Honourable Jane Doe, Minister
inpatient/outpatient	One word, no dash.

Correct word or term (A-Z)	Notes
Internet	always capitalized
intranet	never capitalized
its , it's	**Its** -indicates possession –The dog chased **its** tail. **It's** – is a contraction of it is – **It's** cold outside.
kilometre	
landowner	not land owner
licence (n.) / license (v.) / licensed (adj.)	*Licence*—a permit that gives its holder permission to do something—is always spelled with two Cs. The act of giving a *licence* is spelled with an S (as is the adjective). *Content related to the *Highway Safety Act* will use "license" as it is used in the act. All other references to "license" on the site relate to the verb "to license" or the adjective "licensed driver"; "licence" is the noun.
Lieutenant Governor	This is the established spelling practice of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor of PEI.
log in (v.)/ login (n.)	Log in (v.) with your login (n.) information.
Maritimes and Atlantic	The Maritime and Atlantic provinces are geographical references.
ongoing (adj. and adv.)	
online	
PEI/ PO Box	not P.E.I. or P.O. Box
practice (n.), **practise** (v.)	She started her own law **practice** so she could **practise** law.
in vs. on Prince Edward Island	We live **in** Prince Edward Island; we live **on** an island.
Province of PEI/ Government of	

Correct word or term (A-Z)	Notes
PEI	
provincial government	
RCMP	versus R.C.M.P.
toward	not towards
website, the web, web page	
who's, whose	*Who's* - a contract of "who is"; *whose* - possessive for "who." **Who's** responsible for determining **whose** office gets painted first?

6 Search engine optimization (SEO)

6.1 About SEO
Back to Top

Search engine optimization refers to how likely your content will show up in a search—from Google, Bing, or DuckDuckGo, etc. Search engines constantly evolve and change the way they "read" the Internet, so SEO writing and site organizing is an ever-updating science.

Google's search engine looks for context to understand words. A Google search for "bank" could result in a financial institution, the edge of a river, the way a plane turns or an area in Palestine. Google uses other words on a page to determine relevancy, i.e. headings, title, site location and links. Keywords, page titles, taxonomy and content tags impact your content search ability.

6.2 Page titles for SEO
Back to Top

Web writers commonly use search algorithms to create page titles that are highly searchable. A government website is not competing with popular websites for viewer attention but will still benefit from best practice for search, i.e. writing web titles, using key words, or matching words with topics likely to be searched.

Strong	Weak
Current Road Conditions in PEI	Map report
Tenant and Landlord Agreements	Rental information
Child Care Subsidy	Assistance for child care
Land and Local Governance Updates	What's happening?
Filing and Paying your Taxes	Online bill payments
Find a Child Care Centre in PEI	Daycare

When someone Google searches "How do I pay my taxes in PEI?" the page called "Filing and Paying your Taxes| Prince Edward Island should rank high in the results.

The content management system will automatically attach "– website of the Government of Prince Edward Island", which will further improve search results.

6.3 Taxonomy and tags
Back to Top

For a detailed explanation and instructions for tagging content, refer to the current GPEI Tagging Strategy.

6.3.1 Overview
Back to Top

The Drupal content management system uses taxonomy to organize content. Taxonomy is the site's vocabulary or words used to categorize and sort content. This will shape your reader's experience and affect search results.

As a content creator, you must understand the site taxonomy in order to place your content on the site where readers will find it easily.

Think of content pages as buttons and the taxonomy as a series of buckets. The buttons have labels reading:

- Register your Child for School
- Plow Service for PEI Highways

- Find After-School Care
- School Calendar
- 511 Road Conditions
- Drivers Licence Fees
- Getting a Student Loan

The sample site has two buckets; one called **Education** and the other called **Roads and Transportation.** When a visitor looks into one of the two buckets (by clicking a landing page link) it will contain the right buttons from the pile:

Education	Roads and Transportation
Register your Child for School	Plow Service for PEI Highways
Find After-School Care	
School Calendar	511 Road Conditions
Getting a Student Loan	Drivers Licence Fees

The site, *princeedwardisland.ca*, is a giant pile of buttons that the content management system sorts into buckets and defines where content shows up on the site. Content for residents "sits" in the Residents bucket; content for seniors sits in the Seniors bucket, which itself sits within Residents. Content specifically related to the department, such as policies and reports, will sit in the "Government" bucket.

6.3.2 Content tagging
Back to Top

Your content tags will determine where content appears on *princeedwardisland.ca*. Effective tagging will simplify site navigation and improve results in both the site search and in Google.

First select your **department** tag. Follow the tag prompts in the department box to the section or agency responsible for this specific piece of content. Click the "Add" button to apply the tag. You must tag to **only one** department; then you may apply several topics tags.

Select the topic tags according to where you want your content to appear on the site. An information page about **paying property tax in PEI** could appear under

Residents/Home and Property as well as under *Government/ Tax Information.* Information related to **getting a fishing licence** could be tagged to appear under the related department in Government and under both *Permits and Licences* and *Recreation and Culture* in Residents.

6.3.3   Tagging a related resource

If you want an associated document (publication) to appear with your content, you must upload it to the site as a publication and then attach it as a resource. First search the document to make sure it exists in the site. If it doesn't, follow the instructions for a publication content type to upload it to the site.

When you upload a publication to the site you will be asked to add a few lines to describe the document. This document summary is important information to help the reader decide to open the document or not.

7   Media types

7.1   Naming conventions for files

All files published on the GPEI website need to be named intuitively and appropriately. For example, a PDF called "10294_en_v2.pdf" might follow an internal structure and logic that is understood within a department or agency, but it makes little sense to a visitor, a web content administrator, or a search engine. The same goes for images, videos, and audio files.

Name all files with an appropriate **title and its file type**.

> **Examples:**
>
> The **"Change of Corporate Name"** document for the Department of Justice and Public Safety:
>
> ChangeofCorporateName**.docx**
> ChangeofCorporateName**.pdf**
>
> For the **"Land of One's Own"** video from the Legislative Assembly:
>
> LandofOnesOwn**.docx**
> LandofOnesOwn**.mp4**

7.2 PDFs

Use a PDF as a last resort.

The old site, gov.pe.ca, was considered PDF-heavy. Although most computers and mobile devices are capable of reading a PDF document, visitors do not want to take the time to open them for information. Using too many PDFs will clutter the site and could frustrate or disorient readers.

Before generating a new PDF for *princeedwardisland.ca*, consider offering the content in a simpler format. Can you pull the basic information out of the document to create an information page? Perhaps it is more convenient for a client to submit a Drupal web form online than print, complete, and mail in a PDF.

As a basic guideline:

- Create an information page for important content.
- Publish a form that must be completed manually as a PDF.
- Add a report, research paper or third-party document as a PDF.

8 Content type templates

Typically, a visitor will come to *princeedwardisland.ca* for two purposes: to **get information** or to **do something.** There is a "content type" for each purpose; the information content type and the service content type.

Use an **information page** to provide the general information a visitor may need or want about the supports and services (programs) your department offers to the public, e.g. walk-in clinic locations, graduation requirements or funding programs.

If a resident or business must request something from government in order to perform a task, i.e. drive, get married, light a fire, build an extension, it is a service. If a government employee does something for a resident or business, e.g. test water samples, inspect a food premises, or license an insurance agent, it is also a service.

Any government service that invites the visitor to take action online should be posted as an **online service**, rather than an information page. The online service offers a convenient tool which enables someone to request something or complete a transaction online such as a birth certificate, marriage licence, vehicle registration, or a burn permit.

Providing program and service information in a consistent format across *princeedwardisland.ca* will make it easier for visitors to find what they need or do what they want as they navigate from one topic to another.

Templates and sample content for program information and online services are provided in the Appendices. Each template can be personalized with your writing, specific to your topic.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A: Formatting French Content

9.2 Appendix B: Program Information Template

9.3 Appendix C: Online Services Template

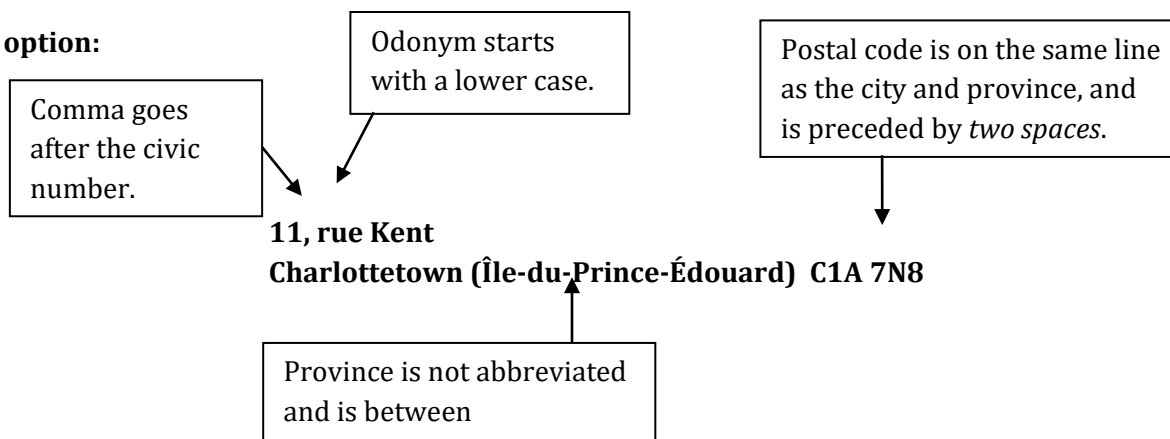9.4 Appendix D: "About Us" Template for Department ABCs

9.1 Appendix A : Formatting French Content

This appendix was created to help you ensure translated content is formatted correctly. The following are general guidelines and may not apply in all contexts. All French content must be provided through Translation Services.

1. **Address**

First option:

Odonym starts with a lower case.

Postal code is on the same line as the city and province, and is preceded by *two spaces*.

Comma goes after the civic number.

11, rue Kent
Charlottetown (Île-du-Prince-Édouard) C1A 7N8

Province is not abbreviated and is between

Alternate options (if there isn't enough space for the first option):

11, rue Kent
Charlottetown (Île-du-Prince-Édouard)
C1A 7N8

Province is abbreviated and between parentheses.

Postal code goes under the city and province.

11, rue Kent
Charlottetown (Î.-P.-É.)
C1A 7N8
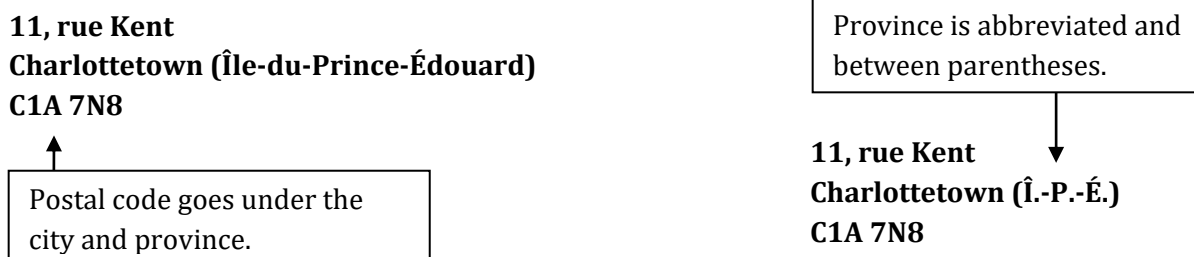
Additional Notes:

Mention of **country** goes below address in capital letters.	**11, rue Kent** **Charlottetown (Île-du-Prince-Édouard) C1A 7N8** **CANADA**
If you mention **PO Box** *and* civic number and odonym, the PO	**11, rue Kent** **C.P. 2000**

Box comes second.	**Charlottetown (Île-du-Prince-Édouard) C1A 7N8**

2. Contact information

If ample space is available

Marie Unetelle
Directrice
Tourisme Î.-P.-É.
C.P. 2000
Charlottetown (Île-du-Prince-Édouard) C1A 7N8

Téléphone : 902-555-5555
Cellulaire : 902-555-5555
Sans frais : 1-800-555-555
Télécopieur : 902-555-5555
Courriel : munetelle@gov.pe.ca

No parentheses around regional code.

Space before and after colon. See punctation table below.

If space is limited

Marie Unetelle
Directice
Tourisme Î.-P.-É.
C.P. 2000
Charlottetown (Î.-P.-É.)
C1A 7N8

Tél. : 902-555-5555
Cell. :902-555-5555
S. F. : 1-800-555-555
Téléc. : 902-555-5555
munetelle@gov.pe.ca

3. Date

Notes	Examples
No commas in dates.	Janvier 2014
(*Upper case for month or day only when date is NOT used in a sentence – upper case for first	20 janvier 2014

word only.)	Mercredi 20 janvier 2014
Use hyphen between years and never abbreviate.	CORRECT: 2015-2016 INCORRECT: 2015-16
Reporting period comes after document title.	Rapport annuel 2015-2016

4. **Time**

Notes	Examples
*Important: always use the 24-hour system.	
A space is needed before and after the "h".	13 h 50
Do not put a "0" before first number.	9 h 05
Put nothing after the "h" when there are no minutes.	22 h
Use "à" **OR** hyphen preceded and followed by a space between beginning time and ending time.	6 h à 13 h 40 **OR** 6 h - 13 h 40
Midnight	0 h
Noon	12 h

5. **Department Names**

Notes	Examples
Capitalize "ministère" and first word of each portfolio.	**M**inistère de l'**É**ducation, du **D**éveloppement préscolaire et de la **C**ulture
When using portfolio names only, **remove articles**.	Ministère **des** Transports, **de l'**Infrastructure et **de l'**Énergie *becomes* Transports, Infrastructure et Énergie
*This information applies only when department name is NOT being used in a sentence.	

6. Numbers

Notes	Examples	
	English	**French**
• Decimal marker is a comma. • No space before or after decimal comma. • Number higher than 9999 use spaces between thousands and hundreds; millions and thousands, etc.	18.9	18,9
	9.82	9,82
	9,283.4	9283,4
	1,248	1248
	23,459	23 459
	1,923,383	1 923 383
	5,456,555.77	5 456 555,77

7. Symbols

Notes	Examples	
Symbol comes after the number and is preceded by a space.	9500 $ 100 % 10 450 km	24, 5 °C 10, 75 g 23 345,43 L
Generally no decimals for round amounts.	CORRECT: 48 $ CORRECT: 48,50 $	INCORRECT: 48,00 $ INCORRECT: 48,5 $

8. Punctuation

Punctuation signs		Rule
Semi-colon	;	No space before, single space after.
Colon	:	Single space before, single space after.

Comma	**,**	No space before, single space after.
Period	**.**	No space before, single space after.
Parenthesis/bracket (opening)	**(** **[**	Single space before, no space after.
Parenthesis/bracket (closing)	**)** **]**	No space before, single space after (unless it is followed by a period).
Question mark	**?**	No space before, single space after.
Exclamation point	**!**	No space before, single space after.
Quotation mark (opening)*	**«**	Single space before, single space after.
Quotation mark (closing)*	**»**	Single space before, single space after (unless it is followed by a period).
*Note that French quotation marks are different from English quotation marks.		

9. **Other**

What	Notes	Examples
Italics	In general, acts, reports, book titles and other publication titles are italicized.	-La *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (loi sur l'accès à l'information et la protection de la vie privée) -*Royal Gazette*
Capitalization	In general, **only the first word** of a **title** or **heading** is capitalized.	*Web page titled* "Motor Vehicle Registration" CORRECT: Immatriculation de véhicule INCORRECT : Immatriculation De Véhicule _____ *Side bar section titled* "General Inquiries" CORRECT: Renseignements généraux

		INCORRECT: Renseignements Généraux
Articles	In general, articles are not part of the official name of an organization. When the name of an organization is used on its own (not in a sentence), don't put the article before the name.	CORRECT: Marie Unetelle Directrice **Commission scolaire de langue française** INCORRECT: Marie Unetelle Directrice **La Commission scolaire de langue française**
*Keep in mind that those are general rules and do not always apply.		

10. Feminine

Notes	Examples
Remember that **the French language uses the feminine**. This means that if your content mentions a position title, it may need to be changed if the person occupying the position changes. In a sentence, there may be additional changes needed. Please ask Translation Services to review your content if the gender of a person occupying a position	*Woman in the position :* Jane Smith **Directrice générale** Division des bibliothèques et des archives *Man in the position :* Mike Smith **Directeur général** Division des bibliothèques et des archives

mentioned in your content changes to ensure that it reflects that change correctly.	*Sentence – women in the position* : Anne Miller est deve<u>nu**e**</u> **la** ministre des Finances en 2015. *Sentence – man in the position* : John Miller est deve<u>nu</u> **le** ministre des Finances en 2015.

11. Links

Notes	Examples
If your content includes an **external link**, make sure to check if it's available in French; if so, **use the French link**.	
If your content includes an **internal link**, make sure **to replace it with the link for the French** side of the website– *even if the link's content is not yet available in French*.	
If a link is **only available in English**: - the note "**(lien en anglais)**" should be added after the link.	*In a text :* Vous pouvez obtenir de plus amples détails sur le site Web de l'<u>Association canadienne du diabète</u> (lien en anglais). *In a list :* - <u>Association canadienne du diabète</u> (lien en anglais) - <u>https://www.diabetes.ca/</u> (lien en anglais)

The French equivalent for "KB" is "Ko".	[PDF	777 KB] *becomes* [PDF	777 Ko]
The French equivalent for "MB" is "Mo""	[PDF	45.7 MB] *becomes* [PDF	45,7 Mo]

12. Other things to keep in mind

Here are a few things you should do before publishing French content.

- **Hyphens, accents, superscripts, apostrophes, and other similar things** tend to disappear when text is copy-pasted. So check your text once you pasted it to make sure they are still there. Give special attention to "Î.-P.-É." and "Île-du-Prince-Édouard".

- **Spaces** before or after punctuation signs and symbols also tend to disappear when text is copy-pasted. So check your text once you pasted it to make sure they are still there.

- If you are using MS Word when copy-pasting French content, **set the language in MS Word to *French (Canada)***; otherwise MS Word might autocorrect French words into English words (for example, MS Word could autocorrect "numéros" to "numerous") without you noticing.

9.2 Appendix B: Program Information Template

Follow this format using the information content type to provide the details your client would likely need or want to know about the supports and services your department offers such as infant immunization, grants for community projects or a directory of licensed child care centres. Depending on your topic, an application form may or may not be required. If the form is available online, use the online service template that follows. Otherwise, use the following program template.

Title and description

Using 1-3 brief sentences, explain the service or support and who will benefit from it. Address the reader as "you" throughout to create a client-centered approach.

Eligibility requirements

Write the header as a question in the first person, i.e. "Am I eligible for a PEI Health card?" Describe basic eligibility requirements or what a person will need in order to use this service. Not all content will have requirements. Use bold text for key information to facilitate scanning.

Application process and supporting documentation

Tell applicants what forms they need to apply and outline any supporting information they should include with their application. Link to the application form here, using descriptive text that matches the form. Do not use "click here".

Deadlines and fees (if applicable) – [Required]

State the program deadline clearly and simply. If there are multiple deadlines, highlight only the first deadline in bold.

If a fee is associated, add a heading such as: **Is there a fee for this program?** If the service is free, it is not necessary to include this section.

Highlight the fee in bold to facilitate scanning. State all fees the user will have to pay and include specifics such as:

- HST included (For user convenience, calculate the amount with the HST.)
- If fees are based on calculations, show how the client can calculate the fee?
- If the fee schedule is complex, possibly link to additional information (you may have to build a page explaining the fee schedule).

- What are acceptable forms of payment? If cheques are accepted, include the statement "Make cheques payable to …"
- Will the service require renewal?

Considerations

Address all the questions your client might have about the application process including what will happen after they apply, pay, etc. The information in this section may come from common questions requested on the phone or in person. Use headings in question form to describe the additional information.

Resources

Add links to related acts, regulations, or external sites that provide **useful** information to the client.

Contact information

Generic contact information will automatically appear in a Drupal block on the right-hand side of the published page. If necessary, add specific contact information at the end of the content using the following standard convention for contact information.

- Name the service provider: department/agency/section (provide staff name *only* if necessary)
- Mailing address
- Telephone and/or fax (general contact number unless specific number is necessary). See section 5.6
- Email address
- Service location (List only the buildings where service is offered.)

9.2.1   Program information template – sample content
Back to Top

Tourism PEI Festivals and Events Funding Program

Provincial funding is available for well-organized, widely marketed festivals or events that specifically target **off-Island** participants. You may be eligible for financial assistance to offset your costs of product development or off-Island advertising and promotion.

Is my festival/event eligible for funding?

Your event must appeal to tourists and be operated by a non-profit community group or association that is supported by an identified executive committee. You are required to:

- have a plan for promotion and advertising (on-Island and off-Island)
- have secured corporate sponsorship or community financial support
- have support from the tourism industry (i.e. regional tourism association)

Depending on the size of your festival or event, you may be eligible for funding up to:

- $2,500 for over 3,000 visitors
- $2,000 for over 2,000 visitors
- $1,500 for over 1,500 visitors
- $1,000 for up to 1,000 visitors

What do I need to apply for the Festival and Events Funding Program?

Print and complete the application for [Festivals and Events Funding Program Application Form](#) and submit it to the address below, along with the following supporting documents:

- statement of revenue
- expenditures accompanied by receipts
- a public relations package (i.e. press releases, copy of posters, flyers, etc), if requested

When is my application due?

You must submit your application before **March 1,** each year. Supporting materials, if requested, are due no later than March 31, the year following the festival.

What criteria are used to assess applications?

Funding assistance is intended for those events that exhibit the greatest tourism potential.

Tourism PEI will assess applications with the following considerations:

- time of year the event is held
- unique theme
- new development ideas
- duration of the event support
- attendance from off-Island

- financial need
- level of private sector support
- location of event
- level of past governmental

- marketing plan

Am I required to use the Tourism PEI logo?

If your organization receives funding, you must include the Tourism PEI logo on all festival/event promotional materials.

Please forward applications directly to:

Tourism PEI
PO Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 7N8

Telephone: (902) 368-6339
Fax: (902) 368-4438
Email: tourismapplications@gov.pe.ca

9.3 Appendix C: Online Services Template

Since the launch of princeedwardisland.ca, more and more services are offered online. Eventually online government services will be standard practice. The service content type is specifically for online services. For services not yet available online, you could adapt the following template using the information content type.

Online services include application or registration forms that can be completed and submitted online, online requests for information or appointments, public engagement surveys and online search or report tools such as "ER Wait times", "View 511 Road Conditions" or "Report a Transportation Problem".

The Services content type has more functionality than an information page.

- It offers a blue button at the bottom of the published page for the user to click to the online service.
- It places the service into the online services section: *princeedwardisland.ca/en/services.*

To help ensure each site visitor has a similar experience accessing a government service online, use the following template for online services.

Title: The title of the service page should be active, **if possible**. - Apply for a Birth Certificate rather than Application for a Birth Certificate. Renew a Motor Vehicle Registration, not Motor Vehicle Registration Renewal.

*Try **not** to begin every title with "Apply" which will lump all the titles together alphabetically. Use other verbs such as buy, find, pay, purchase, register, review, or search.

Brief summary: Just below the title, identify the online service available and briefly describe eligibility requirements, specifically any possible reason(s) why the process **cannot** be carried out online. If there is an information page associated with this service, link to the page for more information.

> *If a basic information page already exists for the service page you are creating, consider using its key content in your service page and then deleting the information page. This will not impact the user and will reduce page duplication. If too much content is required to accomplish this, provide both an information page and a service page. The intent of the online service is user convenience; too much content may reduce the convenience.*

What do I need to apply for this service online?

List all the information and documents the applicant will need to gather before beginning the online application process. Some examples may include:

- Full names (first, middle and given) and birth dates for each person named on the certificate;
- Social Insurance Number
- Account password and other log-in information
- Registration numbers for your company or for a previous permit or vehicle registration
- Complete credit card information, full name, number, exp date, etc.
- Type of delivery request (mail, pick up)

Tell the reader if the form must be completed within a period of time or in one sitting or any other details to help make the process successful.

Examples:

- You must complete each field before moving to the next.
- You must complete this form in one sitting; your information cannot be saved.
- The information you provide must **match exactly** the information in our files.

What is the fee for this service? Or Is there a fee for (indentify service)?

If fees are required, state the rate(s) clearly and describe the payment options – cash, cheque, credit card and debit (if you have not mentioned it in the previous category). Present the fee in **bold font** with all required descriptors.
Note: If HST is added to the fee, provide the calculated amount or both.

If the online service would not typically have a fee attached to it, e.g. an application for funding or information about ER wait times or the fire index, this question could be eliminated.

Examples:

- *The fee for a standard birth certificate is **$25**. A detailed birth certificate is **$35**.*
- *It costs **$500** for a Marriage Commissioner Licence and **$200** to renew your licence every three years.*

- *The fee is **$100** to renew a private passenger vehicle, taxi cab or truck less than 4100 kg.*
- *The fee is $100 + HST **($115)**. The fee is **$115** ($100 + HST).*
- *The fee is **$50** (tax included).*

How long will it take to complete this online form?

Offer an estimate to ensure the user sets aside enough time to complete the form, especially if the form cannot be saved and must be completed in one sitting. A simple form may require less than 20 minutes, a complicated form may require 45 minutes. There is a 30 minute timeout on forms which means the applicant who takes a pause before completing the form may have to restart the entire process. If your form is complicated, you might want to mention this to the applicant.

What other information do I need to know before I fill in the application?

If there are details specific to this service, list them here.

Examples:

- *The application will be processed first come, first served.*
- *The program is subject to budget approval.*
- *Application deadline is **March 10, 2017**.*
- *The successful applicant will require a criminal record check.*
- *You must apply to Engage PEI at least two months before a vacancy is available.*

Also mention if the user has the option to print and complete the form and either mail or take to a specific Access PEI site.

How long will it take to process this online service?

Provide a realistic but reassuring answer based on your internal process for this service. An application for funding may not be reviewed until two weeks following the application deadline. While an online motor vehicle registration is effective immediately, the paper work may require several days to reach the client by mail. Provide clear instructions for the interim if necessary.

Examples:

- ***Motor Vehicle Registration***: *Once your online payment is complete, your motor vehicle registration will be updated in real time and immediately available to police authorities. Print and store this receipt in your vehicle until you receive your official registration and sticker (and new licence plate, if*

required). Allow at least 15 business days for your registration to reach you by mail. If you it doesn't arrive within that time, contact Access PEI.

- ***Apply for Birth Certificate:*** *Regular service - expect about five business days to process your request. Expedited service (available for certificates only) - allow two business days for processing*
- ***Engage PEI:*** *You will receive confirmation that your application is received. Following this confirmation, only persons recommended for appointment will be contacted.*

Additional Information that may be required

If there is important information related to this service that didn't fit into the general categories above, add them here with an appropriate heading in the form of a question if possible.

"Is there anything else I need to know?" "What is the deadline to apply?"

*Really critical information can be inserted into a blue alert box if that is the direction your department officials prefer, e.g. FOIPP privacy notice, specific dates the service is available.

Service link text

The text that appears to the public on the blue button should clearly describe the user's action. Try to be brief but clear (intuitive). The more text used, the longer the button.

Examples: Renew MVR here, Buy licence, Apply for Family Housing.

Insert the link to the service or provide the ID for the online web form.

If there is a more than one service offered with this content, e.g., creating an account and logging in to the account, complete the text and link for the first service and click "Add another item to insert" for the text and link for the second. Two blue buttons will appear at the bottom of the published page.

Examples: Create your e-services profile. Access your account.

The following examples use the online services template.

9.3.1   Online services template - sample content #1
Back to Top

Title: Apply for a Birth Certificate

(https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/service/apply-birth-certificate)

You can apply for your own or your child's birth certificate as long as it was a PEI birth and you provide the information exactly as it is recorded on the birth registration filed at PEI Vital Statistics.

You can use this service to apply online or you can download the pdf application and submit it to Vital Statistics. *Please note: Applications submitted through e-mail will not be accepted.*

What do I need to apply for this service online?

The information you provide must be exactly as recorded on the birth registration filed at Vital Statistics. Otherwise the certificate cannot be issued.

If you are completing the online request for a birth certificate, you must complete all required fields. When you select "I'm not a robot" and "Save," you will be asked for what type of document you wish to apply. Choose "Apply for a Birth Certificate."

To apply online, you must provide a valid credit card number and expiry date. If you are downloading and submitting the form to Vital Statistics, you may pay with:

- Valid credit card
- Money order or cheque payable to Minister of Finance, or
- Cash or debit payments (in person only)

What is the fee to get my birth certificate?

For current fees and expenses please refer to Vital Statistics Service Fees.

How long will it take to complete this online form?

It will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete both the identification portion and the application for service.

How long will it take to process my request?

Standard service is 10-12 business days. Rush service is processed in two business days at an additional cost.

Can someone other than me request my birth certificate?

Your birth certificate may be issued for authorized individuals or circumstances as follows:

- your parent as long as his or her name appears on your official birth registration;
- an individual authorized in writing by you or the parents named on your birth certificate;
- a lawyer acting for you or for the parents named on your birth registration providing written authorization; or
- a response to a court order.

Privacy Notice: Personal information on this site is collected under the authority of the Vital Statistics Act. By clicking "Apply online for Certificates," you give consent to Vital Statistics to use your submitted information for purposes of responding to your request.

Service link text: Apply Online for a Birth Certificate

Service Category: Family and Community

9.3.2   Online services template - sample content #2
Back to Top

Title: Apply for a Family Housing Online

> (*https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/service/apply-family-housing-online*)

This is an online request for a family housing unit in Alberton, Charlottetown, Georgetown, Montague, Mount Stewart, O'Leary, Souris, Summerside or Tignish. If available, housing units are offered to families with low income, poor housing conditions or other special circumstances.

What do I need to apply for this application online?

You will need to provide your current contact information and your PEI Health Card number on this application.

How long will it take to complete this online application?

You should be able to complete this application in about 15 minutes.

What will happen after I apply?

Once your application is received, someone will contact you to schedule an appointment with you.

Is there anything else I should know before I apply for housing?

If a unit is available for your family, you will be responsible for paying for heat and utilities. In some cases, monthly rent may be reduced to assist with heating costs.

You are expected to use your own furniture and have tenant's insurance coverage.

Housing Services staff reviews all applications and considers the present housing conditions, income, housing expenditures, family size, health, and any special circumstances for each applicant.

Service link text: Apply for Family Housing

Service Category: Family and Community   Home and Property

9.4 Appendix D: "About Us" Template for Department ABCs

You are not required to post descriptions of department agencies, boards, commissions or secretariats (ABCS) to princeedwardisland.ca. Engage PEI is responsible for creating and managing the information page for any ABCS which recruits members from the public. The Engage PEI page is written specifically for potential applicants and includes a descriptive profile, a list of members and related application details.

For the ABCS listed on your department 'About Us' page, you can either link directly to the existing Engage PEI page or use the following template to create your own information page to describe, in general, the work of your ABCS.

Title: About (ABC name)

Provide a brief two- or three-line summary outlining the role of the committee, e.g. what it does, why it exists and who benefits from its work.

What is the current project or focus of (ABC name)?

If the ABCD is working on or has completed a project or phase or work that may be of public interest, briefly describe it, explain the next step here and provide a link to project report or offer it as a resource.

How can I serve on (ABC name)??

For information on joining ABCS, visit Engage PEI. (Link to the information page created for this ABCS.)

Additional information related to the (ABC name), if applicable:

- Legislation and regulations
- Identify the minister responsible
- Include current reports or submissions (link or resources)

9.4.1 'About Us" template for department ABCs – sample content

Building Standards Council

The Building Standards Council reviews standards of quality and safety for building construction in PEI, advises the minister on matters concerning the *Provincial*

Building Code Act and regulations and liaises between the Minister and other bodies interested in construction standards.

What is the current project or focus of the Buildings Standards Council?

The committee has contributed to the revision of the *Provincial Build Code Act*, currently in draft, which will be introduced to the legislature in 2017.

How can I serve on this council?

For information on joining the Buildings Standards Council, visit Engage PEI (link to https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/executive-council-office/building-standards-council)

Resources: *Provincial Building Code Act* (https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/p-24.pdf)