



Wisconsin Agency Content Management System

Redirects Policy

Version 2.0

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What is redirection?

Redirection is a method of sending website visitors to a different web page than the one they request via a URL. In the case of the Agency sites, redirects are generally a way to prevent a user trying to access an obsolete URL from getting a 404 Page Not Found error.

Why redirects matter

When you move your agency site into the Wisconsin Content Management System, every address on your existing web site will become obsolete, to be replaced by the addresses in the CMS. While your agency domain may stay the same (e.g. <http://www.WisconsinAgency.gov>), the addresses of all pages will be different, firstly due to the location of site pages in the Pages library, secondly due to the folder (if any) the page is located in, and thirdly because the name of the page file itself may change.

In some cases, you may elect to request redirects for some pages, which will automatically re-route users from an old URLs to the related content at the new addresses. It is not generally possible (nor desirable) to create a redirect from each individual page on the old site to a specific page on the new site; you'll want to identify the most important content on the old site and focus on identifying the location of corresponding content on the new site. To assist with this process, NIC Wisconsin provides the Redirects Tool (Appendix A) which will be used to identify and track redirects, and which NIC Wisconsin requires to configure redirects.

NIC Wisconsin needs the completed Redirects Tool as soon as possible prior to go live, and must have the final redirects list at least two months prior to go-live. Minor changes to the Redirects Tool may be acceptable after this point; check with your NIC Wisconsin Project Manager.

Identifying redirects candidates

Appropriate redirect candidates include:

- Most-popular pages on your existing site
- Most-important pages on your existing site
- Most-bookmarked pages on your existing site (pages users are likely to return to on a regular basis (monthly or more frequently))
- Most-linked pages on your existing site
- Pages whose URLs appear on printed materials (e.g. forms) distributed by your agency and which cannot be updated with the new URL prior to go live

Other strategies

If your agency has applications or other websites, you should coordinate with the administrators of those properties to replace links to pages on your site. Likewise, you may consider printed stickers with the new URL, to be placed over printed URLs on brochures, etc.

A word about the 404 page

When a user tries to access a page on a site which does not exist, the user will receive a "404 page". The 404 page displays a message that the URL cannot be found. The 404 page on your Agency site can be configured to offer additional information to a user who lands on it. Consider expanding the content of your 404 page to include links to information your users are most likely to be seeking, as well as a

sentence encouraging the user to use the site search to locate their information. An example 404 page is provided.

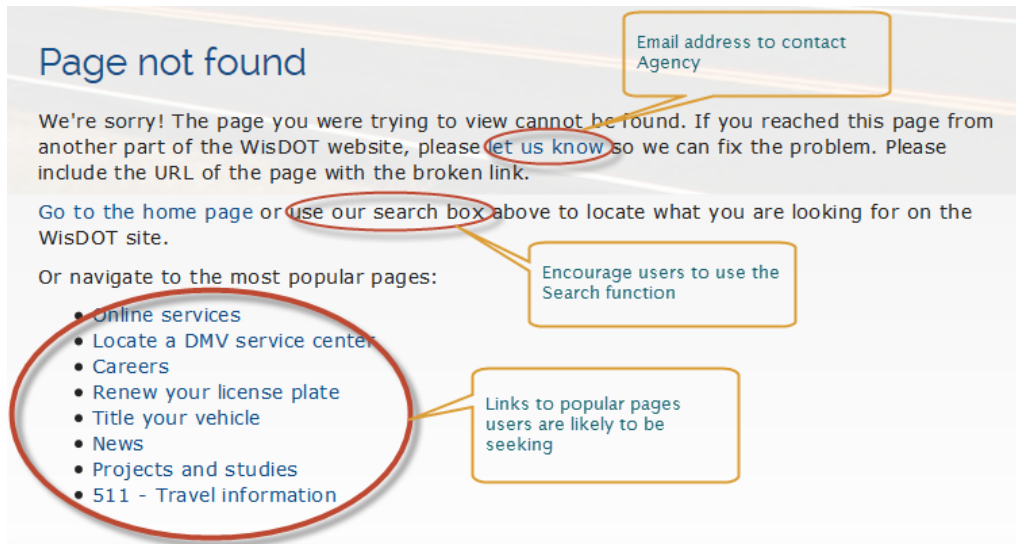


Figure 1 Example 404 Page

Completing the Redirects Tool

Column	Description	Notes
Unique ID	A unique number used to reference the row	Does not represent priority of the redirect in relation to others; this column is used for reference purposes
Prefix	Enter http or https	
"FROM" Current URL (On current production site or printed material)	Enter the URL of the existing item	This is the "old" URL
"TO" New SharePoint URL (where should the old URL redirect to?)	Enter the address of the item in SharePoint	This is the "new" URL to which the user will be automatically redirected
Agency Owner	Enter the name of the person who owns the page or is responsible for the content	This is primarily for Agency reference
Optional: Pageviews	Enter the number of pageviews of the item during the previous year	Can be used to help prioritize redirects
Optional: Unique Pageviews	Enter the number of unique visits to the page during the previous year	Can be used to help prioritize redirects
Notes	Anything else	Used for any comments, notes to NIC Wisconsin, etc.

Next Steps

NIC Wisconsin will review completed Redirects Tools on a per-agency basis to determine the best strategy to implement the requested redirects, using a combination of IIS and F5 rules as well as potentially other techniques. To accommodate this planning and ensure continuity of service to your users, please submit the Redirects Tool to NIC Wisconsin as early in the project as possible, and at least one month prior to go live.

Post Go Live Redirect Requests

You may wish to request additional redirects after your agency site is live; for example, you may have a marketing initiative which requires specific memorable or “friendly” URLs to add to printed materials or billboards. Redirects may be requested via the Redirects Tool using the following process.

NOTE: redirects will be implemented as soon as possible, but **may require up to 5 business days to complete.**

1. Submit requests,
 - a. ensure new requests don't conflict with each other or with existing redirects
 - b. the filename should indicate the request date and agency. For example, a July 7, 2015 Department of Transportation request filename would be 2015-07-07-DOT
 - c. send the completed Redirects Tool to NIC Wisconsin Help Desk (WI_Helpdesk@egov.com) with the Subject Line: “<Agency Abbreviation> Redirects Request” and cc your agency's NIC Wisconsin project manager.
 - d. If there is a specific date on which you would like the redirect to become effective, please indicate that date with your request; this date should be no sooner than 5 business days after the date the request is submitted.
2. NIC Wisconsin will confirm receipt of the request.
3. NIC Wisconsin will implement each request, and will notify you when the redirects have been configured.
4. Your agency should verify each “batch” as soon as possible, and report findings to your agency's NIC Wisconsin project manager as soon as possible.
 - a. Since new requests may “break” existing ones, you may want to test all existing as well as new redirects after each batch is implemented.

Appendix A: Redirects Tool

NOTE: You may add columns to the redirects tool to facilitate agency-specific processes; please do not remove or hide any columns. Because this tool is subject to occasional change, please check with your NIC Wisconsin Project Manager for the most recent copy of the tool, or if you have questions.



redirectsTool.xlsx