

BENEFITS.GOV AFFILIATE POLICY



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Benefits.gov Overview

Benefits.gov and/or one of its related sites (e.g., GovLoans.gov or Benefits.gov/es) may find it necessary and/or desirable to enter into an affiliation agreement for the purposes of advancing the Benefits.gov mission.

1) Purpose

The purpose of the Affiliate Policy is:

- To enable the establishment of relationships that will increase awareness of and traffic to Benefits.gov.
- Facilitate the orderly addition of Nongovernment Organization (NGO) benefit and assistance information to the Benefits.gov database. This may include information from private for-profit entities as well as nonprofit organizations.
- Define the criteria through which Benefits.gov may enter into mutually beneficial agreements to exchange data, links, benefit information or other data with NGOs.

2) Criteria for Affiliation

To be considered for official affiliation with Benefits.gov, organizations first must have a logical relationship to Benefits.gov (i.e., the provision of benefits or assistance to individuals) and:

- Provide services or information that complement or enhance Benefits.gov.
- Support the mission, programs, and policies of Benefits.gov.
- Not promote or appear to promote discrimination based on race, gender, religion, nationality, disability, or age, either in hiring or provision of services.
- Not promote or appear to promote violent, unethical, immoral, or illegal activities; not promote or appear to promote firearms and/or ammunition.
- Not advertise on sites that promote or appear to promote violent, unethical, immoral, or illegal activities.
- Not promote or appear to promote pornography or sexually explicit materials; be non-partisan.
- Not be listed on any Federal or State registers or watch lists for terrorism or financial non-responsibility, and not be suspended or debarred from doing business with the U.S. Government or the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

It is important to note that the affiliation criteria described above are not the only criteria by which an organization may be judged as to their appropriateness for becoming a Benefits.gov affiliate. Benefits.gov retains the final right to determine which organizations will become affiliates.

3) Best Business Practices

The organization must publish and adhere to Internet best business practices for privacy and business policies and follow due care security standards on its websites. These requirements are considered met by subscribing to and being in good standing with an independent, third-party program such as one of the following (or an equivalent policy or practice approved by DOL):

- Better Business Bureau <https://www.bbb.org/>
- TrustArc <https://trustarc.com/>

Government agencies and nonprofit organizations that do not subscribe to such a third-party program must have security, privacy, and terms of use policies equivalent or more stringent than those of Benefits.gov.

4) Statement of Affiliation

Once approved (based on the sole discretion of Benefits.gov), representatives from Benefits.gov and the program or organization will sign a "Statement of Affiliation" or other appropriate agreement that will include an agreement to:

- Recognize the common purpose and mission between Benefits.gov and the approved organization.
- Publicly acknowledge the affiliation, which may include website content and/or links, co-logos on publications, and references in printed materials.
- Coordinate activities to ensure efficient use of the organization's resources for Benefits.gov.
- Keep Benefits.gov informed of activities conducted in support of Benefits.gov and provide an annual report summarizing those activities.

5) No Endorsement

Affiliation with Benefits.gov does not constitute endorsement of any specific organization, program, product, or service by DOL or the Federal government, nor will an affiliate's membership or employees be deemed agents of DOL or the Federal government. In addition, affiliate status does not confer or encompass financial support for obligations from DOL or the Federal government.

6) Linking

Benefits.gov does not engage in reciprocal linking. We invite any website to link to Benefits.gov. Benefits.gov is an official U.S. Government website, which means you may link to us at no cost and without special permission.

7) Subject to Modification

Benefits.gov may modify this policy at its sole discretion to meet the evolving needs of the Program and ensure consistency and compliance with DOL policies and practices. In the event Benefits.gov modifies this policy, Benefits.gov will notify existing affiliates of such changes within 30 calendar days of the change.