



How documents work in the Mass.gov CMS

Content Lab, 24 July 2025

What is Content Lab?

- Focuses on **Content Strategy**: Managing your content to reach target audiences and using data and feedback to improve content and user experience
- Community of practice
 - Values ongoing learning and continuous improvement
 - Flexible format
 - Thrives on active participation

Content Lab is aligned to the Digital Roadmap, supporting the goal of high-quality, accessible, user-centric content on state websites

Our purpose: Learning + better content

Community of practice

- We want to continually grow and improve
- We use real content examples – yours and ours
- The **methods** and practices are the point

Mass.gov content

- Clear before clever
- Current
- Constituent-friendly



"Deep dive into documents" series

- Today: How documents work in the Mass.gov CMS
- July 31: Interactive workshop
- August 14: Converting documents to HTML and options for long, complex documents
- Check ACCESS page for upcoming trainings on making documents accessible!



Contents

- Basics of documents in Drupal
- Document URLs and linking to documents
- Reports in (and out of) the CMS

Basics: Documents in Drupal

A document in Drupal is a "file" and a "media entity"

File (or "binary")

- Files are what you think they are: The .pdf, .xlsx, .docx you want people to

Title *
Enter the title text for your file as you'd like it to appear on the web-page. Titles should help users understand what the file is about and typically are taken from the main heading on the first page of your file. It is best to avoid acronyms and only capitalize the first word in your title.

Short description
A 1-2 sentence, high-level description of what the viewer will find in this file.

Listing description
Enter a short description <320 characters that may be used in curated lists.

Select the file *
ACCESSIBILITY: All documents **must** be accessible so that visitors who need assistive technology can use them. Test your documents prior to uploading [using the guidance found in our Knowledge Base](#).
PUBLIC LINK: The public site should always link to the latest published version of the document which you can access on the "View" tab after you save and publish.
WARNING: Never use the link below on the public site. This is for preview only.
ARCHIVING: Please [submit a copy of PDF, Word, or Excel documents to the State Library](#) for archiving. (opens in new tab)
UPDATING: If you update this document, please remember to also update each translated version of it as well, following your Organization's usual process for document translation.
[Work_Search_Log_weeks-fs.pdf](#) [Remove](#)

Media entity

- The metadata associated with your file. When you select "Add document," you are creating a media entity and associating it with a file.

Title *
Enter the title text for your file as you'd like it to appear on the web-page. Titles should help users understand what the file is about and typically are taken from the main heading on the first page of your file. It is best to avoid acronyms and only capitalize the first word in your title.

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PUBLIC LINK: The public site should always link to the latest published version of the document which you can access on the "View" tab after you save and publish.
WARNING: Never use the link below on the public site. This is for preview only.
ARCHIVING: Please [submit a copy of PDF, Word, or Excel documents to the State Library](#) for archiving. (opens in new tab)



Live demo: Documents in our CMS

To review:

- "All documents" view
- Editing documents: Revisions, pages linking here
- When you add a document, you are adding a media entity AND a file
- When you update a document, you can just replace the file in the media entity
- Metadata you can use for content management (listing description, collections, labels)
- "Language" (or creating language bars)

Documents in multiple languages

- Use the "language" field to connect documents in multiple languages
- The CMS will generate a "language bar"
- Language bar
examples: [Service](#) | [Org](#) | [List](#) | [Info details](#)
- **Live demo: How to connect documents**
 1. Look up the title of English version of the doc
 2. Start typing that in the "English version" field

COVID-19 information in Spanish / Información sobre el coronavirus (COVID-19) en español

A collection of information on the court system response to COVID-19 available in Spanish



[Orden en Efecto Permanente 4-20 / Standing Order 4-20](#)

(Spanish, PDF 116.24 KB)

[English](#) | [العربية](#) | [Kriolu di Cabo Verde](#) | [简体中文](#) | [ភាសាខ្មែរ](#) | [Português, Portugal](#) |

[Русский](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [Translate labels](#)



[Open letter regarding co-parenting during COVID-19 from Chief Justice John D. Casey in Spanish](#) (Spanish, PDF 108.86 KB)

[English](#) | [العربية](#) | [Kriolu di Cabo Verde](#) | [简体中文](#) | [Kreyòl ayisyen](#) | [ភាសាខ្មែរ](#) |

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CONTACT

Trial Court Web Support

Online

webrequests@jud.state.ma.us

Address

John Adams Courthouse
One Pemberton Square - 1M
Boston, MA 02108

[Directions →](#)

Document URLs (and why they matter for you)

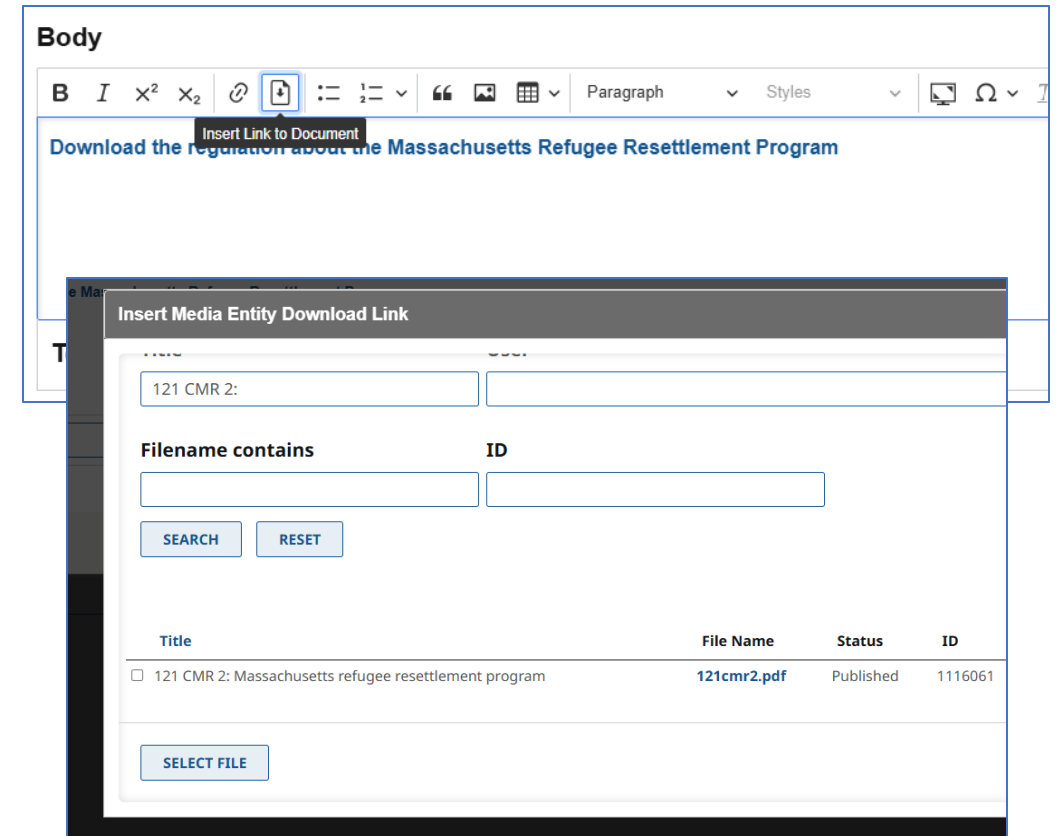
3 document URL patterns to know across Mass.gov

- www.mass.gov/doc/... is a link to a **media entity**.
- www.mass.gov/files/... is a link to a **specific file**.
- www.mass.gov/media/... is an out-of-date link to a **media entity**.

We only ever want to link to media entities.

We only want to link to media entities

- When you update a media entity with a new file, **all your links update automatically.**
- **If you link a file's URL, Google might index the file URL.** Then, people could stumble on it even if you unpublish/update the media entity. (They would have the "direct" file URL.)
- If you never link directly to a file URL, it won't appear in search engines. Only the media entity URL will.



The screenshot shows a document editor interface. At the top, a text box contains the sentence "Download the regulation about the Massachusetts Refugee Resettlement Program". A tooltip "Insert Link to Document" is visible over a link icon in the toolbar. Below this, a modal window titled "Insert Media Entity Download Link" is open. It features a search bar with the text "121 CMR 2:" and a table of media entities. The table has columns for Title, File Name, Status, and ID. One entry is visible: "121 CMR 2: Massachusetts refugee resettlement program" with File Name "121cmr2.pdf", Status "Published", and ID "1116061". A "SELECT FILE" button is at the bottom of the modal.

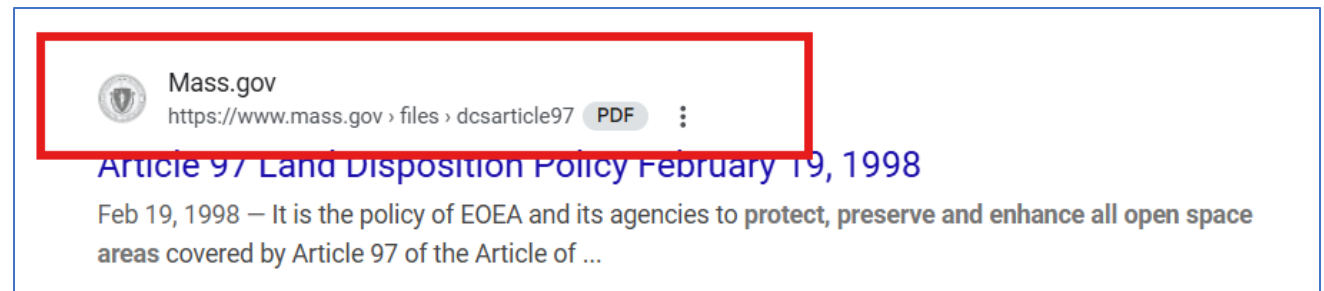
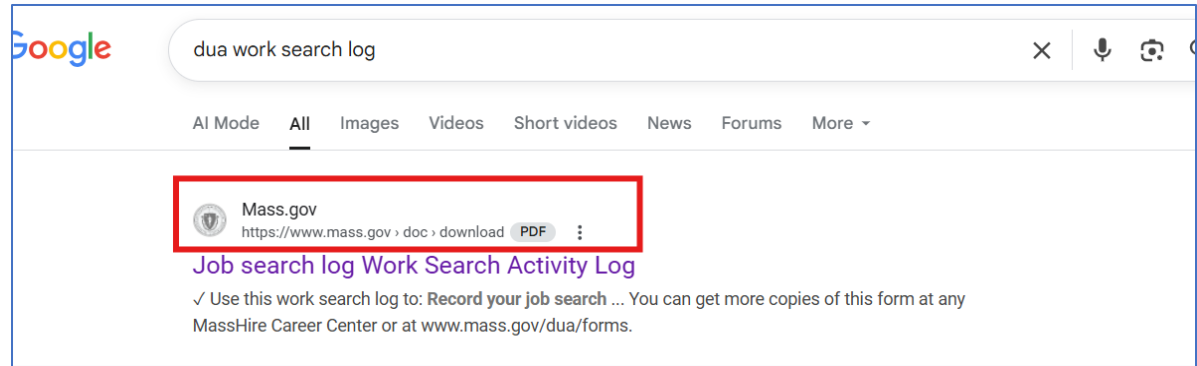
Title	File Name	Status	ID
<input type="checkbox"/> 121 CMR 2: Massachusetts refugee resettlement program	121cmr2.pdf	Published	1116061

Only link to media entities (continued)

If you remove a document, you are removing a media entity.

Removed media entity URLs will be broken links. (Google will remove them quickly.) However...

...file URLs still lead to the file. Removing a media entity does not remove a file.



How to link documents



Live demo: Linking documents

To cover:

Rich text links

- "Insert" document tool
- Modifying the link text


Document-specific fields

- Links and Downloads

Callout buttons

[Demo page for documents](#)

Reports for managing documents



Live demo: Orphaned documents, docs with no binary, downloads by document

To cover:

- How to find them (For CMS reports: Content menu, "reports" menu)
- How to use them



Use Siteimprove policies to find documents you're unpublishing

You can use Siteimprove to search for documents if...

- you think you didn't link a document correctly
- you want to check for file links

Live demo:

- Pages linking here for documents
- Siteimprove policies



Live demo: The document export CSV

To cover:

- Reminder: How to get one
- What columns you get and what they mean