

- The state Web Portal contract is managed by the Division of Technology Operations (DTO), which is a division of the Department of Administration.
- The current contract was awarded to South Carolina Interactive (SCI) in July of 2014, following an open and publicly advertised Request for Proposals process that was administered through the state procurement office.
- The web portal contract is not a mandatory contract that state agencies are required to use for website services. This contract is **available for use** by any state agencies that decide they want to use it, but agencies are **not required** to use SCI for website services. If an agency does not want to use the state web portal contract or believes it can find a better value elsewhere, then the agency is free to conduct their own procurement process to procure web services from another vendor.
- The web portal contract is somewhat unique in that it is based on a self-funded model. Applications and services are designed, built, and implemented by SCI at no cost to the State agencies and local governments that choose to use the portal for their websites. Under the self-funded model, revenue to SCI comes from transaction fees for some of the online services that are created, hosted and maintained on the portal. Some revenue from these transaction fees is used by SCI to fund the development of additional online e-government services for state agencies. Additionally, most of the services provided by SCI through the web portal do not involve transaction fees and are offered at no cost to agencies and the public.
- When an agency chooses to utilize the web portal for acceptance of credit card (or debit card or electronic check) payment transactions, there is an associated fee that SCI collects for each card transaction. The transaction fee that SCI collects generally consists of two parts – (i) a card processing fee of 1.7% of the transaction's value, and (ii) a \$1 Portal Fee. Under the terms of the contract, each state agency that uses the portal for card payment transactions has the option to either pay the transaction fee itself or pass the fee along to its customers. When an agency has chosen to pass the card transaction fee to its customers, the customers can of course avoid the transaction fee altogether by using a check or cash.
- The credit card processing fee of 1.7%
 - A provision in the web portal contract requires that SCI utilize the statewide term contract for Merchant Bank Card Services that was established by the State Treasurer's Office.
 - Credit card processing fees with various merchant banks are set by the Treasurer's Office's statewide term contract for Merchant Bank Card Services. The State Treasurer's Office negotiates the credit card processing fees with the merchant banks under that contract. The negotiated credit card processing fees vary by bank. The Treasurer's Merchant Bank Card Services contract is a statewide term contract, which means that its use by state agencies is mandatory.
 - The 1.7% credit card processing fee assessed on transactions under the Web Portal Contract reflects a weighted average of merchant banks' credit card processing fees that SCI pays pursuant to the statewide term contract for Merchant Bank Card Services. In other words, the average credit card processing fee on all transactions that SCI handles is 1.7%.
 - The 1.7% credit card processing fee was approved by the e-Government Oversight Committee. The eGovernment Oversight Committee (EGOC) is responsible for reviewing, approving, and overseeing the financial terms of the transactions that SCI performs for agencies (Contract Section III.3.2.15). The EGOC consists of 11 members,

- including a representative of Department of Administration Division of Technology Operations and 10 other members appointed by the Governor from various state, county, local, and private industry bodies.
- SCI provides “payment gateway” services to state agencies. SCI is not a “payment processor”. The credit card processing fee is paid by SCI to the credit card companies and the other entities involved in processing credit card transactions.
- The \$1 Portal Fee
 - This fee was proposed by SCI and approved by the eGovernment Oversight Committee.
 - SCI utilizes revenue generated from this fee to provide many other services required under the Web Portal Contract at no cost to state agencies and local governments.
- With the \$1 Portal Fee, SCI provides the following types of services to 176 governmental bodies across the state:
 - Websites – Design, build, maintain, and associated training for government users
 - Custom Service Applications – Design, build, host, and associated training for government users
 - Accounting – accounting reports for each governmental body that processes financial transactions under the Web Portal Contract
 - Security – data security that meets both regulatory requirements and industry standards
 - New Technology Adaptation – creating and reconfiguring existing services to function with new technologies such as smart phones (responsive web design and custom apps) and voice-controlled personal assistants, like Google Home and Amazon’s Alexa (skills). Also, as new payment technologies come into use, reconfigure operations to meet the new technological standards.
 - Compliance – Complete compliance tasks required by the credit card industry and other applicable bodies. For example, for those agencies that accept in-person card payments, SCI has provided, at no cost to the agencies, hundreds of new encrypted card swipe machines that meet the credit card industry’s security standards.
 - 24/7 Customer Support through multiple access channels – phone, email, live chat.
- Monthly Reconciliation Reports: Each month, SCI provides a financial reconciliation report of the web portal account to the Department of Administration’s finance office. Our finance office reviews these monthly reconciliation reports.
- Key Value Features of the Web Portal Contract:
 - The Web Portal Contract is not mandatory. If a government body can find better value of the services that SCI provides, it is free to do so.
 - The Web Portal Contract operates on a zero-cost model, so governmental bodies are not required to expend funds for the services that SCI provides.
 - If a governmental agency wanted to provide the websites, services, and electronic transactions that SCI offers, it would have to pay for them through other procurements. For example, the cost to design a website starts around \$10,000.

- eGovernment Oversight Committee

- The Web Portal Contract established the eGovernment Oversight Committee (EGOC). The Bylaws for the EGOC are part of the Web Portal Contract.
- As stated in the EGOC bylaws, the committee is responsible for providing oversight of the state Web Portal and for establishing all strategic policies governing the portal.
- EGOC membership consists of eleven voting members; ten of these eleven members are appointed by the governor. The eleven members of the EGOC are:
 - The DTO division director, or his/her designee from DTO, who serves as Chair;
 - Five (5) Representatives of state government agencies, recommended by DTO and appointed by the governor;
 - A nominee of the South Carolina Municipal Association, appointed by the governor;
 - A nominee of the South Carolina Association of Counties, appointed by the governor;
 - Three (3) members are selected by the governor from each of the associations listed below:
 - South Carolina Banker's Association
 - Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of South Carolina
 - South Carolina Bar Association
- Aside from the DTO designee, each member serves a 2-year term.
- The EGOC meets every 2 months. These meetings are open to the public.
- Pursuant to the committee's bylaws, the committee reviews and approves all material issues relating to oversight of the State's Web Portal. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Review and approval of development/implementation priorities;
 - Review and approval of application architecture and applications delivered as no-cost deliverables;
 - Review and approval of all charges to portal users;
 - Review and approval of service level agreements and statements of work negotiated by government agencies with the portal manager;
 - Review of annual operating reports, customer satisfaction surveys, and performance measures of the portal; and
 - Approval of all strategic policies governing the portal.