

# Content Templates Guide

This Content Templates Guide serves as a practical resource for creating structured, accessible, optimized content across PPL utilities websites. It's designed for content strategists, UX writers, communications teams, and external partners.

This guide is organized by content type, providing **best practices for headings, body text, CTAs, metadata, and more**. Each section includes clear instructions for identifying the right components to use when building out website content.

Use it as a **step-by-step reference** to ensure all PPL content aligns with brand standards and meets user needs effectively.

Save this Content Templates Guide and feel free to share it with your colleagues. If you have any questions or recommendations for improving this guide, please contact the Digital Experience Team.

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# Content Elements

## Headings

Headings create hierarchy and guide users through the page, breaking information into digestible sections. They help readers scan content quickly and understand its structure. Effective headings also improve accessibility and search engine optimization (SEO).

- Select relevant keywords and use them consistently
- Use familiar language that mirrors the words and phrases your readers use
- Use heading levels in a logical order: start with H1 (main heading), followed by H2 (subheading), and H3 (supporting subheading) as needed
- Do not jump from an H2 directly to an H4, as this disrupts the content hierarchy
- Limit headings to 60 characters for clarity and readability

### H1 (main heading)

The H1 is the page's primary title. It clearly communicates the main topic or focus.

- Include only one H1 per page
- Write in **title case** to distinguish it visually from subheadings
- Use concise, specific language that clearly communicates the page's focus
- Incorporate the most relevant keyword(s)
- Limit the heading to 60 characters for clarity and SEO

### H2 (subheading)

H2 subheadings break the content into major sections, making it easy for readers to scan and find information. Each H2 supports the H1 and introduces a new topic.

- Use **sentence case** for readability
- Write clear, action-oriented phrases to engage users
- Use multiple H2s on a page when needed to organize major sections
- Keep H2s concise and to the point

### H3 (supporting subheading)

H3 supporting subheadings divide H2 sections into smaller, specific topics, providing additional structure. They are most useful for text-heavy or complex pages.

- Use **sentence case** to maintain consistency and clarity
- Include H3s only when needed to organize detailed information



- Write clear, concise H3s that help users navigate the page

## Body Copy

Body copy is the main content on each page. It should be clear, inclusive, and aligned with SEO best practices to answer key user questions and meet user needs.

- **Use clear, inclusive language:** Write in plain language to ensure accessibility for all readers. Avoid jargon, technical terms, or industry-specific language unless necessary. Provide context for complex ideas to make content accessible to readers of all backgrounds.
- **Structure for readability:** Break content into short paragraphs (2-4 sentences) for easy scanning. Use bulleted and numbered lists when necessary to further break up the content and improve readability.
- **Use active voice:** Active voice ensures your message is direct and engaging. For example, “Explore our programs” is preferable to “Programs can be explored by anyone.”
- **Include SEO keywords naturally:** Use relevant keywords within the text to maintain a conversational tone. Prioritize the quality of content over keyword frequency, as excessive keywords can disrupt readability.

## Calls to Action (CTAs)

CTAs are buttons or links that guide users to take specific actions, such as learning more about a program, signing up for a service, or exploring additional resources. All CTAs should be clear, actionable, and aligned with both the page's content and user goals.

- **Write in sentence case:** Use sentence case for all CTAs, except for proper nouns (such as program titles). This improves readability and reduces cognitive load for readers.
- **Lead with verbs:** Choose action-oriented language that clearly tells the user what will happen when they click. For example, rather than “Click here,” opt for “Explore energy-saving tips.”
- **Balance brevity with detail:** While CTAs should be concise, clarity is paramount. Opt for slightly longer phrases when they provide additional context or guidance. For example, “Sign up for the Small Business Retrofit Program” provides more guidance and value than “Sign up.”
- **Maintain a calm, professional tone:** Avoid overly promotional phrases such as “Enroll now!” and avoid exclamation points. Use neutral wording that feels authoritative and trustworthy.
- **Avoid repetition:** Use varied phrasing to keep CTAs engaging across the page. Alternate leading verbs to avoid redundancy. For example, use “Learn about...” for one action and “Explore...” for another.

# Content Cards

Content Cards are modular blocks of content designed to emphasize specific subjects, actions, or resources. They help organize information and guide users to related internal or external resources. These cards come in three types, each serving a unique purpose.

- Provide a clear H3 at the top of the component
- Do not include end punctuation for H3s
- Include end punctuation for body copy
- Add a clear and actionable CTA if necessary

## Article Card (ArticleCard)

This card includes a rectangular image, body text, and a CTA link. It is often used to promote related content on internal pages, external sites, or related resources.

- Body copy: 10-20 words (1 sentence)
- Use when visuals are critical for engaging users
- Add a CTA link to guide users to related resources
- Cards can be stacked 1-up, 2-up, and 3-up



### **Appliance recycling program**

Rhode Island Energy can help you dispose of unwanted appliances such as dehumidifiers, refrigerators, and freezers.

[Learn more about appliance recycling >](#)

## Text-Only Card (TextOnlyCard)

These are compact, text-only sections that emphasize content on a single subject. They summarize programs or resources and almost always include a link to guide users to internal pages or relevant resources.

- Body copy: 15-40 words (1-2 sentences)
- Use when visuals are unnecessary
- Always include a CTA link to direct users to the next step
- Cards can be stacked 1-up, 2-up, and 3-up

### **Gas water heating**

Boost energy efficiency, save on monthly payments and get money back when you purchase new gas water heating equipment.

[Explore rebates on high-efficiency water heaters >](#)

## Highlight Card (HighlightItem)

This card includes a circular image, body text, and occasionally a CTA link. It's typically used to highlight options or services and can accommodate slightly more cards in a row due to the smaller image size.

- Body copy: 15-30 words (1 sentence)
- Use when featuring multiple options to reduce scrolling
- A CTA link is optional if the card is informational and doesn't link to other pages
- Cards can be stacked 1-up, 2-up, and 4-up



### **Water heating and conservation options**

Lower your energy bills and water usage with water heater upgrades and low-flow showerheads.

[Conserve water and save >](#)

# Content Blocks

Content Blocks are specialized sections designed to organize and present key information visually and functionally. Each block type serves a specific purpose and helps users navigate content effectively.

# Marketing Block

Marketing Blocks consist of a header, body copy, an image, and an optional CTA. These blocks appear directly below the H1 and reinforce the page's subject, providing an engaging summary of what users can expect.

## Guidelines:

- Include a concise H2 (MBH2) at the top of the block, written in sentence form (no end punctuation) or as a question (with a question mark)
- Limit body copy to 20–40 words
- Add a CTA button if needed, linking to relevant pages or resources

### **Lower your monthly costs by reducing your water usage**

Conserve water and significantly reduce your monthly energy costs when you invest in energy-efficient water heater upgrades and low-flow showerheads.



Use Marketing Blocks to introduce the page or highlight key content immediately.

# Callout Block

Callout Blocks are used to break up content and emphasize key information that readers can see quickly and clearly. While they are occasionally used for important or time-sensitive updates, their primary function is to highlight details that support the user's needs without overwhelming the main content.

## Guidelines:

- Provide a clear H2 at the top of the block to introduce the information
- Use concise body copy (1–2 sentences) to support the H2
- Add a CTA button if further action is required
- Keep the tone direct and focused

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**Energy-efficient ways to save money for your business**

Learn about sustainable, energy-efficient savings opportunities for your business that benefit the environment and put money back in your pocket.

[Find savings for your business](#)

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Use Callout Blocks to draw attention to specific information in a visually distinct way, ensuring readers can easily scan and identify key points.



# SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Optimizing content for search engines ensures PPL pages rank well and meet user needs. Follow this step-by-step process to create SEO-friendly content that balances visibility with readability.

## Step 1: Understand your audience

Clearly define your target audience before creating or updating content. Know who they are, what they're searching for, and what questions they need answered.

- **Tip:** Write content that directly addresses user needs, ensuring it is relevant and helpful
- **Example:** Small business owners might search for ways to reduce energy costs, so focus content on rebate programs tailored to their needs

## Step 2: Conduct keyword research

Research keywords your audience is likely searching for using tools like Google Keyword Planner or SEMrush. Select 2–3 primary keywords to incorporate into the content.

- **Action item:** Check search engine results pages (SERPs) to confirm your chosen keywords align with user intent and deliver relevant results

## Step 3: Add keywords into the web content and metadata

Integrate keywords thoughtfully to optimize content for search engines while maintaining a natural flow.

- **Headings:** Include a primary keyword in the H1 and use variations in H2 and H3 headings
- **Body copy:** Integrate keywords naturally in the first 100 words and throughout the text, avoiding overuse
- **Metadata:** Add keywords to the page title, meta description, and image alt text

### Examples:

- **Meta description:** “Discover energy-saving programs for small businesses to reduce costs and improve efficiency.”
- **Alt text:** “LED lightbulbs in a small business office for energy efficiency.”



## Additional SEO best practices:

- **Use plain language**

Write short sentences and paragraphs to ensure content is accessible for all reading levels.

- **Use relevant keywords**

Identify relevant keywords that align with user search intent and integrate them naturally in headings, subheadings, and body text. Avoid “keyword stuffing.” Instead, aim for a balance that enhances readability and keeps content engaging.

- **Optimize headings and subheadings**

Organize content with clear, structured headings and subheadings. Place keywords strategically within headings to help search engines identify key topics while making content scannable for users.

- **Write descriptive alt text**

Provide clear, descriptive alt text that describes the image’s purpose and includes relevant keywords. This helps to improve accessibility for users who rely on screen readers.

# Content Review Checklist

Before publishing any page, use this checklist to ensure every step has been completed and nothing is overlooked.

## **Audience and purpose**

- Does the content align with the purpose of the page?
- Is the content tailored to the intended audience, addressing their specific needs and questions?

## **Headings and structure**

- Does the page use H1, H2, and H3 to create a clear hierarchy of information?
- Is the content well-organized, using headings and subheadings to break up sections?
- Is the Marketing Block included and properly formatted, with both a concise header and supporting body text?

## **Readability and clarity**

- Is the content easy to read, with short paragraphs and simple language?
- Did you write in active voice?
- Have you eliminated jargon or complex terms that may confuse users?
- Are lists and bullets used appropriately to make information scannable?

## **CTAs and internal linking**

- Are the CTAs specific, clear, and action-oriented?
- Have you avoided repetitive CTAs within the same section or page?
- Are internal links used to direct users to relevant additional content?

## **SEO and keywords**

- Are the primary and secondary keywords naturally integrated into the H1, H2, meta description, and body copy?
- Do the keywords align with the search intent of your audience?
- Is the metadata (title tag, meta description) concise, keyword-rich, and aligned with the content's focus?

## **Accessibility**

- Is the content accessible to all users, including those using assistive technologies?



- Have you provided alt text for images and ensured headings are used correctly for screen readers?