



## ICANN and Verisign Announce Proposed Amendment to .COM Registry Agreement

January 3, 2020

*Terms of the Agreement are Open for Public Comment Until Feb. 14, 2020*

LOS ANGELES & RESTON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 3, 2020-- The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and VeriSign, Inc. (Verisign), the registry operator of the .COM top-level domain (TLD) today announced that they have reached a proposed agreement to amend the .COM Registry Agreement (RA). In addition, ICANN and Verisign announced a new proposed framework for working together on initiatives related to the security, stability and resiliency of the Domain Name System (DNS) in the form of a binding Letter of Intent (LOI) between the two organizations.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200103005209/en/>

Together, these agreements fulfill commitments that ICANN and Verisign made in 2016 when they previously amended the .COM RA. The new terms, which are now [open for public comment](#), will enhance the security, stability and resiliency of the DNS; provide limited and transparent pricing flexibility for .COM registry services; and standardize the .COM RA by including certain technical and reporting requirements based on terms in other registry agreements between ICANN and the registry operators of other TLDs.

Verisign's operation of the .COM TLD is governed by two separate agreements: the .COM RA, and the Cooperative Agreement between Verisign and the U.S. Department of Commerce. In 2016, Verisign and ICANN [formally agreed](#) that if and when the Department of Commerce and Verisign made changes to the Cooperative Agreement, ICANN and Verisign would negotiate in good faith to ensure those changes were reflected in the .COM RA.

On Oct. 26, 2018, following a review and deliberation by the U.S. Government, Verisign and the Department of Commerce entered into an amendment that included an extension of the [Cooperative Agreement](#).

Under the amended Cooperative Agreement, the Department of Commerce noted that the domain name marketplace had grown more dynamic and concluded that it was in the public interest that, among other things, Verisign and ICANN may agree to amend the .COM Registry Agreement to permit an increase to the price for .COM registry services, up to a maximum of 7 percent in each of the final four years of each six-year period (the first six-year period commenced on Oct. 26, 2018). The proposed agreement announced today updates the .COM RA to reflect those changes. ICANN is not a price regulator and defers to the Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Justice for the regulation of pricing for .COM registry services.

While Verisign does not set retail prices for .COM domain names, the proposed amendment to the .COM RA will provide pricing certainty by limiting the potential maximum wholesale price for .COM domain names. For example, if the four standard price increases are taken in this six-year period, the maximum wholesale price for .COM domain names would be \$8.39 no earlier than Oct. 26, 2020 (compared to \$7.85 today), and cannot exceed \$10.26 until October 2026.

In addition to aligning the pricing for .COM registry services with the Cooperative Agreement, the updated .COM RA and LOI achieve four additional important objectives:

- Alignment with certain technical and reporting obligations for the .COM TLD with those in the Base gTLD Registry Agreement
- Incorporation of commitments related to the implementation of the Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP)
- Formalization of a framework by which ICANN and Verisign will work together to support additional enhancements to security and stability of the DNS, including to help combat DNS security threats
- Additional funding to ICANN to continue to conduct, facilitate and support activities that preserve and enhance the security and stability of the DNS, in support of Verisign's and ICANN's longstanding commitment in this area and ICANN's core mission to ensure the stable and secure operation of the internet's unique identifier systems

Because of the significance of the .COM TLD, these security, stability and resiliency enhancements will benefit internet users worldwide. The .COM TLD is an important part of the internet's global addressing system, providing the foundation for hundreds of millions of websites, apps, email accounts and core internet infrastructure elements across the globe. The .COM TLD is an important part of global commerce, making its continued secure, stable and resilient operation a top priority for both ICANN and Verisign.

These obligations expand on Verisign's long-standing commitment to evolving and improving DNS security, stability and resiliency, through technical innovation, active participation in groups like ICANN's Root Server System Advisory Committee and the Security and Stability Advisory Committee, as well as in Verisign's role as root zone maintainer, and operator of two of the world's 13 authoritative root servers. For more than 22 years, Verisign has maintained 100 percent operational accuracy and stability for the .COM DNS.

ICANN facilitates the coordination of the 12 operators of the 13 authoritative root servers. These root servers are the foundation of the DNS. In keeping with ICANN's mission to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global internet, a pillar of its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is to strengthen the security of the DNS and the DNS Root Server System by partnering with relevant stakeholders to strengthen DNS root server operations governance and coordination; improve awareness of security threats to the DNS; and foster greater diversity of thought to best anticipate, respond to and mitigate potential threats.

### About ICANN

ICANN's mission is to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet, you have to type an address – a name or a number – into your computer or other device. That address must be unique, so computers know where to find each other. ICANN helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world. ICANN was formed in 1998 as a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation and a community with participants from all over the world.

#### **About Verisign**

Verisign, a global provider of domain name registry services and internet infrastructure, enables internet navigation for many of the world's most recognized domain names. Verisign enables the security, stability, and resiliency of key internet infrastructure and services, including providing root zone maintainer services, operating two of the 13 global internet root servers, and providing registration services and authoritative resolution for the .com and .net top-level domains, which support the majority of global e-commerce. To learn more about what it means to be Powered by Verisign, please visit [Verisign.com](https://www.verisign.com).

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