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## Office of the Federal Register and Its Publications

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Today I will be discussing the publications of the Office of the Federal Register, and focusing upon the daily Federal Register (OFR) and the research documents that support it. I will ask for questions from time to time within the lecture, and anticipate having about fifteen minutes for questions at the end of the lecture. You should each have a handbook, which you can take home with you, that reinforces this lecture. We will not be following the handbook this morning.

First, I'd like to discuss what the Office of the Federal Register does, and clear up some myths. We are not a part of the Government Printing Office (GPO). The OFR is an office under the National Archives and Records Administration. The OFR receives, organizes, reviews, edits and okays for printing documents from Federal agencies that publish in the Federal Register (FR) and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). We also receive, organize, review, edit and okay for printing Presidential documents and laws. We do not print, sell or distribute any of these publications. That is done by the GPO. We also do not write the documents. They are written by Federal agencies, Congress or the Executive Office. The Government Printing Office prints and distributes, while our office is primarily providing review and editing.

Let's take some time now to go over the publications of the OFR. The OFR publishes documents for the Office of the President and Federal agencies. Whenever the President of the United States signs an executive order, or presidential proclamation, whenever the White House makes releases or signing statements, and whenever the President gives a public speech, it is transcribed, and collated by our office into the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents. These are then ultimately compiled (with photographs) into volumes of the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. In addition, within the Code of Federal Regulations, title 3 contains the annual publication of executive orders and presidential proclamations which were published in the Federal Register. This title of the CFR is NOT cumulative. Each year's volume needs to be retained. For your convenience, we have color coded title 3 in reverse colors, to alert you to retain the volume and not remove it each year. The Office of the Federal Register edits, annotates and publishes the Slip Laws. These are the laws of Congress which have been signed by the President. And the laws are compiled into the United States Statutes at Large. The OFR also publishes the

United States Government Manual. This book gives the organizational structure of each agency, lists each office and its function, as well as phone numbers and addresses. It is published annually.

For Federal agencies, our primary publications are the Federal Register and Code of Federal Regulations. The Federal Register is produced every workday, with the exception of Federal holidays. It contains the rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies, as well as Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations of the White House. It serves to inform the public of regulations that are proposed, gives them opportunity to comment on them, and alerts the public to new requirements, and other matters, such as advisory committee meetings.

The Code of Federal Regulations is an annual publication of current regulations. It contains only the rules, no proposed rules or notices appear in the CFR. It is updated by the daily Federal Register. For example, if you wanted to know the regulations regarding how wide doorways should be made to be accessible to the physically challenged, you would go to the CFR, and then check the Federal Register to see if any changes had occurred since the publication of the CFR.

To that end, several finding aids materials are published by the OFR. They include the Federal Register Index, which lists publications by agency name, and is published monthly, and the List of CFR Sections Affected, which lists changes to the CFR by CFR title and section number, and is also published monthly. And a CFR Index and Finding Aids book is published once a year. It contains a subject index, a listing of the heading of each title and part number for the Code, and tables of authority citations.

And finally, OFR produces the Privacy Act Issuances. This is a compilation of regulations and notices published in the Federal Register, pursuant to the Privacy Act. It is revised every two years (1993 CD-ROM only; 1995 online).

All of these documents are produced by the OFR. For the Federal Register alone, we process one hundred to two hundred documents a day. All of this is accomplished by 61 people.

I would like to briefly discuss the rulemaking process with you. I understand that you receive requests for information that may occur at any point in the rulemaking process. So, I want to go over that process as it relates to the OFR. The first step in rulemaking is usually a law enacted by Congress. Many laws enacted by Congress require agencies to issue regulations. And issuing regulations means publication in the Federal Register. Usually, the Federal agency will publish a proposed rule as a result. Proposed rules are required in most circumstances, by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The APA dictates proposed rules for the express purpose of giving interested parties an opportunity to participate in the rule making by alerting the public to a change in the regulations, and allowing the public time to give comment on the proposal.

After the comment period closes, and the agency reviews the comments, it may or may not change the regulation. It then publishes a final rule, in which comments that were received are addressed, and the regulatory changes are announced. Once the effective date of the

final rule is reached, these regulations are in effect and enforceable. It does not require publication in the annual CFR. And when the CFR volume is next updated, the changes mandated in the Federal Register are incorporated into the annual Code.

Let's briefly go over the Federal Register layout. The first page contains general information regarding when and how the FR is produced, subscription information, and citing information. It will also tell you when and where the next workshops will be available for the general public. The next page begins with an index, grouped by agency name. It will list the page span for the document. Then you will find a listing by CFR title and part for each rule or proposed rule in the Federal Register of that day.

Then we begin with the text, which starts with Rules, listed in CFR order. Then comes proposed rules, and notices. If there are any corrections that the OFR needs to make, they are printed after the notices. This is followed by separate parts which can be rules, proposed rules or notices. They are set apart from the main body of the FR, usually at the request of the agency, sometimes because of OFR production needs. Separate parts can be reproduced separately from the rest of the FR. Agencies request this in order to make multiple reprints of their document, without reproducing the entire FR.

After all the separate parts, we have printed some reader aids. On this page you will find phone numbers and electronic information for customer assistance, a guide linking page numbers to their appropriate Federal Register for the month, and a listing of the CFR title and parts that are affected during the month that this Federal Register is issued. That is followed by a reminder of rules going into effect on that date and of those proposed rules whose comment due dates end in the following week. On Mondays, a list of CFR volumes and their availability appears behind the reminders list.

Now as librarians, I understand you work with a lot of research type questions. I'd like to take the remaining time to go through some research examples. Of course, the simplest and easiest way to find a document is through the online Federal Register. The online FR has every FR volume from January 2, 1994 to present at [www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/).

If you have questions at any time, please contact our offices and feel free to visit our Web site at <http://www.nara.gov/fedreg>.