



Office of the Superintendent of Documents

**SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT
2022-1**

EFFECTIVE: 11/15/2022

Supersedes

SOD-PPS-2021-1

Effective Date: 08/31/2021

SUBJECT: *Regional Depository Libraries Selecting Solely Online Materials*

PURPOSE

To allow regional depository libraries flexibility in building and providing service to their Federal depository collections.

BACKGROUND

The statutory authority for regional depository libraries requires that they receive copies of all new and revised Government publications and they must also retain at least one copy either in printed or microfacsimile form, except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents (44 U.S.C. §1912).

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) has been moving in an online direction since 1996 when the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1996, Public Law 104-53 required the then Government Printing Office to undertake a study and produce a report: [*Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*](#). This same year Library Programs Services — the former name of Library Services and Content Management's (LSCM) — cataloged its first online publication for which there was no tangible product distributed to depository libraries. Access to the title was through a link in the cataloging record. Ten years later, in 2006, the Superintendent of Documents issued a policy that made online versions of titles the preferred method of dissemination to depository libraries, i.e., making accessible, online versions of publications to depository libraries through links in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) or through the Government Publishing Office's (GPO) system of online access, rather than distributing tangible copies.

In more recent years there have been further developments that help enable having online as an available format for selection, without having to select a corresponding tangible format, for regional depository libraries. The first of these was the issuance of OMB Open

Government Directive in December 2009, which requires agencies to post information products online to increase access to it. Since this time there has been a big decline in the number of tangible titles distributed to depository libraries. Second, in 2015 the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP) approved GPO's proposal to allow regional depository libraries to withdraw materials from their collections under certain specified conditions.

Regional depository libraries are providing access to Federal publications in a variety of formats to meet patron needs, and they no longer are receiving all new and revised tangible versions for all titles through the FDLP. Nor are regional depository libraries necessarily retaining a printed or microfacsimile version of what they receive, since the implementation of the Superintendent of Documents policy, *Government Publications Authorized for Discard by Regional Depository Libraries*. In approving this policy, the Joint Committee on Printing stipulated there be no fewer than four tangible copies of a title geographically dispersed throughout the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). The four geographically dispersed areas, now called National Collection Service Areas (NCSA), were created to ensure the minimum level of tangible copies is maintained and there is public access to them.

GPO, through digitization and preservation of materials, and by working with libraries to catalog and inventory their collections, will ensure that the comprehensiveness of the nation-wide depository collection, the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information, is not impaired. Having online as a selection format on par with paper and microfiche is one such alternative for the digital age that will benefit regional depository libraries, their patrons, and GPO.

POLICY

Regional depository libraries may select "online" (EL) as a format without having to make a corresponding tangible selection, for specified titles that:

- Are accessible through GPO's GovInfo, digital preservation steward partners, or trusted digital repositories of Federal agencies.
- Have at least one day-forward Preservation Steward or Print Selector agreement in place within the regional depository's National Collection Service Area.

The Superintendent of Documents will provide a letter of authorization, *Regional Online Selections Authorization (SOD-ROSA)*, for titles that become eligible for deselection under this policy.

Further, to ensure findability and access, regionals implementing this policy shall have catalog records that include URLs, or provide links on web pages or in finding guides, for those online (EL) titles/resources for which they are not selecting a print format.

Nothing in this policy requires regional depository libraries to select only the online version of a title.

DEFINITIONS

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| Digital Preservation Steward | Digital Preservation Stewards make a commitment to retain, preserve, and provide no-fee public access to specified digital resources within scope of the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information. |
| National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information | The geographically dispersed collection of the corpus of Federal Government public information, accessible to the public at no cost. |
| National Collection Service Areas | Groupings of Federal depository libraries into four regions of the country as a means of ensuring geographically dispersed permanent public access to Federal Government information products, sharing resources among depository libraries, and receiving services from LSCM. The NCSAs are: Northeast, South, Midwest, and West |
| Preservation Steward | Preservation Stewards are partners that commit to retain and preserve specified tangible publications of the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information for the length of the partnership agreement. This includes both preventive maintenance and conservation treatments. Preservation Stewards may be for legacy publications, or for new publications that a library is currently selecting and upon receipt will continue to hold for the duration of the agreement. |
| Print Selector | Regional or selective depository library that agrees to select and retain the print format of a title for a specified period of time, after which they may choose to discard them. The specified time depends upon the title and if it is superseded or replaced by bound volumes. |
| trusted digital repository | A trustworthy digital repository has a mission to provide reliable, long-term access to digital resources to its Designated Community, now, and into the future. To fulfill this mission, a trustworthy digital repository is committed to the continuous monitoring of risks to its systems and responsibilities, ongoing strategic action and technology implementation to meet the needs of its Designated Community, and regularly ensure the transparency of its preservation and assessment activities to the public. |

APPLICATION

This policy is to be implemented by Library Services and Content Management (LSCM). Working with the regional libraries, the Superintendent of Documents is responsible for ensuring the comprehensiveness of the nation-wide depository collection, the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information, is not impaired by this policy.

In the application of this policy Preservation Stewards and Digital Preservation Stewards may include:

- Regional and selective Federal depository libraries.
- The Library of Congress.
- U.S. national libraries.
- Federal agency libraries.
- Various types of libraries: academic libraries, law, public, state, etc.
- Library consortia.
- Federal agencies.
- National Archives and Records Administration.
- Associations.
- Public and private sector enterprises.
- Others interested in access to and preservation of Government information.

APPROVED:

11/09/2022

SCOTT MATHESON
Superintendent of Documents

Date