

# **Long-term Implications for Federal Depository Libraries of the COVID-19 Pandemic Working Group Charter**

Effective 06/21/2021

## **Charge**

This working group will examine the practices, policies, and procedures enacted by FDLs since March 2020 as they adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will assess the long-term impact of these efforts at the institutional and national level. It will examine pandemic practices, policies, and procedures enacted by FDLs and the GPO relating to services, procedures, collections, staffing, etc., and it will assess whether such policies may or should continue into the post pandemic era.

## **Background**

The COVID-19 virus, which spread across the entire world throughout 2020 and 2021, forced institutions to implement policies and efforts to combat the spread of this global health risk. Mitigation efforts included local lockdowns, closure of physical facilities, travel restrictions, limiting or eliminating in-person services, and a move to telework. The Federal Depository Libraries (“FDLs”), like many businesses and organizations, were impacted by these pandemic mitigation efforts. Many FDLs were closed to the public, ceased receiving materials, placed staff on furlough, or changed their collection management policies. These practices, which were implemented in the interest of public health, forced FDLs to find new ways to achieve their primary mission: provide free and open access to federal government information. As a result, FDLs and their staff found new and innovative ways to provide access to federal information despite limited physical access to library facilities and depository collections.

## **Actions Items for Discussion and Development**

- Research and review information to determine the ongoing needs and support for FDLs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Conduct additional surveys, focus groups, or other methods as needed to acquire information about ongoing FDL needs and support due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Identify potential long-term implications arising from COVID-19 pandemic, including policies, procedures, and other needs for FDLs.
- Create a report or white paper to document needs and support for FDLs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Report to Council with potential recommendations related to ongoing needs and support for FDLs, including long-term implications Council could recommend to GPO for follow-up study or action.

## **Organization and Membership**

- Name of WG: Long-term Implications for Federal Depository Libraries of the COVID-19 Pandemic
- The working group will be ongoing as necessary, and will dissolve upon completion of recommendations to Council and any other stated deliverables.
- Anticipated duration of the working group is through two or three biennial survey cycles

DLC and GPO will cooperatively determine the method of selecting members.

- The membership of the group will consist of interested parties from the Government Publishing Office, the Depository Library Council and members of the FDL community.
- Membership will consist of a diverse group representing FDLs of different types and sizes and include members of the DLC, members of the FDL community, and GPO, not to exceed 9 members.
- Community members will be selected by soliciting volunteers who have an interest and expertise in areas related to the charge.
- Interested community members will be asked to provide a statement demonstrating interest, experience, and expertise.
- Term length is two years.

### **Meetings**

- The group will meet virtually once a month or as needed. An additional in-person or virtual meeting at the Fall 2021 Depository Conference may be held.
- All members are expected to attend the virtual Spring Depository Conference, and if possible, Fall Depository Library Conference virtually or in person.

### **Governance**

- The working group will have a Chair and a Secretary, agreed upon by the group.
- The Chair must be a Depository Library Council member.
- Additional expertise from any relevant area may be called upon as needed.
- The chair will determine a regularly recurring meeting time once membership is determined.
- If needed, the chair may adjust regularly recurring meeting times with approval of the WG.
- Non-recurring meetings may be scheduled by the chair as needed.
- Ideas for actionable work may come from a variety of sources, including but not limited to: within GPO, Council, from the community, or may be solicited for input.
- The working group will have a Designated Federal Official (DFO) in attendance.

### **Communication with FDLP**

- The Working Group will use a variety of tools to communicate to the FDLP. At a minimum, the group will offer brief public reports during the Spring and Fall Conferences.
- Other modes of communication may include FDLP news alerts, surveys and blog posts.
- The group, upon completion of its task, will publicly circulate its report.

### **Timeline**

- Anticipated duration of the working group is through two or three biennial survey cycles
- The first report of the working group will be delivered by summer 2023

## **Reporting to the DLC and GPO**

- Minutes of the meetings will be shared with the Depository Library Council.
- A DLC member on the working group will report on meetings or action items during the monthly DLC/GPO information sharing calls.
- A DLC member will report out at the Fall and Spring Council meetings.
- The presence of GPO staff on the committee will promote information sharing between the GPO, the DLC, and the wider community.