

SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

EFFECTIVE: TBD

SUBJECT: Government Publications Authorized for Discard by Regional Depository Libraries

PURPOSE

To allow regional depository libraries the option to discard certain tangible materials and provide permanent public access to the digital version available on GPO's Federal Digital System that meets the standards of the Superintendent of Documents as authentic.

BACKGROUND

Responsibility for retention of depository publications by regional depository libraries is found in 44 United States Code §1912, which states:

[regional depository libraries] will, in addition to fulfilling the requirements for depository libraries, retain at least one copy of all Government publications either in printed or microfacsimile form (except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents) ...

This provision of section 1912 has been in place since the Depository Library Act of 1962, Pub.L. 87-579, which established regional depository libraries.

In 1993, Congress passed the GPO Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act, Pub.L. 103-40, enacted at 44 U.S.C §§ 4101 – 4104, whereby it expressed its clear intent for GPO to use electronic technology to make Government information more accessible to the greatest number of people. The law established the authority for the Superintendent of Documents to carry out the functions necessary to provide the public with access to digital information available online from the Federal Government. The intent of Congress is further evidenced by a series of actions including the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and the mandate for GPO to execute the study which resulted in the 1996 Report to Congress: *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*. The overriding purpose in all of these efforts has been to advance the shift in Government dissemination methods from print and/or microfacsimile form to digital.

GPO has 20 years of successful experience providing access to digital Government information, and today, approximately 96% of materials disseminated through the FDLP are online. In actuality, the Program has achieved the Congressional goal to be primarily digital. Through electronic dissemination of Government information, GPO and libraries are serving vast numbers

of users who do not physically come into the library yet are accessing information and library resources from locations and at times that are convenient to them. This trend is accelerating. In addition, as responses from the FDLP Forecast Study indicate, those depository library users who do come to the library often express a preference for online tools and formats, and use the library's computers to find and download the digital information they need.

The Federal Digital System (FDsys) is a content management system, a preservation repository, and GPO's system of record for providing free online access to official digital Federal information. It guarantees permanent preservation and access to digital Federal Government publications in its collections. Furthermore, it securely controls digital content throughout its lifecycle to ensure content integrity and authenticity.

POLICY

Regional depository libraries are authorized to discard tangible depository materials in their collections under the following conditions:

1. The publication is superseded or later issued in bound form; or,
2. The publication:
 - a. Has been retained by the regional in tangible form for a period of seven years from the date of receipt, processing, or shipping list date; and,
 - b. Is available on GPO's Federal Digital System in a format that meets the standards of the Superintendent of Documents as authentic with the digital signature of the Superintendent of Documents.

In order to ensure that the requisite number of tangible copies are retained within the Program for access and preservation, regional depository libraries must: first, inform GPO of their intent to discard tangible depository materials that are not superseded or later issued in bound form; and second, receive advance approval to discard from the Superintendent of Documents.

Regional depository libraries that withdraw FDLP materials because the appropriate online version is available on FDsys must first offer the publication to the selective depository libraries they serve and then to other depository libraries nationwide.

Nothing in this policy mandates that a regional depository library dispose of a tangible publication because there is an authenticated version on FDsys.

DEFINITIONS

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| Authentic | Content that is verified by GPO to be complete and unaltered when compared to the version approved or published by the Content Originator. |
| Complete | Online versions of Government information dissemination products whose content includes the entirety of the content of |

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| | the tangible product. |
| Digital signature | A cryptographic code consisting of a hash, to indicate that the data has not changed, encrypted with the public key of the creator or the signer. A digital signature identifies the signer and verifies the integrity of the data. |
| Information dissemination product | Any book, publication, paper, map, machine-readable material, audiovisual production, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, disseminated by an agency to the public. |
| Official content | Content that is approved by, contributed by, or harvested from an official source in accordance with accepted Federal Depository Library Program specifications. |
| Permanent public access | Available for use by the general public today and for future generations, regardless of format. |
| Tangible | Refers to information dissemination products conveyed in a physical medium. |

APPLICATION

The Superintendent of Documents, through the Director of Library Services and Content Management, is responsible for ensuring that regional depository libraries retain all depository materials that are not authorized for discard under this policy.

REFERENCES

44 *United States Code* §§ 1901-1916, Depository Library Program.

44 *United States Code* §§ 4101 – 4104, Access to Federal Electronic Information.

U.S. Government Printing Office. *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program As Required by Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1996 Public Law 104-53*. June 1996.

_____. Library Services and Content Management. *Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications* (guidance for selective depository libraries).

_____. Office of the Superintendent of Documents. SOD Public Policy Statement 2014-1, *Scope of Government Information Products Included in the Cataloging and Indexing Program and Disseminated Through the Federal Depository Library Program*.

APPROVED:

Superintendent of Documents

Date

For Discussion