

SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT
SOD-PPS-7-2025

EFFECTIVE: XX/XX/2025

Supersedes

No.: SOD 301

Effective Date: 09/28/2006

SUBJECT: Print Distribution and Access to Government Publications in a Digital Federal Depository Library Program

PURPOSE

Establish a policy to distribute and to make accessible Government public information through a digital Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).

BACKGROUND

In June 1993, the GPO Access Act¹ ushered the Government Printing Office² into the Internet age by establishing a means of enhancing online public access to a wide range of Federal electronic information through GPO. With the success of GPOAccess, the Legislative Branch Appropriations for FY 1996 directed the Public Printer³ to provide a report to Congress, which was published in June 1996, *Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program*.⁴ It was clear that the intent of Congress was to shift the FDLP towards a more online program.

The Task Force on a Digital Federal Depository Library Program,⁵ convened in January 2022 by GPO's Director, concluded that the FDLP can and should be a digital program. The Director subsequently charged the Superintendent of Documents with implementing a digital FDLP.

¹ Pub. L. 103-40, [STATUTE-107-Pg112.pdf](#).

² Pub. L. 113-235, div. H, title I, §1301(a), (b), Dec. 16, 2014, 128 Stat. 2537, the Government Printing Office was redesignated to the Government Publishing Office.

³ Pub. L. 113-235 also renamed the head of the GPO from Public Printer to Director.

⁴ This report to Congress is accessible from <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-GP3-83702f16b5d4a3823308c2c477545669/pdf/GOVPUB-GP3-83702f16b5d4a3823308c2c477545669.pdf>.

⁵ For more about the Task Force on a Digital Federal Depository Library Program see <https://www.fdlp.gov/project/task-force-digital-federal-depository-library-program>.

For a more complete picture of the digital transition, see *Evolution of a Digital FDLP: A Transition Timeline*.⁶

POLICY

The Superintendent of Documents has the authority to determine which in-scope Government public information is distributed through the FDLP, in what format, and the quantity. With this authority it is established that:

- Digital will continue to be the preferred format to make Government public information accessible, as it has been since 2006.⁷
- With a limited print framework, the *Print Distribution Titles List*⁸ will facilitate the selection and allocation of only those publications that the Superintendent of Documents determines are needed by depository libraries.
- Special Selection Offers⁹ (SSO) will be extended to depository libraries on an irregular basis for publications that have a special value when printed.
- At a minimum, each National Collection Service Area will receive at least one copy of all distributed print publications.¹⁰

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all appropriate elements of the Superintendent of Documents Public Information Programs. The Superintendent of Documents, through the Managing Director of Library Services and Content Management, must authorize any exceptions to this policy.

⁶ The Transition Timeline is accessible from <https://www.fdlp.gov/evolution-of-digital-fdlp-timeline>.

⁷ In September 2006, the Superintendent of Documents policy, *Dissemination/Distribution Policy for the Federal Depository Library Program* (SOD 301), declared online versions of publications as the preferred format for disseminating information to depository libraries when the publications are available in both online and tangible formats. SOD 301: <https://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository-item/disseminationdistribution-policy-federal-depository-library-program-sod-301>

⁸ Access the *Print Distribution Titles List* from <https://www.fdlp.gov/file-download/download/public/25410>.

⁹ For more about Special Selection Offers see <https://www.fdlp.gov/project-list/special-selection-offers>.

¹⁰ In an August 5, 2015, letter to GPO Director Vance-Cooks, the Chair of the Joint Committee on Printing, the Honorable Gregg Harper, conveyed the approval of the Superintendent of Documents' proposed regional depository library discard policy with the added stipulation that a "minimum of four tangible copies of the publication exist in the FDLP distributed geographically." Letter: <https://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository-item/correspondence-between-gpo-director-and-chair-jcp-regarding-discarding>

APPROVED

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Date

Proposed Draft