



SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS  
DEPOSITORY GUIDANCE DOCUMENT  
2018-1

**EFFECTIVE:** October 22, 2018

Supersedes

Guidelines for Establishing Intrastate Regional Depository Libraries

Dated: 02/12/2009

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## Guidelines for Establishing Shared Regional Depository Libraries

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The provisions of chapter 19 of Title 44, U.S.C., prescribe a structure for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) consisting of regional and selective libraries, and set the conditions for the operation of the Program as administered by the Government Publishing Office (GPO). In accordance with §1912, all regional depository libraries are designated as such by one of the state's Senators or the Resident Commissioner for Puerto Rico. Not more than two depository libraries in each State and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may be designated as regional depositories.

Within this [statutory framework](#), different models of sharing resources and responsibilities between regional and selective libraries within the states they serve have been implemented over the years with GPO approval. These include different models of intra- and inter-state sharing between regionals and selective libraries. One example is regional depository libraries in one state sharing collections and services to selective depositories in that state. Another model is one regional serving selective depository libraries in an adjacent or nearby state where no regional depository library exists. Yet another example is one regional with a distributed regional collection through selective housing agreements with other depository libraries within the state.

In recent years, technological innovations and the ease of disseminating digital information have made it possible for a number of depository libraries to participate in multi-state collaborations for rapid delivery of shared services. This has also made it possible to develop models and networks that create cost effective shared print resource archives and shared digital repositories. Both intra- and inter-state shared regional models can offer practical and economical means to maintain

public access and reallocate library space, while achieving operational efficiencies for the participating regional and selective depository libraries.

## GUIDELINES

These guidelines were developed to assist libraries in planning for both intra- and inter-state shared regional depository libraries. Scenarios include one regional serving multiple states (multiple states share a regional) and multiple regionals (multiple regionals share support for an area) serving one or more states. **The Superintendent of Documents will consider proposals that reflect current models as well as ones that are unprecedented.** GPO requires that an open and collaborative planning process be used to establish a successful shared regional.

In general.—

- Inform the Superintendent of Documents of your intent to propose a shared arrangement.
- Proposals<sup>1</sup> must be developed into a strategic implementation plan.
- Plans must be developed with the expectation of maintaining public access to and services for depository resources in all formats.
- The Superintendent of Documents will review and approve all plans for shared regional depository libraries prior to implementation.
- Plans that include sharing collections across state boundaries must have the support and signed consent of at least one Senator from each participating state in accordance with 44 *United States Code* §1912.
- Any arrangement for the sharing of the resources and responsibilities of regional depository libraries must be delineated in a written memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by representatives of the participating institutions.
- Consult with all depository libraries in the state(s) and consider their reasonable concerns are addressed prior to signing an MOU.

While GPO is not a signatory of the agreement, the MOU must be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent of Documents prior to its signing and implementation. This is to ensure there are no conflicts between the provisions of the MOU and Title 44 of the *United States Code*, and other FDLP requirements. A copy of the signed MOU shall be transmitted to GPO for inclusion in the libraries' official files.

## THE PROPOSED SHARED REGIONAL PLAN

- Obtain the support of the administrations from all participating libraries that are assuming portions of the regional depository library's responsibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposals do not have to be elaborate; they can be a few paragraphs describing what might be fleshed out in an implementation plan. Or the proposal may be a discussion and results of brainstorming with the Superintendent of Documents (followed up by an email describing the conversation).

- Confer with selective depository libraries in the state(s) as part of the planning process and ensure their concerns are discussed and reasonably addressed prior to submission of the plan.
- Develop a plan for the new arrangement that addresses:
  - ◆ Goals, objectives, and success measures
  - ◆ Roles and responsibilities
  - ◆ Projected timeline
  - ◆ Access and services
    - Address how selective depositories, the public, and others will identify and access regional holdings (e.g., shared catalog, holdings of libraries participating in the MOU reflected in all their catalogs).
    - Specify how services for the public and support services for selective depositories will be conducted (e.g., reference assistance, disposition of depository materials, training).
  - ◆ Collections
    - Identify which regional is responsible for what part of the collections, this should include disaster preparedness and response.
    - Specify where regional collections will be housed.
    - Address a contingency plan for maintaining the regional collection(s) should the MOU be terminated or modified by one or more of the parties.
  - ◆ Communication with selectives.
    - Discuss the plan with the appropriate Senators and seek their approval in writing.

#### TO FACILITATE THE PLANNING PROCESS

- GPO will be available for consultation throughout this process.
- GPO's virtual meeting platform will be available for your use.

#### REVIEW BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS

The formal review process will begin when the Superintendent of Documents receives a proposed shared regional plan. The Superintendent of Documents will:

- Review the plan and supporting documentation and compare it with the plan elements above within 30 days.
- Arrange a call with the potential regional coordinators to discuss the plan.
- Once the plan is approved, request that the parties draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for review by the Superintendent of Documents.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> If the plan is for regionals to cross state boundaries, the consent of at least one Senator from each participating state is to be submitted with the draft MOU.

- Notify the parties of the determination that the MOU meets established criteria and is approved for signatures and implementation.
- Maintain a copy of the plan, verification of Senate approval(s), and the signed MOU in the GPO official file of each signatory library.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING MUST INCLUDE:**

- Assurance that public access to and services for depository resources will be maintained, and that success measures will be identified and assessed.
- Clear statement indicating the allocation of responsibilities for collections and services (to selectives) among the libraries participating in the MOU.
- Clear statement indicating what services selective depositories will receive from each library participating in the MOU.
- Clear statement that all statutory and FDLR requirements for regional depository libraries continue to be in effect.
- Provision for periodic reviews of the arrangement that include success measures and any feedback received from selective depository libraries served.
- Procedures for modifying or terminating the agreement.
- Provisions for disposition or transfer of materials and the realignment of services in the event of termination of the agreement or modification of the MOU that significantly alters regional responsibilities.
- If applicable, reference the signed accord of the Senators involved.
- Contact information for the regional documents coordinators.
- Signatures of the library directors<sup>3</sup>, from all libraries that are a party to the MOU.

Signatory libraries will maintain a copy of the plan, the verification of Senate approval(s), the signed MOU, and the approval notice from the Superintendent of Documents in their files.

**TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Once approval is received, participating regionals must notify their congressional delegations of their state's new arrangement, and then they may begin to implement their plan. Communication is important throughout this process, and even more so during the transition and implementation.

- Keep the selectives in the participating state(s) informed throughout the transition and the implementation.
- Keep GPO abreast of progress, implementation schedules and activities, and of the periodic reviews.
- Inform the depository community and the community served of new arrangements.
- Review state plan(s) and revise accordingly.

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<sup>3</sup> GPO understands that some institutions may require the signature of someone other than the library director.

## INFORMATION FOR CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

The *Designation Handbook for Federal Depository Libraries* provides not only guidance on the designation process, but sample letters as well. The *Handbook* accessible from FDL.gov at <<https://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/5-designation-handbook-for-federal-depository-libraries>> and it was distributed to depository libraries as GP 3.29:D 44/3.