

# Key Assumptions of Transitioning Collections & Services to More Electronic



---

While this paper focuses on libraries transitioning to a mostly electronic Federal depository collection, the following assumptions apply to all libraries participating in the FDLP.

1. A mostly electronic Federal depository library collection will consist of electronic information products and services. There will continue to be some tangible products distributed to the libraries because of the importance of the material and/or visibility and ease of use of the publication.
2. General administration of the electronic depository collection will be the responsibility of the Federal depository coordinator and the Library Director.
3. Collection development decisions for the electronic Federal depository library will be developed in accordance with the library's overall collection development policy and the FDLP requirement to select materials to meet the Federal information needs of the general public.
4. The library will develop public service guidelines for access to electronic products to ensure public access to the Federal resources.
5. A mostly electronic Federal depository library will provide public access computer work stations and study areas for users to access Federal publications on a comparable basis as those work stations provided for primary patrons.
6. Both onsite and offsite users will utilize the resources in a mostly electronic depository collection.
7. Staff in a mostly electronic depository collection will provide access to electronic depository resources through the most effective methods for the library's collections. For example, linking to online resources via the library's web pages, online catalog, and pathfinders as appropriate.
8. FDLs will continue to provide in-house assistance and access to Federal information resources for the general public even when most of these resources are available from a public website.
9. Reference assistance in a mostly electronic collection will include reference assistance to Federal resources, tangible and online resources, on a comparable level for reference assistance provided for non-Federal resources.

10. Decisions about developing a mostly electronic collection will not be made in a vacuum, but rather will be part of an overall review of depository collections in the Congressional District or local service area.
11. The general public must be allowed no-fee public Internet access to depository resources in your facility. If there is a security arrangement or filter in place, the library must provide an alternative mechanism to access Federal in-scope online resources for all groups of library users.
12. Libraries must ensure that their security and access policies, as well as those of the library's parent institution, do not hinder public access to depository materials.
13. Libraries must provide the ability to download, copy, and print Federal Government resources. If fees are assessed for these services, they must not exceed library charges for non-depository materials.
14. Although mostly electronic depositories focus on remote access to available electronic resources, access to materials in other formats should be made available during business hours or via interlibrary loan services. Libraries that offer night and weekend service hours to their primary user groups must offer comparable open hours to depository users of electronic resources.
15. Staff skill sets will change as the focus shifts from the physical processing or shipments to identification and bibliographic control for online resources. Staff must be prepared to share information about electronic products and services with library patrons and staff.
16. At a minimum, all Federal Depository Libraries should have a Web page that explains the depository's collection and areas of emphasis. It should include the FDLP logo, contact information for appropriate staff, and information about hours and services.