

Guidelines



U.S. GOVERNMENT
PRINTING OFFICE
KEEPING AMERICA INFORMED

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Establishing Shared Regional Depository Libraries

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 GPO.

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-state sharing between regional and selective libraries, and between regional depository libraries in one state and selective depository libraries in an adjacent state where no regional library exists.

In recent years, technological innovations and the online information environment have made it possible for a number of depository libraries to participate in multi-state collaborations for rapid interlibrary loan and other services. Technological innovation and the online environment have also made it possible to develop models for sharing resources and responsibilities between regional depositories in different states and the selective libraries they support. These guidelines have been developed to assist libraries in planning for single state and multi-state shared regional libraries.

Both intra-state and inter-state shared regional models can offer practical and economical means to improve public access while achieving operational efficiencies for the participating libraries. These guidelines encourage libraries to use an open and collaborative planning process and to ensure that proposals submitted to GPO for approval are developed with the expectation of improved public access to the depository collections. Proposals for shared regional collections and services within a single state can be approved by GPO. Proposals for shared regional collections and services involving two or more states also may require approval of the Joint Committee on Printing because they involve the sharing of resources and responsibilities outside the jurisdictions the libraries were originally designated to serve.

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. While GPO is not a signatory of the agreement, the MOU must be shared with and reviewed by Superintendent of Documents prior to signing and implementation. This is to make sure there are no conflicts between the provisions of the MOU and Title 44 of the United States Code and other FDLP policies. The GPO review also will ensure that

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all regional obligations for access, collections, and services will continue under the new pact. Once an MOU is signed, the participating regionals must notify the congressional delegation(s) of their state(s) of the new arrangement. GPO will inform the Joint Committee on Printing of the MOU and, if necessary, request formal approval.

Guidelines

The following guidelines facilitate the process of establishing a successful shared regional. As new regional agreements are implemented and reviewed, additional guidelines and best practices will be added.

COMMUNICATION

- ◆ Consult with selective depository libraries in the state(s) and assure their concerns are addressed.
- ◆ Keep the selectives in the participating state(s) informed through regular communications during the transition and implementation.
- ◆ Confer with and keep GPO abreast of plans and implementation schedules and activities.
- ◆ Obtain the support of the administrations from all participating libraries.
- ◆ Obtain the support of the state library commission or comparable authority.
- ◆ Review state plan(s) and revise accordingly.

COLLECTIONS

- ◆ Identify which regional is responsible for what part of the collections (date and SuDoc ranges).
- ◆ Specify where regional collections will be housed.
- ◆ Include responsibility of archiving and long-term security of the collection, as covered in the *Federal Depository Library Handbook* <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/handbook/index.html>.
- ◆ Address a contingency plan for maintaining the regional collection(s) should the MOU be terminated or modified by one or more of the parties.

ACCESS & SERVICES

- ◆ Address how this agreement will improve, or at least not diminish, service to the public, including access to the tangible collection.
- ◆ Address how selectives, the public, and others will identify regional holdings (e.g., shared catalog, holdings of libraries participating in the MOU reflected in all their catalogs).
- ◆ Provide information as to how, where, and when depository resources can be accessed and obtained by the user.
- ◆ Address how participating institutions will retrieve materials from the regional collection and deliver to users (e.g., interlibrary loan, document delivery).

- ♦ Determine how services for the public and support services for selective depositories will be conducted (e.g., reference assistance, disposition lists, training).

MOU SHOULD INCLUDE:

- ♦ Assurance that the agreement will improve, or at least not diminish, public access and service.
- ♦ Clear statement indicating the allocation of responsibilities for collections and services 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 regional requirements/guidelines of the FDLP continue to be in effect.
- ♦ Procedures for modifying or terminating the agreement.
- ♦ Provisions for disposition or transfer of materials in the event of termination, or significant modification, of the MOU that alter responsibilities for the collection.
- ♦ Contact information for the regional documents coordinators.
- ♦ Signatures of the library directors from all libraries participating in the MOU.

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