

**CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 1056**

(Supersedes Circular Letter No. 1012 dated August 10, 2018)

August 18, 2020

**TO:** Publishing Officials of the Federal Government

**SUBJECT:** Disseminating Information Products to the Public through GPO's Federal Depository Library Program

The Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO), administers the [Federal Depository Library Program \(FDLP\)](#) in compliance with the Depository Library Act (Pub. L. 113-187, Aug. 9, 1962, 76 Stat. 352, codified as amended at 44 U.S.C. §§ 1901-1916), and in support of GPO's mission of keeping America informed. The FDLP provides permanent free public access to tangible and electronic information dissemination products of the U.S. Government through a network of over 1,100 depository libraries throughout the United States and its territories.

All published Federal information dissemination products, regardless of format or medium (e.g., online, print, CD, DVD), which are of public interest or educational value, or produced using Federal funds, are to be provided to depository libraries for public use. Exceptions are those products that are:

- For official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes that are not of public interest or educational value.
- Classified for reasons of national security.
- The use of which is constrained by privacy considerations.
- "Cooperative publications" which must be sold by the publishing agency in order to be self-sustaining.
- Protected under copyright **and** the Government does not have rights to publish or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes.

All Federal information dissemination products published on an agency's (or an agency's official partner's) publicly accessible website and originating from, or funded by, the agency are intended for public use and are considered in scope of the FDLP.

For more information see [Superintendent of Documents Public Policy Statement 2019-1 Scope of Government Information Products Included in the Cataloging and Indexing Program and Disseminated Through the Federal Depository Library Program](#).

**How Working with GPO Benefits Your Agency**

Your efforts are crucial to help GPO widely disseminate your agency's publications and, in addition, meet the mandates of 44 U.S.C. §§ 1710, 1902-1903 that require information dissemination products published with Federal funds, in any format, be made available to the public.

Besides complying with the law, including publications in the FDLP guarantees your information dissemination products are:

- Discoverable by a broad audience.
- Represented in the comprehensive index of government publications, the [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications \(CGP\)](#).
- Preserved in perpetuity for future generations of researchers, historians, and the general public.

See Appendix I *Benefits to Agency, Reach the Public through GPO's Federal Depository Library Program* for more information.

## **How to Inform GPO of Your Publications**

### **• Print and Other Tangible Publications**

- For orders placed through GPO (Central Office and Regional Offices) and/or on agency direct-deal contracts, GPO decides which publications to distribute through the FDLP and determines the appropriate distribution medium and quantity required. GPO bears the printing and binding costs of the depository copies.
- For products produced independently of GPO, agencies are required to notify GPO of their intent to publish, and bear the printing and binding or replication charges for the number of copies required for depository library distribution. In all cases, GPO bears the expense of distributing the copies. Please notify GPO of upcoming publications printed independent of GPO by submitting one of the following forms to the shared [IntentToPublish@gpo.gov](mailto:IntentToPublish@gpo.gov) email box for rider determination:
  - GPO Form 3868 Notification of Intent to Publish
  - GPO Form 4044 Simplified Purchase Agreement (SPA) Work Order FormForms are available at <https://www.gpo.gov/how-to-work-with-us/agency/forms-and-standards>

### **• Electronic or Online Publications**

GPO will ensure permanent public access and make your publications discoverable in GPO's online research systems, OCLC (an international cooperative catalog of library resources), and the online catalogs of depository libraries nationwide. Please notify GPO via askGPO (<https://ask.gpo.gov/>) using the Agency Content Submission form. Instructions for submission can be found on the [Dissemination Program](#) page.

To discuss other mechanisms for submitting publications (e.g., API) please submit an inquiry through [askGPO](#), using the category Agency Publication Submissions/Document Discovery. We endeavor to make it as easy as possible for you to meet your statutory obligation.

## **Additional Guidance**

A listing of terms and their definitions is included for clarification. The enclosed *Guidelines for the Provision of Government Publications for Depository Library Distribution* (Appendix II) was developed to guide Federal agency officials in determining the suitability of various U.S. Government publications for depository distribution. To further assist you in making your determinations, “Types of Publications to Be Included in the Federal Depository Library Program” and “Types of Publications Excluded from the Federal Depository Library Program” are also included as Appendices III and IV.

Please help us ensure that all U.S. Government publications are evaluated for inclusion in the FDLP. If you have any questions about what is in scope of the FDLP, or how to comply with the statutory mandate to furnish publications, please contact us through [askGPO](#) using the category Agency Publication Submissions/Document Discovery.

Sincerely,

SANDRA MacAFEE  
Managing Director, Customer Services

Enclosure

**DEFINITIONS**

As used in this letter –

<b>Agency</b>	Any department of the U.S. Government, including any military department, independent regulatory agency, Government corporation, Government controlled corporation, or other establishment in the executive, legislative, or judicial branch.
<b>Depository library</b>	A library, designated under the provisions of 44 U.S.C. Chapter 19, which maintains tangible U.S. Government information products for use by the general public, offers professional assistance in locating and using U.S. Government information, and provides local capability for the general public to access electronic information dissemination products of the U.S. Government.
<b>Federal Depository Library Program</b>	A nationwide, geographically dispersed network, established under the provisions of 44 U.S.C. Chapter 19 and administered by the Superintendent of Documents, consisting of libraries acting in partnership with the Federal Government for the purpose of enabling the general public to have local access to Federal Government information at no cost.
<b>Government information</b>	Government publications, or other Government information products, regardless of form or format, created or compiled by employees of a Government agency, or at Government expense, or as required by law.
<b>Government information dissemination product</b>	Any recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristics, disseminated by an agency, or contractor thereof, to the public. (OMB Circular No. A-130, Managing Information as a Strategic Resource) The terms “ <b>Government publications</b> ” and “ <b>Federal documents</b> ” are also used interchangeably.
<b>Permanent access</b>	Through preservation activities, GPO will provide free permanent public access to Government publications and information dissemination products that are within the scope of the Federal Depository Library Program and the Cataloging & Indexing Program for future generations.

## APPENDIX I

### **BENEFITS TO AGENCY REACH THE PUBLIC THROUGH GPO'S FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM**

GPO partners with agencies to increase the visibility of U.S. Government publications. Tangible paper publications are highly sought after by the public who use Federal Depository Libraries, and electronic technologies afford tremendous opportunities for improved and enhanced public access to U.S. Government information. Making agency publications available through the FDLP fulfills Federal agency public dissemination mandates (44 U.S.C. §§ 1710, 1902-1903), and ensures that the information is maintained for permanent access even after it is no longer available on the agency website, all at no cost to the agency. GPO promotes Government publications, provides easy access, and makes U.S. Government publications permanently available to a wide audience of users in the following ways:

#### **Information Dissemination Services**

- Distribute tangible products to depository libraries at no cost to the agency if produced in or procured through GPO.
- Disseminate agency electronic information products via GPO's persistent identifiers and archiving services.

#### **Cataloging Services**

- Catalog agency information products in a standard library format for entry into the national bibliographic database and individual library online catalogs nationwide, allowing users to search for publications by title, agency, subject, and other metadata.
- Include agency information dissemination products in GPO's comprehensive index of government publications, the [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications \(CGP\)](#).

#### **Permanent Access Services**

- Coordinate with agencies, partner institutions, and participating depository libraries to ensure that both tangible and electronic information dissemination products are preserved permanently for use by the originating agency and the public.
- Store, maintain, and provide distributed permanent access to electronic information dissemination products of the U.S. Government.

#### **Depository Library Services**

- Over 1,100 depository libraries across the United States and its territories provide access to U.S. Government information for public use, and provide professional assistance for locating and using it.
- Regional depository libraries maintain permanent collections of all tangible information dissemination products distributed through the FDLP.
- Depository libraries provide local capability for the public to access U.S. Government information online, allowing the agencies to reach a wider audience.

## APPENDIX II

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE PROVISION OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS FOR DEPOSITORY LIBRARY DISTRIBUTION**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist agencies in complying with the Depository Library Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 19) for ensuring that publications of the U.S. Government are made available to depository libraries. These guidelines will assist agencies by describing the Government Publishing Office (GPO) requirements and procedures, and providing examples of the type of materials to be included in the program.

#### **2. OVERVIEW OF THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM**

The goal of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is to ensure current and permanent public access to information published by the U.S. Government. GPO administers the FDLP, by which U.S. Government publications are provided free of charge to over 1,100 libraries in the United States and its territories for the use of the public. The FDLP is the Nation's principal channel for providing U.S. Government information to the public.

The purpose and goals of the Federal Depository Library Program are rooted in the following Principles of Government Information:

- The public has the right of access to Government information.
- Government has the obligation to disseminate and provide broad public access to its information.
- Government has an obligation to guarantee the authenticity and integrity of its information.
- Government has an obligation to preserve its information.
- Government information created or compiled by government employees or at government expense should remain in the public domain.

The definition of a "Government publication" (44 U.S.C., §1901) is "informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law."

Regional depositories receive all tangible publications, both printed and electronic (e.g., CD-ROMs, DVDs), distributed through the program for permanent retention to ensure that archival resource collections of U.S. Government publications remain available throughout the United States. By contrast, selective depositories may choose to receive only specific categories of publications to meet local needs.

In return for receiving U.S. Government publications at no cost, depository libraries must make the publications available to the public, and provide appropriate assistance to users.

Both regional and selective depository libraries also provide for public access to U.S. Government information online.

### 3. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Agencies are required by 44 U.S.C. §§ 1710, 1902–1903 to make all of their publications ("informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law"), regardless of the printing source or publishing format, available to the Superintendent of Documents for distribution to depository libraries, except those which are:

- For official use only or for strictly administrative or operational purposes that are not of public interest or educational value (see Appendix II for examples).
- Classified for reasons of national security.
- The use of which is constrained by privacy considerations.
- "Cooperative publications" which must be sold by the publishing agency in order to be self-sustaining.
- Protected under copyright **and** the Government does not have rights to publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes.

*Printed Publications* – Agencies are not responsible for the printing and binding costs of depository library copies if the products are acquired through GPO. When these products are not printed or acquired through GPO, the publishing agency must pay for the printing and binding costs associated with printed products, and for replication and software costs associated with tangible electronic products for depository libraries. Examples of such products are those produced in printing plants authorized by the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), or those procured under a JCP printing waiver or under U.S. Government contract or grant. In all cases, GPO bears the expense of distributing the publications.

*Electronic or Online Publications* – All publications issued through an agency's website or the website of an official partner must be submitted to GPO for evaluation.

### 4. PROCEDURES

*Printed Publications* – Depository copies are ordered for all Federal agency publications not falling within the "exception" categories described in Section 3, including products published in tangible electronic formats (e.g., CD-ROMs, DVDs) and for which electronic dissemination is not suitable. Ordering procedures vary according to the printing source of the publication, and are described in [Circular Letter No. 1010 Use of GPO Form 3868, Notification of Intent to Publish](#) dated July 11, 2018.

*Electronic or Online Publications* – There are two ways to provide GPO with access to electronic publications:

1. When an agency publishes an information product on its own website or electronic information service, GPO will harvest the information product for permanent public access, and direct users to the product, either on the agency website or GPO's server,

as appropriate. Federal agencies can submit publications via askGPO (<https://ask.gpo.gov>), using the Agency Content Submission form.

To discuss other mechanisms for submitting publications (e.g., API) please submit an inquiry through [askGPO](#) using the category Agency Publication Submissions/Document Discovery. We endeavor to make it as easy as possible for you to meet your statutory obligation.

2. When an agency ceases to offer public access online to an information product within the scope of the FDLP, GPO can use electronic source files to provide permanent access through the FDLP. Source files may be provided to GPO facilities via SSH file transfer protocol (SFTP), internet download, CD-ROM, or DVD-ROM. GPO can accept virtually all popular electronic formats; electronic source files in PostScript (PS) or Standardized General Markup Language (SGML), ASCII format, and Press Optimized PDF are preferred. Source files for Federal agency information products should reflect the latest authoritative version of the text. GPO may receive such files from the originating agency, or as a by-product of replication contracts administered by GPO. These files may be disseminated through the [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications \(CGP\)](#) and/or through GPO's online repository, [govinfo](#).

## **5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE**

For additional information about, or assistance providing publications to, the Federal Depository Library Program, please contact your GPO Customer Services representative, or Library Services and Content Management:

Library Services & Content Management

U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, DC 20401

Phone: 202-512-1408

Questions about printed publications: [IntentToPublish@gpo.gov](mailto:IntentToPublish@gpo.gov)

Questions about electronic/online publications: Submit an inquiry through askGPO (<https://www.ask.gpo.gov/>) using the category Agency Publication Submissions/Document Discovery

## APPENDIX III

### **TYPES OF PUBLICATIONS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM – PRINTED AND ELECTRONIC**

**PURPOSE:** This appendix describes many types of publications for inclusion in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), and provides examples of each type. They are considered to be of "public interest" and/or "educational value" insofar as members of the general public (individuals, governments, private and public institutions, and organizations) have, or could express a need for, or interest in, the information for research, instructional, informational, scholarly, or compliance purposes. Depository Libraries make available printed and electronic publications to the public. The FDLP catalogs and indexes the print and electronic/online publications for the public in the [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications \(CGP\)](#). The CGP will indicate if a publication exists in multiple formats.

Special care must also be taken to include the following types of products in the FDLP:

- **CONSOLIDATED REPRINTS**
- **APPENDICES, SUPPLEMENTS, and INSERTS**, such as maps, charts, photographs, microforms
- **ALL THE ISSUES** of publications issued on a continuing basis, such as periodicals, multi-volume sets, and titles in numbered series
- **ALL PIECES OF MULTI-PART** publications, such as the binder and tabs in one package and the contents in another
- Publications printed in an **UNBOUND FORM** intended to be inserted in a binder by the recipient
- **MULTIPLE LANGUAGE VERSIONS**
- Publications that are produced in **MEDIA** other than ink-on-paper, such as CD-ROM, microfiche, video tape, multimedia kits, braille, and wall charts
- **SUPPLEMENTS, ADDITIONS, AND ERRATA SHEETS**

**QUESTIONS:** If you have questions about whether your publications fall within the scope of the Federal Depository Library Program, please contact:

Library Services & Content Management  
U.S. Government Publishing Office  
Washington, DC 20401  
Phone: 202-512-1408  
Fax: 202-512-1260

Questions about printed publications: [IntentToPublish@gpo.gov](mailto:IntentToPublish@gpo.gov)

Questions about electronic/online publications: Submit an inquiry through askGPO (<https://www.ask.gpo.gov/>) using the category Agency Publication Submissions/Document Discovery

## EXAMPLES OF PUBLICATIONS SUITABLE FOR FDLP DISTRIBUTION – ELECTRONIC AND PRINTED

**1. HANDBOOKS, MANUALS, GUIDES**, including **TECHNICAL, PROCEDURAL, ADMINISTRATIVE**, and **TRAINING** publications.

Examples:

- [\*Work and Family Issues: a module for supervisors and managers\*](#). Office of Personnel Management.
- *Weather Service Observing Handbook*. (series) Department of Commerce, National Weather Service.

**2. CIRCULARS** that are advisory in nature, warning the public or segments of the public about dangers, proper conditions for safety, etc.

Example:

- [\*Certification of Normal Category Rotorcraft\*](#). (Advisory Circular series) Federal Aviation Administration.

**3. DIRECTORIES** that list staff, office and agency locations, services, etc.

Examples:

- [\*Telephone Directory\*](#). Department of State.
- [\*Telephone Directory\*](#). U.S. House of Representatives.

**4. PROCEEDINGS** of symposia, public meetings, workshops, conferences, hearings, etc.

Examples:

- [\*Proceedings of the U.S.-Mexico Border Conference on Women's Health, September 26-28, 1995\*](#). National Cancer Institute.
- [\*Design of Shallow p-type Dopants in ZnO \(Presentation\)\*](#). Department of Energy, Office of Scientific and Technical Information.

**5. FORMS**, including surveys, applications for services, grants, admission to programs, jobs, etc.

Examples:

- [\*FormFlow \(CD-ROM\)\*](#). Defense Logistics Agency.
- [\*Schedule D \(Form 1120\), Capital Gains & Losses\*](#). Department of the Treasury, Internal Revenue Service.

**6. MAPS, ATLASES, CHARTS** (geographical, topographical, climatological, nautical, economic, etc.).

Examples:

- [\*Soil Survey of Maries County, Missouri\*](#). Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- [\*Sectional aeronautical chart, Chicago\*](#). Department of Commerce, National Ocean Survey.

**7. GRAPHICS** with informational content.

Examples:

- [\*Eat 5 Fruits & Vegetables a Day, For Health and Energy!\*](#) National Cancer Institute.
- [\*Ecoregions of Colorado\*](#). Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey.

**8. CATALOGS** (bibliographies, abstracts, and indexes, which identify and describe publications, educational courses, activities, events, etc.).

Examples:

- [\*Catalog of Captioned Educational Videos and Films\*](#). Department of Education, Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Office

**9. REPORTS**, including one-time and recurring reports, which generally describe the status of organizations and/or results of research, investigations, studies, surveys, etc. All versions of a report (draft, preliminary, interim, final) unless they are preliminary versions which are intended for strictly internal review and does not go to any segment of the public for review or comment.

Examples:

- [\*American Indians and Alaska Natives in Postsecondary Education\*](#). Department of Education, National Center for Education.
- [\*Coastline population trends in the United States 1960 to 2008\*](#). Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

**10. JOURNALS, PERIODICALS, NEWSPAPERS** (published on a periodic basis, more substantial than newsletters and bulletins).

Examples:

- [\*National Institute of Justice Journal\*](#). Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.
- [\*Monthly Labor Review\*](#). Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS** (draft and final). Draft statements are very important since they are issued to obtain public comment.

Examples:

- [\*North Fork Burnt River Mining, Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Baker County, Oregon\*](#). Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.
- [\*Final Environmental Impact Statement North Fork Burnt River Mining\*](#). Department of Agriculture, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

**12. LEGAL MATERIALS**, including **LAWS** and **DECISIONS** issued by regulatory agencies, Courts, Inspectors General, etc., **LEGAL OPINIONS, REGULATIONS, and RULES, LEGISLATIVE HISTORIES, and TREATIES and INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.**

Examples:

- [\*Decisions and Orders of the NLRB\*](#). National Labor Relations Board.
- [\*United States Treaties and Other International Agreements\*](#). Department of State.

**13. FLYERS, BROCHURES, BOOKLETS, and PAMPHLETS** designed to explain Government services and activities to the public.

Examples:

- [\*Social security, if you are blind, how we can help.\*](#) Social Security Administration.

**14. STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS.**

Examples:

- [Agriculture Statistics.](#) Department of Agriculture.
- [Occupational Employment and Wages.](#) Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**15. MONOGRAPHS** (substantial publications complete in one part or a finite number of parts).

Examples:

- [Oceans, Into the Next Millennium of Oceanographic Research.](#) Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- [Mathematics and Science Achievement in New Mexico.](#) Department of Education.

## APPENDIX IV

### **TYPES OF PUBLICATIONS EXCLUDED FROM THE FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM – ELECTRONIC AND PRINTED**

**PURPOSE:** This appendix describes 14 types of publications and provides examples for publications excluded from the Federal Depository Library Program because they fall under one of the following exemptions:

- For official use only, or for strictly administrative or operational purposes that are not of public interest or educational value.
- Classified for reasons of national security.
- The use of which is constrained by privacy considerations.
- “Cooperative publications” which must be sold by the publishing agency in order to be self-sustaining.
- Protected under copyright **and** the Government does not have rights to publish or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes.

#### **1. JOB VACANCY NOTICES or ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

#### **2. RULES, NOTICES, and HANDBOOKS CONCERNING RECREATIONAL and WELFARE ACTIVITIES and SERVICES for FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.** Includes such areas as bowling league materials, notices of picnics, parties, blood drives, health clinics, social club minutes, charity contributions, etc.

Examples:

- *General Manual – Merit Protection Plan.*
- *USDA Club of Franklin County Meeting Notice.*
- *Reclamation Mixed Bowling League – Handbook.*

#### **3. MEMOS, DIRECTIVES, NOTICES, and MANUALS of FEDERAL AGENCIES** used to implement **PERSONNEL POLICIES**, training activities of specific agencies and other internal administrative operations. (This does not include Government-wide personnel and training activities such as those conducted by Office of Personnel Management.)

Example:

- *Information for Employees Transferring at Government Expense.* Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation.

#### **4. DATA INPUT FORMS** used to record information to be put into manual or computer record systems.

Example:

- *ADP Nonexpendable Movable Property Responsibility and/or Project Serial & Retrieval Input Form for Describing Biological Families & Genus.*

5. **FORMS THAT FACILITATE CORRESPONDENCE** or control scheduling and collection of data, or route information in such areas as property or equipment management, personnel, operational statistics, or guidelines for internal procedures. Examples include memorandum and letterhead stock, transmittal slips, and guidelines for correspondence performance.
6. **PERSONNEL EVALUATION FORMS.**
7. **SOLICITATIONS** for the awarding of procurements including specifications and related documentation. These are usually advertised in the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) and the Federal Register and can be acquired from the agency.  
Example:
  - *Invitation for Bid Requests for Proposed Purchase Requests*
8. **ACCESS PASSES (IDs)** for automobiles, people, or buildings.
9. **SIGNS and BUMPER STICKERS THAT INSTRUCT**, such as "quiet" or "wet paint," or give information, such as parking lot number or medical and access warnings.
10. **WORKING DRAFT** (preliminary version that is intended for strictly internal review and revision and does not go to any segment of the public for review or comment).
11. **FORM LETTERS** designed to go to multiple recipients.
12. **USER MANUALS** for computer programs in the area of information covered by the **PRIVACY ACT**.  
Example:
  - *Pay/Pers System Time and Attendance Instructions*
13. **AGENCY CONTROL FORMS, HANDBOOKS, and MANUALS** used in the management of property such as typewriters, paper, etc.  
Example:
  - *Warehouse Catalog*
14. Publications containing high impact **PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII)**: personal identification numbers issued by government or financial institutions printed in conjunction with an individual's name, such as full or partial Social Security numbers, passport numbers, driver's license numbers, taxpayer identification numbers, patient identification numbers, financial account numbers, or credit card numbers.