

# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Federal Libraries

*Discusses Federal agency libraries as depositories, public access to depository collections in Federal Libraries, their relationship to regional depository libraries and non-Federal depository libraries, and the discard process*

### What's New or Important

This entirely new chapter brings together information regarding the responsibilities of Federal libraries that have been designated Federal depository libraries.

### Depositories in Federal Libraries

If your depository is a library of a Federal agency, it may have been designated as a Federal depository “by law” under the provisions of [Title 44 §1907](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html) (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html>). This section of the law permits the libraries of executive departments, military service academies and independent agencies. The phrase, “independent agencies”, is broadly interpreted so that many different types of libraries in all three branches of Government are eligible for participation in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Examples of Federal libraries are National libraries, Federal Court libraries, academic libraries on military bases, as well as libraries in Federal agencies. The libraries of Boards, commissions, committees, and quasi-official agencies are not eligible under Title 44 for depository status.

### Public Access to Depository Collections in Federal Libraries

- Since security in most Federal buildings is restricted in some manner, unplanned or unescorted access may be difficult to accommodate immediately. **However, free public access is still a REQUIREMENT for all depository libraries.** Therefore, depositories in Federal libraries may require the public to make arrangements in advance as well as to show identification, and/or to have an escort. **Your depository library MUST still grant access to the general public to use depository materials, both physical and electronic.**

- If your depository is in a Federal library, you are expected to work with your security office to make acceptable arrangements to ensure that the REQUIREMENT for public access to depository materials is met to the best of your organization's ability. Because facility access restrictions are well beyond the control of the agency library, latitude is given to Federal libraries, but public access to Federal Government information MUST still be provided in accordance with [Title 44 §1911](#) (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html>).
- Should physical access to your library building be denied temporarily because of the national threat level or other security issues, your library MUST still assist depository patrons by phone, e-mail, or other form of remote communication. In such circumstances, libraries may fax materials, scan resources and deliver them electronically, or route requests for depository resources through interlibrary loan. Referring users to another nearby depository library where access is open to the public is also acceptable.
- You may clarify the information needs of the person seeking entrance to the building to ensure that the person has a need that will be met by the depository materials housed in your library. Depositories in Federal libraries are strongly encouraged to provide access to commercial resources that are available to agency employees if these resources are required to adequately meet the information needs of depository users. Public users MUST be provided access to depository materials but may be restricted from accessing other non-depository materials even though they may have been created by a Federal agency.
- If your Federal library maintains public Web sites, you are REQUIRED to ensure access to the electronic depository materials and should develop Web pages that help users understand which materials are available to them. You are also strongly encouraged to catalog your depository publications and provide access to a publicly accessible online catalog. For those with limited physical access, it is recommended that information regarding how to contact the library for assistance via phone, e-mail, or other services are included on the Web site. The Web site should also include an explanation of how to locate other Federal Depository Libraries in the area at [Locate a Federal Depository Library](#) (<http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/login.jsp>).
- It is also strongly encouraged that you share your access limitations for public use with your regional and other selective depositories in the state to ensure appropriate referrals are made. For example, if a patron needs to call ahead for an appointment at a particular Federal library, other depositories should be aware of that requirement before sending someone to a specialized collection located in a Federal facility.

## Regional Depository Libraries

Regional depository libraries have no jurisdiction over depository libraries in the various agencies of the Federal Government or the highest appellate court

in the state. Federal agency depository libraries are designated by Title 44 and are responsible only to the Superintendent of Documents and their parent agency. However, in the spirit of cooperation, Federal agency libraries are strongly encouraged to participate in local meetings and other depository-related activities at the invitation of regional depository libraries.

## Discards by Federal Libraries

Depository discard procedures are different for Federal agency libraries. Your Federal depository library is not required to maintain depository titles for five years. Materials may be withdrawn at any time and disposed of after they have been offered to the Library of Congress and the Archivist of the United States. Federal libraries should be judicious in their item selections for the collection development process; they should not select too many materials that will not be added to their library's collection. It is important that depository coordinators make selections responsibly and be good stewards of the appropriated funds that are spent to provide these materials, which can be very expensive.

The Library of Congress accepts surplus paperbound and hardbound books. Guidance on material accepted may be found at [http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_04/36cfr701\\_04.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_04/36cfr701_04.html).

Contact information at the Library of Congress is as follows:

[Anglo-American Acquisitions Division \(LS/ACQ/ANAD\)](#)

Library of Congress

101 Independence Avenue, S.E.

Washington, D.C. 20540-4170

(202) 707-9524

<http://www.loc.gov/acq/fedsur.html>

Though not required, your Federal depository library is encouraged to offer withdrawn materials to your regional depository library, and to other depository libraries in their area if your agency regulations allow such practices. All materials distributed through the depository library program remain the property of the U.S. Government Printing Office. If your library is leaving the FDLP and wishes to keep certain publications that were received under the FDLP, you may request to retain them by submitting to LSCM a list of the depository publications you wish to keep.

## Tips, Practical Advice, and Lessons Learned

- Work with your security office to make arrangements to ensure that the requirement for public access to depository materials is met to the best of your organization's ability.
- Share any access limitations for public use with your regional and other

depositories in the state so that any referrals are made appropriately.

- Offer withdrawn materials to your regional library and to other depository libraries in their area if your agency regulations allow such practices so that other depositories can fill gaps in their collections.
- Participate in local meetings and other depository-related activities.

### Did you realize that you don't have to.....?

- Maintain depository titles for five years.
- Offer withdrawn materials to your regional library.
- Provide access to non-depository materials even though they may have been created by a Federal agency.

### Important for Library Administrators

- **Federal libraries MUST still grant access to the general public to use depository materials, both physical and electronic.**
- In the spirit of cooperation, Federal libraries are encouraged to participate in local meetings and other depository-related activities.
- All materials distributed through the depository library program remain the property of the U.S. Government Printing Office.