





SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO  
public documents  
**highlights**  
(December 1975)

# Proposed Standards & Guidelines

## PROPOSED DEPOSITORY LIBRARY SYSTEM MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE

The objective of the depository library system is to make U.S. Government publications readily accessible for use by the general public and to insure their continued availability in the future.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

#### The Depository Library Program

1. The Superintendent of Documents will be responsible for distribution of documents to depository libraries in accordance with the provisions of Title 44 of the United States Code.
2. The Superintendent of Documents will provide a comprehensive system of catalogs, bibliographies and indexes to U.S. Government publications.
3. There should be at least one selective depository accessible to the public in each Congressional district. The designated library shall have the interest, resources and ability to provide custody of the documents and public service. The library must contain at least 10,000 books other than government publications.
4. Each depository shall select and maintain a collection responsive to the needs of the users in the geographic area it serves and promote their use by the general public.
5. The collection in a depository library shall be organized to insure quick and easy access by library users. The library will promptly open shipments and claim publications selected but not received.

#### The Depository Library

#### Interlibrary Cooperation

6. The collection shall be maintained in as good physical condition as the other collections in the library.
7. Each depository library will assign sufficient staff to select, organize and provide reference service to the collection.
8. Each depository will provide sufficient space of a quality which conforms to ALA standards for the type of library.
9. The depository will be open to the public for free use of depository publications.
10. Each depository library will cooperate with the instructions issued by the Superintendent of Documents, respond promptly to the **Biennial Survey** and to other communications from the Public Documents Office.
11. All depository libraries shall be considered part of a national system to make Government documents available.
12. All selective depositories should be served by a regional depository. The regional depository libraries will retain at least one copy of all Government publications either in printed or microfacsimile form (except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents) and within the region served will provide interlibrary loan, reference service, and assistance for depository libraries in the disposal of unwanted Government publications.

Submitted by  
the Committee on Standards  
Depository Library Council  
To the Public Printer

## PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR THE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY SYSTEM

1. Objectives of the Depository Library System
- 1-1 The purpose of depository libraries is to make U.S. Government publications easily accessible to users and to insure their continued availability in the future.

### § 1-2

2. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
- 2-1 Obtain new federal publications and forward free of expense to depository libraries as expeditiously as possible.

### \* 2-2

- 2-3 Provide all numbers of series in the **List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries**, including those numbers not printed at the Government Printing Office. (See also **proposed changes 1.b.**)
- 2-4 Actively gather and distribute in paper or microformat all unrestricted Federal publications of reference value not printed at the Government Printing Office.

- 2-5 Provide samples and/or annotations for new titles offered to depositories, and return cards for selection purposes.
- 2-6 Subdivide item numbers as necessary to insure that libraries need receive only wanted documents.

- 2-7 Supply shipping lists containing item numbers, titles of documents, classification numbers and order information with each day's shipment of depository selections.

- 2-8 Supply forms for claiming.
- 2-9 Offer choice of format, paper, microform or other format; however, the GPO with consultation with the depository, should have the option of providing only one format when the nature of the material warrants it.

- 2-10 Provide a comprehensive system of catalogs, bibliographies and indexes to Federal publications. (See Proposed changes 2 b, 11/7/74)
- 2-11 Provide a standard classification system for Federal documents and related aids such as lists of subject headings.

- 2-12 Provide assistance to libraries on problems of using the Sudocs system of classification.

- 2-13 Maintain a library to become the National Depository Library.
- 2-14 Issue instructions for the selection, claiming, retention, withdrawal and other activities related to depository libraries.

- 2-15 Provide additional funds for the evaluation of depository libraries through questionnaire surveys, and inspections at intervals considered necessary by the Superintendent of Documents, to insure compliance with the depository law.

- 2-16 After advance notice to the library concerned, investigate unsatisfactory conditions in depository libraries by personal visits. (See **Proposed changes 1.c, 11/7/74**)
- 2-17 Provide written notice to a library about unsatisfactory conditions, and if not corrected within six months, delete the library from the list of depositories.

- 2-18 Announce new policies and changes on a regular basis to all depositories.
- 2-19 Cooperate with publication projects which contribute to use of Federal Documents.

- 2-20 Consult with an Advisory Council on matters related to depository libraries, including the development of standards.
- 2-21 Collect, compile, analyze and report statistics on a regular basis.

- 2-22 Designation of new depository libraries
- 3-1 There may be up to two depositories in each Congressional district, designated by representatives, two at large designated by Senator and other depository libraries specifically provided for in the depository law.

- 3-2 The library shall be open for free use of the general public, except as provided in U.S. Code, Title 44.
- 3-3 The library shall have the interest, resources and ability to provide custody of the documents and public service.

- 3-4 Minimum size of library. The library should possess at least 10,000 books other than government publications. (See Proposed changes 3.b 11/7/74)
- \* 3-5
- 3-6 Hours of service. Documents collections should be open the same hours as other major parts of the library, when the library is open for full range of services.

- 3-7 When there is a vacancy in a Congressional district, the fact should be made known to the state library authority, the state professional associations and the depositories within the region.
- 3-8 Eligible libraries shall apply to the state library authority for evaluation and recommendation. The library must be prepared to offer statistics on the size and character of its collection.

§ Reserved for new material

\* Deleted. See proposed changes 11/7/74 § 1 a

### § 2-22

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population served, budget, and if an academic library, the size of the student body, and need for research materials.

- 3-9 The evaluation must relate to community interests and indicate staff, space and budget to be allocated to the collection and the number, scope and character of the items to be selected. The State library authority shall consult with the librarians of other depositories in the Congressional District and the regional depository, if any, representatives from the professional association will make a recommendation based on location in relation to other depositories, the need for an additional depository and the ability of the library to provide custody and service. (See **Proposed changes 3.a 11/7/74**)

§ 3-10

4. Collections

- 4-1 Each depository library should maintain a basic reference collection available for immediate use consisting of all titles in Appendix A (attached).
- 4-2 Each library will acquire and maintain the basic catalogs, guides and indexes, retrospective and current, considered essential to the reference use of the collection. This should include selected non-governmental reference tools. (Appendix B, to be compiled).
- 4-3 Each depository will select frequently used and potentially useful materials appropriate to the objectives of the library.
- 4-4 Each depository will select materials responsive to the needs of the users in the Congressional district it serves. (See **Proposed changes 4.6, 11/7/74**)
- 4-5 Selection of at least 25% of the available items on the **Classified List** is suggested as the minimum number necessary to undertake the role of depository library. (See **Proposed changes 4.a, 11/7/74**)
- 4-6 Coordinate selections with other depositories in the district.

§ 4-7

5. Organization of collection.

- 5-1 The library will check all daily shipping lists to insure that items selected are received, and if not, promptly claimed.
- 5-2 Each publication in the shipment should be marked with the word "depository" and the date of the Shipping List according to the **Instructions to Depository Libraries**, Revised July 1974.

5-3 The library will record its accessions.

5-4 The minimum record for a depository library

§ Reserved for new material

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should be a shelf list which shows the library's holdings and the call numbers or locations where they may be found.

- 5-5 A standard classification system should be adopted for precise identification and location of materials requested by library users.
- 5-6 The classification adopted shall be optional with library; however, it is recommended that libraries which integrate their documents should maintain a shelf list by Sudocs number showing disposition of the publication.
- 5-7 Any document should be available for public use within 10 days after receipt.
- 5-8 Maintain statistics of the collection, needed for the Biennial Survey.

§ 5-9

6. Maintenance of the collection.

- 6-1 Collections should be maintained in good physical condition as other library materials.
- \* 6-2
- \* 6-3
- 6-4 Lost materials should be replaced if possible.
- 6-5 Unneeded publications should be made available to other libraries.
- 6-6 All publications should be retained for a period of at least five years before requesting permission from the regional library for disposal.

§ 6-7

7. Staffing

- 7-1 One person shall be designated by the library to coordinate activities and to act as liaison with the Superintendent of Documents in all matters relating to depository libraries.
- 7-2 This person shall be responsible for
- a) selection, receipt and claiming of depository distributions
  - b) replies to correspondence and surveys from the Public Documents Department
  - c) interpret the depository program to the Administrator of the library
  - d) performance and/or supervision of stated aspects of service, or in an integrated collection, a knowledge of to whom responsibilities are delegated.
    - (1) organization for use
    - (2) maintain records of the collection
    - (3) physical maintenance of the collection
    - (4) establish withdrawal procedures
    - (5) maintain reader services
    - (6) promote use of collection
    - (7) prepare budgets
    - (8) submit reports

7-3 The liaison person should be a professionally qualified librarian with a minimum of two years

§ Reserved for new material

library experience.

- 7-4 The liaison person should be directly responsible to the administrative level of the library.
- 7-5 Additional professional staff should be added depending on the size and scope of the library and the methods of organization of the collection.
- 7-6 Professional staff will be assisted by support staff in a proportion of 1 to 3, and no greater than 1 to 5.
- 7-7 Librarians and such support staff as indicated by their responsibilities will keep up to date on new developments through participation in professional societies, attendance at document workshops and professional readings.

§ 7-8

- 8. Space standards shall conform to ALA standards for type of library.
- 8-1 Space for the depository operation should be of the same quality as other areas of the library. It should be attractive, comfortable and have acceptable levels of lighting, temperature, ventilation and noise control. It should be functional, flexible and expandable.
- 8-2 The space should contain well planned areas for services provided, reference, circulation, loan and other public service activities as well as adequate space for the processing of new materials and housing of the collection.
- 8-3 It should include private work areas for staff members and the administrator.
- 8-4 All parts of the collection should be readily accessible, preferably open shelf, but in all circumstances, should be located so that materials may be retrieved in a reasonable period of time.
- 8-5 If documents are maintained in a separate division of the library, the space provided should be conveniently located to encourage use of the materials.
- 8-6 The library should abide by the recommended standards for handicapped users.
- 8-7 Tables and/or carrels should be provided for in-library use of documents.
- 8-8 Microform readers and reader/printers for the principal types of microforms should be provided.
- 8-9 Microform storage should be located in the documents area.

§ 8-10

- 9. Services to users requiring government information is the main objective of the depository system.

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9-1 The depository will be open to the public for free use of depository publications.

9-2 In each depository library, there should be recognized focal points for inquiries about government publications. At this point it should be possible to find out:

- a) Resources in the collection, including specific titles.
- b) Location of wanted publications in the Library.
- c) Answers to reference questions or a referral to a source or place where answers can be found.
- d) Guidance on the use of the collection, including the principal available reference sources, catalogs, abstracts, indexes and other aids.
- e) Availability of additional resources in the region.
- f) Assistance in borrowing documents from a regional or other libraries.
- g) User privileges for other libraries, educational agencies, culturally deprived, disadvantaged, handicapped, retired users and the community at large.

9-3 The library will have the option of establishing circulation policies for use of materials outside the library.

9-4 The library will provide facilities for using materials within the library, including copying facilities and equipment for reading microforms.

9-5 The library will publicize the depository collection through displays and announcements of significant new titles.

9-6 The library will provide to all users the same reference and research services offered to its normal clientele.

§ 9-7

10. Cooperation with the GPO.

10-1 Staff will familiarize themselves with the depository instructions and abide by their conditions.

10-2 Claims will be submitted within stated time limits.

10-3 Use correct address when corresponding with the GPO.

10-4 Promptly return all questions, surveys submitted by the Superintendent of Documents.

§10-5

11. Interlibrary Cooperation.

11-1 All depository libraries will be considered as part of a network of libraries consisting of selective, regional, and national. (See **Proposed Changes** 11.a, 11/7/74)



- 11-2 Selective depositories will cooperate in building up the collections of the regional depositories.
- 11-3 Selective depositories will cooperate with the redistribution of documents not needed in their own organizations.
- 11-4 All depository libraries will cooperate in reporting to the Superintendent of Documents new Federal documents not listed in the **Monthly Catalog**.
- 11-5 All depository libraries will cooperate in the development of tools for the identification and location of documents in other libraries.
- 11-6 Depository libraries borrowing documents from other libraries will verify bibliographic information as completely as possible.
- 11-7 All depository libraries will provide material on interlibrary loan at least for the regional depository. (See **Proposed Changes 11.b, 11/7/74**)
- 11-8 All depository libraries will provide a reasonable number of photocopies on request.
- §11-9
12. Regional depository.
- 12-1 Eligibility to become a regional depository library.
- There may be not more than two regional depositories in one state. A regional library may serve two or more states, or regional status may be shared by more than one library. (See **Proposed changes 12.a-b, 11/7/74**)
  - A regional library must be an existing depository.
  - A regional depository should be conveniently located to serve the largest number of people possible.
  - The library selected for regional status should have an adequate retrospective collection, space, personnel and a continuing basis of financial support sufficient to fulfill the obligations of a regional depository.
  - The selection of a regional depository should be agreed upon by the state library authority and all depository libraries within the region.
- 12-2 Obligations of regional libraries.
- Receive and maintain permanently all Federal government publications in either printed or microform as provided in the depository instructions.
  - Attempt to complete their retrospective collections of major serials, annuals and other research materials by means of gift,

exchange or purchase, including microforms.

- Screen all lists of documents withdrawn from selective depositories to insure their future availability in the region.
- Acquire additional copies where necessary.
- Assist selective depositories with reference questions, interlibrary loans and photocopies.
- Grant permission to selective depositories to dispose of unwanted documents according to the **Instructions to Depository Libraries**.
- Provide guidelines to selective depositories for preparing disposal lists of unwanted documents.
- Contribute to the effectiveness of the depository network through workshops, training sessions and consultive services within their region.

### §12-3

#### Appendix A

Budget of the United States  
 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance  
 Census Bureau Catalog  
 Census of Housing (for State of Depository only)  
 Census of Population (for State of Depository only)  
 Code of Federal Regulations  
 Congressional Directory  
 Congressional District Data Book  
 Congressional Record  
 County-City Data Book  
 Federal Register  
 Monthly Catalog  
 Numerical Lists of Schedules of Volumes  
 Slip Laws (public)  
 Statistical Abstract  
 Statutes at Large  
 Subject Bibliographies  
 Supreme Court Reports  
 United States Code  
 United States Government Organization Manual  
 Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents

### **Proposed Changes to the Minimum Standards and Guidelines for the Depository Library System Which Require Legislative and Administrative Action. (Numbers correspond to standards numbers.)**

#### 1. Distribution of Documents

- The number of copies of GPO imprints purchased for distribution to depository libraries is equal to the



number of libraries which select that Item from the List of Classes . . . (44 U.S. Code 1903). Most regional depositories are large libraries serving large numbers of library users on-site as well as providing interlibrary loan service to selective depositories within the region. **It is recommended that regional depositories be entitled to a second copy, either in microform or paper copy, if desired.**

b) The cost of printing and binding of non-GPO publications is borne by the components responsible for their issuance (44 U.S. Code 1903). The Committee feels this restricts their availability to the depository program. **It is recommended that appropriations be provided to enable the Superintendent of Documents to obtain non-GPO government publications.**

c) The Superintendent of Documents is charged with the responsibility of investigating depositories. (44 U.S. Code 1909.) **It is recommended that the Superintendent of Documents should receive adequate funding to conduct an inspection program of depository libraries biennially.**

## 2. Catalogs, bibliographies and indexes to U.S. Government Publications

a) Bibliographic tools cited in Title 44 include a Comprehensive Index (44 U.S. Code 1710), a Consolidated Index to congressional publications (44 U.S. Code 1710), a Catalog of Government Publications (44 U.S. Code 1711), and a Classified List (44 U.S. Code 1904).

b) The comprehensive index referred to in section 1710 was the **Document Catalog** which ceased with the 1940 coverage, and to some extent was replaced by the reorganized **Monthly Catalog**. It is recommended that **financial support be given to the Superintendent of Documents to increase the coverage in the Monthly Catalog, improve the indexing, provide periodic cumulations and speed up publication, thereof.**

## 3. Designation of Depository Libraries

a) It is possible for a new depository to be designated by a Congressman or Senator without the knowledge of the regional depository, which may be in the best position to know if there is a need for an additional depository and where it should be located. **It is recommended that 44 U.S. Code 1905 include the words and head of the library authority of the state and the heads of the regional depositories, if any.**

b) The law specifies that a library must contain 10,000 books other than government publications to be a depository library. The Committee considers a library of this size to have insufficient resources to support a depository library. The term "book" is misleading, since it could indicate multiple copies of the same book. The Committee recommends 25,000 titles other than government publications as the basic minimum size to be

eligible to become a depository library.

## Collections

a) Appropriations may not be used to supply depository libraries documents, books, or other items not requested by them (44 U.S. Code 1913). This restriction tends to nullify the intent of the depository law which is to make government publications available to the public. The law implies needs beyond those of the individual institution which serves as the depository. For example, a law library occupying a depository designation may be interested in acquiring only legal materials. Library users in the area may need access to other materials, such as the Census.

b) The present law makes no requirements as to number or type of document selected by the individual depository. While recognizing that to receive all depository items would place an undue burden on the small library, the Committee believes that it is reasonable to require a depository to accept a minimum of the selections available to depositories. This would include a basic list, revised annually, recommended by the committee of depository librarians and additional titles selected by the depository to satisfy the needs of the community.

5-10. These standards refer to custody and serve for depository materials. They are covered in general terms in 44 U.S. Code 1909 and specifically in **Instructions to Depositories** (July 1, 1974).

## 11. National System

At present this system consists of selective depositories and regional depositories. *It is recommended that provision should be made for a National Depository Library at the head of the system.* In the January 22, 1974, report of the ALA Ad Hoc Committee on the Depository Library System, 8 of 9 recommendations refer to a National Depository Library.

## 12. Regional Depositories

a) Only 38 States are served by one or more regional depositories. Regional status is voluntary. Selective depositories not served by a regional depository are unable to discard unwanted documents, or to depend on a regional for reference questions, interlibrary loan, photoduplication or assistance in the organization of their collections. The Superintendent of Documents lacks the assistance of the regional librarian for information about conditions of local depositories or for participating in inspections and their followup.

b) To assure the regional depositories are better able to serve selective depositories, **it is recommended that limited financial support be sought to defray direct costs incurred by a regional depository for responsibilities beyond those of a selective depository.**

**Number 12 GP 3.27:13**

