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Guidelines for 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 Government Publishing Office (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- and inter-state sharing between regionals and selective libraries, and for sharing of some services between regional depository libraries in one state and selective depository libraries in an adjacent or near-by state where no regional library exists.

In recent years, technological innovations and the ease of disseminating digital information have made it possible for a number of depository libraries to participate in multi-state collaborations for rapid delivery of shared services. This has also made it possible to develop models and networks that create cost effective shared print resource archives and digital repositories. Both intra- and inter-state shared regional models can offer practical and economical means to maintain public access and reallocate library space, while achieving operational efficiencies for the participating regional and selective depository libraries.

GUIDELINES

These guidelines were developed to assist libraries in planning for both intra- and inter-state shared regional depository libraries. The Superintendent of Documents will entertain proposals that reflect current models as well as ones that are unprecedented. GPO requires that an open and collaborative planning process be used to establish a successful shared regional.

In general.—

- Proposals are to be developed with the expectation of maintaining public access to and services for depository resources.
- Proposals that include sharing collections across state boundaries must have the support and signed consent of Senators from the participating states in accordance with 44 *United States Code* §1912.
- Proposals for shared regional depository libraries will be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent of Documents.

- 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.
- Consult with selective depository libraries in the state(s) and assure that their concerns are addressed prior to signing an MOU.

While GPO is not a signatory of the agreement, the MOU must be shared with and approved by the Superintendent of Documents prior to signing and implementation. This is to ensure there are no conflicts between the provisions of the MOU and Title 44 of the *United States Code*, and other FDLP guidance. A copy of the signed MOU shall be transmitted to GPO for inclusion in the libraries' official files. Once an intra-state agreement is finalized the participating regionals must notify the congressional delegation(s) of their state's new arrangement.

THE PROPOSED SHARED REGIONAL PLAN

- Obtain the support of the administrations from all participating libraries.
- Confer with selective depository libraries in the state(s) as part of the planning process and ensure their concerns are addressed prior to submission of the plan.
- Develop a plan for the new arrangement that addresses:
 - ◆ Goals, objectives, and success measures
 - ◆ Roles and responsibilities
 - ◆ Projected timeline
 - ◆ Access and services
 - Address how selectives, the public, and others will identify and access regional holdings (e.g., shared catalog, holdings of libraries participating in the MOU reflected in all their catalogs).
 - Specify how services for the public and support services for selective depositories will be conducted (e.g., reference assistance, disposition of depository materials, training).
 - ◆ Collections
 - Identify which regional is responsible for what part of the collections.
 - Specify where regional collections will be housed.
 - Address a contingency plan for maintaining the regional collection(s) should the MOU be terminated or modified by one or more of the parties.
 - ◆ Communication with selectives.

TO FACILITATE THE PLANNING PROCESS

- GPO will be available for consultation throughout this process.
- GPO's virtual meeting platform will be available for your use

REVIEW BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS

The review process will begin when the Superintendent of Documents receives a proposed shared regional plan. The Superintendent of Documents will:

- Review the plan and documentation against the plan elements above, within 30 days.
- Arrange a call with the potential regional coordinators to discuss the plan.
- Request that, once the plan is approved, the parties draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for review by the Superintendent of Documents.¹
- Notify the parties of the decision.
- Copies of the plan and the MOU will be kept in the libraries' official files at GPO.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING MUST INCLUDE:

- Assurance that public access to and services for depository resources will be maintained, and that success measures will be identified and assessed.
- Clear statement indicating the allocation of responsibilities for collections and services (to selectives) 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 of the FDLP continue to be in effect.
- Provision for periodic reviews of the arrangement that include success measures and any feedback received from selective depository libraries served.
- Procedures for modifying or terminating the agreement.
- Provisions for disposition or transfer of materials, and the realignment of services, in the event of termination of the agreement, or significant modification of the MOU that alters regional responsibilities.
- If applicable, reference the signed accord of the Senators involved.
- Contact information for the regional documents coordinators.
- Signatures of the library directors², from all libraries that are a party to the MOU.

TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Once approval is received libraries may begin to implement their plan. Communication is important throughout this process, and even more so during the transition and implementation.

- Keep the selectives in the participating state(s) informed during the transition and implementation.
- Keep GPO abreast of progress, implementation schedules and activities.
- Inform the community served of new arrangement(s).

¹ If the plan is for regionals to cross state boundaries, the consent of the Senators is to be submitted with the draft MOU.

² GPO understands that some institutions may require the signature of someone other than the library director.

- Review state plan(s) and revise accordingly.

INFORMATION FOR CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

The *Designation Handbook for Federal Depository Libraries* provides not only guidance on the designation process, but sample letters as well. The *Handbook* accessible from FDLP.gov at <<https://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/about-the-fdlp/5-designation-handbook-for-federal-depository-libraries>> and it was distributed to depository libraries as GP 3.29:D 44/3.

Discussion Draft