Draft: Depository Library Public Service Guidelines for Government Information in Electronic Formats

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1. All depository libraries should have a written policy regarding public services for Government information in electronic formats. This policy should also contain provisions for no-fee access to computer workstations with CD-ROMs, diskettes, and the Internet. These should be equal to or exceed the services provided by other departments of the library.
2. All depository libraries should offer access to electronic information for the general public. Attempts must be made to purchase hardware that meets the latest Recommended Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries as published in Administrative Notes (updated annually).
3. All depository libraries should make tangible electronic products and services (CD-ROMs, floppy diskettes) available to the general public in a timely manner. For example, if a product is not currently loaded and/or supported on a depository library's computer workstation, the depository library should attempt to provide access to it within a designated time frame as determined by each library. If the depository library is unable to provide adequate access to and technical support of tangible electronic products, circulation of those products should be made available in accordance with the library's circulation policies of other non-Governmental tangible electronic products or other depository resources.
4. All depository libraries should provide Internet access to Government information at no cost to the general public. Access should also include Telnet and FTP capabilities to encourage downloading and/or transmission of electronic data.
5. Depository libraries are encouraged to develop home pages or bookmarks for Government information and/or work cooperatively with other depository libraries in their area to provide links to prominent or useful sites for the general public; such efforts would be in line with Section 8-6, (publicizing the depository collection) of the Guidelines for the Federal Depository Library Program.

6. Depository library public service areas should have a capability for fax and e-mail delivery of Government information to distance users in accordance with existing policies in the library.
7. Depository libraries are obligated by law to provide public access to depository receipts, including electronic Government information products. Depository libraries should provide the ability to download or print electronic Government information in accordance with GPO requirements and guidelines. Limits to or cost associated with printing or downloading shall be consistent with other public service provisions of the library.
8. Whenever possible, depository libraries are encouraged to provide hard disk space on publicly available computers for temporary storage of electronic Government information for patron use.
9. Depository libraries should provide adequate reference service and help guides/documentation of tangible electronic products and the Internet for the general public.
10. Depository libraries are encouraged to offer training for the general public in using tangible electronic products and Internet resources.