

May 21, 2020

Dear Depository Library Coordinator,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our Nation, libraries are assessing conditions and making decisions about reopening. Many of our libraries in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) have already reopened, or are planning to do so, as jurisdictions rescind stay-at-home orders. We also know many are facing new challenges and addressing needed operational changes they might never have imagined.

Many libraries are adopting a phased approach to reopening. Some plans restrict access to the library's primary patrons or limit the number of people allowed in the library at a time. I have received questions from depository library coordinators who are concerned about potential conflicts with the library's statutory obligation to provide free, public access to anyone wishing to use Government materials received through the FDLP.

The U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) recognizes that local jurisdictions and parent institutions may have more specific guidance to which you must adhere during this most extraordinary time. It is GPO's position that **temporarily** restricting physical access to the library is acceptable, as these precautions were put in place for the health and safety of library staff and for those you serve. We are aware that this temporary situation may last weeks or months, although we all hope that depository libraries will be in a position to restore full admittance as soon as possible.

GPO strongly encourages you to post any current access limitations on your website and in signage visible from outside the library. Additionally, you should publicize how the public, or non-primary patrons, may receive help remotely by email, phone, or other means. This may be a continuation of remote services you have been providing for the last several weeks. As always, please take advantage of the FDLP network to help your patrons gain access to needed Federal information resources.

To continue to keep you informed, we are working on FAQs and additional guidance, and planning webinars on these topics through the FDLP Academy. Keep an eye out for [FDLP News Alerts](#) and check the [COVID-19 Toolkit for the FDLP](#) regularly. And, if you haven't already, [notify GPO](#) when you reopen and when you will be able to accept depository shipments. We also are interested in your library's reopening plan and how it supports

access to Federal depository resources. Should your plan change, be sure to notify us about that as well.

Thank you for your continued dedication to *Keeping America Informed* by providing access to and services for Government information. I greatly appreciate the extra efforts undertaken to continue to meet the needs of your users during this incomparable time. Please email at [FDLPOutreach@gpo.gov](mailto:FDLPOutreach@gpo.gov) if you have any questions.

Stay safe, and stay healthy,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "LB Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LAURIE B. HALL  
Superintendent of Documents