

Digital FDLP Implementation: Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

- Digital FDLP Implementation & Basics..... 2
 - What will be distributed in print through the Federal Depository Library Program? 2
 - What is the timeline of this transition?..... 2
 - What are the NCSA Steering Committees, who are on them, and how will they help manage the National Collection? 3
 - What are the incentives to stay in the Program? 3
 - How will reducing receipt of new, tangible materials provide an opportunity to shift focus for improved collection management of physical and digital collections? 3
 - What criteria were used to determine which depository libraries will receive the available print titles?..... 4
- FDLP Collection Management..... 5
 - What will my library be expected to do in a digital FDLP? What options do we have? 5
 - What does collection development look like in a Digital FDLP?..... 6
 - Are the public access requirements changing under a Digital FDLP?..... 6
 - What guidance exists regarding how to manage a digital FDLP collection? (ex. weeding digital resources, knowledge base integration, search results configuration, etc.) 6
 - What are the minimum requirements for Federal depository libraries that accept to receive titles from the Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List, including information on interlibrary loan, access, and preservation requirements?..... 6
 - What if my library does not want or is not able to continue to receive PDT titles that we have been allocated? 7
 - What is the vision and expectations for the historic tangible collections in a digital FDLP? 7
 - Will weeding and retention rules change for existing FDLP tangible material? 7
 - As new tangible receipts are reduced, will libraries be permitted to supersede or substitute their last print issues received prior to February 2024? 7
- Digital or Online Titles 8
 - How is GPO capturing digital pubs? Are they official? What if they supersede? 8
 - How is GPO dealing with digital publications that are difficult to use online? (ex. too large to download, not screen readable, etc.) 8
 - Will GPO help with assistive or adaptive technologies? 9

Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List & the future of print distribution 9

 What is the Print Distribution Titles List? 9

 What methodology was used to determine which titles to include on the Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List? 9

 Do regionals have to continue receipt of each of the Print Distribution Titles?10

 Will Braille titles continue to be distributed through the FDLP?10

 How can I tell if a Print Distribution Title that I just received has new retention requirements? Do I need to mark them differently since they have different retention requirements?10

Upcoming changes10

 What will happen to my FDLP shipments in the upcoming months?10

 What changes are in store for item selection profiles, catalog records, and vendor record loads?11

Library selection profiles11

 Do I need to go into DSIMS now and drop tangible item numbers?11

 Do I need to go into DSIMS and select EL item numbers for tangibles?11

 Do I need my regional’s permission to select EL formats?11

Miscellaneous12

 Will the GPO Bookstore continue to sell titles?12

 Will GPO explore Print on Demand again?12

Digital FDLP Implementation & Basics

What will be distributed in print through the Federal Depository Library Program?

As the FDLP transitions to digital as the primary mode of access and preservation of newly published material, the tangible titles that will continue to be distributed are included on the [Print Distribution Titles](#) (PDT) List.

What is the timeline of this transition?

The reduction in the amount of print material being distributed to Federal depository libraries (FDLs) is happening now. The current focus of the Digital FDLP implementation is to establish NCSA Steering Committees, whose tasks include developing NCSA collection development plans for print material. After that work has been performed, GPO will have freer resources to investigate new and improved digital initiatives. See the [Digital FDLP Implementation](#) page for more details.

What are the NCSA Steering Committees, who are on them, and how will they help manage the National Collection?

Each [NCSA steering committee](#) is led and facilitated by a member of the Depository Library Council, and GPO staff. How each NCSA steering committee will operate is evolving at present. However, it is expected that each NCSA may operate differently, depending on the needs of the service area. Stay tuned to FDLP News and Events for alerts about any NCSA CCD meetings that you may participate in.

What are the incentives to stay in the Program?

LSCM will continue its Special Selection Offer (SSO) opportunities for Federal depository libraries to acquire print copies of high interest titles with broad or geographic appeal. SSOs will be distributed by a lottery system, with LSCM ensuring each NCSA will have at least one copy.

GPO is committed to increasing access to and discovery of digital Government information through libraries in the FDLP. LSCM is strengthening its capacity for digital imaging, ingesting content into GovInfo, enhancing bibliographic records, and increasing awareness of digital content. Enhanced tools, support, and services for digital content are primary goals for LSCM.

Online Federal Government information often requires professional expertise to find, understand, and interpret. Expert librarians in Federal depository libraries will continue to be a resource for all users who need assistance in accessing and using Government information resources, in all formats. FDLs continue to support democracy and a mission of *America Informed*. To that end, LSCM will increase training and professional development through the [FDLP Academy](#).

By implementing a limited distribution and shared collection management model within National Collection Service Areas (NCSAs), GPO is easing space constraints in many libraries. This will also save on processing costs in depository libraries.

How will reducing receipt of new, tangible materials provide an opportunity to shift focus for improved collection management of physical and digital collections?

A digital-first FDLP requires reducing the distribution of print publications to depository libraries. In so doing, GPO staff and fiscal resources will be aligned with operations for digitizing print titles and identifying, providing bibliographic control, harvesting, hosting, and increasing access to digital resources.

The importance of the physical historical collections held by depository libraries for access and preservation is not diminished in the digital-first FDLP. NCSA Steering Committees will work to develop collaborative collection management plans for the print depository collections. The collection flexibilities that exist in the new framework will allow depository

coordinators to weed and right-size their collections if they so desire. GPO plans to develop user needs assessments to assist libraries in this effort. Also, a preservation plan is in development, which will call for preservation services to support depository historical print collections. Although tangible collections will cease to grow at the rapid pace they once did, there will still be a need for some collection management activities. Working with digital content will be the norm, and depositories may find the need to make staff shifts, as GPO is doing, to focus on making digital content easily accessible.

What criteria were used to determine which depository libraries will receive the available print titles?

The criteria used to determine the print allocations to depository libraries was determined by the National Collection Service Areas (NCSAs). Following the November 2023 NCSA meetings to discuss distribution criteria, depository library coordinators were asked to complete a questionnaire, *Determining Criteria for Distribution Print Titles*, which was open from November 20-30, 2023. The purpose was to allow them to provide input on their preferences for how criteria should be weighted when making these PDT allocations within their NCSA.

Coordinators were asked to rank the importance of each criterion by assigning it a number from 0-100 with the sum totaling 100. Depository coordinators also had the opportunity to add additional criteria by completing a free text box. The following heat map shows the resulting criteria weights in each of the NCSAs.

Criteria	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Print preservation commitment	17.08	16.76	16.26	13.19
Interlibrary loan available	13.27	11.25	12.35	13.23
Demonstrated user need for print	11.3	10.45	8.23	8.56
Extensive run of title preserved	8.35	12.01	9.17	7.78
Community with limited internet connectivity	7.89	7.22	7.61	8.69
Government information expertise available	7.58	8.51	8.66	7.16
Will provide reference service for NCSA	7.26	7.33	7.11	6.14
Library Type	5.89	6.72	6.21	6.4
Depository type (regional/selective)	5.55	5.31	7.42	6.23
Geographically dispersed	5.45	5.56	5.99	8.03
Distributed geographically - NCSA subregions	4.72	4.57	6.41	9.58
Depository collection circulates	4.42	4.23	3.63	4.46

In addition to the criteria, LSCM had other priorities for the allocation of print titles that

would help ensure equitable distribution:

- Favor libraries with strong and compliant public access.
- Existing Preservation Stewards have priority.
- Favor libraries with strong support for sharing materials.
- No duplication of titles at libraries on the same campus.
- Allocations were mapped for a visual of geographic distribution.
- Libraries receiving the bound Congressional Serial Set will not receive the individual House and Senate Documents or House and Senate Reports.
- Each of the following titles will be sent to allocated libraries as a set:
 - *Code of Federal Regulations* and *Finding Aids and Index*.
 - *Budget of the United States, Analytical Perspectives, and Major Savings and Reforms*.
 - *Congressional Record Proceedings and Debate* and *Daily Digest* (bound).

FDLP Collection Management

[What will my library be expected to do in a digital FDLP? What options do we have?](#)

Federal depository libraries and their staff are an important asset in a democracy. Depository libraries provide a critical link between the Federal Government's information resources and people.

Libraries will develop and manage digital collections that meet their patron needs. How digital collections are to be developed will be a local decision, based on the library's catalog being used, consortium arrangements, and integration of digital resources into other discovery tools such as library websites, research guides, etc.

The success of a digital FDLP collection largely depends on the skills of the library staff, who always seek to meet the needs of their patrons, where their patrons are at. Time allocated for staff is also critical, as Federal Government information resources are often timely, and quick access is beneficial. Ongoing training for library staff is also needed to maintain knowledge of where to find relevant government information and how to make use of it.

The information resources of the Federal Government have always required specialized expertise to discover and contextualize. Federal Depository Libraries and their staff have always served to bridge the gap between the information resource and the patron's information need. The Federal Government's information being disseminated digitally does not alter that fact. If anything, there is a greater need for subject matter experts across the country to fill that vital need. In a sea of online information, library staff are essential to help the public find official, reliable resources to meet their information needs.

Requirements for a digital Federal Depository Library remain the same as for ordinary depository libraries. Provide public access to, and assistance in the use of, the information products of the U.S. Government.

What does collection development look like in a Digital FDLP?

Libraries may build a digital FDLP collection however it best works for them. Cataloging records for online content are one way to build a digital collection. Some libraries work with vendors to acquire catalog records. When that happens, libraries typically profile for EL-format item numbers using their item selection profile, so the vendor knows what records to deliver. Other libraries include links to Government information websites and titles on their library websites or research guides.

Are the public access requirements changing under a Digital FDLP?

No, public access to depository materials continues to be a cornerstone of the FDLP. Tangible materials are Federal property and were/are produced and provided with taxpayer funds. Even for all-digital libraries without any print collections, onsite access for the public is still required so that patrons can utilize digital materials via library computer networks and receive reference services and support from trained library staff.

What guidance exists regarding how to manage a digital FDLP collection? (ex. weeding digital resources, knowledge base integration, search results configuration, etc.)

The management of a digital FDLP collection is an area that GPO seeks assistance from the FDLP community. Each library has local circumstances, such as their catalog, consortium arrangements, staffing, and ‘inherited’ circumstances resulting from past library practices. As such, it is difficult for GPO staff to universally advise libraries on how to best manage their local collection.

As resources shift away from tangible operations to support more digital operations, LSCM will seek input from the FDLP community to develop guidance for managing digital FDLP collections. Current guidance will be revised and expanded, and new guidance will be developed to accommodate the range of local circumstances across the FDLP.

What are the minimum requirements for Federal depository libraries that accept to receive titles from the Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List, including information on interlibrary loan, access, and preservation requirements?

Libraries that receive a PDT title must agree to hold the material for 5-years. Supersession and online substitution will not be permitted during that time, as GPO will be working to secure Preservation Steward agreements to ensure the paper format remains accessible into the future.

PDT recipients must also commit to catalog and make all print receipts discoverable via the library’s integrated library system (ILS) to support interlibrary loan and in-library

access of the print format.

What if my library does not want or is not able to continue to receive PDT titles that we have been allocated?

We understand that circumstances and collection needs change over time. Please reach out via [askGPO](#) to let LSCM know, and we will work to find a new home for that content. We also plan to involve the NCSA Steering Committees in reallocation discussions since this is related to overall collection development in the service area.

What is the vision and expectations for the historic tangible collections in a digital FDLP?

Even though LSCM has shifted the format for future publications to be primarily digital, the essential tenets of the FDLP have not changed. This shift coincides with agencies preferring to disseminate their information products online.

Although most FDLP publications will be issued in online format, that does not diminish the importance of historic physical collections for access and preservation. The requirements and guidance for managing the historic tangible collection of FDLP publications is not changing. Selective depositories may continue to manage their print collections by weeding through their regional what they do not wish to keep in tangible format. In addition, the vast majority of older FDLP publications are not currently available via a trusted, digital repository, like [GovInfo](#). LSCM is committed to digitizing these publications. However, that effort will take years, and Federal depository libraries are serving both the digital and tangible National Collection by retaining these publications, so they are available for both digitization and permanent print access.

Moving forward, each National Collection Service Area (NCSA) will have no less than one copy of everything that continues to be distributed in paper format. Each NCSA will also have a different collection depending on what was deposited and retained in libraries historically over time. We realize that this is a new paradigm of collaborative collection management for older and newer print materials.

Will weeding and retention rules change for existing FDLP tangible material?

No, there are no immediate plans to revise any weeding and retention rules for existing FDLP material distributed under the old framework. All existing weeding and retention rules are in force. See: [Weeding a Depository Collection](#) for information about existing policies. Consult your regional depository library for any specific procedures that may be in place locally.

As new tangible receipts are reduced, will libraries be permitted to supersede or substitute their last print issues received prior to February 2024?

There are no changes to weeding and retention rules for material received prior to February

2024 (under the old FDLP framework). All depositories, regionals and selectives, may supersede paper and microfiche content when the content has a new edition or issue posted online.

Further, any content received prior to February 2024 that has an online equivalent, may be substituted after the library has held the tangible format for a year. Selectives must seek authorization from their regionals for the substitution.

Supersession and substitution rules for material received prior to the limited distribution framework/digital FDLP implementation may be found in [Weeding a Depository Collection](#).

Digital or Online Titles

[How is GPO capturing digital pubs? Are they official? What if they supersede?](#)

LSCM staff continue to identify, catalog, and capture, digital format resources as before. Catalog records are available on OCLC and in GPO's catalog, the [Catalog of U.S. Government Publications](#) (CGP). Persistent Uniform Resource Locators (PURLs), found in catalog records, direct users to where the online resource may be found. In some cases, digital information is crawled and made available in the [FDLP Web Archive](#).

Scaling down tangible format operations will enable LSCM to shift resources into developing digital products and services. LSCM will continue to investigate options and to work with the depository community to determine needs and priorities moving forward.

As always, publications distributed or digitally disseminated through the FDLP are official Federal Government resources. The FDLP does not distribute commercial or other non-official information resources.

Superseding digital resources are captured when possible; however, this is an area that needs further exploration. Online platforms may not permit GPO to crawl and capture the information products therein. Some titles supersede so regularly that it is difficult to capture before it is too late. GPO hopes to expand digital capture of titles in the future.

[How is GPO dealing with digital publications that are difficult to use online? \(ex. too large to download, not screen readable, etc.\)](#)

LSCM plans to develop further guidance on this topic. GPO seeks to be proactive when working with Federal agencies, to advise them on best practices with digital products and how to make them more user-friendly. As LSCM shifts from the legacy print operations to new digital operations, we will consult the FDLP community to identify challenges to digital format usage and solutions to those problems.

Will GPO help with assistive or adaptive technologies?

GPO is not one of the 26 Federal Agencies that have grant-making authority, and as such, is unable to provide financial assistance in the acquisition of assistive or adaptive equipment or software.

Where possible, LSCM staff are seeking to provide free training opportunities for libraries, so that they may apply best practices and low-cost/no-cost solutions to meet patron needs.

Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List & the future of print distribution

What is the Print Distribution Titles List?

The [Print Distribution Titles List \(PDT\)](#) consists of titles that will continue to be distributed in paper format. No new titles will be added to the list. The quantity of copies available fall into three categories:

- **Unlimited distribution titles** will be distributed to any selecting library and includes the U.S. Code, Statutes at Large, U.S. Reports, Constitution of the United States (Analysis & Interpretation, including supplements), House and Senate Journals, and Bound Congressional Record Index.
- **20-copy titles** include Serial Set (both bound and individually published House and Senate Reports and Documents), Bound Congressional Record (Proceedings & Daily Digest), and select maps.
- **50-copy titles** include all other titles on the PDT List.

Titles not on the PDT List that meet select criteria may be distributed via Special Selection Offers (SSOs).

What methodology was used to determine which titles to include on the Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List?

The List of Classes (LoC) was the basis for title selections. Several factors were used to determine which titles from the LoC to include on the PDT List:

- Statutorily required print titles.
- Legally controlling authority in some jurisdictions is print format.
- Item numbers under which publications were distributed since FY 2019.
- Popular titles based on item selection rates of depository libraries and feedback from depository library staff.
- Non-ephemeral maps where online version lacks sufficient resolution.
- Time-series statistical data.
- Titles of an important reference nature.
- *Paper Titles in the FDLP-Core List* (1996 and reaffirmed in 2019; Later became known as [Essential Titles for Public Use in Paper or Other Tangible Format](#)).

A more detailed description of this methodology will be in the report of the new print distribution framework, which is expected to be completed and posted, prior to Council's

spring meeting.

Do regionals have to continue receipt of each of the Print Distribution Titles?

No, regionals are not obligated to take all or any of the Print Distribution Titles. All other responsibilities remain unchanged for now.

Will Braille titles continue to be distributed through the FDLP?

Braille titles will not be distributed through the FDLP unless a title is selected as a Special Selection Offer.

How can I tell if a Print Distribution Title that I just received has new retention requirements? Do I need to mark them differently since they have different retention requirements?

February 2024 was a transition month. Publications shipped in February that have old retention requirements were noted in the shipping lists with a ^ symbol in the title field. Unless otherwise noted, FDLP receipts from February 2024 onwards should be assumed to have new retention requirements.

Libraries should note in catalog records or otherwise mark receipts in such a way that future staff will understand the retention requirements.

Upcoming changes

What will happen to my FDLP shipments in the upcoming months?

Libraries will note the following:

- Unlimited distribution titles ship out like normal to selecting libraries.
- 20 and 50-copy titles on the PDT List ship out to libraries selected to receive them.
- February 2024 was a transition month. February shipping lists noted material that was shipped to all selecting libraries (prior to the new quantity limits). Those publications may be managed according to the previous retention rules. Superseding is permitted, titles may be substituted with the online equivalent with regional permission (after having held them for a year), and weeding is permitted per the library's regular weeding process after being held for five years.
- Print Distribution Titles that are distributed under the new NCSA-framework have different retention rules. They must be retained for five years, after which, they must be offered nationally on FDLP eXchange, at a minimum.
- The only material to ship out moving forward will be PDT List content and Special Selection Offers (SSOs), both of which will have new retention requirements.
- In lieu of boxes, GPO's Distribution unit is mailing material in envelopes to ensure more regular receipt of material.
- Libraries will only receive shipping lists when they receive a publication on that shipping list.
- Separate shipping lists are being affixed to the outside of the Separates box in a clear envelope.

What changes are in store for item selection profiles, catalog records, and vendor record loads?

Libraries will note fluctuations in their selection profiles as GPO staff perform adjustments to the List of Classes. Keep in mind that selectives may deselect anything they do not wish to profile for, at any time. Regionals must wait for LSCM to notify them when they may deselect item numbers.

Libraries in the Cataloging Record Distribution Program (CRDP) will not need to update their vendor with selection profile changes. As part of the CRDP program, Marcive, Inc. regularly checks selection profiles and updates your records accordingly.

Libraries not participating in the CRDP will need to consult with their vendors about upcoming changes, including if your library purchases services from Marcive, Inc.

Library selection profiles

Do I need to go into DSIMS now and drop tangible item numbers?

If you are a selective depository and there is anything you wish to cease receiving now, regardless of whether it is on the Print Distribution Titles (PDT) List or not, go ahead and deselect it in DSIMS.

GPO staff have adjusted library item selection profiles to reflect the 20 and 50-copy limited distribution title selectors.

Keep in mind that there are seven unlimited titles on the PDT List that will go out to all current selectors. If you currently select one or more of the unlimited titles, and wish to continue receiving those titles, then do nothing.

Bottom line, you only need to act in DSIMS if you wish to cease getting something in paper immediately.

Do I need to go into DSIMS and select EL item numbers for tangibles?

Per existing guidance, you may always add EL item numbers at any time to your profile, whether there is a corresponding tangible format item number or not. GPO is still determining our approach to updating the List of Classes to a digital FDLP framework. Libraries will note fluctuations in their selection profiles as GPO staff perform any adjustments to the List of Classes. If there are any changes to regular processes, FDLs will be informed.

Do I need my regional's permission to select EL formats?

Barring any special agreement between you and your regional library, your library is free to select and deselect whatever you like, without consulting your regional library. However,

keep in mind that you do need regional permission if you decide to weed material held for more than five years, or to substitute material (i.e., replacing a paper copy with a digital copy), after having held the paper for more than a year.

Miscellaneous

Will the GPO Bookstore continue to sell titles?

There are no plans to close the [GPO Bookstore](#). Copies of some titles not received through the FDLP may be purchased online through the GPO Bookstore.

Will GPO explore Print on Demand again?

In the recent past, Print On Demand (POD) was evaluated as a mechanism for libraries to acquire FDLP material outside of normal item selection mechanisms. At that time, it was determined to be financially unfeasible, given the then-available POD technology.

Further, there are several reasons the FDLP shifted its framework in 2023 to focus on the digital format. Reasons include:

1. Acknowledgment that the Federal Government seeks to disseminate information digitally rather than in paper,
2. Increasing costs of paper,
3. Flat appropriations for printing resources, and
4. Community input requesting GPO do more to capture, preserve, make discoverable, and disseminate, the digital format.