



Implementing the Regional Discard Policy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Do I need to notify the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) that I am discarding the titles on the Eligible for Discard List?

Yes, regional depository libraries must submit a request to discard a title to the Superintendent of Documents. Please follow the [instructions for submitting a request to discard](#).

Please know that the list of eligible titles will grow as time passes. The [first list of titles](#) is a subset of what is, and what ultimately will be, eligible for discard. GPO is starting the implementation with this subset as processes and procedures are fine-tuned. As more FDsys/**govinfo** content becomes eligible, the list will be updated and a column will be added to the spreadsheet, "Date Added to List", that will allow for sorting. Consult the public policy statement, [Government Publications Authorized for Discard by Regional Depository Libraries](#), for more details about discard eligibility.

2. Can any tangible format (paper, microfiche, CD, etc.) of a title be discarded during Phase 1 of the Regional Discard implementation?

Yes, any tangible format of an eligible title can be requested to be discarded. Regional depository libraries may discard a title when approval has been granted by the Superintendent of Documents.

3. Will all regional depository libraries have to respond to the eligible titles list indicating for each title whether we will discard it or keep it (like we did for the 2014 Regional Discard Intent Survey)?

No, GPO only needs to know the titles a library is interested in discarding or the titles for which they want to be a Preservation Steward. If you are going to keep all the titles you need not respond.

4. Will four Preservation Stewards have to be identified for a title before the title can be discarded?

Yes, GPO will ensure that at least four Preservation Stewards are in place (signed MOA) before GPO will approve the discard request of a title. In accordance with the

Joint Committee on Printing's (JCP) direction, GPO must ensure there are at least four geographically dispersed tangible copies throughout the FDLP. As the JCP suggested, GPO is using the [U.S. Census Regions map](#) to determine the geographic dispersion of the Preservation Stewards. This map has four defined regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. See the map on the last page of this FAQ.

5. When can a title be physically discarded by a regional depository library?

Regional depository libraries may physically discard a title only when the library has received an approval notice from the Superintendent of Documents that states it may discard the title. Also, the regional depository library must first offer the title to the selectives in the region served and then to other depository libraries. As part of the approval process, GPO may ask the regional depository library to send their discarded copy to a preservation steward if it is in better condition than the one currently being maintained.

6. Does material on the superseded list need approval from the Superintendent of Documents before a regional library can discard?

No, the material listed on the superseded list has already been approved for discard and does not require notification to the Superintendent of Documents. The Superseded List (last updated in 2009) will not be updated as part of this initiative. Regionals and other depository libraries may continue to use the list as guidance for determining whether titles meet supersession criteria. Regional depository libraries are reminded that past agreements among regional depository library staff to retain superseded material (marked with an 'R' in the Superseded List) is an optional practice.

7. Can a library submit serial titles as one entry?

Each entry should clearly identify the title and dates of each issue of the serial title to be discarded, otherwise there could be delays in processing your library's request.

8. What are the geographically dispersed locations?

The geographically dispersed locations for the four maintained copies will be determined based on the Preservation Steward Agreements. As the JCP suggested, GPO is using the [U.S. Census Regions map](#) to ensure the geographic dispersion of the Preservation Stewards. This map has four defined regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. See the map on the last page of this FAQ.

9. How will GPO and other libraries know where the four maintained copies will be located?

Preservation Steward information is available on the [GPO Partnership](#) page.

10. Will the FDLP eXchange tool be used for regional discard?

The FDLP eXchange is not available for use as part of the Phase 1 Regional Discard implementation. Stay tuned to FDLP.gov for updates on the FDLP eXchange.

11. When will other eligible titles be added to the list?

GPO will expand the eligible titles list periodically during Phase 1.

12. Will all regional depository libraries have to discard materials received through the FDLP?

No, there is nothing in the Superintendent of Documents policy that requires regional depository libraries to discard depository materials. The choice to retain or discard materials is the library's to make. All depositor libraries should strive to retain tangible formats that best meet the needs of their users.

13. How long will Phase 1 last?

Phase one is September 2016 – July 2017.

14. If there are not four Preservation Stewards, would GPO still potentially approve a discard request?

No, if there are not four geographically dispersed Preservation Stewards for a title, GPO will not approve any regional discard request for it. If GPO did, it would be contrary to the stipulation that the Joint Committee on Printing added to the policy.

15. Does the new Regional Discard Policy have any effect on the discard procedures of selectives?

Regionals stipulate the discard process for the selectives they serve. Unless you have heard otherwise from your regional, you can assume the process and procedures for selectives discarding materials have not changed in your region. The regional will inform you if there are any changes.

16. Are regionals mandated to keep and preserve all titles they receive?

The FDLP's statutory authority requires regionals to retain at least one copy of all Government publications in either print or microfacsimile form (except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents). Regionals, just like the selective depository libraries, are required to maintain them for access.

Preservation or conservation is not a requirement for Federal depository libraries. Retaining a publication does not equate to preserving it.

17. In addition to the “are there four copies,” how will decisions be made regarding discard?

The four copies must be geographically dispersed across the FDLP. Additionally, if the copy held by the library requesting approval for discard is in better condition than the copy held by a Preservation Steward, the library may be asked to send it to the Preservation Steward. GPO is investigating ways to assist in moving copies around the FDLP to meet the Joint Committee on Printing’s requirement of geographically dispersed availability of four tangible copies.

Follow-up question: If all four Preservation Stewards for a title are in California, GPO won’t approve the discard?

That’s correct. The four copies may be geographically dispersed in California, but GPO’s mandate is to ensure the title is geographically dispersed throughout the FDLP, which includes all the states, the District of Columbia, commonwealths, and territories. Four copies in California does not meet this criteria.

18. Is there a requirement that regionals tell their selectives what and when they want to discard materials? Or can the decision be a unilateral one?

There is a requirement that regionals offer the materials they wish to discard to the selective depository libraries they serve and then to other depository libraries nationwide. There is not a specific requirement that regionals tell their selective depository libraries what and when they intend to discard, the decision could be a unilateral one. However, GPO has always encouraged regionals to communicate and work with their selectives. Because this has implications for selectives’ collection management decisions, GPO strongly urges regionals to communicate and discuss their discard intentions and decisions with selectives. Open communication and collaboration is certainly a best practice and regional depository libraries are encouraged to follow this guidance.

19. I am concerned about having only one digital copy for access. Do others share this concern?

GPO would be concerned if there were only one digital copy for access. This, however, is not the case with GPO’s system of online access, FDsys/**govinfo**. Redundancy and other security features are built into the system. There are two sites: Production and Continuity of Operations (COOP), and there are also back-ups for all copies. Each site has three components: access/public web, preservation repository, and content management system. Each of these stores various versions of the Government information products at the file level. The table below depicts what files are contained in each component.

	ACCESS/PUBLIC WEBSITE	PRESERVATION REPOSITORY	CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
ACCESS DERIVATIVES	✓		✓
PRESERVATION MASTERS		✓	✓
ANY OTHER FILES SUBMITTED BY THE CONTENT PROVIDER		✓	✓

Preservation masters are TIFF images or JPEG200 files. Other files submitted by FDsys/**govinfo** content providers include but are not limited to PDFs, spreadsheets, metadata files, etc. The Production and COOP sites are synchronized. Content in FDsys/**govinfo** is what is conveyed in the table above multiplied by three. In addition to this redundancy at the file level, there also are security features of the systems, such as constant security checks conducted by the storage filer that ensure data integrity and hardware redundancy at both locations in the event of any hardware failures.

GPO's system of online access was refined and modified for FDsys/**govinfo** with GPO's mission in mind – *Keeping America Informed* for future generations. Because of its mission, access, preservation, and digital access is based on the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) model, and was security are given the highest priority, and it is why GPO is seeking certification as a Trustworthy Digital Repository (TDR).

In addition to the measures GPO takes to preserve and secure digital content, there are also efforts by others outside of Government to provide redundancy to this same digital content. An example of this is the LOCKSS-USDOCS program that includes thirty-six Federal depository libraries as members, eleven of which are regional depository libraries. GPO is also a member of LOCKS-USDOCS.

20. How should and how long must a regional offer the title to their selectives and other libraries before they can discard?

Regional depository libraries set the discard procedures for the area they serve, and they can determine the length of time materials are offered. If the current [National Needs and Offers List is used](#), national offers require lists to be posted no less than 30 days.

- 21. This regional discard process is set up to permit regional depositories to weed select material secured under MOAs. Are regional depository libraries permitted to authorize the withdrawal of the same material found in the collections of their selectives? In other words, if a regional has been authorized by GPO to withdraw a title, or if the regional has never held the title because they selectively house the material in another library, are they still able to let their selectives weed what may be the only copy in their region?**

Yes. The process is set up to permit regionals to weed material that have a sufficient number of tangible copies available for public use throughout the FDLP. Titles authorized for withdrawal by regional depository libraries have been deemed secure and as such weeding of the same material from their selectives' depository collections is permitted, unless the selective depository library is serving as a Preservation Steward for those materials.

- 22. If a regional depository library discards a tangible item, are they required to update their catalog with the digital record?**

If a regional library discards a tangible item, therefore removing the tangible record from their catalog, they must replace the record in their catalog with the digital record. Regionals must continue to provide access to their regional FDLP collection. GPO is exploring ways to provide regional depository libraries with bibliographic records for digital titles.

- 23. Will the discard requests of regional depository libraries be made publicly accessible?**

Yes, the discard requests of regional depository libraries will be made publicly accessible. The discard policy requires regional depository libraries to offer their discards first to the selectives they serve, and then to depository libraries nationwide. This provides an opportunity for other libraries to obtain those materials for their collections.

U.S. CENSUS REGIONS



