

Government Documents Staff Training Policy

The purpose of this document is to provide training and development goals of the Library with regard to government documents. It is intended to improve public services, and to support employees in their library work.

Depository Coordinators

The depository coordinators are expected to stay up-to-date on developments within the FDLP and the field of government information. Reading, of journals, newsletters, and email lists, is an important, everyday activity supporting professional development. In addition, each year the coordinators should make use of 2 or 3 of the following continuing education activities.

National Opportunities

- Federal Depository Library Conferences, held in the Spring and Fall
- Interagency Depository Seminar
- Depository Library Council meetings, held semiannually
- GODORT Conferences, held at ALA Annual and Midwinter

State Opportunities

- Georgia Depository Libraries Meeting, annual December meeting
- Governmental Documents Interest Group (GDIG) Meetings, held at the COMO conference and GLA Midwinter

Public Services Staff

Reference Librarians

The librarians of the Reference Unit are the primary providers of government documents reference service. Consequently, it is critical that they themselves possess a good basic knowledge of government documents. To ensure this level of knowledge, the Documents Librarian for Public Services will provide appropriate training. This training will consist of both an initial training, to be provided to new librarians, and continuing training, offered to the Reference Unit as a whole.

Initial Training

Initial training will be provided to new librarians. Librarians who completed course work in government documents or have previous documents experience may opt out. This training will be provided during the first weeks or months of their service. Training will include the following:

- An orientation to the depository collection, including policies and public service obligations
- Major bibliographic tools (e.g., Catalog of U.S. Government Publications)
- Essential document titles and web sites

Continuing Training

Continuing training will address developments in the field as well as questions or problems faced by the reference librarians. Continuing training will include the following:

- Semiannual Government Document Training Sessions
- Ad hoc announcements and updates at Unit Meetings

Peer Reference Counselors

Peer Reference Counselors (PRC's) assist the Reference Librarians at the reference desk. The Documents Librarian for Public Services will work with the PRC Coordinator to provide appropriate documents training. PRC's work with librarians, and are trained to refer difficult items to them. Their training will cover the same topic areas as the Librarians' initial training, but less extensively.

Circulation Staff

The Documents Librarian for Public Services will work with the Circulation Manager to ensure an appropriate awareness of depository issues among circulation staff. The necessary information is limited, but should include an understanding of the following:

- The Odum Library is a Federal and Georgia state "Depository Library"
- The Library is legally required to provide Free Public Access to the collection
- Where the government documents collection is located
- How to recognize that an item is a government document (the ownership stamp) and that it is shelved in government documents area (the call no. is written by hand).
- Reference is responsible for providing assistance to the collection. Inquiries concerning the "depository collection," "government documents" or government information generally may be referred to them.

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