

Wisconsin Document Depository Program

Retention and Weeding Policy

August 2021

Introduction

The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) and the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) are designated as state level depository libraries. They maintain the most comprehensive physical collections for Wisconsin state government documents (except for University of Wisconsin publications, which are held at university libraries). WHS and the LRB often take documents being weeded from regional or selective depositories to replace missing or damaged items in their collections or to do scanning and digitization projects.

Retention Guidelines

Regional depository libraries should keep at least one copy of each document for a minimum of five years and selective libraries should keep a copy of each document for at least two years.

It is not required that state documents be removed from the collection after the retention period. Documents of historical value may be vital to the depository library collection, and each library should evaluate the needs and collection policy of their library before discarding any Wisconsin documents.

Developing a Discard List

Superseded materials or materials with expiration dates may be discarded automatically. For other materials each library may follow its normal discard procedures and policies for weeding depository materials. Document librarians planning to do a significant weeding should follow the weeding procedure before state documents are discarded.

The following items are of particular interest and should be included on a discard list:

- Older Pre-1950s publications of state documents.
- Unbound legislative agency publications that can be used for scanning and digitization projects.

The following items may be excluded on a discard list from libraries unless, using best judgement, the item is considered unique and not widely distributed. These items can be discarded following normal discard procedures and policies for weeding depository materials:

- State documents published in the year 2000 or later.
- Main publications 1995 or later from legislative service agencies, Legislative Audit Bureau, Legislative Council, Legislative Fiscal Bureau, and Legislative Reference Bureau. (Audit reports, Issue Briefs, Information Memorandums, Informational Papers etc...)
- Brochures and other ephemeral items that are single page or folded publications. (WIDoc numbers of 9/2 or 9/4)
- Individual or scattered issues of periodicals/serials (publications issued more than twice a year). If a long run of the issues is being offered, it is ok to list.

Weeding Procedure

1. Use the retention guidelines to select documents eligible for discard.
2. Compile a discard list which includes **Title, WIDoc number, OCLC number and Date**. State agency is also useful but not required.

3. Email the list to the Wisconsin Document Depository Program, statedocuments@dpi.wi.gov. Upon review by the depository librarian, the Wisconsin Historical Society and Legislative Reference Bureau will be emailed the list and given first priority in selecting items from the discard list. The timeline for response from WHS and LRB regarding the discard list may take 3 months. The depository librarian will notify the discard library of claims made by WHS and LRB.
4. After the WHS and LRB have had an opportunity to request materials, the list can be offered to other listservs and libraries as desired by the weeding library.
5. After shipping the requested documents to the requesting libraries, discard the remaining documents being weeded.

For more information contact statedocuments@dpi.wi.gov.

