

General Responsibilities and Guidelines for All Types of Depository Libraries

Introduction

Designated depository libraries located throughout Wisconsin participate in the [Wisconsin Document Depository Program](#) under [Wisconsin Statutes, Sections 35.81-35.84](#). Depository libraries maintain print collections of state documents and provide access to state government information in all formats. A directory of depository libraries is available [online](#).

Designation of Depository Libraries

Wisconsin libraries may apply for depository library status when openings exist by requesting an application form from the Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian at statedocuments@wi.dpi.gov. Applications should be addressed to the Assistant Superintendent of the Division for Libraries and Technology, Department of Public Instruction. If accepted, a letter of agreement is signed by the depository library and the Division for Libraries and Technology.

Depository libraries are selected according to the following criteria:

Availability. Openings for state depository libraries will be announced by the Division for Libraries and Technology.

Geographic Distribution. When depository libraries are selected, consideration will be given to geographic distribution and population served throughout the state of Wisconsin. Each public library system in the state should have a Wisconsin document depository library. There also should be representation by various types and sizes of public and academic libraries in the Wisconsin Document Depository Program.

Public Service. Section 35.825, Wis. Stat. requires that: “Each state document depository library shall make freely available to inhabitants of the state all state documents retained by the library, shall keep state documents readily accessible for use and shall render assistance in their use to such inhabitants without charge.”

- Free access to the resources of the state documents collections by the general public is a fundamental obligation expected from all state document depository libraries. Free access means that any member of the general public can physically handle and use a state document at the library without impediments.
- Wisconsin depository libraries are expected to post a sign or the Wisconsin Document Depository Program logo in a prominent location (preferably visible from the exterior of the library) indicating that the library takes part in the Wisconsin Document Depository Program and that state documents can be used by the public at no charge.
- Staff in a depository library who provide public services should be aware that their library belongs to the Wisconsin Document Depository Program and should generally be able to assist patrons with locating and using state documents. Assistance with documents should be available whenever public assistance for other library materials is available.

Document Shipments

Depository libraries receive physical shipments of state documents on a limited basis based on level of participation. A list of fully cataloged electronic documents records are made available on a monthly basis for libraries to either download into their local OPACs or to provide access to through the Wisconsin Digital Archives, www.wistatedocuments.org . Distribution lists for both print and electronic documents are available [online](#).

In addition to the document shipments, depository libraries receive many official state documents in print format free of charge for maintaining depository status. The [Table for Distribution of Official Documents, Section 35.84, Wis. Stats.](#) provides a complete list of official state documents distributed to depository libraries.

Circulation of Materials

Each depository library may establish its own circulation policies for use of the depository materials outside the library. Libraries are encouraged to circulate state documents.

State documents may be designated reference if appropriate. Photocopies of non-copyrighted state documents may be loaned in place of the original. The issuing state agency should be contacted for permission to photocopy copyrighted state publications.

Interlibrary Loan

Depository libraries should loan state documents to other libraries whenever comparable materials would be circulated under the library's policies. Library staff should also borrow state documents requested by patrons, but not available locally, from other depository libraries.

Interlibrary loan requests should be sent and received through regular interlibrary loan channels. These channels are outlined in [Wisconsin Interlibrary Loan Guidelines](#) published by the Department of Public Instruction, Division for Libraries and Technology.

The Wisconsin Historical Society has the most complete collection of state documents, and most of their documents can be borrowed through interlibrary loan.

Staffing

One person should be designated by the director of a depository library to coordinate activities and to act as a liaison with the Division for Libraries and Technology. This individual is responsible for administering or coordinating the library's receipt of materials, organizing and maintaining the document collection or integrating it with other materials, and for providing public services from the collection. Depository libraries should notify the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) upon initial appointment or subsequent replacement of the contact person for the depository library.

Space

Space for depository operations should be of the same general quality as other areas of the library. It should be comfortable and functional, and should have adequate room for reference, circulation, and interlibrary loan as well as adequate space for processing new materials and housing the collection. Open shelving is recommended, but if not available, timely retrieval methods should be in place.

Organization of the Collection

Each library should adopt a method to identify and locate materials received. The library may select a classification scheme appropriate to its users and their needs. The Wisconsin Historical Society Library classifies Wisconsin documents to assist librarians in this process. A guide to the [Wisconsin Document Classification System \(WIDocs\)](#) is available.

Maintenance of the Print Collection and Retention Guidelines

The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) and the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) as state level depository libraries, 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.

Regional depository libraries are expected to keep at least one copy of each document for a minimum of five years and selective libraries are expected to keep a copy of each document for at least two years. Depository libraries are expected to provide the same level of protection and care of state documents as they do for their commercially acquired materials.

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 an extraordinary or major weeding of state documents should review the [Document Weeding and Retention Policy](#). Please contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) before state documents are discarded so that withdrawn items may be offered to other libraries and educational institutions in the vicinity.

Depository libraries looking for historical state documents in particular areas are also encouraged to contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#).

Classification and Cataloging of Wisconsin Documents

The Wisconsin Historical Society Library has primary responsibility for cataloging state documents. From 1978 to the present, catalog records for state documents have been available in WorldCat.

The Wisconsin Historical Society Library has unique responsibility for assigning Wisconsin State Document Classification (WIDocs) numbers. This classification was developed by the library. It is modeled after the federal Superintendent of Documents classification system. It was devised so that all of an agency's publications are shelved together. Although digital archive records are virtual, they too are assigned a WIDoc number as an intellectual tool for organizing state government information and for clearly identifying the web content as Wisconsin State government information. The [Guide to](#)

[Wisconsin State Agencies and Their Call Numbers](#), traces names and classification numbers for Wisconsin state agencies from the beginning of statehood to the present.

All depository libraries are encouraged to catalog state documents so that their holdings are entered into local, state and national databases. At a minimum, depository libraries placing documents in pamphlet files should provide for subject access to them.

Acquisition and Filing Claims

Upon receipt of a document shipment from the Wisconsin Document Depository Program, the documents received and the shipping list should be compared to ensure all documents listed have been received based on distribution level. If any documents are missing, please contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) to request the missing document. Depository libraries are also encouraged to contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) if they hear about new state documents that have not yet been distributed in the depository program.

Please do not contact the state agency directly to make a claim for a missing document. One purpose of the Wisconsin Document Depository Program is to centralize the distribution of state documents in Wisconsin. The legislation was revised in 1991 so that state agencies need to send copies of their publications to only one agency, the Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning, which then will distribute copies to all depository libraries. This was designed to cut down the staff time required for agencies to respond to frequent calls from libraries for the same publication. The Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning does not supply or procure additional copies of documents beyond the maximum called for by the legislation.

A state agency may restrict the number of copies provided for distribution to only that number necessary for distribution to the public document depository libraries specified under s. 35.83(3)(a) to (d), Wis. Stats., if the state document is published in limited quantities because of its cost or the nature of the information it contains. The statutes also make a partial exemption for state documents published exclusively for public sale by presses established by the University of Wisconsin System of the Wisconsin Historical Society, and state documents sold primarily on a subscription basis. Only three copies of these publications need to be shipped to the state level depository libraries.

When limited or state level distribution is indicated on a depository shipping list those depository libraries not receiving the state document in print format are encouraged to go to the state agency website to seek out availability online. A link to the website can be added to the catalog record to provide access electronically or it is permissible to print non-copyrighted materials from the state agency website to add to the library's collection. The state agency should be contacted to ask permission to print a copy of all copyrighted state publications. If assistance is needed in locating a publication online please contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#).

Termination of Depository Status

A depository library may relinquish its depository status at any time. Should you decide to relinquish your depository a request should be made in writing to:

Assistant State Superintendent
Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction
Division for Libraries and Technology
125 S. Webster St.
Madison, WI 53707

Once the request has been approved, the library terminating its depository status will be removed from the list of libraries receiving physical print shipments of Wisconsin documents and the official state documents in print format libraries receive free of charge for maintaining depository status.

Libraries that have relinquished their depository status are required to adhere to the [Document Weeding and Retention Policy](#) to properly weed state documents collection. Please contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) before state documents are discarded so that withdrawn items may be offered to other libraries and educational institutions in the vicinity.