

# General Responsibilities and Guidelines for All Types of Depository Libraries

## *Designation of Depository Libraries*

Wisconsin libraries may apply for depository library status when openings exist by filling out an [application form](#). Applications should be addressed to the assistant superintendent of the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning, Department of Public Instruction. If accepted, a letter of agreement is signed by the depository library and the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning.

Depository libraries are selected according to the following criteria.

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

**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. Stats. 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 approximately one physical shipment a month of state government documents based on level of participation. A list of fully cataloged digital archive records are also made available on a monthly basis for libraries to download into their local OPACs.

In addition to the monthly document shipments, depository libraries receive many official state documents in print format free of charge for maintaining depository status. These documents include the Annotations, Laws of Wisconsin, and the Administrative Code and Register just to name a few. The [Table for Distribution of Official Documents, Section 35.84, Wis. Stats.](#) provides a complete list of official state documents distributed to depository libraries.

## ***Shipping Lists***

The Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian prepares separate [shipping lists](#) for both print and digital archive records for each shipment distributed to depository libraries. Widoc numbers are assigned to each title and OCLC numbers are also provided if available at time of distribution.

Shipping lists for print materials are arranged alphabetically by title. Digital archives shipping lists are arranged alphabetically by title within issuing state agency. All digital archive records are fully cataloged and available in WorldCat or WISCAT for downloading into local OPACs.

Level of distribution for each title is also indicated as either State, Limited or Full distribution.

## ***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 regardless of format. State documents may be designated reference if appropriate. Photocopies of noncopyrighted 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, Technology and Community Learning.

The Wisconsin Historical Society has the most complete collection of state documents, and most of their documents can be borrowed through interlibrary loan. The state documents collection at the Reference and Loan Library is also used for statewide interlibrary loan and reference services.

## ***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, Technology and Community Learning. 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***

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 contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) at the Reference and Loan Library before state documents are discarded. 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](#).

### ***Maintenance of a Digital Archive Record Collection and Retention Guidelines***

The [Wisconsin Digital Archives](#) was established in 2004 as a way to begin identifying a means that state agency web content could continue to be available in the future and to determine how state agencies could continue to fulfill their statutory obligation to participate in the Wisconsin Document Depository Program with electronic formats. Since October 2005, monthly shipping lists of fully cataloged digital archive records are made available for all libraries regardless of depository status. Although it is not currently mandatory to download digital archive records into local OPACs in order to maintain depository status, it is encouraged as a way to provide access to state government information in electronic formats especially as state government information is increasingly born-digital and only available online.

Each digital archive record included on a shipping list is assigned a Widoc number and lists the OCLC number for the catalog record in WorldCat. Catalog records that are part of the Wisconsin Digital Archives can easily be identified by the OCLC symbol WIDAG. Digital archive records can be downloaded into local OPACs from WorldCat or WISCAT.

Unlike other URLs, digital archive URLs are constant. Access to content through the digital archive URL will remain regardless of what changes are made to the original URL. Digital archive records add value to a library's overall collection since much of the web content preserved in the digital archive record may only exist online for a limited time. Many digital archive records have enduring value and provide perspective on state government that otherwise is missing in print formats making it advantageous to upload the digital archive records into local OPACs.

### ***Classification and Cataloging of Wisconsin Documents***

Both the [Wisconsin Historical Society](#) and the [Reference and Loan Library](#) catalog state documents and make this information available to other libraries. 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.

Catalog records are also made available in [WISCAT](#), the statewide union catalog developed by the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning. WISCAT is one of the largest physical statewide union catalogs in the country, containing 7 million titles and more than 34 million holdings from over 1200 contributing libraries. WISCAT serves as a repository for state government documents that are distributed through the Wisconsin Document Depository Program and the Wisconsin Digital Archives.

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 Reference and Loan Library, the documents received and the shipping list should be compared to ensure all documents listed have been received based on distribution level. If one or more documents are missing please contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) to request the missing document. Depository libraries are encouraged to contact the [Wisconsin Document Depository Librarian](#) at Reference and Loan Library 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 Reference and Loan Library, 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 Reference and Loan Library does not supply or procure additional copies of documents beyond the maximum of 52 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:

Richard Grobschmidt, Assistant State Superintendent  
Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction  
Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning  
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. This includes many official state documents in print format libraries receive free of charge for maintaining depository status. These documents include the Annotations, Laws of Wisconsin, and the Administrative Code and Register just to name a few. The Table for Distribution of Official Documents, Section 35.84, Wis. Stats. provides a complete list of official state documents distributed to depository libraries. These documents are very costly and may be purchased through the DOA Document Sales. For document pricing information please visit the DOA Document Sales Online Catalog, <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docview.asp?locid=2&docid=741>

A depository library is asked to maintain its state document collection for 6 months after relinquishing its depository status to allow time for a newly designated depository library to be determined. A newly designated depository library will be allowed to identify all or some of the collection from the relinquishing library's state document collection they wish to obtain. It will be the relinquishing library's responsibility to help facilitate the transfer of selected documents to the newly designated depository library. Almost all transferring of documents can be done via red bucket delivery.

After the 6 month waiting period, the former depository library will be allowed to make collection development decisions regarding the state documents collection that best fits the library's needs. The former depository library may wish to retain the existing state documents collection in its entirety or offer all or part of it to other depository libraries. State documents may also be offered to other information providers for use in their collections.