



# VCU

Libraries

## Guidelines for Federal Government Documents

Last updated September 2023

---

### Table of Contents

1. Purpose
  2. General collection guidelines
    - A. Language
    - B. Chronology
    - C. Geography
    - D. Publication Date
    - E. Treatment of Subject
    - F. Types of Materials, Formats Collected
    - G. Classification and Organization of the Collection
    - H. Access to the Collection, Subscription Services
  3. Area resources
  4. Methodology
  5. Collection Maintenance
  6. ASERL Center of Excellence for the Department of Homeland Security
  7. Related Subject Policy Statements
- 

### 1. Purpose.

VCU Libraries was designated a selective Federal Depository Library in 1971. The Libraries is committed to providing access to depository materials that support the research and teaching needs of the University as well as the information needs of Virginia's 4th Congressional District.

The depository collection is primarily digital and is selected, maintained, and serviced in accordance with the requirements of Title 44, Chapter 19, of the United States Code (44 USC 19). Acquisition, maintenance, and use of the collection is governed by *The Legal Requirements & Program Regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program*. The administration and development of the documents collection requires cooperation from the following departments in the VCU Libraries: Academic Outreach, Collection Analysis and Investment, Electronic and Continuing Resources, and Resource Acquisitions and Management Services. Select documents are housed at the James Branch Cabell Library, while materials relevant to health sciences are housed at the Health Sciences Library.



# VCU

## Libraries

## 2. General Collection Guidelines.

### A. Language.

English is the primary language of the collection. Spanish and other non-English language materials are added selectively.

### B. Chronology.

Primary emphasis is given to current and historical federal documents that are relevant to the needs and interests of the University community and the residents of the 4th Congressional District.

### C. Geography.

Geographic coverage reflects the publication interests of the federal government, which is worldwide. Primary focus is on the United States, however, the collection is international in scope.

### D. Publication Date.

Emphasis is on current publications. Some retrospective materials are added selectively, primarily publications produced by the Department of Homeland Security.

### E. Treatment of Subject.

Government publications can be identified according to six types of documents, based on their functions. Materials providing the following functions are selected: legislative documents published on the legislative process of a government; administrative documents which are compilations of rules and regulations needed to carry out the intent of the law; reportorial documents that are reports issued by government agencies or commissions or court decisions; service publications which provide beneficial information to individuals or groups; research documents that cover the results of research projects by government agencies or technical reports; and informational documents that are issued to inform the public about government activities or services.

### F. Types of Materials, Formats Collected.

Government information comes in an extensive variety of materials and formats. The range of government information materials includes: annual reports; bills and resolutions; juridical decisions and opinions; multimedia materials; hearings; laws and statutes; scholarly journals; research/investigation reports; statistical reports/compilations; books/monographs; committee and commission reports; journals and proceedings; maps; rules and regulations; and executive communications.

Online (EL) formats are prioritized for this collection, while paper (P) formats are selected for certain legal and other publications.

### G. Classification and Organization of the Collection.

The physical documents collection is cataloged and arranged by the Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) classification system. Select documents are located in the library's general circulating collection and arranged using the Library of Congress (LC) classification system.



# VCU

## Libraries

### H. Access to the Collection, Subscription Services.

Primary access to the depository collection is through the Libraries' catalog, which includes links to the digital publications and the location and call number of the physical materials. Most federal documents circulate to any patron with library privileges. Computers are available for use by all patrons in accordance with the VCU Computer and Network Resources Use Policy.

The following full-text resources and search tools are also available on the Libraries' A-Z Databases list: *govinfo.gov*, *HathiTrust Digital Library*, *HeinOnline*, *ProQuest Statistical Insight*, *CQ Library*, *American State Papers (1789-1838)*, *U.S. Congressional Serial Set*, the *Catalog of Government Publications (CGP)*, and *WorldCat*.

### 3. Area Resources.

VCU Libraries participates in several interlibrary loan networks with other libraries in the region, state, and nation. There is unrestricted interlibrary loan of circulating documents to any requesting academic or public library. This service is free.

Federal publications not in the VCU Libraries' collection may be available from other selective depository libraries in the Richmond-Petersburg metropolitan area which include the: Library of Virginia, University of Richmond- Boatwright Memorial Library, University of Richmond Law School Library, Virginia State University-Johnston Memorial Library or the University of Virginia Alderman Library, which is the regional depository for the state of Virginia.

### 4. Methodology.

**The List of Classes of the United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries** is used to update item selections. Changes to the Libraries' item selection profile are made using the Depository Selection Information Management System (DSIMS).

### 5. Collection Maintenance.

The collection is maintained in accordance with the guidelines stated in the **The Legal Requirements & Program Regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program**. Materials are represented in the Libraries' ILS and all documents are clearly marked with the depository property stamp.

Titles in the **Superseded List**, or titles that meet the **Supersession Criteria**, may be withdrawn from the collection. Materials in the collection are periodically reviewed for retention or withdrawal. Those titles no longer needed in the collection are offered to other libraries with the permission of the regional depository in accordance with Federal Depository Library Program guidelines. Damaged or worn documents are evaluated for replacement or withdrawal.

### 6. ASERL Center of Excellence for The Department of Homeland Security.

The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) designated the VCU Libraries a Center of Excellence (COE) for the Department of Homeland Security (SuDoc call number HS 1.) in 2011. As a COE, the Libraries has agreed to:

- Operate within the boundaries of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) guidelines and instructions as well as 44 USC 19, in particular Sections 1911 and 1912.
- Inventory holdings and ensure accurate cataloging and holdings records for the extant collections.



# VCU

## Libraries

- Create a master list of all titles in the relevant Superintendent of Documents (SuDocs) stem(s) and upload brief catalog records to the ASERL/COE database.
- Fill identified gaps in the COE collection.
- Develop expertise to facilitate use of the COE collections.
- Facilitate access to Federal Depository Library Program and COE titles through interlibrary loan.
- Develop a contingency plan for maintaining the regional collection and the COE collection, should the COE elect to terminate or significantly modify their agreement.

The VCU Libraries is an active participant in the ASERL Collaborative Federal Depository Program, and the COE advances the research enterprise of the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs' degree programs in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness as well as the School of Population Health's degree programs in Public Health and Epidemiology. The University is located in the state capital, and is only 100 miles south of the nation's capital, which provides excellent access to homeland security institutions and practitioners.

### **7. Related Subject Policy Statements.**

See policies for Business, Criminal Justice, Economics, Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Political Science, Public Administration, Urban and Regional Studies and Planning.