

What is a Government Document?

A government document is any informational material issued by the U.S. government. Government documents exist in a variety of formats, including print, online, CD-ROM, and microform. The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is responsible for providing U.S. citizens with free access to documents created by the federal government.

What is a Federal Depository Library?

In 1858, Congress created the Federal Depository Library Program to give American citizens access to information generated by the federal government. Congress primarily designates FDLP libraries; however, other government officials have the power to designate FDLPs. Located in fifty states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, FDLP libraries are designated as either regional or selective. Regional depositories receive and permanently retain all government documents distributed through the Program. Selective depositories may choose to receive only publications relevant to the library's community. The Government Publications Office (GPO) distributes government documents at no cost to depository libraries. FDLP libraries must comply with GPO regulations: to collect, organize, preserve, and provide free access to all government documents received. Approximately 1,300 Federal Depository Libraries currently safeguard the American public's right to know. **The official FDLP website is <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fdlp.html>.**

How are Government Documents Classified?

Government agencies use the Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) classification system to classify government documents. The SuDoc system groups government documents together according to the generating government agency, and within, the subordinate organization. The purpose of the SuDoc system is to uniquely identify, logically relate, and physically arrange each publication to ensure that all publications of a single agency or department are located together. Government document call numbers are called SuDoc Numbers, or simply SuDocs. A thorough explanation of the **SuDoc system** is located at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/explain.html.

What can I find in a Government Documents Collection?

Government documents include Census records, Congressional bills and hearings, agency reports, statistics, and many other types of government information. The Congressional Information Service Index (CIS/Index), Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications, and American Statistics Index (ASI) are examples of finding aids created by government agencies to locate government documents.

Where is Florida's Regional Depository Library?

As Florida's designated Regional Federal Depository Library, the University of Florida permanently retains all government documents for Florida citizens. Access the University of Florida's **Government Documents website** at <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/docs/>. Access a listing of **Federal Depository Libraries in Florida** at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/modalldep.cgi?cmd+FL> or <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/fehdl/admin/depoalpha.html>.