

Clearinghouse Guidelines for State Agencies: FAQ

What is the North Carolina State Documents Depository System?

The North Carolina State Documents Depository System, [G.S. 125-11](#), was created in 1987. The North Carolina State Documents Depository System established an orderly system for the **collection and distribution of state agency publications**, both print and digital, through the North Carolina State Publications Clearinghouse. The services of the Clearinghouse and those of the Government and Heritage Library (GHL) at the State Library of North Carolina ensure that all North Carolina citizens have access to both current and historic state agency publications.

What qualifies as a state agency?

[G.S. 125-11](#) defines a state agency as “every State department, institution, board and commission.” This includes all institutions in the University of North Carolina system, all community colleges in the NC Community College System, and all state licensing boards and commissions.

What qualifies as a state publication?

[G.S. 125-11](#) defines a state publication as “any document prepared by a state agency or private organization, consultant, or research firm, under contract with or without the supervision of a state agency.” State publications are NOT: administrative documents, training documents, budget requests, contracts, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, forms, press releases, job announcements, event announcements, and manuals and handbooks intended for internal use only.

Any questions about whether or not an item qualifies as a state publication should be sent to the Clearinghouse can be addressed to Clearinghouse Liaison, Denise Jones, 919-814-6812 or denise.jones@ncdcr.gov

What is the role of the Clearinghouse and GHL in the NC State Documents System?

The mission of the Government and Heritage Library (GHL) is to “preserve and facilitate public access to state government information.” The Clearinghouse and the GHL strive to increase this access and are responsible for collecting, classifying, cataloging and distributing state agency publications, both print and digital publications. G.S. 125-11 designates the State Library as the “official, complete and permanent depository for all state publications.” Print publications are housed with the government documents collection at the GHL/State Library (109 E. Jones St., Raleigh, NC) and are available for check-out and interlibrary loan throughout the US and Canada. Digital publications are made available online, at no cost, through the [North Carolina State Government Publications Collection](#). Some publications can be found in both the print and digital collections. Older agency publications, some even from the 1700s and 1800s, have been scanned and digitized, and can also be found in the digital collection.

In addition to being responsible for making agency publications widely available, the Clearinghouse is also the conduit for getting state agency publications to the Library of Congress and to North Carolina’s depository libraries. This is a benefit to the state agencies because agencies only need to send their publications to one place, the Clearinghouse. After that, the Clearinghouse sees that the publications are distributed to Library of Congress and the depository libraries throughout NC. (North Carolina State University, Western Carolina University, East Carolina University, University of North Carolina – Asheville, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina – Charlotte, and

University of North Carolina – Wilmington.) The Clearinghouse also keeps the depository libraries informed of all new state agency publications as they are received.

How many copies should state agencies send to the Clearinghouse?

When the State Documents Depository System and the Clearinghouse were created in the 1980s, agency publications were almost exclusively print publications. Guidelines from the 1980s required **10 copies** of each agency publication be submitted to the Clearinghouse. Over time, the shift in state agency publication practices means that many publications are now both print and digital, or have converted to digital formats only. The numbers of print issues required has been adjusted. Below are guidelines to the number and formats of publications that should be sent to the Clearinghouse.

Agency publications widely distributed in paper only	10 paper copies
Agency publications widely distributed in paper and also available as digital	10 paper copies and 1 PDF
Agency publications widely distributed digitally and a few printed	2 paper copies and 1 PDF
Agency publications distributed digitally only	1 PDF

*** If an agency publication is offered for sale – only 5 paper copies should be sent to the Clearinghouse.

Where do I send print publications? Digital publications?

Print publications should be mailed to:

State Publications Clearinghouse
State Library of North Carolina
4640 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-4600
OR
Courier No. 52-31-33

Digital publications (PDFs or the URL for the PDF) should be emailed to slnc.digitaldocs@ncdcr.gov and/or denise.jones@ncdcr.gov

What does the Government and Heritage Library (GHL) do with state agency publications?

The GHL is a permanent repository for all print and digital state agency publications. The Clearinghouse directs two copies of each print publication to the GHL’s collection. One copy does not circulate so there is certain to be a copy available for examination at the GHL. Second copies are available for circulation through checkout and interlibrary loan.

Digital publications are available online through the GHL’s digital collections at <https://ncgovdocs.org/> This makes them widely available online through the catalogs of many libraries. Digital preservation is an important benefit of sending digital publications to the Clearinghouse. Digital preservation is a series of managed activities performed by the GHL to ensure continued access to digital materials for as long as they are needed. Sending your agency’s digital publications to the Clearinghouse ensures the original electronic file will be digitally preserved and accessible if ever needed.

All agency publications received are classified according to the [Classification Scheme for North Carolina State Publications](#) . Information about each publication is entered into OCLC, an international bibliographic database, where users from many other libraries can find the publications.

What are the responsibilities of the state agencies?

[G.S. 125-11](#) requires state agencies to designate a publications officer who is responsible for supplying the necessary number of agency publications to the Clearinghouse. Now that agency publishing is less centralized than when G.S. 125-11 was enacted, there may be several publications officers within an agency. Agency publications should be sent to the Clearinghouse within 2 weeks of publication so that library collections can be as current as possible. Agencies should also notify the Clearinghouse of any changes in agency publications, such as a change of title or the frequency of publication.

For any digital agency publications that have a copyright mark, the agency should provide a signed [Copyright Release Form](#) before the publication can be added to the [digital collection](#).

What services and information does the library provide state agencies?

- **Free access to online databases** – All state employees can access a number of databases, including NC newspapers, journals, magazines and demographics. See the complete list here: <http://ox.dncr-statelibrary.stage.nc.gov/ghl/resources/online> For more information call 919-807-7450 or email slnc.reference@ncdcr.gov
- **Website and social media archiving** - In addition to the online collection of state government publications (<http://ncgovdocs.org/>), the library also archives state government websites and social media. This website/social media archive can be searched at: <http://webarchives.ncdcr.gov/>
- **Digital materials guidelines and education** - The library, along with state archives, has developed guidelines to help state agencies with their digital files. These guidelines include useful information on naming conventions, file formats, storage of file, digitization, and state policies on digital files. These guidelines can be found at: <https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/research/digital-information-management>
- **Research help** - Get one on one help from a librarian. Specialties include: legislative research, government information, statistics and demographics, census and digitization. For help call 919-814-6790 or email slnc.reference@ncdcr.gov