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EPA Library Disaster Response and Continuity of Operations (COOP) Procedures	
EPA Classification No.: CIO 2170-P-10.1	CIO Approval Date: 12/28/2016
CIO Transmittal No.: 17-005a	Review Date: 12/28/2019

*Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,  
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19, dated 07/07/2005*

## **EPA LIBRARY DISASTER RESPONSE AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP) PROCEDURES**

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### **1. PURPOSE**

To establish Agency-wide procedures for the EPA National Library Network libraries to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters in EPA libraries and provide continuing operations during and after a disaster.

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### **2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY**

The procedures apply to the EPA National Library Network and all EPA organizations that provide library services either onsite or through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with another Network library. They provide baseline operational standards for all Network libraries. Individual libraries should develop local procedures to supplement the Network procedures.

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### **3. AUDIENCE**

The audience for the procedures includes Assistant, Deputy Assistant and Associate Administrators; Regional, Deputy, and Assistant Regional Administrators; Senior Information Officials, Information Management Officers, Federal Library Managers, Contract Library Managers and EPA staff.

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### **4. BACKGROUND**

Disaster can strike an organization in any number of ways, often without warning. Planning for disaster response and continuity of operations (COOP) helps EPA libraries to better respond to unexpected calamities that can affect the services they provide to EPA staff and the public.

EPA libraries develop location-specific plans that address all aspects of emergency management, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. A well-designed disaster plan helps to ensure the continued performance of essential library functions, provide techniques that can be used to minimize damage and losses, reduce disruptions of operations and achieve a timely and orderly return to normal functions.

Library staff and managers, including federal employees and contract staff, need to know how to respond in the event of a disaster. They should know how to ensure the safety of library staff and visitors, assess affected materials and evaluate them for treatment or replacement, maintain processing functions and provide or arrange for continued services to their patrons after disaster has struck. Contract staff duties related to disaster response and COOP should be included in Statements

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of Work and job descriptions as appropriate.

This document addresses baseline standards to which libraries in the EPA National Library Network adhere when planning for disaster response and continuity of operations (COOP).

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## 5. AUTHORITY

Agency Delegation 1-19 GENERAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND MISCELLANEOUS, Paragraph 2(b) ([http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/documents/delegation\\_1-19\\_revised070705.pdf](http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/documents/delegation_1-19_revised070705.pdf)).

CIO 2170.1, EPA National Library Network Policy, dated 05/15/2009 (<http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8>).

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## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Mitigation

EPA Libraries conduct mitigation activities in order to identify potential risks and reduce the impact of an incident on the library's collection and the services that the library provides. The broad areas that EPA libraries address on a local level include: threat assessment, safety measures, data back-up and identification of high-priority publications and resources.

#### 6.1.1 Threat Assessment

Each EPA library examines and considers possible local threats, which may vary greatly across the Network, depending on the local facility and geographic location. Each area of the country has common types of natural disasters that are to be considered in the threat assessment process. For example, if a library is in an area that is prone to earthquakes, certain precautions, such as reinforcing or bolting shelving, are considered.

#### 6.1.2 Safety Measures

Based on the individual threat assessment, each EPA library identifies ways to prevent or mitigate damage during a disaster. Locations outline specific techniques, such as keeping rare or valuable materials in areas less prone to flooding, keeping plastic sheeting near stacks of rare materials and/or keeping all materials at least six inches above the floor. EPA library staff are familiar with the location of basic safety features, such as fire alarms, fire extinguishers, sprinklers and emergency exits. Libraries inspect their physical spaces for potential hazards, including exterior features, on a regular basis. Areas of concern are documented and reported to the appropriate parties.

#### 6.1.3 Data Back Up

Within EPA, much of the electronic data related to library resources is backed up by EPA's computer services. Libraries identify any systems or data that may exist outside of standard backup queues. In the event of a disaster, library managers make EPA computer services aware of any lapses, or employ alternate methods of retrieving backed up data. Data such as vendor account information, the library disaster plan, shelf lists and other information that would be needed to resume library services, are maintained offsite in a confidential manner. If possible, rare or important library materials that are only available in hard copy are digitized.

#### 6.1.4 Identification of High-Priority Publications and Resources

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Each library identifies the materials within the collection that hold the most value to the Agency. Reasons for including an item in a library's high-priority list include, but are not limited to, the rarity of the item, the importance of the item to Agency business, possible replacement costs, the significance or value of a collection of works and the vulnerability of an item. Whenever possible, decisions about priority documents are made and documented before disaster strikes, in order to facilitate the process of protecting, salvaging and/or replacing them.

## 6.2 Preparedness

EPA Libraries develop local disaster plans that enhance their capacity to respond to an incident by taking steps to ensure staff is informed of the appropriate actions. Disaster plans address the needs of the library, set out roles and responsibilities in the event of a disaster, and effectively identify steps to be taken whether the incident is a local issue such as broken water pipes or a major act of nature.

- 6.2.1 Each library disaster plan fits within the framework of the relevant EPA building plan or broader location disaster plan. Library managers ensure that those responsible for overall disaster response at the local level are aware of the special needs of the library and receive copies of the library's disaster plan.
- 6.2.2 A copy of the library disaster plan is provided to the Library Network National Program Manager for safekeeping purposes offsite.
- 6.2.3 Safety of library staff and visitors is the highest priority for disaster response. The library disaster plan includes procedures for evacuating or sheltering library staff and visitors and describes the location and composition of items, such as fire extinguishers or medical supplies, that may be used during a disaster.
- 6.2.4 Each local library disaster plan includes location-specific details on what to do when a disaster is imminent. For example, high-priority materials may be moved to a specified secure location.
- 6.2.5 The library disaster plan includes a list of high-priority materials, referenced by location in the library, to be salvaged first in the event of a disaster. The plan also outlines steps to ensure the continuity of library services and identify additional steps needed to return to normal operations as quickly as possible.  
*NOTE: If an EPA library has resources or publications that are not yet included in the EPA National Library Catalog, it is imperative that these resources be identified and recorded, at a minimum, as a collection or group of items in a local database, a shelf list or in some other manner. This information is also included in the library's disaster plan.*
- 6.2.6 The library disaster plan includes a library floor plan, noting the locations of high-priority library materials, safety features such as fire extinguishers and alarm pulls, and any other features that help to prevent or mitigate damage in the event of disaster.
- 6.2.7 The library disaster plan contains contact information for the federal and contract library staff who are responsible for participating in disaster recovery scenarios. The contact list identifies each party's responsibilities, as well as back up contacts for the primary contacts.
- 6.2.8 The library disaster plan includes procedures for assessing damaged materials and determining salvage priorities. It outlines disaster recovery steps including the point at which external recovery services will be contacted. When possible, advance preparation

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or notes on the procurement of specialized disaster response services are incorporated in the disaster plan in accordance with local procedures.

- 6.2.9 The library disaster plan includes an explanation of essential library functions and the means to provide these services during unplanned library closures. These may include plans for alternate work locations and a process to determine when various plans or procedures will be put into effect.
- 6.2.10 The library disaster plan contains information about any electronic resources needed to continue library services during disaster scenarios. This may include vendor or subscription information, account IDs or similar information.
- 6.2.11 The library disaster plan is reviewed annually to verify that it is sufficient, complete and current; all revisions are dated. Copies of revised plans are distributed to all points of contact in the local organization responsible for overall disaster response as well as the Library Network National Program Manager.
- 6.2.12 Library task order managers ensure that all library staff are aware of the library's disaster response and recovery procedures and the library staff's role and responsibilities, if any, in disaster response as related to local policies and procedures.
- 6.2.13 Library managers and designated staff must be prepared to implement the library's disaster plan with or without warning, during or outside of business hours. The library disaster plan takes into account whether or not time worked outside of normal business hours by contract staff is allowed under the contract.

### 6.3 Response

Immediate response to a disaster will be carried out in accord with the disaster plan for that location, with the highest priority being placed on the safety of library staff and visitors. Response activities will also focus on protecting property such as library collections and the building itself. Due to the nature of federal and federally-occupied buildings and the likelihood of an Agency-coordinated response, facilities personnel or emergency staff may prevent library management from conducting response activities exactly as listed below. Advance coordination with the overall building emergency response plan is advised to mitigate problems in this area. Responsible parties named in the library disaster plan will take the following steps upon reentry to the library space:

- 6.3.1 **Stabilize the Area**  
After initial photographic evidence is gathered, designated library staff work with facilities and emergency response workers to stabilize the area. This could include cleaning up standing water, using plastic sheeting to protect the collection from further damage, providing electricity through the use of generators, removing wet furnishings and stabilizing temperature and humidity levels by using fans or dehumidifiers.
- 6.3.2 **Document the Damage**  
It is important that all damage to EPA libraries and materials that results from disaster is fully documented. Designated library staff make a written assessment of the damage prior to enacting further response efforts. Before and during the recovery process, they gather photo and/or video evidence with pertinent identifying information, such as date and time. This information contributes to the final disaster recovery report.

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6.3.3 Locate Items on the High-Priority List

Designated library staff identify and assess items on the high-priority list of the library disaster plan. The library determines what method of recovery or replacement should be used for damaged items.

6.3.4 Evaluate and Assess Losses

Designated library staff assess the condition of damaged materials using procedures established in the library's disaster plan. During assessment, each item is considered individually. The assessment phase ends in the event a total-loss determination is made. Assessment categories may include: unsalvageable (replace or discard), to be repaired or to be cleaned. Cost considerations for sending materials through a remediation process are weighed against purchasing replacement items that may have a longer lifespan.

6.3.5 Prioritize Treatment/Replacement

After assessing materials, the library determines a priority order in which to treat or replace materials. If many items require treatment for water damage or if any mold is detected, the library considers freezing processes for those materials that are deemed worth salvaging. Whether recovered materials are treated in-house or sent to an outside vendor, the library is aware that not all techniques are appropriate for all library materials. After damaged materials are treated, they are prepared for shelving.

6.3.6 Maintain Bibliographic Control

During the remediation period the library may need to temporarily change its loan status to "non-supplier" in OCLC interlibrary loan systems. Catalog records in both the Online Library System (OLS) and OCLC will be updated to reflect those items that were destroyed or sent for treatment.

6.4 Recovery

Following a disaster libraries are expected to undertake recovery activities to restore services and repair damages caused by the event.

6.4.1 Write a Disaster Recovery Report

Regardless of how major or minor a disaster, the library writes a disaster recovery report. The report includes the dates, time, and description of the disaster, the appropriate number of EPA documents and other materials affected, a description and count of materials that were lost, immediate and long-term response efforts, the amount of time spent in recovery, the results and impacts of the disaster, the recovery budget and any evidentiary photographs or video taken during the recovery effort. A copy of the disaster recovery report is provided to the Library Network's National Program Manager and appropriate local EPA staff.

6.4.2 Resumption of Library Services

After the initial disaster response steps are taken, the library attempts to return to normal or partial services as quickly as possible. If the physical library space is uninhabitable during remediation work, the library makes arrangements to provide services from an alternate location, or coordinate with the EPA National Library Network to provide

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temporary services to patrons through other libraries. The library communicates changes to its services, hours of operations, locations and other relevant access issues as early as possible and through multiple communication channels, including, but not limited to signage, Internet sites, Intranet sites, all-hands memos and other announcements as appropriate. A Federal Register Notice may be necessary if changes in service are expected to be significant; libraries communicate with the Network Program Manager on this decision.

#### 6.4.3 Continuity of Operations Plan for EPA National Library Network

The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan for the EPA National Library Network ensures that the Network is capable of providing essential services to all EPA locations under all threats and conditions. While the severity and consequences of an emergency cannot be predicted, effective disaster planning minimizes the impact on the Network's mission, personnel and facilities. This plan applies to the functions, operations and resources necessary to ensure the continuation of the Network's essential services in the event that normal operations of any Network library location are disrupted or threatened with disruption. This plan applies to all Library Network staff and contractors and the full spectrum of emergencies that may affect one of the Network libraries. This plan is meant to apply to short-term emergency situations and is not meant to be used for planned library closures (e.g. library renovation projects). In the event of a pre-planned library closure, other arrangements will need to be made regarding the provision of essential services during that time. Additionally, this plan is meant to provide a short-term solution to emergency needs and is not meant to be used as a long-term reassigning of library services.

##### 6.4.3.1 Overview of Plan

The distributed nature of the Library Network makes it particularly well suited for continuity of operations in the event of a threat or emergency. The various Network libraries are located throughout the continental United States with locations in a variety of time zones. This document lays out a plan for rolling over essential services from one library location to another in the event of an emergency. Not all emergency situations will necessitate the shifting of services to an alternate location. For example, if a library facility is forced to close while the overall facility remains open, it may be possible for the library to remain open in a virtual sense by providing essential services from an alternate office space within the facility.

##### 6.4.3.2 Plan Details

###### 6.4.3.2.1 Essential Services

The essential services provided by Network libraries include reference and research services as well as interlibrary loan and document delivery.

###### 6.4.3.2.2 Key Personnel and Responsibilities

The Library Network Program Manager, or their designee, works with Federal Library Managers to assess the potential need for closure of a specific library location and decide on an appropriate rollover library location. The Federal Library Manager responsible for each Network library informs library staff at their location of the need to close and contacts the library that will be

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providing services on their behalf.

#### 6.4.3.3 Plan of Implementation

##### 6.4.3.3.1 Phase 1 – Pre-Emergency

All libraries are made aware of this plan and are provided a copy for their reference. Individual libraries prepare location specific procedures as needed to supplement the procedures discussed in this plan. Individual libraries investigate location specific options for providing services through alternative means in the event of an emergency. If possible, libraries develop a plan to reduce the impact of a closure on the designated rollover locations. Such a plan may include the use of alternate office space within the facility, the shifting of staff to an off-site office space (or flexiplace) or the migration of staff to a rollover location within the same geographic area.

##### 6.4.3.3.2 Phase 2 – Activation and Notification

###### 6.4.3.3.2.1 Assessment Procedures

Federal Library Managers at each library location are responsible for assessing the potential need for a library closure in consultation with the Library Network Program Manager and their local management. Once a decision has been made to close a library location due to an emergency, an appropriate rollover location is designated by the Library Network Program Manager. The choice of rollover location depends on the nature of the emergency and the geographic areas affected. The potential for providing services without utilizing a rollover library is always considered before activating the rollover plan.

###### 6.4.3.3.2.2 Plan Activation and Notification Procedures

- 6.4.3.3.2.2.1 The Federal Library Manager informs local management, the Network Coordination Team and library staff of the need for a closure and initiates steps laid out in local disaster plans for closing and securing the library.
- 6.4.3.3.2.2.2 The Federal Library Manager or a library staff designee discusses with the rollover library the need for closure and the anticipated length of the closure.
- 6.4.3.3.2.2.3 Library users are informed of the temporary change in provision of library services, as well as the hours, time zone and contact information of the rollover library, via outgoing voicemail messages, out-of-office email replies and physical signage at the affected library. Libraries use other means of communicating the situation to their users if they have them available (e.g. local library email lists).
- 6.4.3.3.2.2.4 The entire Library Network will be informed of the closure and change in provision of library services via the epalibnet email list.

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#### 6.4.3.3.2 Phase 3 – Continuity Activities

While the emergency situation continues, all essential services such as reference, interlibrary loan and document delivery are provided by the designated rollover library. The rollover library keeps a record of services performed for the closed library. Regular assessments of the emergency situation are made by the Federal Library Managers to ensure that the impact on the rollover library is minimized. If an emergency situation goes on longer than anticipated, alternative arrangements are pursued. These arrangements could involve the affected library's staff working from an alternative location or the shifting of services to a different rollover location. All efforts are made to pursue remediation and return to service activities at the affected site as soon as possible. The Federal Library Manager regularly updates the Library Network Program Manager and local management as to the status of the situation.

#### 6.4.3.3.3 Phase 4 – Deactivation of COOP Activities

Once the emergency situation has been resolved and the affected library is able to reopen, the Federal Library Manager informs the Library Network Program Manager, local management, the Network Coordination Team, the Federal Library Manager of the library providing services and library staff at both locations that the library is reopening. Library users are informed of the restoration of services as appropriate and the entire Library Network is informed of the restoration of services via the epalibnet email list. The staff of the library that provided services during the closure shares the record of services performed for the closed library with the Library Network Program Manager and the Federal Library managers of both libraries. Once normal activities have resumed, a meeting is scheduled to discuss the continuity activities and assess their effectiveness.

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## 7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

American Library Association (ALA). Disaster Preparedness and Recovery, accessed 02/2015 (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/disasterpreparedness>).

American Library Association (ALA). Disaster Response: A Selected Annotated Bibliography (ALA Library Fact Sheet 10), updated 09/2014 (<http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet10>).

California Preservation Program. Emergency Preparedness & Response, accessed 02/2015 ([http://www.calpreservation.org/information\\_resources/emergency-prep-and-response](http://www.calpreservation.org/information_resources/emergency-prep-and-response)).

EPA Office of Technology Operations and Planning. Directive 300.06: Disaster Recovery, revised 06/26/2002 (<http://basin.rtpnc.epa.gov/ntsd/directives.nsf/bynum/300.06>).

Federal Emergency Management Agency. FPC 67, Federal Preparedness Circular; Acquisition of Alternate Facilities for Continuity of Operations (COOP), dated 04/30/2001 (<http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/fpc67.pdf>).



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Federal Library and Information Center Network (FEDLINK). Disaster Preparedness Working Group, updated 11/13/2013 (<http://www.loc.gov/flicc/about/FLICC%20WGs/diasterprepwg.html>).

Library of Congress. Emergency Preparedness, Response & Recovery, accessed 02/2015 (<http://www.loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/>).

Northeast Document Conservation Center. 24/7 Collections Emergency Phone Assistance, accessed 02/2015 (<http://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/disaster-assistance/emergency-phone-assistance>).

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## 8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Agency has the overall responsibility for the governance and coordination of the EPA National Library Network, including establishing policy and supporting procedures, standards, and guidance to ensure the effective oversight of the EPA National Library Network.
  - B. Assistant Administrators and Regional Administrators with EPA National Library Network libraries are responsible for the management of their individual libraries, ensure compliance with Agency-wide policies, procedures, standards and guidance relating to the Library Network and ensure their individual libraries provide efficient and cost-effective access to information and data necessary to carry out EPA's mission.
  - C. The National Library Program Manager has the day-to-day responsibility to provide assistance and guidance to offices in the operation of the EPA National Library Network and to ensure that the individual libraries provide efficient and cost-effective access to information and data necessary to carry out EPA's mission. The National Library Program Manager resides in the Office of Environmental Information.
  - D. Federal Library Managers have first-line responsibility for operation of physical Network libraries and provision of library services and to ensure that their individual libraries provide efficient and cost-effective access to information and data necessary to carry out EPA's mission.
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## 9. DEFINITIONS

**Access:** The ability of members of the public to obtain information from a government agency. All public libraries and most academic libraries in the United States are open to the general public, but access to certain areas such as closed stacks, rare books and special collections may be restricted. In a more general sense, the right or opportunity to use a resource that may not be openly and freely available to everyone. In computing, the privilege of using a computer system or online resource, usually controlled by the issuance of access codes to authorized users or, more broadly, the ability of a user to reach data stored on a computer or computer system.

**Bibliographic Control:** A broad term encompassing all the activities involved in creating, organizing, managing and maintaining the file of bibliographic records representing the items held in a library or archival collection, or the sources listed in an index or database, to facilitate access to the information

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contained in them.

**Catalog:** A comprehensive inventory of the books, periodicals, maps and other materials in a given library collection, arranged in systematic order to facilitate retrieval (usually alphabetically by author, title, and/or subject). In most modern libraries, the card catalog has been converted to machine-readable bibliographic records and is available online. The catalog for the EPA National Library Network is the EPA National Library Catalog.

**Catalog Record:** An entry in a database that describes the physical attributes of a work, including its subject(s) and gives the physical location of the item and/or links to the work online. Also known as Bibliographic Record.

**Continuity of Operations (COOP):** The preplanned capability of EPA Libraries to continue to operate in any emergency or situation that may disrupt normal operations.

**COOP:** See Continuity of Operations.

**Database:** A large, regularly updated file of digitized information (bibliographic records, abstracts, full-text documents, directory entries, images, statistics, etc.) related to a specific subject or field, consisting of records of uniform format organized for ease and speed of search and retrieval and managed with the aid of database management system (DBMS) software. Content is usually created by the database producer. In the case of commercial databases, the content may be leased to one or more database vendors (Dialog, EBSCO, OCLC, etc.) that provide electronic access to the data after it has been converted to machine-readable form, usually online via the Internet, using proprietary search software. Most databases used in libraries are catalogs, periodical indexes, abstracting services and full-text reference resources leased annually under licensing agreements that limit access to registered borrowers and library staff.

**Disaster Plan:** A library disaster plan is a guide that is used to assist a library in preparing for and recovering from a disaster.

**EPA Document/Publication:** An official EPA publication in any format, that has or should be assigned a special alpha-numeric identifier known as an EPA publication number.

**EPA National Library Catalog:** The online catalog for the EPA National Library Network, which provides bibliographical records for the items residing in EPA libraries and links to documents on environmental topics on the Internet. The Catalog allows searches by author, title, subject heading, any standard numbers that are assigned to the work, classification number and keywords present in the record.

**EPA National Library Network:** A national network composed of EPA libraries and repositories located in the Agency's Headquarters, Regional and Field Offices, Research Centers and specialized laboratories, as well as Web-based access to electronic collections. Network libraries are defined as those libraries with an official membership presence in OCLC. Centralized Network coordination

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comes from the Agency's Office of Environmental Information. Individual EPA libraries are administered by a range of offices in conjunction with contract staff.

**Essential Library Functions:** Those library services that are critical to the mission of the library and the Agency. The services may include reference, circulation, etc. Functions that are considered "essential" may vary from one EPA Library to the next.

**External Recovery Services:** Companies that have expertise in various disaster recovery techniques for library materials. These companies can provide services that include the freezing of water damaged books, rebinding services, etc.

**High-Priority Publications and Resources:** Those materials that are essential to library functions or the Agency's mission. The resources that should be the first to go through a remediation process or be replaced after a disaster.

**ILL:** See Interlibrary Loan.

**Interlibrary Loan (ILL):** The process by which a library requests materials from, or supplies materials to, another library. This service is provided upon request of a library user for materials not available in the local library.

**Library Floor Plan:** A map or graphical representation of the library space that includes the locations of materials, high-priority resources and emergency support features such as fire extinguishers and alarm pulls.

**Loan Status:** The type of loan in effect at a particular time for a specific item in a library collection. Typical status indicators include materials available for general circulation, materials on loan to other libraries via interlibrary loan and noncirculating materials.

**Materials:** Items within the library collection that may include books, journals, reports, miscellaneous publications, microform, multimedia and other physical objects. Generally, library materials do not include official records, but convenience copies of records may be included.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A memorandum signed by more than one agency or organization that promises cooperation or coordination on a specific issue, project or agenda.

**MOU:** See Memorandum of Understanding.

**OLS:** See Online Library System.

**OCLC:** OCLC is a nonprofit, membership-based, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing

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information costs. OCLC maintains the largest catalog and interlibrary loan network in the world, which assists librarians and the general public with locating, acquiring, cataloging, lending, borrowing and preserving library materials.

**Online Library System (OLS):** The previous name for the EPA National Library Catalog. This term currently refers to the computer system used by EPA libraries for circulation, cataloging, serials and dispersals.

**Patrons:** Anyone authorized to use the materials and services of the library. May include EPA staff, contractors and/or the public.

**Processing Functions:** The steps taken to make materials shelf-ready in libraries. This can include but may not be limited to cataloging, stamping and placing labels on books and resources.

**Rebinding:** The process of replacing or repairing the cover and spine of a book. This process may be required after a book receives water, smoke or fire damage. General wear on a book can also necessitate rebinding.

**Shelf List:** A list of library books and resources, containing bibliographic information about each book or resource, in the order the resources appear on the library shelves.

**Signage:** A collective term for all the static visual symbols and devices posted in a library to direct patrons to specific resources, services and facilities, and to inform them of library hours, policies, programs and events, including their size, design and placement. Signs that are clear, concise, consistent, courteous and appropriately placed can significantly reduce the number of directional questions received at the reference desk and make using the library less stressful, especially for inexperienced patrons. To comply with ADA requirements, many libraries in the United States have added Braille to signs posted within physical reach of users. In libraries that serve a significant number of non-English-speaking patrons, signs may be provided in more than one language. An effort is made in new construction and major renovations to avoid a piecemeal approach by incorporating the style and placement of signs into the overall interior design.

**SOW:** See Statement of Work.

**Stacks:** The area of a library where the main body of the collection (usually books and periodicals) is stored when not in use, usually on rows of free-standing double-faced shelving. In some libraries the stacks are closed to the public, but most libraries in the United States allow patrons to browse all or part of their primary collections in open stacks.

**Statement of Work (SOW):** A specific statement regarding the requirements needed in a service contract. The statement of work should include all aspects of job requirements, performance and assessment.

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**Subscription:** The right to receive or access a newspaper or periodical for a designated period of time (or prescribed number of successive issues), upon payment of a subscription fee payable in advance to the publisher or subscription agent. Most subscriptions are renewed annually. Subscription also refers to the right of a library or library system to provide access to a bibliographic database or other online resource to its patrons under a licensing agreement with a vendor upon payment of an annual subscription fee and is subject to renewal.

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#### 10. WAIVERS

Waivers to these procedures must be approved by the Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information/Chief Information Officer. Waiver requests must be submitted in writing by the requesting office's Senior Information Official (SIO) through the Director of the Office of Enterprise Information Programs.

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#### 11. RELATED POLICIES, STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

The following related policies, standards and guidance documents are available on the Office of Environmental Information Policy page (<http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8>):

CIO 2170-P-06.2 EPA Library Facility Management Procedures

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#### 12. MATERIAL SUPERSEDED

These procedures supersede CIO 2170-P-10.0 EPA Library Disaster Response and Continuity of Operations (COOP) Procedures, dated March 2011.

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#### 13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about these procedures, please contact the EPA National Library Network Program Manager at [epalibrarynetwork@epa.gov](mailto:epalibrarynetwork@epa.gov).

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*Ann Dunkin*  
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