



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT *of* EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
MARK HENRY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 21, 2012

Dr. Helen Parker
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor/ETA
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, Room 6M12
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dr. Parker:

I am pleased to submit the Mississippi's Integrated Workforce Plan for Program Years 2012 through 2017. I certify that no changes will be made to the State's Integrated Workforce Plan while posted on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site.

If you have any questions, please contact Richard McMorris at rmorris@mdes.ms.gov or 601-321-6569 or Yolonda Boone at yboone@mdes.ms.gov or 601-321-6050.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Henry".

Mark Henry
Executive Director

MISSISSIPPI



**FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC
STATE INTEGRATED WORKFORCE PLAN
FOR
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT
WAGNER-PEYSER ACT
AND
OTHER DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WORKFORCE PROGRAMS**

July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2017

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State of Mississippi
Integrated Workforce Plan
Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser Act,
Dept. of Labor Workforce Program
July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2017

Section I - State Workforce Strategic Plan

A. Governor's Vision

Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant's five-year Integrated Workforce Plan is centered on an effective and efficient state workforce development system that meets the demands of Mississippi's businesses and job seekers by creating a *Work-Ready Mississippi*. This system will integrate state and local resources to create a seamless system to serve the business community and the individuals who use the system.

As a demonstration of his commitment to transform the system, Governor Bryant directed a commission of workforce and education partner agencies to develop a statewide plan that establishes a more coordinated and accountable workforce development system with greater emphasis on training, increasing job skills, and certifications. The Governor has also created a statewide economic development plan, "Mississippi Works," that will be aligned with the redesigned workforce development system. This will be an industry-focused, demand-driven workforce development system.

These strategies will work concurrently with other workforce and economic development strategies that are currently proposed by the Mississippi Economic Council in its "Blueprint Mississippi" and by the State Workforce Investment Board's "Mississippi Vision 20/20." Under Governor Bryant's direction, the State Workforce Investment Board will be responsible for the implementation and oversight of these various plans as one coordinated vision of the governor.

Governor Phil Bryant's economic priorities for Mississippi over the next five years will guide the strategic and operational workforce planning for state agencies. The priorities include providing an attractive economic climate for current and emerging industries that foster economic opportunity, job creation, capital investment and infrastructure development by developing a well-trained, educated, and productive workforce. The initial emphasis will be placed on two growth sectors, Health Care and Energy, which were the focus of important pieces of legislation passed in the 2012 legislative session. Of equal importance is the retention and expansion of existing industries such as advanced manufacturing, including automotive, shipbuilding, and aerospace; tourism; and defense and homeland security.

Mississippi passed the Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act which expands the health care industry. This Bill advocates centralizing health care and encouraging health care-related businesses to create high-paying jobs and to locate within qualified Health Care Zones. Businesses that create jobs in the research, development, manufacturing or processing of

pharmaceuticals, biologics, biotechnology, medical supplies and medical equipment, diagnostic imaging and other shared services would be eligible for incentives.

As Mississippi's population ages, the need for quality, accessible medical care will increase. This increase in need for medical care will require an increase in the number of healthcare jobs, as evidenced by the national growth in this sector of twenty-one percent between 2001 and 2010. Mississippi jobs in healthcare pay 40 percent more than the statewide average.

Governor Bryant's Energy and Sustainability Act of 2012 encourages energy innovation in the private sector. Mississippi is ranked as the world's most attractive spot for oil and gas investment according to a 2011 independent report issued by The Frasier Institute. Mississippi is poised to become a leader in energy innovation. To facilitate this effort, Mississippi must adopt an oil and gas energy strategy that creates jobs and encourages education, job training, and further job creation.

This act also requires the development of a statewide energy plan that includes forecasting energy needs and energy workforce needs. The Energy and Sustainability Act also addresses Mississippi's pressing need to expand its energy economy, develop energy jobs, further energy research, and implement statewide energy efficiencies.

At the heart of Mississippi's economy are our existing business and industries. Developing a workforce for the growth and sustainability of Mississippi businesses large and small - from tourism on the Mississippi Blues Trail to the high tech and advanced manufacturing of military drones - must remain a priority. The vision is simple: to help our state attract, keep, and grow businesses that create good jobs.

The Governor understands that Mississippi's economic growth is dependent on a comprehensive statewide workforce system that integrates education, industry, employment and economic development into a unified enterprise with a shared vision and common goal. This system will be employer-focused and demand-driven. The growth of high wage employment is dependent upon Mississippi having a trained workforce, a continued supply of skilled Mississippians who are ready, willing and able to fill jobs. Mississippi has identified five keys to meet the shortage a high-quality workforce:

1. *A high quality education* for all citizens is a key tenet of competitiveness that makes Mississippi an attractive place to create, locate and grow a business;
2. High wage jobs must be filled by *highly skilled workers* possessing the appropriate skills to do the job and further business growth. Unfilled job positions are wasted opportunities in the short and long term causing employers to look outside Mississippi for talent;
3. *An information system that supports data-driven planning and decision making* for state and local workforce stakeholders;
4. An increase in *post-secondary credentials and certifications* that help jobseekers access the high-skill, high-growth jobs of the future; and

5. *A pipeline for workforce development* must be advanced through *strategic partnerships* with a common vision among K-12, community colleges, universities, state agencies and other stakeholders devoted to workforce training and retraining.

Governor Phil Bryant envisions a business friendly climate with a skilled and qualified workforce that positions Mississippi as a leader for economic growth in the global economy.

B. Economic and Workforce Information Analysis

Overview of the State's Labor Market and Economic Context:

Mississippi is a predominantly rural state with a population of 2,967,297 with only three metropolitan areas. From 2000 to 2010, Mississippi's overall population grew by 122,639. Growth among particular populations has resulted in a more diverse Mississippi. The state also has a larger potential workforce in 2010 than it did in 2000, as Mississippi's population over 18 years old grew by 142,000 to a total potential workforce of 2,219,538. However, actual labor-force participation is 1,090,200 as of March 2012, resulting in a participation rate of 49.1%. Compared to the national workforce participation rate of 63.1%, Mississippi ranks number 47 in the nation.

Mississippi's unemployment rate rose from 5.9% in January 2000 to a peak of 11.6% in July 2011. Unemployment rates now range from 6.1% to 18.9%. The gap in unemployment rates for Mississippi's white and African-American workers exceeds the national gap and has grown during the recession. At the end of 2010, the unemployment rate for African-American workers was 17.3%, while the rate for white workers was 6.9%.

The 2007 recession brought larger job loss than the 2001 recession. In the 2007 recession, Mississippi lost 76,800 jobs (6.6% of total jobs) over a two-year period. From 2000 to 2010, Mississippi lost 39% of its manufacturing employment, equal to 86,700 jobs. Health and education services added 27,200 jobs in the 2000s, a 26% increase. There was no employment growth in the state in 2011 and the growth rate in 2012 is expected to be only a modest 0.8%, with a 1.3% increase predicted in 2013. Job growth is forecast to peak in 2014, at a growth rate of 1.5%; nationally, the rate in the peak year of 2014 is forecast to be 1.8%.

Inflation-adjusted median wages for Mississippi workers rose marginally this decade from \$13.13 in 2000 to \$13.45 in 2010. While the gap between wages for men and women remains, it shrank in Mississippi between 2000 and 2010. In 2010, the median wage for men was \$14.29 compared to \$12.75 for women. Wage disparities between white and African-American workers have persisted at a similar level for over three decades. White workers earned median wages of \$15.66 in 2010 while the median wage for African-American workers was \$11.02.

Mississippi's median household income of \$36,851 in 2010 was \$4,500 less than in 2000. A larger percentage of Mississippi's population lives in poverty than any neighboring Mid-South state. More than one in five Mississippians (22.4%) lived in poverty in 2010, up significantly from the beginning of the decade. Close to 275,000 adults in Mississippi are in low-wage employment. For adults in low-wage jobs, working full-time is often not enough to keep a family of four out of poverty.

As the national economy strengthens, the numbers in Mississippi are improving. Both the index of leading indicators and the index of coincident indicators for the state have risen for six consecutive months. Personal income in the state rose 3.8% in 2011, led by strong growth of proprietors' and property income. This fiscal year, state income tax collections through March are up 7.0% from year-ago collections.

Overall, state General Fund revenues for FY2012 through March are up 5.6% over the same period in FY2011, or 4.7% ahead of estimate. The economy remains on track to reach FY2012 revenue projections, although tight budgets are expected to continue through FY2014. Payroll employment did not grow in 2011, however, and in the first two months of 2012 came in only 0.1% above year-ago numbers. Manufacturing employment was stable, and positive growth is expected in 2012 as several major new facilities have now begun production.

1. Assessment of the current situation and projected trends of the state's economy, industries and occupations, including major economic regions and sectors within the state

The projected growth trends for Mississippi's economy are in the Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Energy sectors. Other state-targeted industries include Automotive Assembly and Suppliers and Shipbuilding.

The current and anticipated continued growth rate in the Healthcare sector in Mississippi is expected to keep pace with the national healthcare growth rate. Healthcare is an industry of necessity. As Mississippi population ages, the need for quality, accessible medical care will increase. Revenue growth in healthcare outpaced other industries in 2011. Nationally, healthcare jobs growth rose twenty-one percent between 2001 and 2010.

The healthcare industry has a tremendous impact on Mississippi's economy. The industry in its current state generates \$11.9 billion in annual economic impact, provides Mississippi with more than \$484 million in annual tax revenues and accounts for seven percent of our gross state product. Mississippi jobs in healthcare are paying 40 percent more than the statewide average.

In addition to healthcare and energy, over \$377 million in new investments in advanced manufacturing have been announced since the start of 2012 and the \$3.1 billion in new projects announced in 2011 continue to bolster the economy. A \$1.3 billion Toyota auto plant began production in 2011, as did a \$500 million plant built by Schulz Extruded Products (metallurgical pipes). The \$550 Severstal expansion at Columbus, which will double the plant's steelmaking capacity to 3.4 million tons annually, has also begun operations. This plant features the most advanced electric arc furnace facility in the world and recycles scrap steel for use in autos, pipes and appliances.

Mississippi's growth in the energy sector has been fueled by a \$1.4 billion expansion at Chevron, a \$570 million port upgrade at Gulfport, and a \$1 billion natural gas pipeline (Spectra Energy and CenterPoint Energy). In addition, HCL Cleantech has announced plans to build its headquarters and four plants in the state, for a total investment of \$1 billion. The plants will convert pine chips into cellulosic sugars for use in fuel, lubricants, and other products. Two \$500 million projects have also been announced: one by Stion (thin film solar panels) and the other by KiOR (crude oil from biomass). A total investment of \$3.1 billion in new projects was announced in 2011 and year-to-date in 2012 another \$377 million has been announced.

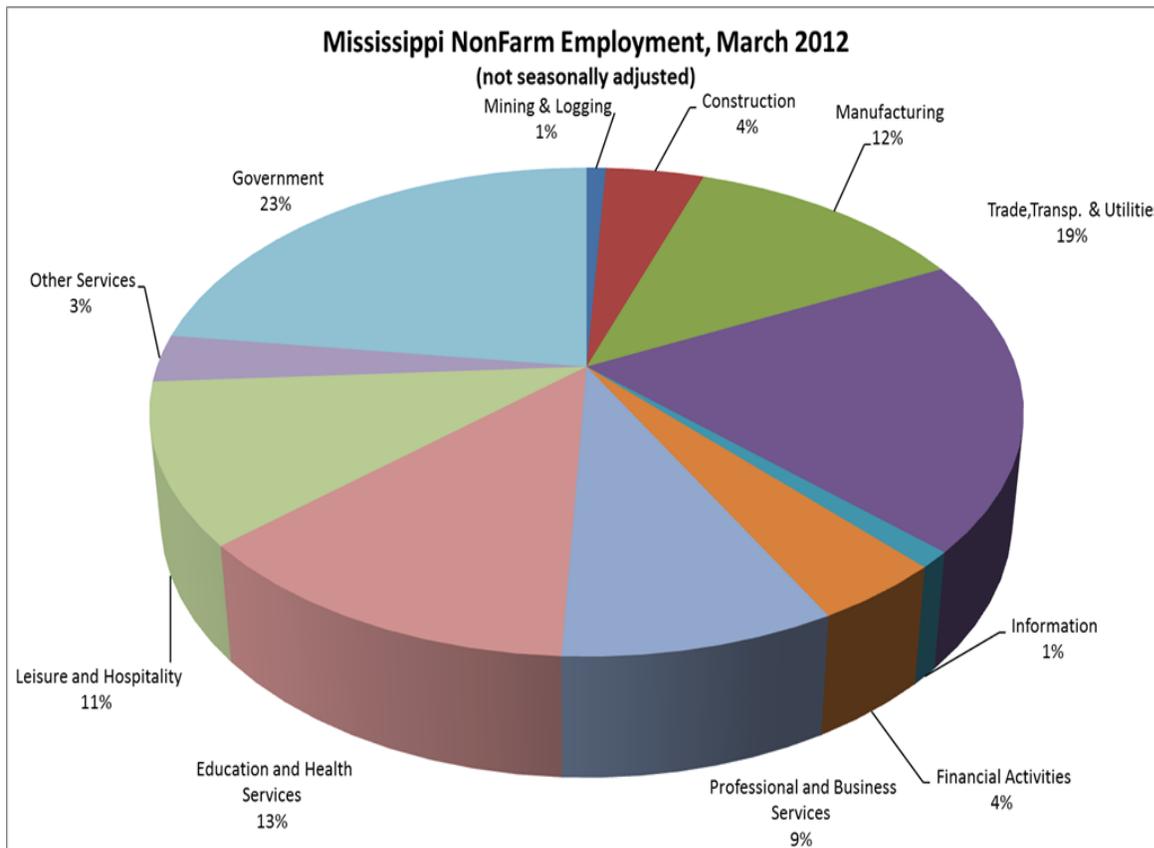
The growth rates of output and employment in Mississippi are forecast to be somewhat lower than the U.S. average rates in 2012. The state's growth rate of real output is forecast to accelerate to a peak of 2.8% in 2014. Payroll employment growth will also peak that year at 1.5%. The

major risks to the forecast come from developments abroad that are driving up the price of oil and reducing the world's growth rate. But the U.S. debt crisis is not over either, and has the potential to derail the recovery here.

About 2,500 jobs were added by the private sector during 2011, for a modest gain of 0.3%. Public sector employment was 1.2% lower, on the other hand, so that overall payroll employment remained unchanged.

As indicated by the new investments mentioned above, major growth is predominantly in the energy sector and in advanced manufacturing, often in support of the energy sector. The energy sector requires specialized education, skills and training for a large percentage of its jobs. Energy exploration requires highly trained geoscientists and engineers. Energy extraction requires skilled personnel across the spectrum, from field workers managing complex processes (such as mining or hydraulic fracturing) to production engineers with graduate engineering degrees. Refinery operations require specialized training (for example, Chevron in Mississippi works closely with the community college system to secure the specialized workforce they require, as do many other firms), and the growth of a bio refinery model will need these specialized skills. Electric energy production and distribution, likewise, is a skills-driven industry where specialized training is needed for jobs as diverse as line workers to nuclear engineers.

The following chart shows the current employment trends of Mississippi's economy:



As the Non-Farm Employment chart indicates, Mississippi's economy is dominated by six sectors. The largest sector as of March 31, 2012 was Government followed by Trade, Transportation, and Utilities and Education and Health Services. If we compare the industry makeup over the past decade, what becomes clear is that the decline of manufacturing seen nationwide has also occurred in Mississippi. While there has been a significant loss in manufacturing employment in Mississippi over the past 10 years, manufacturing employment has remained stable over the past year. There was positive growth for Education and Health Services and Professional and Business Services.

The data below compares Mississippi's employment by industry sector at March 31, 2012 to employment at March 31, 2002.

INDUSTRY SECTOR	March 2012	March 2002	Number Change	Percent Change
Mining & Logging	9,300	9,000	300	3.33%
Construction	47,400	53,900	(6,500)	(12.06%)
Manufacturing	135,400	191,100	(55,700)	(29.15%)
Trade, Transp. & Utilities	211,800	218,300	(6,500)	(2.98%)
Information	11,600	16,300	(4,700)	(28.83%)
Financial Activities	44,600	45,500	(900)	(1.98%)
Professional and Business Services	93,300	77,100	16,200	21.01%
Education and Health Services	137,800	112,600	25,200	22.38%
Leisure and Hospitality	115,600	119,600	(4,000)	(3.34%)
Other Services	34,200	37,300	(3,100)	(8.31%)
Government	249,200	239,600	9,600	4.01%
Total	1,090,200	1,112,400	(22,200)	(2.00%)

As shown in the following chart, Mississippi's 2008 -2018 Long-term Industry Employment projections show steady growth across all industries with the exception of Mining and Utilities. Long-Term projections are designed to predict employment changes by industry over a ten-year period. The predicted largest percentage increases are for Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services at 29.3% and Educational and Health Services at 24.6%. The largest numeric increases noted were for Educational and Health Services. Educational and Health Services show an increase of 31,500 followed by Government with 27,630. Government includes public school employment. The chart does not account for the recent investments and expansions in the advanced manufacturing, energy, and healthcare sectors.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	2008 Employment	2018 Projected Employment	Projected Employment Growth 2008-2018	Percent
Total Employment, All Jobs	1,366,400	1,541,930	175,530	12.80%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	17,290	17,310	20	0.10%
Mining	6,520	6,180	(340)	(5.20%)
Construction	64,150	76,110	11,960	18.60%
Manufacturing	160,040	165,200	5,160	3.20%
Utilities	8,900	8,650	(250)	(2.80%)
Wholesale Trade	36,490	38,380	1,890	5.20%
Retail Trade	139,540	157,550	18,010	12.90%
Transportation and Warehousing	41,330	46,830	5,500	13.30%
Information	14,970	15,820	850	5.70%
Finance and Insurance	34,950	37,350	2,400	6.90%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,020	14,820	1,800	13.80%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	34,270	44,310	10,040	29.30%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	9,860	10,400	540	5.50%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	52,330	64,260	11,930	22.80%
Educational Services	18,850	22,850	4,000	21.20%
Health Care and Social Assistance	128,300	159,800	31,500	24.60%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	13,850	17,210	3,360	24.30%
Accommodation and Food Services	115,580	131,950	16,370	14.20%
Other Services (Except Government)	52,710	59,440	6,730	12.80%
Government	253,170	280,800	27,630	10.90%
Total Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	149,890	154,570	4,680	3.10%

The following table presents Occupational Employment Projections over the ten year period 2008 - 2018; the data is presented by major occupational group. The occupational groups with the largest projected employment increases are Office and Administrative Occupations at 19,750, followed by Education, Training and Library Occupations at 19,050 and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations with 18,560. Occupational groups with the largest predicted percentage increases are Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations at 23.8% followed by Healthcare Support Occupations at 23.1% and Education, Training, and Library Occupations at 22.8%. Only one occupational group showed negative growth over the ten-year period, Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations, possibly caused by technological advances in that industry.

Standard Occupational Classification Group	2008 Employment	2018 Projected Employment	Projected Employment Growth 2008-2018	Percent	Total Projected Avg. Annual Job Openings
Total, All Occupations	1,366,400	1,541,930	175,530	12.80%	49,375
Management Occupations	68,850	74,020	5,170	7.50%	2,055
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	31,070	36,590	5,520	17.80%	1,170
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	11,160	13,350	2,190	19.60%	440
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	18,310	21,230	2,920	15.90%	680
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	9,490	10,830	1,340	14.10%	400
Community and Social Services Occupations	26,040	31,170	5,130	19.70%	1,075
Legal Occupations	9,490	10,960	1,470	15.50%	305
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	83,700	102,750	19,050	22.80%	3,795
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupati	20,310	22,910	2,600	12.80%	755
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	77,880	96,440	18,560	23.80%	3,490
Healthcare Support Occupations	41,760	51,400	9,640	23.10%	1,415
Protective Service Occupations	35,790	41,600	5,810	16.20%	1,535
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	102,780	118,680	15,900	15.50%	5,155
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupa	58,210	63,460	5,250	9.00%	1,495
Personal Care and Service Occupations	44,680	51,370	6,690	15.00%	1,905
Sales and Related Occupations	143,520	159,650	16,130	11.20%	6,065
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	192,290	212,040	19,750	10.30%	6,160
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	16,040	15,790	(250)	(1.60%)	455
Construction and Extraction Occupations	81,860	91,390	9,530	11.60%	2,405
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	59,430	66,830	7,400	12.50%	1,945
Production Occupations	126,530	133,830	7,300	5.80%	3,295
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	107,220	115,660	8,440	7.90%	3,390

Job zone tables analyze specific occupations within Mississippi. The following tables provide the top twenty occupations by job zone. The tables provide the related Job Zone or general education and training for each of the occupations. An explanation of Job Zones is provided after table two. The tables are derived from Mississippi's Long-Term Occupational projections for 2008-2018. Amounts are based on survey results and related staffing patterns for Mississippi employers. The tables provide a comparison of each occupation's annual demand, average entry wage, and average annual wage compared to the state averages. An index was computed and then occupations were ranked according to the index to determine the top twenty occupations for each job zone.

Mississippi
Top 20 Occupations - Annual Demand
Job Zone One

Rank	SOC Code	Occupational Title	Annual Demand	Entry Level Wage		Average Wage	
				Hourly	Annual	Hourly	Annual
1	41-2011	Cashiers	1,915	\$7.83	\$16,290	\$8.79	\$18,270
2	35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	850	\$7.75	\$16,120	\$8.44	\$17,550
3	35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	580	\$7.78	\$16,170	\$8.36	\$17,390
4	43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	500	\$8.08	\$16,800	\$10.33	\$21,480
5	35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	495	\$7.85	\$16,330	\$8.28	\$17,220
6	51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	375	\$8.36	\$17,390	\$9.83	\$20,460
7	35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food	365	\$7.86	\$16,360	\$8.36	\$17,390
8	37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	355	\$8.00	\$16,640	\$9.53	\$19,830
9	35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	340	\$7.81	\$16,240	\$8.36	\$17,400
10	37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	200	\$7.83	\$16,290	\$8.57	\$17,830
11	37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	185	\$8.10	\$16,840	\$10.44	\$21,720
12	51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers	180	\$8.57	\$17,820	\$9.73	\$20,240
13	35-9021	Dishwashers	170	\$7.75	\$16,130	\$8.40	\$17,480
14	35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	165	\$7.81	\$16,240	\$8.63	\$17,960
15	45-4022	Logging Equipment Operators	155	\$10.97	\$22,820	\$15.44	\$32,120
16	47-2061	Construction Laborers	135	\$9.01	\$18,730	\$11.93	\$24,820
17	51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	135	\$8.12	\$16,880	\$11.27	\$23,430
18	35-9011	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	125	\$7.71	\$16,040	\$8.25	\$17,160
19	53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	85	\$8.28	\$17,220	\$12.93	\$26,890
20	41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks	80	\$8.11	\$16,860	\$11.42	\$23,760

Mississippi
Top 20 Occupations - Annual Demand
Job Zone Two

Rank	SOC Code	Occupational Title	Annual Demand	Entry Level Wage		Average Wage	
				Hourly	Annual	Hourly	Annual
1	41-2031	Retail Salespersons	1,230	\$8.06	\$16,760	\$11.24	\$23,390
2	53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	735	\$8.11	\$16,870	\$10.78	\$22,420
3	53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	680	\$11.24	\$23,390	\$17.58	\$36,580
4	43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	575	\$9.44	\$19,640	\$13.04	\$27,110
5	41-1011	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Retail Sales Workers	490	\$11.03	\$22,950	\$16.81	\$34,960
6	31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	465	\$8.13	\$16,910	\$9.46	\$19,680
7	43-6014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	400	\$9.22	\$19,170	\$12.74	\$26,510
8	51-2092	Team Assemblers	385	\$9.67	\$20,100	\$13.96	\$29,040
9	33-9032	Security Guards	360	\$8.18	\$17,010	\$10.85	\$22,570
10	43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	315	\$8.31	\$17,290	\$10.80	\$22,470
11	43-9061	Office Clerks, General	310	\$8.09	\$16,820	\$10.87	\$22,610
12	43-3071	Tellers	260	\$8.80	\$18,310	\$10.99	\$22,850
13	51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	230	\$12.89	\$26,810	\$17.77	\$36,960
14	35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	225	\$8.17	\$16,990	\$9.96	\$20,720
15	31-1011	Home Health Aides	215	\$7.96	\$16,560	\$8.58	\$17,840
16	39-3011	Gaming Dealers	215	\$7.67	\$15,950	\$10.24	\$21,300
17	53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	215	\$9.84	\$20,460	\$12.95	\$26,940
18	35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	200	\$7.95	\$16,540	\$9.09	\$18,900
19	43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	170	\$9.50	\$19,770	\$13.02	\$27,080
20	53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	160	\$8.57	\$17,820	\$13.60	\$28,300

Mississippi
Top 20 Occupations - Annual Demand
Job Zone Three

Rank	SOC Code	Occupational Title	Annual Demand	Entry Level Wage		Average Wage	
				Hourly	Annual	Hourly	Annual
1	29-1111	Registered Nurses	1,075	\$19.91	\$41,410	\$27.86	\$57,940
2	29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	525	\$13.19	\$27,430	\$16.79	\$34,930
3	25-9041	Teacher Assistants	495	N.A.	\$16,240	N.A.	\$17,700
4	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	405	\$21.68	\$45,100	\$42.26	\$87,910
5	43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	355	\$10.77	\$22,390	\$15.22	\$31,660
6	43-1011	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Office and Administrative Support Workers	350	\$13.25	\$27,560	\$21.02	\$43,710
7	39-9011	Child Care Workers	325	\$7.82	\$16,260	\$8.67	\$18,030
8	41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	290	\$14.03	\$29,190	\$25.34	\$52,700
9	33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	245	\$11.23	\$23,370	\$15.11	\$31,430
10	33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	185	\$9.66	\$20,090	\$12.40	\$25,790
11	47-1011	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	170	\$16.68	\$34,690	\$24.88	\$51,760
12	29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	155	\$9.11	\$18,940	\$11.85	\$24,650
13	33-2011	Fire Fighters	145	\$10.29	\$21,410	\$15.09	\$31,380
14	47-2111	Electricians	145	\$14.52	\$30,190	\$19.41	\$40,380
15	47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	135	\$12.38	\$25,740	\$17.49	\$36,370
16	49-1011	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	135	\$15.70	\$32,660	\$25.03	\$52,050
17	49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	130	\$9.43	\$19,620	\$14.89	\$30,960
18	25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	125	\$7.93	\$16,490	\$10.94	\$22,750
19	43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	125	\$12.19	\$25,340	\$17.37	\$36,130
20	43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks and Machine Operators	110	\$10.16	\$21,140	\$13.36	\$27,780

**Mississippi
Top 20 Occupations - Annual Demand
Job Zone Four**

Rank	SOC Code	Occupational Title	Annual Demand	Entry Level Wage		Average Wage	
				Hourly	Annual	Hourly	Annual
1	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	515	N.A.	\$32,550	N.A.	\$41,720
2	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	470	N.A.	\$31,350	N.A.	\$41,490
3	25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	320	N.A.	\$32,510	N.A.	\$40,700
4	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	150	\$16.39	\$34,080	\$26.76	\$55,660
5	41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	105	\$12.78	\$26,580	\$24.74	\$51,460
6	21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	95	\$11.59	\$24,100	\$15.20	\$31,620
7	17-2112	Industrial Engineers	90	\$23.72	\$49,340	\$31.33	\$65,160
8	13-1023	Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	80	\$14.77	\$30,720	\$23.51	\$48,900
9	25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	75	N.A.	\$30,220	N.A.	\$40,590
10	25-2041	Special Education Teachers, Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary School	75	N.A.	\$34,360	N.A.	\$44,650
11	27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	75	\$13.49	\$28,060	\$18.88	\$39,280
12	11-3031	Financial Managers	70	\$21.14	\$43,970	\$36.46	\$75,840
13	13-1041	Compliance Officers, Except Agriculture, Construction, Health and Safety, and Transportation	70	\$14.72	\$30,610	\$22.46	\$46,720
14	25-2032	Vocational Education Teachers, Secondary School	55	N.A.	\$34,320	N.A.	\$44,040
15	41-1012	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Non-Retail Sales Workers	55	\$15.20	\$31,610	\$28.26	\$58,790
16	17-2051	Civil Engineers	50	\$24.21	\$50,360	\$37.26	\$77,490
17	25-4031	Library Technicians	50	\$7.92	\$16,480	\$10.29	\$21,410
18	27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	50	N.A.	\$21,310	N.A.	\$49,360
19	29-2011	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	50	\$16.19	\$33,680	\$22.90	\$47,630
20	39-9032	Recreation Workers	50	\$8.11	\$16,860	\$11.34	\$23,590

NA – hourly wages are not estimated for this occupation

2. An assessment of the workforce skills and knowledge individuals need to find current and future employment in the state, particularly those skills and knowledge identified by employers as necessary for economic growth in the state.

An analysis of the top 100 occupations in the State based on Annual Demand and Average Annual Wages was performed to determine the knowledge/skills that would be generally required. Annual Demand amounts were taken from the 2008-2018 Occupational Employment Projections for Mississippi and the Average Annual wage statistics were derived from an annual occupational wage survey performed by MDES. As expected, the greater the educational attainment the greater the average wages.

- Job Zone One occupations represent 20.0% of the top 100 occupations; however both the entry (\$17,011) and average annual (\$20,520) wages were less than the overall state entry-level average (\$17,720) and annual average (\$34,770) wages. Job Zone One occupations may require a High School Diploma or GED Certificate.
- Job Zone Two Occupations represent 37.0% of the top 100 occupations. The average entry-level wage (\$19,449) for those occupations is greater than the State entry-level average, but average annual wages (\$25,998) were less than the State average. Job Zone Two occupations usually require a High School Diploma.
- Job Zone Three occupations represent 26.0% of the top 100 occupations. The average entry (\$24,733) and average annual (\$36,069) wages are greater than the State averages. Most of the Job Zone Three occupations require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an Associate's Degree.
- Job Zone Four occupations represent 11.0% of the top 100 occupations. The average entry (\$32,170) and average annual (\$45,566) wages are greater than the State averages. Most Job Zone Four occupations require a four-year bachelor's Degree.
- Job Zone Five Occupations represent only 6.0% of the top 100 occupations. The average entry (\$49,867) and average annual (\$85,275) wages are significantly higher than the State averages. Most Job Zone Five occupations require graduate school.

Explanation of Job Zones:

Job Zone One: Little or No Preparation Needed

Education	Some of these occupations may require a high school diploma or GED certificate.
Related Experience	Little or no previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations. For example, a person can become a waiter or waitress even if he/she has never worked before.
Job Training	Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few days to a few months of training. Usually, an experienced worker could show you how to do the job.

Job Zone Two: Some Preparation Needed

Education	These occupations usually require a high school diploma.
Related Experience	Some previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is usually needed. For example, a teller would benefit from experience working directly with the public.
Job Training	Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations.

Job Zone Three: Medium Preparation Needed

Education	Most occupations in this zone require training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree.
Related Experience	Previous work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is required for these occupations. For example, an electrician must have completed three or four years of apprenticeship or several years of vocational training, and often must have passed a licensing exam, in order to perform the job.
Job Training	Employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations.

Job Zone Four: Considerable Preparation Needed

Education	Most of these occupations require a four-year bachelor's degree, but some do not.
Related Experience	A considerable amount of work-related skill, knowledge, or experience is needed for these occupations. For example, an accountant must complete four years of college and work for several years in accounting to be considered qualified.
Job Training	Employees in these occupations usually need several years of work-related experience, on-the-job training, and/or vocational training.

Job Zone Five: Extensive Preparation Needed

Education	Most of these occupations require graduate school. For example, they may require a master's degree, and some require a Ph.D., M.D., or J.D. (law degree).
Related Experience	Extensive skill, knowledge, and experience are needed for these occupations. Many require more than five years of experience. For example, surgeons must complete four years of college and an additional five to seven years of specialized medical training to be able to do their job.
Job Training	Employees may need some on-the-job training, but most of these occupations assume that the person will already have the required skills, knowledge, work-related experience, and/or training.

3. A description of the characteristics and needs of the state’s population and diverse subpopulations, including those from racial, ethnic, linguistic groups, older persons, and individuals with disabilities

The following data from the US Census Bureau provides a comparison of demographic data for Mississippi to the United States. The percent of population growth for Mississippi for 2000 to 2010 was 4.3% compared to the United States, which was 9.7%. This indicates slower than average population growth for Mississippi.

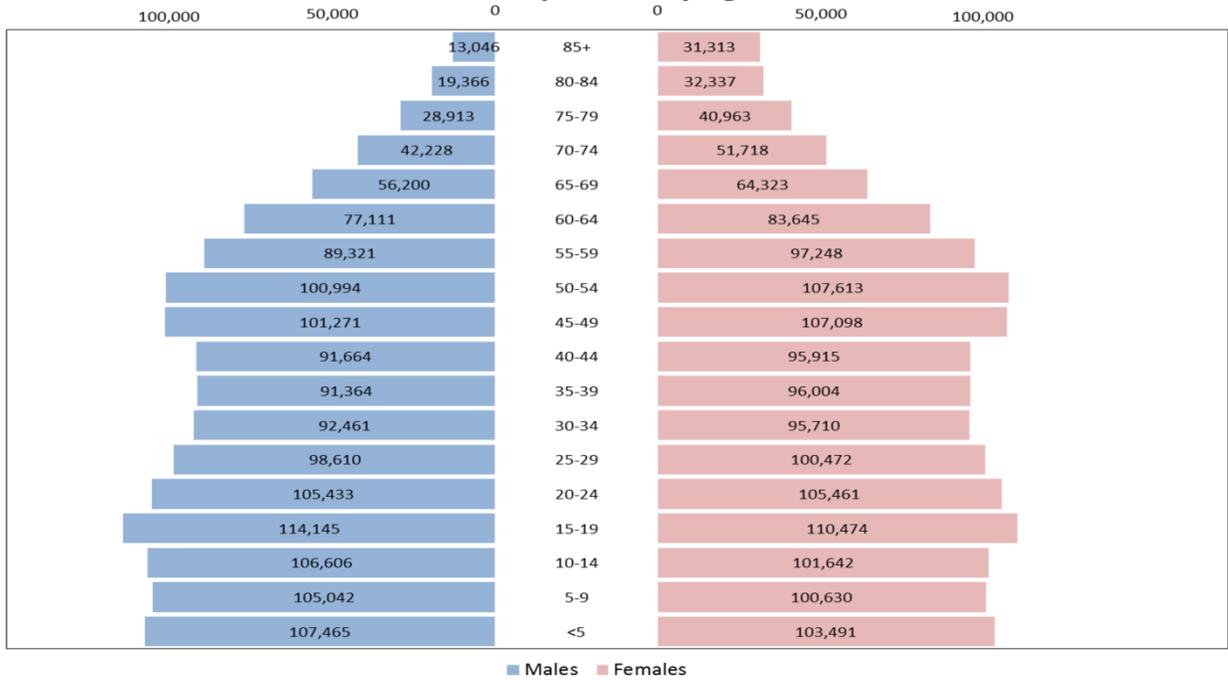
People QuickFacts	Mississippi	USA
Population, 2011 estimate	2,978,512	311,591,917
Population, 2010	2,967,297	308,745,538
Population, percent change, 2000 to 2010	4.3%	9.7%
Population, 2000	2,844,658	281,421,906
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010	7.1%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	25.5%	24.0%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010	12.8%	13.0%
Female persons, percent, 2010	51.4%	50.8%
White persons, percent, 2010 (a)	59.1%	72.4%
Black persons, percent, 2010 (a)	37.0%	12.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.5%	0.9%
Asian persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.9%	4.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2010 (a)	Z	0.2%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2010	1.1%	2.9%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b)	2.7%	16.3%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2010	58.0%	63.7%

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.

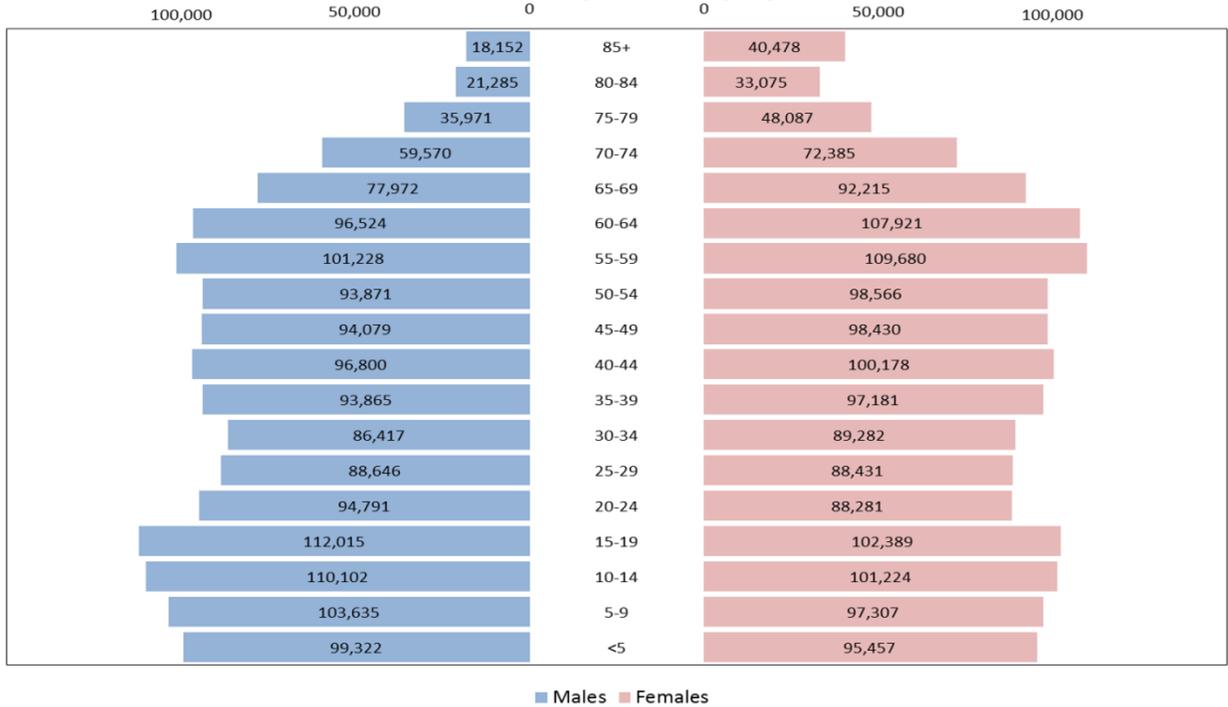
Z: Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

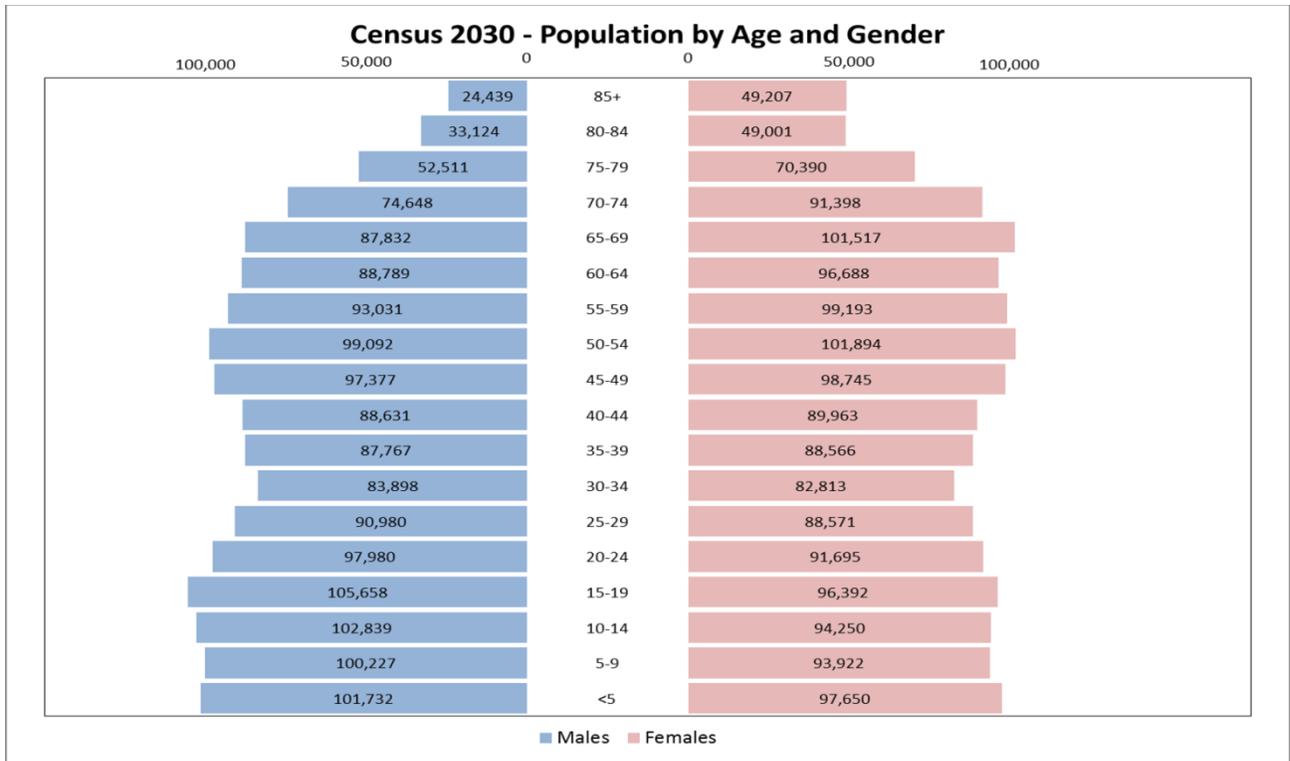
A comparison of population by age and gender over time reveals a pattern for Mississippi, which is a decline in the age groups of 20-24 through 40-44; the primary working years for most adults. Charts are shown below for 2010, 2020, and 2030.

Census 2010 - Population by Age and Gender



Census 2020 - Population by Age and Gender





The charts indicate that Mississippi is losing certain population groups who could be leaving the state for employment opportunities, college, military service, or simply moving to another State. Overall the State’s population is projected to be 3,044,812 for 2020 and 3,092,410 for 2030, representing 2.6% growth from 2010 to 2020 and 1.6% growth from 2020 to 2030.

Statistics for Individuals with Disabilities in Mississippi – the following information represents data from the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey for 2010.

Disability Status Of The Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population		
Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population (CNP)	2,902,907	
CNP with a disability	472,835	16.3%
Under 18 years - total	751,985	
Under 18 with a disability	37,696	5.0%
18 to 64 years - total	1,781,118	
18 to 64 with a disability	266,903	15.0%
65 years and over - total	369,804	
65 and over with a disability	168,236	45.5%

4. An assessment of the skill and education gaps for all individuals within the state particularly those individuals targeted by the programs included in the Five Year Integrated Workforce Plan.

Statistics from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey for 2010 and MDES applicant data for the 12 month period ending March 31, 2012 were reviewed in order to assess skill and education gaps. The educational attainment data below shows comparative data for Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) applicants and all individuals in Mississippi.

The data reveals that MDES applicants who would represent individuals targeted by programs of the Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan had a much greater percentage of individuals with a High School degree as the highest level of education when compared to all individuals in Mississippi. This would imply that the individuals served by MDES would need additional training and/or education to become more employable and earn a higher than average wage. Also noted was a similar trend when looking at the higher levels of educational attainment, MDES applicants had much lower levels at the Bachelor’s and Graduate Degree categories when compared to Mississippi.

Educational Attainment	MDES applicants	Mississippi
Less than 9 th grade		6.6%
9 th to 12 th grade (no diploma)	19.9%*	12.4%
High School Graduate (includes GED)	44.6%	30.6%
Some college, no degree	21.5%	22.5%
Associate’s Degree	4.3%	8.4%
Bachelor’s Degree	5.1%	12.4%
Graduate Degree	1.1%	7.1%

*-includes individuals with less than 9th grade education

NOTE: Amounts above represent the highest level of educational attainment

5. An analysis of the challenges associated with the state’s population attaining the education, skills, and training needed to obtain employment

Although strides have been made to improve each of the statistics provided below, the following data highlights that certain groups within Mississippi may face greater challenges attaining the necessary education to succeed in today’s economy.

- According the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 2010, Mississippi had the highest teenage pregnancy rate in the nation at 55.0 births per 1,000 persons aged 16-19.

The rate did show a decline from 69.9 in 2007. The national average was 34.3 births per 1,000 persons aged 16-19.

- The US Census Bureau’s Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates for 2010 showed Mississippi having the highest poverty rate in the nation at 22.4% and the lowest Median Household Income in the county at \$36,992. The national average for each was 15.3% and \$50,046.
- The US Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that for 2011 Mississippi had the lowest Per Capita Income in the United States at \$32,176. The national average was \$41,663.
- The US Census Bureau American Community Survey for 2010 shows Mississippi ranked 49th for persons over 25 with a High School Degree or higher at 81.0% and 50th for persons with a Bachelor’s Degree or higher at 19.5%. The rankings include the District of Columbia.
- According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics for March 2012, Mississippi’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 9.0% tied for the 43rd highest in the nation, the national average was 8.2%.

The following chart shows a comparison of Educational Attainment statistics for the United States, Mississippi, and the persons served by MDES. When comparing the data, the largest difference was noted for persons with a High School Degree as their highest educational attainment. For the United States it was 28.5%, for Mississippi it was 30.6%, but for applicants over the age of 25 served by MDES, the amount was 44.6%. A similar pattern was noted for persons with a Bachelor’s degree of higher, for the United States the amount was 28.2%, 19.5% for Mississippi, but only 6.1% for persons over 25 served by MDES.

**Comparison of Educational Attainment
for MDES Applicant data to Mississippi and the
United States**

Educational Attainment	United States*	Mississippi*	All applicants #		Applicants over 25 #	
			WINGS Count	WINGS %'s	WINGS Count	WINGS %'s
Population 25 years and over	204,288,933	1,904,406	233,889		179,287	
Less than 9th grade	6.1%	6.6%	46,596	19.9%	34,071	19.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8.3%	12.4%	107,741	46.1%	79,881	44.6%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	28.5%	30.6%	50,285	21.5%	40,273	22.5%
Some college, no degree	21.3%	22.5%	10,166	4.3%	8,909	5.0%
Associate's degree	7.6%	8.4%	9,798	4.2%	9,055	5.1%
Bachelor's degree	17.7%	12.4%	1,930	0.8%	1,899	1.1%
Graduate or professional degree	10.4%	7.1%	7,373	3.2%	5,199	2.9%
Information not provided						
Percent high school graduate or higher	85.6%	81.0%	76.9%		78.1%	
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	28.2%	19.5%	5.0%		6.1%	

* - based on 2010 American Community Survey data from US Census Bureau website

- taken from MDES/WINGS applicant file, for the time period 4/1/2011 through 3/31/12

Additional demographics of persons served in Mississippi for the time period 4/1/11 through 3/31/12:

Applicants by Gender	Count	Percent
Did Not Disclose	1,678	0.72%
Female	110,293	47.16%
Male	121,918	52.13%
Grand Total	233,889	100.00%

Applicants by Ethnicity	Count	Percent
African American	134,818	57.64%
Asian	828	0.35%
Hispanic	2,889	1.24%
Native American	1,528	0.65%
None	5,217	2.23%
Pacific	549	0.23%
White	88,060	37.65%
Grand Total	233,889	100.00%

Applicants by Age Group	Count	Percent
20 & under	18,428	7.88%
21-29	74,487	31.85%
30-39	56,666	24.23%
40-49	42,604	18.22%
50-59	30,281	12.95%
60 & above	11,417	4.88%
Information not provided	6	0.00%
Grand Total	233,889	100.00%

Applicants by Work Experience	Count
Top Ten Occupations	
Cashiers	9,665
Helpers—Production Workers	7,321
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	3,518
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers,	3,232
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	3,183
Customer Service Representatives	2,968
Retail Salespersons	2,639
Food Preparation Workers	2,629
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2,560
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	2,526

Applicants by Ethnicity and Gender	Did Not			Grand
	Disclose	Female	Male	Total
African American	39	69,529	65,250	134,818
Asian		429	399	828
Hispanic	1	993	1,895	2,889
Native American	1	680	847	1,528
Information not provided	1,605	1,711	1,901	5,217
Pacific		200	349	549
White	32	36,751	51,277	88,060
Grand Total	1,678	110,293	121,918	233,889

Applicants by Educational Att and Gender	Did Not			Grand
	Disclose	Female	Male	Total
Associates Diploma or Degree	60	6,386	3,720	10,166
Bachelors Diploma or Degree	67	5,743	3,988	9,798
Education beyond Bachelors Degree	15	1,174	741	1,930
High School Diploma/GED	642	46,887	60,212	107,741
Less than High School Diploma	192	19,606	26,798	46,596
Other Post-Secondary Degree or Certification	8	589	330	927
Some College	236	26,841	22,281	49,358
Information not provided	458	3,067	3,848	7,373
Grand Total	1,678	110,293	121,918	233,889

Applicants by Age and Gender	Did Not			Grand
	Disclose	Female	Male	Total
20 & under	264	8,808	9,356	18,428
21-29	476	35,603	38,408	74,487
30-39	375	26,506	29,785	56,666
40-49	281	20,058	22,265	42,604
50-59	199	14,108	15,974	30,281
60 & above	83	5,208	6,126	11,417
Information not provided	0	2	4	6
Grand Total	1,678	110,293	121,918	233,889

6. A discussion of the ability of Integrated Workforce Plan programs to meet the skill needs of employers in the state and close any skill gaps

Mississippi has identified seven major strategies to meet the vision of a *Work-Ready Mississippi*:

- A Market-Driven Approach
- Targeted Training Resources to include Career Pathways, contextualized learning, earn as you learn training and apprenticeship
- Regional Planning
- Work-Ready Communities
- Workforce Planning Information System
- Accessibility to Workforce Services
- Leveraged System Innovation

These seven strategies are supported by five cross-program strategies that meet the workforce needs of the state's businesses and targeted populations. These cross-program strategies are centered on shared data to identify necessary WIA and Wagner-Peyser services and critical business sector needs for preparing a *Work-Ready Mississippi*.

This data will be identified using our performance management systems and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. Through this shared data, we will identify high growth and emerging business and industry sector training needs. Once identified, the needs will be addressed through training and credentialing to align the skills of the state's workforce with the skills demands of business.

C. State Strategies

The Governor’s vision is to create a ***Work-Ready Mississippi***. This Integrated Workforce Plan sets out this vision and the strategies to attain it while meeting the priorities for Department of Labor funded programs in the state. The State will develop a high-quality workforce that is business-focused and demand-driven and will implement the vision of a ***Work-Ready Mississippi*** through seven key workforce development strategies that:

1. provide for a market-driven approach to strategic state and local planning and service delivery that is aligned with economic and community development strategies, education, and the federal vision for Workforce Development;
2. target training resources toward Governor’s targeted high-growth and emerging industries and other identified high-growth, high-demand occupations;
3. promote regional planning and cooperation;
4. identify and develop Work-Ready Communities
5. provide and enhance a robust workforce planning information system and data tools that support state and local workforce planning;
6. increase accessibility to workforce services for businesses and jobseekers while increasing private sector engagement in the public workforce system; and
7. leverage system transformation and innovation by further strengthening comprehensive one-stop services while delivering strategic employment and re-employment services.

Strategies	Action Steps to Achieve the Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Market-Driven Approach• Targeted Training Resources• Regional Planning• Work-Ready Communities• Workforce Planning Information System• Accessibility to Workforce Services• Leveraged System Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Plan• Integrated Service Delivery• Increased Accessibility• Defined Sector Strategies• Partnerships• Leveraged Resources• Improved use of Data• Statewide Longitudinal Data System• Targeted Job Skills Training• Certifications and Credentialing• Apprenticeship• Career Pathways• Contextualized Learning• Earn as you Learn Programs

1. Cross-Program Strategies

Mississippi has embarked upon a number of integrated cross-program strategies for workforce development that provide for efficiencies and promote collaboration across workforce partner agencies. Over the next five years these strategies will be critical to the success of ***Work-Ready Mississippi***. The following cross-program strategies help meet the workforce development needs of the state's businesses and targeted populations:

Increase Awareness and Communication – Develop a communication plan among workforce partners to share programmatic information and workforce and economic data analysis to assure alignment with state strategies. This communication plan will promote regional, state, and local workforce planning.

Each of the workforce partners has a distinct customer base. Although these customer groups overlap, they are unique to each partner. When there is a best-practice that is identified, the communication plan will ensure that the best practice is shared among the workforce partners for replication where applicable.

The state's economic development agency conducts employer surveys of existing companies and identifies workforce needs of siting industries. The communication plan will ensure that this information is shared with the workforce agency and the workforce arm of the education system.

Streamline Service Delivery – The state will analyze its service delivery strategy to ensure non-duplication of workforce services and revisit the current strategy of co-enrollment of Wagner-Peyser and WIA participants in core-only services. In keeping with the MDES key strategies, we will use data to identify return on investment for WIA and Wagner-Peyser services. Continuous improvement to the service delivery strategy will ensure alignment with high-growth and emerging industries to meet the needs of businesses and jobseekers.

MDES has developed operating systems that streamline and simplify services to our clients. New systems for Unemployment Insurance and UI Tax, Wagner-Peyser, and WIA programs have been implemented and many are in second or third phase development. ACCESS MS provides UI functions online and in self-service format with further developments to come. WINGS has automated Wagner/Peyser and WIA participant reporting and will do the same for Trade and Veteran's programs. The Eligible Training Provider System has automated the provision of Individual Training Accounts, with On-the-Job Training as the next rollout.

Increase Accessibility – MDES, in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Human Services, has begun to establish virtual WIN Job Centers, known as e-WIN Access Points, at each of the 82 county DHS offices. Workforce services are currently available in the 53 WIN Job Centers of the MDES WIN Network. However, MDES does not anticipate that the current and expected funding situation will allow MDES to maintain these 53 offices. We will continue to seek additional partnership opportunities that enable us to expand access and provide workforce development services in a cost-effective manner.

MDES has also seen the necessity to cross-train staff in the WIN Job Centers among the various funding-specific programs and is working to better coordinate services among staff of co-located agencies. Staff is also trained on assisting clients with the many Internet based service options available to them in the resource rooms, facilitating self-service for those who want it, and helping those that need assistance.

Expand the Current Sector Strategy Initiative – Mississippi’s objective is to create a market-driven strategic alliance of state and regional government resources to serve the needs of critical business sectors for greater economic and regional development impacts for the state. The SWIB endorsed a list of targeted high-growth and emerging businesses and industries for workforce training. The list of target industries includes the following:

- Healthcare
- Energy
- Automotive Assembly and Suppliers
- Contact/Call Centers
- Defense/Homeland Security
- Metal Fabricated & Steel
- Plastics/Polymer/Chemicals
- Shipbuilding
- Timber/Wood Products

MDES has developed a Statewide Target Occupations List that highlights critical occupations that support growth within the Governor’s industry clusters. Many of these clusters dovetail with sector strategies highlighted in WIA implementation guidance, including renewable and sustainable energy and health care.

MDES has established policy that requires local workforce investment boards to set strategic priorities for their WIA training dollars to focus on industry sector employment strategies including renewable and sustainable energy, industries with high potential for health care, and other high-growth and high-demand industries or industry clusters identified by the Boards or regions. MDES requires boards to focus their training investments to meet the priority occupational and skills demands of companies in the high-growth and high-demand industry sector. Boards seek to identify their:

- target industries, prioritized by the Governor;
- demand occupations;
- target occupations among their target industries for WIA training; and
- planned strategies in support of their target industries and occupations.

The Mississippi workforce system engages businesses within high-growth, high-demand industries to identify their current unmet and emerging skills demands. Training investments are then directed to high-priority occupations that bridge the gap between the current skills levels of the workforce and the skills demands of businesses. Training has been traditionally the choice of the individual.

MDES will partner with MDA in support of their Priority One business survey initiative for workforce development. Priority One surveys of businesses are conducted by MDA to identify expansion opportunities and near-term and future hiring projections. Results from these surveys will form the basis for other cross-program workforce development strategies.

Increase Certifications and Credentials – MDES strongly encourages training strategies that lead to nationally recognized and portable credentials. Training is targeted towards growing sectors.

Mississippi's network of 15 community and junior colleges provides excellent opportunities through its career and technical education programs; the community colleges provide essential support to Mississippi's citizens and its employers.

Through the Workforce Enhancement Training Fund, community colleges partner with business and industry to design and implement specialized short-term training programs to teach the skills employees need to be productive and to up-to-date in their jobs

The community colleges also oversee the Mississippi Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), which determines a job seeker's ability in three main skills: reading for information, locating information and doing applied math. The ACT, through its WorkKeys™ Occupational Profile Database, selected these skills as important for more than 85% of jobs across all industries.

Through the CRC, employers can identify individuals best suited for their available jobs. Each individual has the opportunity to earn one of four levels of Career Readiness Certification: Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum. Each certification tells what percentage of jobs in a database an individual is qualified to do. For example, a silver level certificate worker has the necessary skills for 65 percent of jobs, while a platinum level certificate worker has the skills for 99 percent of jobs.

The Adult College Completion Program is a pilot program that offers college completion courses as a short-term training option in the workforce investment system. The results as of today have shown that this idea has the potential to meet the workforce development needs of employers and improve outcomes for clients accessing workforce investment training dollars. The Adult College Completion Project was initially piloted on a small scale in the Mississippi Partnership Workforce Investment Area, with the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center and in partnership with East Mississippi Community College (EMCC). The project identified adults who had begun college but stopped 0 to 12 credits short of an Associate or Bachelor's degree. It funded their tuition as a *short-term* training option through MDES.

With a small amount of funds and technical and research support from the Rutgers Center for Women and Work project funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education, both the Golden Triangle and EMCC revised their systems and policies to recruit and better support clients close to a college degree. Ten (10) of the workforce participants involved in this project graduated in May of 2012 with a variety of Associate's degrees ranging from general liberal arts degrees to more occupation-specific degrees such as welding. All ten of these graduates are now employed. Another six are expected to graduate by the end of the year. In addition, project outreach resulted in the graduation of five additional students who had previously earned enough credits from EMCC for a degree but never applied for Associate degrees, and by the end of the year, three students expected to complete a degree with Pell Grant funding.

Following these results, the project has now expanded to selected WIN Job Centers in each of the four workforce areas, and students are currently enrolled at both EMCC and Gulf Coast Community College. Given the need for more degree holders (just 29% of Mississippi's working-age adults hold a two-year degree or more, and about a quarter have some college)¹ and the frustration of local workforce staff who feel they have run out of options for helping unemployed or underemployed workers, adding degree completion as a viable training option is important.

As such, Mississippi workforce investment areas are working collectively to adopt policies towards this idea and make ITA, Rapid Response, and other funding available for the purpose of providing tuition dollars for workers who have not attended college in the past semester but lack 12 or fewer credits towards a degree.

Encouraging Local Workforce Investment Areas to consider including this in their local plans will provide additional methods to increase the competitiveness of Mississippi's workforce through a new additional linkage with the post-secondary education system. This will allow the leveraging of resources already committed and invested to provide Mississippi employers with the higher skill workers they require.

Mississippi has identified these five cross program strategies to meet the workforce needs of the state's businesses and targeted populations. These strategies are centered on shared data to identify necessary WIA and Wagner-Peyser services and critical business sector needs for preparing a *Work-Ready Mississippi*. Through shared data, we will identify high growth and emerging business and industry sector training needs. Once we identify the needs, we will address the skills gaps of the workforce through training and credentialing to align the skills of the state's workforce with the skills demands of business.

2. Partnerships

Mississippi's Workforce Investment Network (WIN) is the workforce development centerpiece, which combines Federal, State, and community programs and services and makes them easily accessible at WIN Job Centers throughout the State, as well as through on-line electronic sites. The WIN system is a collaborative effort including private businesses, local elected officials, and

¹ http://www.luminafoundation.org/state_work/mississippi/

local and state public agencies. This collaboration ensures that the needs of local businesses and job seekers are met through tailored solutions designed to promote workforce development and economic growth.

In accordance with WIA Sections 111(d)(2), 112(b)(8) and W-P Section 8(c), WIN partners include, but are not limited to: the Mississippi Department of Employment Security; the Mississippi Development Authority; local elected officials; Local Workforce Investment Boards; the Mississippi Department of Education; the Mississippi Department of Human Services; the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services; Mississippi Community College Board; Mississippi Department of Corrections; National Partnership for UI Connectivity Project and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Additional partners are engaged at the local level.

While partner agencies function independently, with their own governing bodies and statutory authorities, all are dedicated to the mission of creating a ***Work-Ready Mississippi***. These partner agencies recognize the value of pooling resources to eliminate duplication and maximize the use of Federal and State workforce dollars.

The following state and local entities are members of the SWIB and bring agency-specific expertise to the workforce system in pursuit of the vision:

Local Workforce Investment Areas and Boards – are responsible for regional and local development of workforce programs and the local implementation and oversight of the WIN System that is available to all Mississippians. An important aspect is the development of workforce-related education and training strategies for Youth, one of the WIA-required target populations.

Mississippi Development Authority – the state’s economic development agency provides information on existing and siting business workforce needs. The WIN System, through its array of services, addresses skill gaps and other needs as identified by the business community.

Mississippi Department of Education – provides education and curriculum development for the K-12 system. MDE partners with the WIN System to provide dropout prevention and dual-enrollment programs for Youth.

Mississippi Department of Human Services – the agency responsible for federal economic assistance that includes TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). MDES and MDHS engaged in a successful partnership to implement and operate the Mississippi Subsidized Transitional Employment Program and Services (STEPS) Program. STEPS was a transitional employment program targeting TANF and SNAP participants.

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services – is the agency responsible for services to persons with disabilities. MDRS provides accessibility assessments of the WIN Job Centers and training to WIN Job Center staff on ADA compliance. MDRS is co-located in some WIN Job Centers to provide participant services to clients with disabilities.

Mississippi Community College Board – this board provides oversight in an advisory capacity to the state’s 15 community colleges. The community colleges provide career and technical training, they provide training using Workforce Enhancement Training Funds (WET Funds), and they administer the Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Equivalency Diploma (GED), and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) programs. This meets the mission to serve low skill and entry-level workers and workers with barriers to advancement.

Mississippi Department of Corrections – the state agency responsible for state-funded youth and adult correctional facilities. MDES has partnered with MDOC to address prisoner recidivism. MDOC operates pre-release and post-release occupational skills training programs to transition ex-offenders to the workforce.

The above partners interact on a regular basis to conduct rapid response sessions for dislocated workers, recruit potential businesses, on-the-job training, customized training, participate in pilot projects designed to enhance and improve service delivery. The directors of key agencies that participate in the WIN system as One-Stop partners were appointed to the State Workforce Investment Board. The WIN system partners also interact at Local Workforce Investment Board meetings, the Governor’s Workforce Conference, Economic Development Association meetings, employer association meetings, and community college workforce board meetings.

The following Regional Partnerships expand capacity to provide services to targeted populations and fosters interstate collaboration:

Delta Workforce Funding Collaborative – MDES established this regional partnership to ensure Mississippians in the Delta are qualified for existing and emerging job opportunities. Two sectors in the Mississippi Delta that hold promise for hiring workers immediately are healthcare and manufacturing. Currently, the program is focused on healthcare, but will expand to manufacturing in the near future.

Specifically, the Delta Workforce Funding Collaborative is focused on moving low-income workers into better paying jobs and increasing the skills and education of the unemployed workforce so they can gain employment and better provide for their families. The collaborative consists of key philanthropic, public, and private partners working together to increase job growth and retention in the heavily unemployed, impoverished 14-county Delta region of the state. Members include the Foundation for the Mid South, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Mississippi Economic Policy Center, and the State Community College Board.

Mississippi Delta Area Workforce Training Project – Local Economic Development, State Economic Development, Local Workforce Area, and the MDES also partnered to provide regional assistance through a Regional Workforce Coordinator, as enacted by the Mississippi Legislature 480 2011 and Mississippi Code Annotated if 1972 57-107-3. The coordinator is responsible for increasing business engagement with the public workforce system, developing job retention and expansion strategies, and action as liaison to workforce economic development and the private sector.

National UI Connectivity Project – This project is designed to develop the Integrated Workforce Registration (IWR) system, which will become the point of entry into the state system for unemployed individuals/jobseekers in the three pilot states, Mississippi, Oregon and New York. The pilot states have partnered with the National Association of State Workforce Agencies/ Information Technology Support Center (NASWA/ITSC) for this project.

The partners envision a system that is driven by an Integrated Workforce Customer Registration as the entry to the nation’s reemployment system – and offers a coordinated customer-centric focus with full partner access. The UI claimant process is seen as a part of the broader job seeking process and customers are treated as job seekers; their UI claim being just one aspect of the services available to job seekers. Services will be available via the Internet as well as other means. Dynamic social networks linking customers, career counselors, employers and educators support Internet access. Integrated service delivery is focused on customer outcomes. The system will be focused on skills transferability, and will be data driven, measureable, and accountable - both to the law and to customer needs.

The project team has developed a model for a participant registration that includes both UI and ES components along with the three of the four transformational elements: Common Registration, Triage, and Skills Transferability/Job Search. The three pilot states are reviewing state specific requirements and system integrations in preparation for the IWR development. Anticipated completion of the project is June 2014 for full deployment and a maintenance period.

3. Leveraging Resources

MDES is the single state agency responsible for WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, Unemployment Insurance, and Trade Act programs. WIN Job Center staff has been cross-trained in all Department of Labor programs, enabling each staff member to provide participant services across programs. MDES will continue to integrate and streamline each of these federal programs in order to achieve cost efficiencies and better services for customers.

Mississippi aggressively seeks to leverage workforce funds with other federal, state, local, and private resources through a number of strategies. Our leveraging efforts have been successful in the following areas:

Co-location/co-funding – Mississippi leverages discretionary and formula-based investments through integration of services and staff in the WIN Job Center system. Staff in the WIN Job Centers is co-funded with Wagner, Peyser, WIA, Unemployment Insurance, and other discretionary funds when available. Cross training of staff allows for leveraging of formula-based and discretionary funds.

Co-location is a key strategy for leveraging resources. Community college coordinators facilitate course planning, financial aid, student support and resource referral for Dislocated Workers and under-employed Adults in need of skill training. Community college instructors are used to

provide computer training and adult GED classes in the WIN Job Centers. Community college and university recruitment staff is co-located at some of the WIN Job Centers.

Cross-Agency Funding – Mississippi continues to be a strong proponent of On-the-Job Training (OJT). The Mississippi Development Authority and MDES co-fund OJT projects to leverage state workforce training funds with WIA funding. When funding to meet a critical training need of a company, the MDA may provide funding to the appropriate workforce partner to fund or subsidize such training. To ensure that workforce-training needs are met, we will leverage WIA funds with other state workforce funds to meet the needs of new and existing businesses to maximize the use of these funds.

WET Fund – Mississippi has enacted the Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) Fund that allows the community colleges to increase services to businesses through customized and incumbent worker training, utilizing funds generated by the unemployment tax system. WIA funds will be used to leverage the WET Funds when possible or necessary to meet the demands of businesses, train workers for better jobs, and put more Mississippians to work.

Coordinate with the Department of Human Services to leverage TANF funds for workforce training – MDES and MDHS engaged in a successful workforce development partnership to implement and operate the Mississippi Subsidized Transitional Employment Program and Services (STEPS) Program. STEPS was a transitional employment program targeting TANF and SNAP participants, granting a wage and benefit subsidy to businesses that provided an hourly wage and a transferable work skill to eligible participants.

System Integration – MDES has launched an automated, Internet-based Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) portal that provides electronic processing of training providers' enrollments, training course applications and subsequent eligibility. The system provides Individual Training Account (ITA) awards processing (obligations) and ITA invoicing (expenditures) in real time. MDES plans to automate the On-the-Job Training business process into the ETPS. The state plans to have the automation of OJT processing and invoicing completed by 2013.

WINGS Integration of Wagner-Peyser and WIA – MDES has embarked on a multi-year project to develop WINGS (the Workforce Investment Network Global Systems), a unified participant data collection system aimed at meeting the WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program reporting, the WIASRD and TAPR reporting and new federal requirement that mandates intergraded information and reporting for the three programs. Currently, Wagner-Peyser and WIA-funded programs have been integrated into the system. Trade Act components will be integrated in 2013.

Over the next five years the Mississippi Department of Employment Security will continue to work with LWIAs, WIN Job Center operators, and WIA partners to increase co-location opportunities, cross-agency funding, better training opportunities, and improved system integration. Leveraging resources and funding will reduce administrative costs, enhance service delivery to customers, and maximize WIN Job Center productivity. The state will replicate best practices from its existing strategies and will implement the following:

- WINGS Integration to include the Trade Act components
- Implementation of an Internet-based module for processing and invoicing On-the-Job Training (OJT) applications
- Future leverage of state training funds available to MDA
- Continue use of WET Funds for New and Expanding Business Funding
- Replicate regional workforce development / economic development teams.
- Identify opportunities to leverage private resources for sector strategy enhancement.

4. Policy Alignment

Governor Bryant’s strategic workforce plan and vision for a *Work-Ready Mississippi* requires the workforce system to provide services that meet the demands of Mississippi’s businesses and job seekers and support both current and emerging industries. This strategic plan is aligned with Mississippi WIA Policy 25, which supports a demand-driven workforce investment system that encourages local workforce areas to develop and implement training in high-growth/high-demand industries.

To guide the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of quality workforce development services, the State has developed a number of policies that outline legislative, regulatory and service quality requirements for the WIN System. Current MDES policies and systems to comply with data collection, reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery and performance management are aligned with WIA, Wagner-Peyser Act, and UI law to assure coordination and avoid duplication.

The State has contracted with Mississippi State University to develop a system to store labor market and economic data, customized for the four local workforce boards and for the WIN Job Centers. This will allow the WIN System partners to use detailed performance information and workforce trends in workforce planning. The development of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) will enable MSU to provide better and more precise data for decision making across the educational system in support of workforce and economic development initiatives.

MDES will continue coordination with partner agencies to improve alignment with the Governor’s vision and the strategies to meet that vision.

D. Desired Outcomes

WIA/Wagner-Peyser Performance Measures:

The negotiated Program Year (PY) 2012 performance goals were developed to drive realistic, attainable and continuous improvement within our integrated service delivery system. In determining the proposed performance goals, Mississippi analyzed regression targets, performance trends, and considered the economic condition of the state.

As the economic health of the State has a direct impact on the WIA program outcomes, it should be noted that Mississippi has been slower in recovery of jobs than other States in the region. In addition, wage rates for employees reentering the economy may be lower than similar jobs in other States and specific areas of the State have fewer job openings for returning employees.

Mississippi is committed to providing quality workforce services. The MDES will work closely with the local workforce investment areas in a renewed effort to focus on individuals who have multiple barriers to employment. MDES remains committed to increasing the total number of successful “exitors” in each program area.

MDES plans to provide WIA services annually to an average of 22,000 adults, 18,000 dislocated workers and 3,200 youth for a total of 43,200 participants. Each year an average of 36,000 participants complete services and exit WIA programs. Annually, more than 200,000 participants will receive WP services. Each year an average of 392,000 participant complete WP services and exit the program. MDES will meet or exceed DOL-required performance measures for WIA and WP programs.

Our current Performance Management System, WINGS, and planned improvements to it, will enhance our ability to measure performance in real time and make proactive program decisions to improve outcomes. Once completed, the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) will improve data-driven decision-making and program planning and enhance long-term performance in connecting education and training to businesses’ workforce needs.

Table-I – WIA and Wagner-Peyser Performance Measure 2012 Negotiated Goals:

WIA Program	PY 2012 Goals
Adult Measures	
Entered Employment Rate	59.0
Employment Retention Rate	82.0
Avg. Six Month Earnings	\$11,600
Dislocated Worker	
Entered Employment Rate	59.0
Employment Retention Rate	82.0
Avg. Six Month Earnings	\$13,000
Youth Common Measures	

Placement in Emp. Or Education	70.0
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	80.8
Literacy or Numeracy Gains	69.0

W-P Program

Wagner-Peyser Program	
Entered Employment Rate	51.0
Employment Retention Rate	77.0
Avg. Six Month Earnings	\$10,000

Additional indicators and system measures:

As a demonstration of his commitment to transform the system, Governor Bryant directed a commission of workforce and education partner agencies to develop a statewide plan that establishes a more coordinated and accountable workforce development system with greater emphasis on training, increasing job skills, and certifications. The Governor’s Workforce Plan will include recommendations to provide performance information in categories that cross workforce, education, and economic programs. Specifically, the plan will recommend disseminating Workforce Participation Rates, Career Technical Training Enrollment and Completion Rates, High School Graduation Rates, and the increase in Business Engagement in the workforce system to identify gaps and opportunities to improve service delivery.

Increases in the rate of business engagement in the system will be dependent upon the relative satisfaction of businesses with the services they receive. Businesses will also engage more if they receive more trained and ready jobseekers. Therefore, jobseeker and business satisfaction rates will be important indicators of our success as workforce brokers. MDES will also continue technological advancements implemented in recent years and cross train new staff on all services of the WIN Job Center and MDES to achieve seamless customer service.

MDES was awarded a \$70,000 two-year grant to participate in the DOL/ETA Expanding Business Engagement-Technical Assistance Initiative. The grant will support the strategic planning and implementation of revitalized or enhanced business engagement activities within the state. A team of industry representatives, community colleges, local workforce investment areas as well as economic development agencies will come together to develop a statewide business engagement strategic plan.

A recommendation from the Governor’s Workforce Planning Committee will be prepared by September 30, 2012, for consideration by the Governor’s Office. The Mississippi Integrated Workforce Plan for WIA Title I/Wagner-Peyser and DOL Workforce Programs will be modified based on that recommendation.

Other additional measures may include the implementation and/or certification of Work-Ready Communities, which can be local or regional communities, in support of the ***Work-Ready Mississippi*** vision. As municipalities, counties, or regions work toward becoming work-ready, the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and other resources will provide data-driven decisions to identify the gaps to implementation of their goals.

The MDES has also identified program-specific goals and quality measures for success that are outlined in the MDES Five-Year Strategic Plan. (*Appendix I*)

Section II. State Operational Plan

A. Overview of the Workforce System

1. Organization:

Early in 2004, the previous governor introduced and the legislature passed groundbreaking reforms to the State's workforce system. The Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004 consolidated the Mississippi Workforce Development Advisory Council and the State Workforce Investment Board, and consolidated the Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIA) from six to four. This re-designation, which consolidated six workforce areas into the current four workforce areas, considered all federally required factors and resulted in increased performance and conservation of administrative funds.

The Boards of Supervisors of each area established a Local Workforce Investment Board comprised of local business and public sector representatives, in compliance with WIA law. These boards are responsible for designing local WIN services to meet the needs of the community. The four Local Workforce Investment Areas are closely aligned with Planning and Development District boundaries in Mississippi. Planning and Development Districts perform a dual function, serving as the fiscal agents for WIA funds and supporting the Local Workforce Investment Boards.

The 2004 legislation also provided incentives for the State's community colleges to become one-stop operators and reorganized the Mississippi Employment Security Commission under the Governor's Office as the new Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

MDES continues as a cabinet level office that functions under federal and state law to operate programs relating to workforce development, unemployment insurance, and economic security. MDES services are directed by three key pieces of federal legislation: the Social Security Act, which enacted the Unemployment Insurance program, the Wagner-Peyser Act and the Workforce Investment Act. These acts collectively provide direction for the agency's Workforce Investment Network (WIN), Job Centers, and its employment and training services.

As the single state agency responsible for the various Federal workforce programs, MDES has worked to align these programs and integrate its service delivery strategy. WIN Job Center staff has been cross-trained in all Department of Labor programs, enabling each staff member to provide participant services across programs. MDES will continue to integrate and streamline each of these federal programs in order to achieve cost efficiencies and better services for customers.

As part of the One Stop service system, MDES focuses on providing information about job vacancies, training opportunities, career options, reemployment strategies, financial aid, and instruction on how to conduct a job search, write a resume, or interview with an employer. Individuals can also access unemployment insurance information and services. Programs are also offered to help businesses recruit new employees.

Services are delivered in one of three ways: self-service, facilitated self-help services and staff-assisted services.

Job seekers who are military veterans receive priority referral to jobs and training as well as special employment services and assistance. Additionally, the Employment Service provides specialized attention and assistance to individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers, ex-offenders, youth, minorities and older workers.

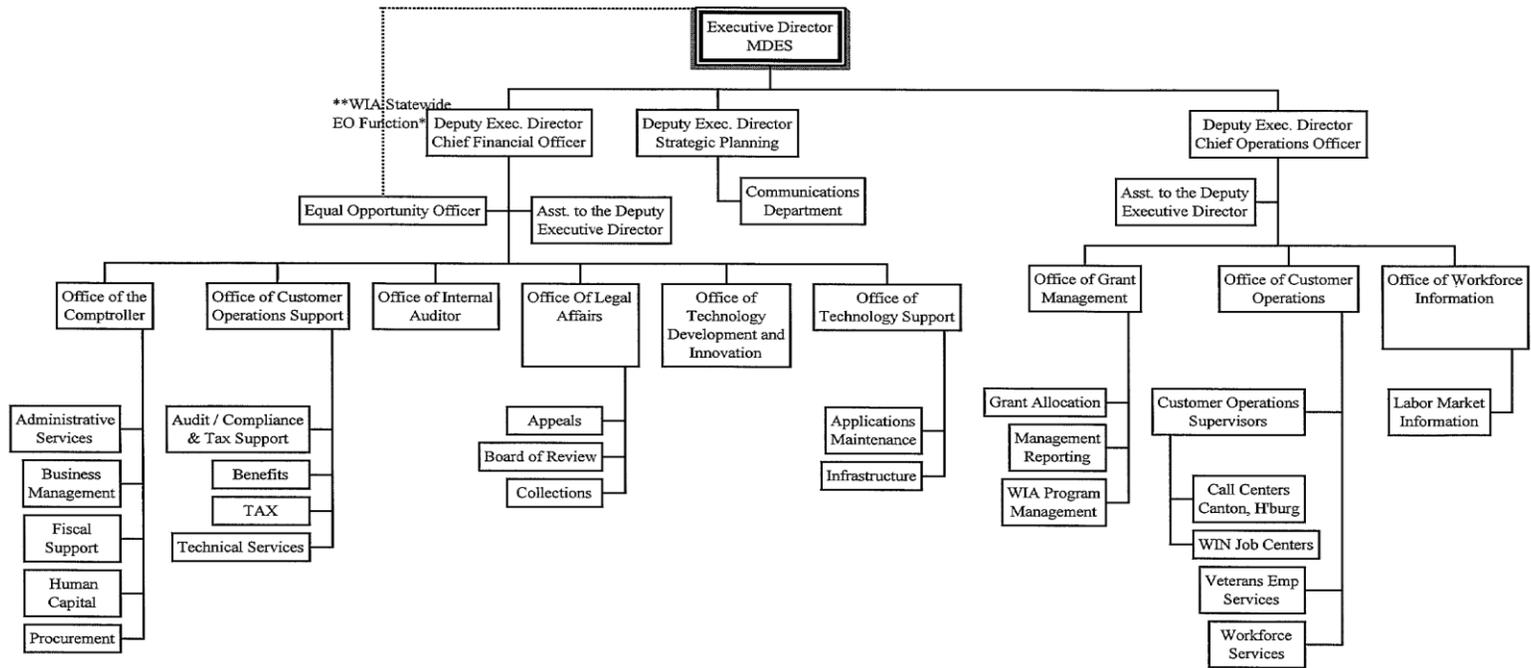
The following organization chart describes the key state administrative personnel of the various programs operated by MDES:

Figure 1

MDES

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY - OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Mark Henry
 MDES - 0671
 FY-2012 PREPARED 05/24/2011
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State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB)

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) consists of 45 members including one vacancy for a second labor representative. A recommendation will be made to the Governor's office to fill the vacancy in January 2013. The SWIB is business led with twenty-three business which constitutes 51%. The Governor appoints a Chair from among the Board's business members. The Chair presides at Board meetings and appoints the Vice-Chair. The Chair appoints committees as deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Board. Currently, the Board has an Executive Committee and seven other committees that have been established to address the Board's various goals. These committees are: Integrated Workforce Performance; Addressing the Prisoner Recidivism Rate through Workforce Training; Building the Workforce of the Future; Business Outreach and Targeting Industry; High School Drop-Out Challenge; Incumbent Workers and Association Training Programs; and Workforce Policy Guidance and Best Practices.

Figure 2

State Workforce Investment Board –Roster & Affiliation

First	Last Name	Business	Affiliation
Ronald	Aldridge	National Federation of Independent Business	Business
Jeffrey	Allman	Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding	Business
Cheri	Barry	Mayor of Meridian	Elected Mayor
Jackie	Beasley	MINACT, Inc.	Youth
Richard	Berry	MS Department of Human Services	State Official – Department of Human Services
Rufus	Straughter	MS House of Representatives	House of Representatives
Cecil	Brown	MS House of Representatives	House of Representatives
Tom	Burnham	MS Department of Education	State Official - MS Department of Education
Terry	Burton	Senator, MS State Senate	Senator, MS State Senate
George	Butler	Federal Land Bank of North MS	Business
Brent	Christensen	Mississippi Development Authority	State Official – Economic Development
Eric	Clark	MS Community College Board	State Official - MS Community College Board
Robert	Clark	Retired, MS House of Representatives	Business
Jason	Dean	Butler Snow	Business
Jennifer	Dumal	Memorial Hospital at Gulfport	Business
Chris	Epps	Commissioner, MS Dept. of Corrections	Governor
Charles	Evers	Manager, WMPR Radio Station	Business
Charles	Furman	Severstal	Business
Linda	Gates	East Central Community College	Business

Mary	Graham	President, MS Gulf Coast Community College	Business
Steve	Gray	MS Association of Supervisors	MS Association of Supervisors
Michael	Hall	Ashley Furniture	Business
Mark	Henry	Executive Director Mississippi Department of Employment Security	State Official - Department of Employment Security
Charles	Holder	CEO, Hol-Mac	Business
Clarke	Holmes	CEO, Central Mississippi PDD	One Stop Partner PO Box 4935 Jackson 39296
Joe	Jones	Retired, MS Business Journal	Business
Tom	Kovar	Chevron Products Company	Business
Lida	Lambert	Tower Loan Company	Business
Perry	Lee	Senator, MS State Senate	Senator, MS State Senate
George	Lewis	Exec. Director, MS Municipal League	MS Municipal League
H.S.	McMillan	Exec. Dir., MS Dept. Rehabilitation Services	Rehabilitation Services
David	McMillen	Specialty Targets LLC, HMC Technologies	Local Workforce Area
Jay	Moon	CEO, MS Manufacturers Association	Business
Joe	Morton	Ripley Insurance	Business
Jackie	Mullins	Southern Pine Electric	Business
Robert	Mullins	Nissan North America, Canton	Business
David	Newell	State AFL-CIO Pipefitters Union	Labor
			Labor - Vacant
Jim	Watkins	Woodland Furniture	Business
Larry	Otis	Director, State Workforce Investment Board	Business
David	Stephens	Twin Districts Local Workforce Chairman	Business
Kerry	Stepter	Toyota Motor Mfg. of Mississippi, Inc.	Business
Michael	Thomas	MS Lignite Mining, North American Coal Corporation	Business
Sherrye	Thompson	Rankin County School District	Youth
John	Turner	Entergy Corporation	Business
Paul	Watson, Jr.	Washington County Supervisor	Elected County Supervisor

2. State Board

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB), in partnership with MDES, the four local workforce areas, and WIN Job Centers across the state, manages Mississippi's Workforce Investment Network to provide an array of services for business and workers. The SWIB advises

MDES by championing business and training, welcoming new partnerships, and aggressively marketing workforce development services.

The SWIB has been working to consolidate and strengthen Mississippi's workforce development system and make it more efficient, customer-friendly, and demand-driven. SWIB has also developed and implemented a statewide performance management system, the Integrated Longitudinal Education and Workforce Performance Management System, that allows for the collection and analysis of education, training, and placement data across all public workforce and education service providers throughout Mississippi, including the community college system, the state's largest training provider.

Developing and retaining good jobs and a high-quality workforce has paid off for the state. Many new companies have decided to locate in the state, producing thousands of high-paying jobs. This approach has also paid off in terms of lessening the overall impact of the recent recession on Mississippi's economy. Even though the state has experienced dramatic job losses as a result of the recession, Mississippi still has 8,000 more jobs today than at the beginning of 2004.

SWIB has also placed greater emphasis on workforce system services to businesses, especially small businesses and entrepreneurs, and has adopted six broad goals:

1. Install an accountability system to track system-wide results and funding.
2. Consolidate workforce-training efforts and reduce redundancy and administration.
3. Involve businesses in defining training needs.
4. Provide a user-friendly system for all customers.
5. Develop a clearly defined implementation plan.
6. Fully leverage the community college workforce training system.

SWIB has accomplished many of these goals, effectively using its committee system that consists of an executive board and several standing committees.

The State Workforce Investment Board through MDES offers several workforce resources to job seekers and employers. Through the MDES website job seekers can find local WIN Job Centers and training locations by county, access contact information of community colleges and universities to earn degrees, and learn about starting careers. Employers can find employees through WIN Job Centers, access Labor Market Information, and learn more about workforce development in Mississippi. Other resources include information on the SWIB Data Center and the Integrated Longitudinal Education and Workforce Performance Management System.

The State Workforce Investment Board has created a centralized location for workforce and economic information on the state. The SWIB Data Center brings together expertise and disparate datasets to provide access to high-quality, timely, and relevant information that supports workforce development decision-making and strategic planning in Mississippi.

The center has been designed as a management tool for developing, managing, and evaluating workforce and economic development initiatives throughout the state. The center provides research and evaluation capabilities to promote and expand the coordinated delivery of

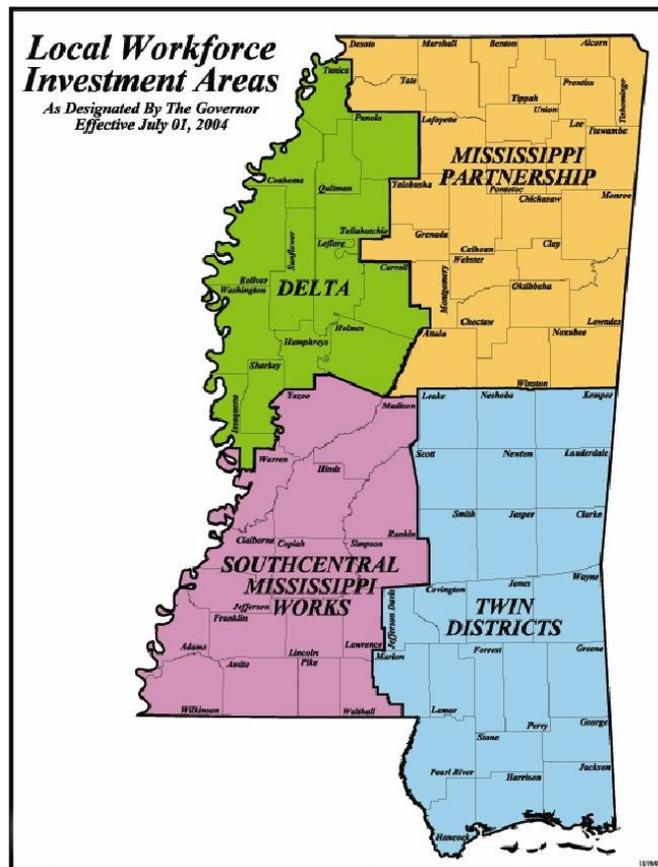
workforce, economic, and education services across the state with the goal of improving career-readiness and economic competitiveness.

The State ensures that any groups not represented on the SWIB are made aware of all SWIB meetings through public notice on the Internet at <http://swib.ms.gov/Meetings/>. All SWIB Meetings are held in accordance with Mississippi's Open Meetings Law and Sunshine Law, allowing interested parties to attend and participate.

3. Local Areas

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 establishes the framework for Mississippi's Workforce Investment Network (WIN). WIN combines federal, state and community workforce development programs and services and makes them easily accessible at one-stop WIN Job Centers. WIN consists of locally designed and managed programs that provide customer choice and convenient access to services and information for job seekers and businesses seeking qualified workers.

Figure 3



The Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004 consolidated the Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIA) from six to four. Mississippi's four local workforce investment areas use WIA funds to administer their various programs. (see Figure 3)

- The Delta Workforce Investment Area encompasses 14 counties in the Mississippi Delta and operates under the fiscal direction of South Delta Planning and Development District.
- The Mississippi Partnership Workforce Investment Area has the largest geographical area, covering 27 counties in north and northeast Mississippi.
- Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Investment Area serves 17 counties in the central and southern portion of the state.
- The Twin Districts Workforce Investment Area serves 24 counties.

The county boards of supervisors of each area establish local workforce investment boards comprised of local business and public-sector representatives. These boards and local elected officials are responsible for designing WIN services to meet the needs of their communities. WIN in Mississippi represents a collaborative effort among private business, local elected officials and public agencies.

These are among our many WIN in Mississippi partners;

Mississippi Department of Employment Security
 Local Workforce Investment Areas
 Local Elected Officials
 Mississippi Community College Board
 Mississippi Department of Corrections
 Mississippi Department of Human Services
 Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
 Mississippi Development Authority
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

B. Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies:

Operating Systems: The following are operating systems that support the coordinated implementation of the State's strategies:

Labor Market Information (LMI): The Labor Market Information Department of MDES, through federal grants with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration, operates statistical programs to capture and report economic information. LMI includes data on what careers are in demand and what future demands will be, as well as the education or training that is necessary to qualify for each career. LMI data is available in the WIN Job Centers and at <http://mdes.ms.gov/Home/LMI/index.html> on the MDES website. This information helps to guide state legislators and other state and local decision makers in the design and provision of workforce development services and economic development.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS): The State is developing and will implement a statewide performance management system, that allows for the collection and analysis of education, training, and placement data across all public workforce and education service providers throughout Mississippi, including the community college system, the state's largest training provider. This data is invaluable in defining the education, training, and skills gaps of workers and business needs, enabling the state to provide targeted solutions to fill those gaps.

ACCESS MS: MDES began a modernization project for the Unemployment Insurance system, benefits and tax, in January 2005. The project's name is ACCESS Mississippi, for Automated Comprehensive Claims and Employment Service System. MDES has already launched five components of ACCESS MS consisting of claims taking, investigations and determinations, appeals, benefit payments, overpayments, and online registration for taxes and reporting and payment of unemployment taxes. This technical solution has opened the door to a wide array of self-service options accessible for MDES individual and business customers via local WIN Job Center resource rooms, call centers, and the Internet.

Phase two of tax modernization, tax application redesign, began in August of 2009 and is expected to be implemented by the end of 2012. This component's focus is on improving access to self-service options that will offer more flexibility to taxpayers. ACCESS MS is available online at <http://mdes.ms.gov/Home/index.html>.

Online Statewide ETPL: MDES has launched an automated, Internet-based Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS) portal that provides electronic processing of training providers' enrollments, training course applications and subsequent eligibility. The system provides Individual Training Account (ITA) awards processing (obligations) and ITA invoicing (expenditures) in real time. MDES plans to automate the On-the-Job Training business process into the ETPS. The state plans to have the automation of OJT processing and invoicing completed by 2013. The ETPS is available online at <https://etpl.mdes.ms.gov/>.

WINGS: MDES is in its third year of a multi-year project to develop WINGS (the Workforce Investment Network Global Systems), a unified participant data collection system aimed at meeting the WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

program reporting, the WIASRD and TAPR reporting and new federal requirement that mandates intergraded information and reporting for the three programs. Currently, Wagner-Peyser and WIA-funded programs have been integrated into the system. Trade Act components will be integrated in 2013. The system is available at <http://mdes.ms.gov/Home/index.html>.

The online accessibility enhancements to the ETPL and WINGS systems support the coordinated implementation of the Accessibility to Workforce Services and the Leveraged System Innovation strategies to help build a *Work-Ready Mississippi*.

State Policies: The following policies also support the coordinated implementation of the state's strategies:

Local Workforce Investment Boards Policy – requires the establishment of the local workforce board and identifies requirements, composition, general membership provisions, general appointment provisions, LWIB certification, and conflict of interest. These local boards are the focal point for policy and funding decisions for implementation of WIA workforce development programs at the local level.

Eligible Provider Certification Policy – sets forth the state requirement for application to and inclusion on the Mississippi Eligible Training Provider List. It also describes how the state and local areas should compile and maintain the list. This policy allows the state to provide oversight and direction to the training providers, ensuring performance accountability, greater access for our clients to training services, and targeting training programs toward high growth/high demand occupations and emerging sectors.

Individual Training Account Policy – the Workforce Investment Act requires that with certain limited exemptions, all Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker training services as defined at Section 134(d)(4)(D) shall be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). This policy established the minimum requirements local workforce investment boards must set in the development of a local area ITA policy. These requirements define client accessibility to, and state and local area fiscal management of ITAs, a centerpiece of the workforce training requirements of WIA.

WIA Performance Measures and Goals Policy – provides the state and local area performance measures and goals as required by and negotiated with the Department of Labor. All workforce development programs and systems must work together to improve the employment prospects and earning capabilities of our clients, as defined by these measures.

High Growth/High Demand Training Policy – encourages LWIBs to work with local community colleges to create and contract for group-sized training in at least three areas identified by the local board as high growth/high demand occupations. This policy establishes requirements for local areas and community colleges to identify the high growth/high demand occupations, design the training, market the training options through the WIN Job Centers, and provide accountability for the training. This policy will be aligned more closely with the state's workforce development strategy and priorities.

On-the-Job Training and Customized Training Policy – provides the LWIBs guidance and procedures to facilitate the development of On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, and other employer-based training or wage-subsidized activities for adults and dislocated workers. Each workforce area is required to develop OJT and CT policies and procedures that address meeting the needs of employers and workers and promote development of a skilled workforce.

WIA Allocation Policy – provides guidance and information to the LWIAs on WIA Title I allotments for operating Adult, Dislocate Worker, Youth, and Rapid Response activities. These annual allocations give the local areas the funding to design and implement workforce training and development services.

Veterans Priority of Service Policy – articulates the procedures for providing priority of service to veterans and their eligible spouses with respect to qualified job training, and establishes all appropriate requirements. All services across the workforce development system are required to comply with federal statute and state policy regarding giving priority of service to veterans.

Delivery of Services - Alignment across Programs:

By using workforce development as the centerpiece of the state's strategy, the WIN system is able to combine Federal, State, and community programs and services. This will make these services easily accessible at WIN Job Centers throughout the state, as well as through online electronic sites. Through these interactions, services are accessible for dislocated workers, UI claimants and Wagner-Peyser customers. These services include, but are not limited to, assessment, job search and matching, and training opportunities such as on-the-job and customized training.

Customers of the local WIN Job Centers receive the full range of labor exchange services available. These services include (1) self-service, (2) facilitated self-help service, and (3) staff-assisted service. WIN Job Centers offer resource rooms for self-service and facilitated self-help services that include personal computers (PCs) with internet access to search for jobs, to write and post resumes and cover letters, to explore wage and job trends, to research job and labor market information, and to view specific jobs listed by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. Resource Rooms also offer printed materials on job search and work-related skills. Telephones fax machines, copiers, and printers are also available. Resource Rooms may also offer TV/VCRs with job search, career and work-related videos, as well as videos and printed materials on interviewing tips.

WIN Job Center staff will provide services as needed to Center customers. These services include staff-assisted job search, placement assistance, career counseling, job referrals, job development, and workshops. Businesses have access to MDES's database of qualified workers. Businesses may also use MDES's website to obtain labor market data, wage information, job fair information, Work Opportunity Tax Credit information, Rapid Response information and information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) benefits for employees. WIN Job Center staff also provides tailored recruitment and screening assistance. These services are available to all customers at the local level through the State's network of WIN Job Centers.

Registered Apprenticeships: There are a variety of registered apprenticeship opportunities available in the state. Most programs are offered through local unions, though non-union apprenticeships are also occasionally available through small businesses. There are a large number of apprenticeship programs available mostly in the construction, electrical, plumbing and HVAC fields. Although they are harder to find, other apprenticeship programs are also available for non-construction related fields such as in early childhood education or childcare.

Although these opportunities are available, the state workforce system will continue to invite greater cooperation among agencies, apprenticeship sponsors, local unions, and the DOL field office in Mississippi to advance apprenticeship opportunities. Many of the emerging sectors in the state are highly technical fields that may lend themselves to the incorporation of registered apprenticeships. Unusual options, such as a Folk Artist apprenticeship grant from the Mississippi Arts Commission, are occasionally available, and similar partnerships may extend to other career fields and industry sectors where applicable.

WIA Rapid Response Activities:

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) is the lead agency for Rapid Response services in Mississippi, and staffs the state Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU). The State also allocates a share of available Rapid Response funds to local workforce areas based on mass layoff or plant closure activity. Each workforce area has designated a staff person as their Rapid Response and dislocated worker program coordinator. Local area plans describe how the State and local areas coordinate Rapid Response services to address each area's specific labor market needs.

The State also allocates a share of available Rapid Response funds to local workforce areas based on mass layoff or plant closure activity. Each workforce area has designated a staff person as their Rapid Response and dislocated worker program coordinator. Local area plans describe how the State and local areas coordinate Rapid Response services to address each area's specific labor market needs.

The MDES responds to both the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) and non-WARN events, that is, events involving fewer than 50 individuals. The MDES DWU receives official WARN notices of impending closures or mass layoff events from the affected business. To ensure that assistance and services are provided to as many dislocated workers as possible, the MDES also established a policy to respond to non-WARN events, regardless of the number of individuals affected. The MDES may learn of non-WARN events from the media, partner agencies, local economic development offices, WIN Job Center and LWIA staff, businesses, affected workers, community college rapid response coordinators, and other local sources.

Within 48 hours of the receipt of a WARN or non-WARN notice, the MDES staff contacts the company to discuss available Rapid Response services and offers assistance to the company and the affected workers. An on-site visit with the company representative and, when appropriate, the union or employee representative, is scheduled as soon as possible.

The State developed an employee survey form to determine the specific assistance needed by the affected workers. The survey is provided to the employer during the on-site visit for immediate distribution to the workers. The form collects information on the employees' education and skill levels, work history, employment assistance needs, and training interests. After compiling and analyzing the information provided by the employees, the team identifies the workers' specific needs and coordinates with the local area and community college to facilitate the delivery of services from the appropriate partner agencies.

Working in coordination with the local workforce area and WIN Job Center staff, a plan of action is developed to deliver services to the affected dislocated workers. Whenever possible, Rapid Response services are delivered on-site prior to layoff, onsite at the company and on company time. Providing services on-site is dependent upon the company's willingness to allow workers to attend sessions during work hours and the availability of meeting space at the site.

To assist with the provision of on-site services for workers, MDES utilizes a mobile WIN Job Center. The mobile one stop is outfitted with twelve computer workstations, allowing access to the Internet. The separate instructor workstation has a control console that allows the instructor to assist or take control of any or all computer monitors. The workstations have Choices 2005, a career exploration program, Microsoft Office XP, and Win Way Resume Deluxe software that may be used to develop a resume. Workers can also access the Internet for job search from the computer. The mobile one stop unit is a vital part of the Rapid Response team's efforts to deliver services on-site to workers, especially in rural areas where workers may not have convenient access to a comprehensive center.

Rapid Response services offered to the company may include general orientation sessions and, whenever possible, on-site workshops on resume preparation, job search skills, financial planning, or other topics. The local community college may provide basic introduction to computer training or GED classes. If the company does not have adequate facilities to provide workshops on-site or in the mobile WIN Job Center, workshops are scheduled at a nearby WIN Job Center.

During orientation sessions with small groups of employees, the Rapid Response team gives workers an overview of available services and assistance. Workers are encouraged to visit the local WIN Job Center to access appropriate core, intensive, or training services. If the event is Trade related, local staff will interview each TAA eligible applicant regarding suitable training opportunities available to them and individual job plans are developed. A TAA brochure that describes available services and benefits is provided to each employee.

MDES also works to partner Rapid Response with local and state economic development entities to connect employees from companies undergoing layoffs to similar companies that are growing and need skilled workers. Further, MDES works to promote the full range of Rapid Response and agency services available to help companies in all stages of the economic cycle, not just those available during layoffs. Exploring viable layoff aversion strategies and strengthening partnerships is an ongoing effort of MDES to minimize the effects of layoffs.

When the MDES learns of a layoff or closure, the MDES immediately notifies the Mississippi Development Authority, the state's economic development agency, that a company may be in need of assistance. The local economic development staff is in a position to assist the employer

in exploring options that may help them to avert the layoff. In addition, if it is evident that a closure will occur, local economic development staff may be able to market the site to employers who will be moving to the area.

MDES has developed a comprehensive, integrated Management Information System that includes Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance Act programs. The DWU utilizes several methods to track its activities. A file is maintained for each Rapid Response event that includes a checklist that describes all services provided, names of company contacts, copy of the WARN notice, and information on any follow-up activities. The file contains information on each closure or layoff event, and each individual affected. It provides individual contact information and the skills of the affected workers. A quarterly WARN report is also maintained that lists all WARN and non-WARN activities, name and location of each company, type of company affected, number of workers, services provided, and if the event is trade related.

Common Data-Collection and Reporting Systems:

The state has developed common data-collection and reporting processes through ACCESS MS and WINGS. ACCESS MS is the modernization project for the Unemployment Insurance system. MDES has already launched five components of ACCESS MS consisting of claims taking, investigations and determinations, appeals, benefit payments, overpayments, and online registration for taxes and reporting and payment of unemployment taxes. Phase two, the tax application redesign, began in August of 2009 and is expected to be implemented by the end of 2012. This component's focus is on improving access to self-service options that will offer more flexibility to taxpayers.

When UI claimants enroll for WIA services, many of the data fields are automatically populated from ACCESS MS into WINGS. All WIA participants are enrolled through WINGS and all services and case management are performed electronically in the system. WINGS (the Workforce Investment Network Global Systems), is a unified participant data collection system aimed at meeting the WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program reporting, as well as WIASRD and TAPR reporting. Currently, Wagner-Peyser and WIA-funded programs have been integrated into the system. Trade Act components will be integrated in 2013.

State Performance Accountability System:

The Mississippi Integrated Workforce Performance System project provides an integrated, online system of education, training, and supportive services that promotes skill attainment and career pathway development for those seeking new or better employment opportunities in Mississippi. This project also contributes substantially to larger statewide efforts aimed at streamlining workforce activities under a unified system and help the state meet its commitment to develop and implement an integrated workforce performance system to build a more competitive workforce for the jobs of the future and improve the quality of life for all Mississippians.

The National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center (nSPARC) at Mississippi State University (MSU) worked closely with MDES and the SWIB to develop this system and conducted all the research necessary to generate information for the eData Portal. The portal has been designed as a management tool for developing, managing, and evaluating workforce and economic development initiatives throughout the state. The center provides research and

evaluation capabilities to promote and expand the coordinated delivery of workforce, economic, and education services across the state with the goal of improving career-readiness and economic competitiveness. nSPARC is the system architect and serves as the project manager.

State Strategies for Use of Quarterly Wage Record Information:

Mississippi's also has a strategy for using quarterly wage record information to measure the progress on state and local performance measures. Currently, the state has a data sharing agreement with our data system developer, nSPARC, to provide performance reporting through the ETA 9090 and the WIA Standardized Reporting Data (WIASRD) reports. State UI wage records and Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) data are transferred to MSU via an MDES secure web file server.

Safeguards are in place to ensure that MSU deletes all WRIS quarterly wage data after the ETA 9090 and the WIASRD reports are generated and delivered to MDES. However, state UI wage records are stored by MSU for future use in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, being developed by the nSPARC at MSU.

The Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) is a statewide project to develop, implement, and expand longitudinal data systems that link information from pre-kindergarten through the workforce to create better information for better decision making to improve student outcomes. Specifically, the SLDS is designed to align the efforts of universities, community colleges, K-12 schools, and early childhood education in terms of academic standards and career expectations with the general intent of: (1) decreasing the number of high school dropouts; (2) increasing the number of high school students who graduate and enroll in and successfully complete a two- or four-year college degree; (3) increasing the number of students who successfully transfer from community colleges to universities; (4) increasing the number of four-year college graduates; (5) improving career-readiness at all levels of education; and (6) increasing the number of students who successfully gain employment. The SLDS will coordinate data sharing and reporting across all educational institutions and workforce entities in Mississippi.

C. Services to State Target Populations:

In order to achieve a *Work-Ready Mississippi*, the state must meet the needs of jobseekers from several target populations who have varying skill levels and education, and many of whom have various barriers to employment. The following sections outline service strategies for specific target populations.

Unemployment compensation claimants; the long-term unemployed; the under-employed; and dislocated workers:

Each full service WIN Job Center provides access to clients with resource services both staff- and self-directed. All service centers provide access to services and information using self-directed Internet and printed material. The intake and assessment processes are able to identify the services needed by clients with special needs including low-income, disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities. Clients so identified are directed to more intensive staff-assisted services to provide additional information and assessment. Service delivery has been enhanced with the advent of WINGS intake and assessment and the accessibility of more self-directed services and information. Future enhancements to WINGS include integration of Trade Act components in 2013, with Veterans programs following that.

MDES is also expanding access to WIN Services in counties that do not have a WIN Job Center by opening additional satellite sites known as e-WIN Access Points. This is a collaboration between MDES and other public or private entities where WIN System accessible computers and training in the provision of core services are provided to MDHS county offices, libraries and other public facilities, non-profit organizations, or churches.

Unemployed persons may file their Unemployment Compensation claims via the Internet using ACCESS MS or may call in their claims to the MDES Call Centers.

The Reemployment and Eligibility Assessments (REA) program targets recently separated individuals who are most likely to exhaust UI benefits, who are then provided intensive individualized reemployment plans, case management, and follow-up services. Intensive reemployment services include resume prep, soft skills, Job Search Skills Training, enhancing technology skills, and individualized assessments of participants to determine job readiness.

The overall goal of the Reemployment Eligibility Assessment Initiative in Mississippi is to implement a statewide early intervention strategy to help reconnect unemployed applicants with work as quickly as possible and to educate them at a high level about Unemployment Insurance requirements.

- Applicants must be:
 - Physically able to work
 - Available for work
 - Actively seeking full time employment
 - Must not refuse an offer of suitable work

- If a participant works, they must report any work and earnings on the weekly certification for that week. They cannot wait to report the work or earnings when it is paid.
 - If a participant has not returned to work within 3 months of the initial REA assessment, they will be called back in for a second REA appointment. During this second session the participant must be prepared to tell staff what steps have been taken to secure employment and discuss any barriers to re-employment.
 - If the participant is called in for any appointment, they must report or face possible disqualification.
- Disqualification
 - If the participant fails to meet any of the above requirements, they will be subject to disqualification from receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits. This point is stressed to the participant.
 - If staff detects a possible issue at any point during the REA process (Possible overpayment, Able and Available issues, Refusal of Suitable work, Failure to Report, etc.), staff is required to submit the information to the MDES Unemployment Call Center where it is assigned to an investigator for further research and eventual adjudication. The issue should be created on the day it is detected to prevent possible improper payment of benefits.

Low-income individuals:

To ensure high quality, integrated workforce services are provided to low-income individuals, including individuals receiving TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) and other forms of public assistance, State and local workforce system representatives will partner with agencies and organizations that serve this population, particularly the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS). WIN Job Centers will be encouraged to continue and enhance strategies to improve job attainment and retention, for this population of job seekers.

When low-income individuals visit a WIN Job Center, they are assessed to determine needs and are referred to partner services as appropriate. MDES serves as a clearinghouse to leveraged Supportive Services including temporary shelter, assistance with housing, food banks, and other services from partners such as MDHS and community and faith-based organizations. After basic needs are met, the full range of WIN Job Center workforce and training services are available as appropriate.

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers:

Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers are discussed at **Section D**, below.

Veterans:

Priority of Service for Veterans is stipulated in all core and intensive services provided by Wagner-Peyser funded staff in all WIN Job Center locations. Additionally, all core and intensive

services provided by WIA funding are inclusive of veteran priority of services, as policies and statements of operation have been included in the four Local Workforce Area Plans. This priority of service requires that covered persons are identified at the point of service and each person is given the opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service. It also ensures that covered persons are aware of (1) their entitlement to priority of service, (2) the full array of employment, training, and placement services available through the WIN Job Centers and all service points, and (3) that all applicable eligibility requirements for these programs are understood and applied including veterans.

Signage for Priority of Service is prevalent in WIN Job Centers waiting areas and also in resource centers to include a separate sign-in sheet for covered persons. All staff closely monitors the sign-in sheet and immediate attention is given to those covered person signing in. All employer job orders received by Job Centers are subject to Veterans' priority of services. Computer searches for qualified veterans are conducted before releasing job orders, with most orders placed on a 24-hour hold for covered persons.

In addition to advising veterans of their preferred status, signs are posted in each WIN Job Center to make veterans aware of their priority of service entitlement. Veterans are made aware of the special assistance provided by Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veteran Employment Representative Program (LVER) staff when WIN Job Center staff conducts outreach activities for the veteran community. MDES enforces procedures through the issuance of Employment Service Bulletins to ensure the prioritization of service to the special populations of veterans as identified by VETS. In order to maximize job and training opportunities, information on such services as WIA approved training courses, Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) and On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts are available to eligible veterans at WIN Job Centers. For those veterans with barriers to employment, referrals are made to the Veteran Administration Regional Office (VARO) and other Job Center partners and staff.

Individuals with limited English proficiency:

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security recognizes that the demographics of the State are changing rapidly. This fact is evidenced by the increase in the numbers of persons of Hispanic and Asian heritage accessing services in the WIN Job Centers. MDES has taken a proactive approach to improve services to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). MDES is working with the local workforce areas to address cases where language may be a barrier to access. One key step consists of communicating to WIN Job Center staff the rights of LEP individuals to access, in the appropriate languages, employment benefits, services and job-training programs for which they may be eligible. MDES has contracted with a translation service to create forms, brochures, booklets, outreach and recruitment information, and other materials that are routinely disseminated to the Spanish-speaking public. Interpreters are also available. Each WIN Job Center has a list of resources available to LEP customers.

The staff in the WIN Job Centers is knowledgeable about and sensitive to barriers facing the LEP customer. The staff notifies management immediately when a customer with language barriers enters the center. The goal of all staff is to render the highest level of customer service possible. The MDES Equal Opportunity (EO) Department conducts staff training during each office evaluation on serving LEP customers. This topic will be also addressed in local plans.

Homeless individuals:

Through the partnerships maintained by interagency relationships, we are aware of the resources available to other agencies and have been able to leverage funds and assist homeless customers through referral to services. We serve as a clearinghouse to these leveraged Supportive Services including temporary shelter, assistance with housing, food banks, and other services from partners such as Mississippi Department of Human Services, and community- and faith-based organizations. We plan and participate in Job Fairs and conduct job skills workshops in the WIN Job Centers, which are open to all clients who need the assistance.

Ex-offenders:

The Prisoner Recidivism Committee of the State Workforce Investment Board has championed pilot pre-release training programs that have proven results in reducing the number of ex-offenders returning to prison. The pilot programs are operated by Mississippi Prison Industries in the Jackson area and by Jones County Junior College at the Green County Correctional Facility. Prisoners are trained in job skills prior to release, and as they approach parole, they are trained on soft-skills, resume preparation, and interviewing skills and receive assistance with housing, obtaining transportation, and drivers licenses and other state ID that are required to work.

Older workers:

As of July 1, 2012, MDES was designated by the governor as the agency to administer Title V funds of the Older Americans Act. A stand-alone 4-year state plan for the Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) will be submitted to the Department of Labor under separate cover.

Not only does MDES administer the program, we are also a host agency for many of the SCSEP participants, providing them with part-time employment and opportunities for employment skills training.

Individuals training for nontraditional employment:

The state wants to design a workforce system that will afford all Mississippians an opportunity to obtain the skills needed to pursue the job best suited for them. This includes jobs in careers that have not traditionally been open or easily accessible to members of their gender. For instance, we have assisted programs at LWIAs and various community colleges including Women in Welding and Women in Construction. Also, the Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce continues to work to expand nursing opportunities for men.

In addition, we provide skills training in jobs that do not traditionally fit the prevalent skill sets associated with the geographic region. For instance, we provide training for workers making composite jet engine fan blades at GE in an area that has historically been dominated by agriculture and logging. We also train workers accustomed to working in furniture upholstery and manufacturing to perform the high-tech jobs needed for the manufacture of cars at the new Toyota plant. Numerous other examples exist such as training for solar panel manufacturing and other green jobs or training entrepreneurs, some of who will support our burgeoning creative economy.

Serving the Employment and Training Needs of Individuals with Disabilities:

In comprehensive WIN Job Centers, customers with disabilities will receive the full range of services available through the State's One-Stop system. WIN Job Center staff, including Wagner-Peyser funded staff and Vocational Rehabilitation coordinators, will provide specialized services to customers with disabilities. All Centers shall adhere to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to assure that customers with disabilities are able to access or have assistance in accessing job listings and other resources. Knowledgeable and competent staff shall be available to assist each customer as needed. The staff shall be capable of responding to the needs of persons with disabilities.

The minimum standards for comprehensive WJCs states that: Priority will be given to assuring that throughout the system, persons with disabilities will have programmatic access to all services. The commitment to adequately serving persons with disabilities extends beyond the specialized services of vocational rehabilitation to the system as a whole and assumes the responsibility of continuously enhancing system capacity for achieving that aim. The Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services monitors each comprehensive WJC to ensure accessibility issues are addressed as part of the certification process.

WIN Job Centers will continue to work closely with all partners to ensure programs and services are accessible for all individuals. The MDRS provides advice and guidance regarding assistive services, and/or devices are available to provide easy access to information and workforce related services to persons with disabilities in the WIN Job Centers. Thirty WIN Job Centers are now equipped with special ADA compliant computers to be used by individuals with disabilities to conduct a job search, complete resumes, and access other services that are provided at the WIN Job Centers.

In addition, the State Workforce Investment Board encourages the following activities:

- Dedicating a portion of their website to links with local and national disability resources to support staff and customers with disabilities in each workforce area;
- Ensuring that disability literature and information on local resources is available in local WIN Job Center resource libraries;
- Open house at WJCs for local disability organizations to provide an opportunity to learn about the system with a brief orientation of services offered;
- Promoting services through local advocacy groups, community action groups, faith based community organizations and others that provide support and service to persons with disabilities;
- Designating a lead staff member in each local workforce area to provide outreach and serve as a liaison to the disability community and other individuals with barriers to employment;
- Developing marketing materials that describe persons with disabilities as a target audience;

- Facilitating the transition of youth with disabilities to school, employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Conducting outreach to, and coordination with, community service providers working with people with disabilities, local Independent Living Centers, and public and private mental health and developmental disability organizations; and
- Including a case management model that provides accessible intensive services to individuals with barriers to employment.

Comprehensive Services for Eligible Youth:

Mississippi is committed to providing comprehensive services to eligible youth, especially those individuals having significant barriers to employment. Comprehensive services are provided through an integrated system of education, workforce training, skills development and job readiness services for youth. Mississippi has taken steps to implement strategies to assist eligible youth to receive the educational and employment skills, training, and support needed to achieve academic and employment success as they transition to the world of work, training or post-secondary education. Services to eligible youth are delivered through a network of youth providers. Independent contractors that competitively bid for youth funds deliver the Local Workforce Area Youth Program services. These contractors have been successful in achieving and exceeding the prescribed goals as outlined in WIA. These services include counseling, occupational skills training, leadership development, guidance, follow-up-work readiness training, internships, job placement, pre-employment training, work experience, GED preparation and achievement, employment referral to WIA On-the-Job Training (OJT) and individual training accounts (ITA).

Innovative approaches used by youth providers include the Counseling to Career (C2C) youth programs, the Senior Transition Program, Out of School Youth Work Experience and Career Connections.

C2C provides one to one counseling that helps to develop a personalized individual service strategy that leads to short term and long term employment. The Senior Transition Program enhances work readiness, college preparedness, and transition to work skills to WIA eligible high school seniors on track to graduate during the program year. Career Connections offers four types of training designed to equip youth with the education and skills to take advantage of new and increasing job opportunities in high growth labor markets.

The State has been granted a waiver to provide Individual Training Accounts to Youth. Use of this waiver by the LWIAs to expand their youth services has prompted the state to request this waiver for continued use.

The state will continue to encourage the LWIAs to fund innovative youth projects in accordance with the DOL vision for serving Youth. These projects will encourage collaboration among state agencies that serve youth including, but not limited to, Education Human Services, WIA, Rehabilitation Services, and Juvenile Justice. Mississippi will seek to replicate innovative youth program models from other states, particularly those with socio-economic and labor market conditions similar to those of Mississippi.

Entities serving youth will also share best practices among themselves and will seek to incorporate existing youth programs from other states that have proven successful. Local Youth Councils and youth teams take the lead in designing and implementing youth strategies. Youth strategies will be addressed in more depth in local area workforce plans.

Mississippi Job Corps is not a WIA-funded program for youth in MDES, but it is a viable WIA youth service. The Department of Labor (DOL) now contracts with private companies for the recruitment and placement aspects of the Job Corps program. These companies, in some locations, are partners in the WIN Job Centers. Referrals of interested participants are made to the appropriate contractor that handles Job Corps activities.

Job Corps offers career planning, on-the-job training, job placement, residential housing, food service, driver's education, health and dental care, a bi-weekly basic living allowance and clothing allowance. Some centers offer childcare programs for single parents as well.

In addition to career training, Mississippi Job Corps also provides academic training, including basic reading and math. Courses in independent living, employability skills, and social skills are offered in order to help students transition into the workplace. They also have several academic programs to help our students achieve their full potential.

One of the top goals at Mississippi Job Corps is to ensure that every qualified student obtains his or her GED/high school diploma prior to leaving the center. Students who don't already have a high school diploma upon their arrival can enroll in the GED/high school program.

In addition to academic training, Job Corps provides career technical training in several vocational trades, including Bricklayer, Business Technology, Carpentry, Electrician, Facilities Maintenance, Food Service, Health Occupations, Plumbing, Retail Sales, Security Officer, and Welding. Job Corps is committed to the development of green job training. All students who enter in Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive, or Construction career technical training areas will train in a variety of green subject areas.

The MDES and our WIN System partners will continue to enhance access to programs and services for all Mississippians. To ensure that special populations are appropriately served and that non-traditional career opportunities are presented, local Workforce Boards are encouraged to provide professional development training to all front-line personnel. They are also encouraged to include service providers and community-based organizations that serve special populations on the local Board, or on its workgroups and committees.

Local plans must specify how the needs of displaced workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, women, minorities, individuals training for non-traditional employment, veterans and individuals with multiple barriers to employment including older workers, individuals with limited English-speaking abilities and individuals with disabilities, will be met.

D. Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach

MDES has established partnerships with community-based organizations to assist in seeking out and identifying Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs). MDES staff works with local employers to identify MSFWs that are in need of services. MDES has also entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Workers Opportunities, Inc. (MDC). Through this agreement, MDES is able to achieve many of the state's outreach goals for ensuring appropriate services are provided through the agency for MSFWs.

MDES and MDC management staff will insure that information on both agencies' services and the MDES Grievance Procedure are available for dissemination to the farm workers in the language prevalent among the farm worker population in that area through such means as posters, pamphlets, use of the media, workshops, and others.

Appropriate personnel of both agencies meet on at least a quarterly basis for the purposes of coordinating their outreach activity. With this coordinated effort, duplication of service is minimized and a maximum number of MSFWs are contacted.

MDES and MDC each maintains a data system designed to provide feedback on the results of referrals received. MSFWs that register at the WIN Job Center for assistance are entered into WINGS. MDES is able to extract data from the system to analyze outreach and service outcomes. MDES provides MDC with information on services provided to MSFW applicants through the WIN Job Centers. The MDES and MDC management staff insure that data gathered regarding MSFWs and labor market information is shared for planning purposes.

Services provided to MSFWs in the WIN Job Centers includes information on unemployment insurance, assessment, counseling, job referrals, job development contacts, training, support services and job placement assistance. Appropriate assessments for each MSFW that registers at the WIN Job Center are conducted, to determine the specific employment and training needs of that worker.

In the WIN Job Centers, promotional materials, brochures, flyers and resource materials are translated into languages other than English so that Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients can understand and access one-stop services. WIN Job Center staff has access to translators via an 800 telephone number and a listing of local individuals who can provide translation services for a reasonable fee should the need arise. MDES estimates that approximately 2,500 MSFWs will be served during the plan period.

E. Services to Employers:

For those businesses operating in the State of Mississippi or for those considering moving here, the WIN in Mississippi system and WIN Job Centers are eager to assist with their staffing needs. Services are provided at no charge including:

Federal Bonding Program:

The McLaughlin Group provides the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) five free bonds each year beginning July 1st. MDES provides free of charge fidelity bonds to employers that hire at risk job seekers. The maximum amount of the bond is \$5,000 and provides up to six months of coverage. Bonds are used to assist job seekers with the following barriers to employment:

- Ex-offenders with a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment; anyone who has been on parole or probation, or has a police record.
- Any person whose background may lead employers to question their honesty and subsequently deny them employment.
- Recovering substance abusers and/or persons rehabilitated through treatment for alcohol or drug abuse.
- Persons who have poor credit records or have declared bankruptcy.
- Persons dishonorably discharged from military service.
- Disadvantaged person or individuals from low-income families.
- Individuals without a work history.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit:

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) serves as the State Workforce Agency for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program, which provides businesses with substantial tax savings for each newly hired employee from one of five targeted groups of Veterans. Commonly known as WOTC, the program provides a credit against an employer's federal tax liabilities of up to \$9,600 per employee. The amount of the actual credit depends on several factors, including the number of hours worked, the amount of wages earned, and for which Veteran target group the newly hired employee is qualified. Businesses are allowed to make all the hiring decisions. A minimal amount of paperwork is required to file for the tax credit. A WOTC application can be submitted for every newly hired Veteran, regardless of the number of Veterans a business may hire.

President Obama signed the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 into law on November 21, 2011. The Act applies to Veterans hired on or after November 22, 2011 and before January 1, 2013. A Veteran is defined as an individual who:

- Served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days in the Armed Forces of the USA, or

- Was discharged from active duty for a service connected disability, and
- Did not have any day during the 60-day period prior to the hiring date that was a day of “extended active duty” in the Armed Forces of the USA.

The five Veterans target groups are:

- Veterans receiving SNAP benefits
- Disabled Veterans receiving compensation for a service-connected disability hired within one year of discharge or release from active duty
- Disabled Veterans unemployed 6 months
- Veterans unemployed for at least 4 weeks but less than six months
- Unemployed for at least 6 months.

To establish that the newly hired employee is a Veteran, MDES reviews the following forms of support documentation submitted with the WOTC application forms by employers or consultant firms:

- Form DD-214
- Letters of Separation bearing the Agency stamp and signed by the individual who verified service connected disability
- Discharge Papers
- Reserve Unit Contracts

F. Outreach and Awareness

MDES uses a variety of resources to conduct outreach and awareness of available services. Print materials that include brochures, flyers, and reports as well as the website are used to provide information to the public. In addition, workforce partners disseminate information on the availability of services through the WIN system.

Mississippi has identified workforce branding as a strategy to increase the awareness of the public workforce system. Brand consistency throughout all levels of the workforce that exemplifies innovation and responsiveness and availability of services will be addressed with the new workforce brand. The governor has formed a work team that consists of community colleges, private industry, economic development, local workforce areas and MDES to make recommendations on branding Mississippi’s workforce system. The recommendation will be presented in February 2013.

MDES will co brand its WIN Job Centers as funding permits. The American Job Center logo and tag line will be added to all WJC printed materials as supplies are depleted. The MDES website is also undergoing a redesign. The new website which is expected to launch in January 2013 will include the AJC brand and tag line. The LWIAs have been provided the AJC toolkit

and strongly encouraged to co brand. There is no immediate plan for co-branding building or road signage due to limited funding.

G. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security administers the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act. They provide seamless service to participants through a coordinated and functionally aligned effort between the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser (W-P). The TAA partnership strategies are as follows:

Providing early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a TAA petition has been filed:

- The MDES leads Rapid Response efforts across the state. When working with a business to provide Rapid Response services, the MDES staff activates team efforts locally. The Team includes a rapid response coordinator from the appropriate Local Workforce Area, a representative of the local WIN Job Center representing Wagner-Peyser, and staff representative from the Trade Adjustment Assistance department. Whenever possible, the team conducts on-site presentations at the business location. Every effort is made to provide information sessions prior to the commencement of the lay-offs and/or plant closure. The presentation consists of an overview of the benefits and services that can be expected from each of the partner groups.
- During these sessions, the Rapid Response team emphasizes how the partner agency staff representatives will be working together as a team to offer the customer individualized comprehensive reemployment benefits and services.
- Once a petition is approved, additional sessions with affected workers are scheduled to provide information about TAA services only. These sessions give the workers the opportunity to ask detailed questions or questions directly related to the workers' individual needs. The sessions may be set up through the employer if the place of business is still open or through TAA staff at the nearest WIN Job Center or at another location.
- When an individual enters the WIN Job center and is identified as Trade eligible, a Trade case manager provides them with an orientation to explain available Trade benefits and services.

Providing core and intensive services to TAA participants as indicated in the guidance and encouragement of co-enrollment polices:

- All TAA customers are assessed and co-enrolled as appropriate. Counselors emphasize the benefits of co-enrollment to allow the maximum benefit from all available resources. All customers have Individual Employment Plans developed, which are used to facilitate the leveraging of resources. These plans also identify any possible barriers to employment and how those barriers will be addressed. Assessments are utilized to identify participants' services needs in a variety of ways: diagnostic testing, skills assessments, in-depth interviewing and evaluation of employment barriers and goals. Labor market information is provided as well as training options to assist participants in making informed decisions. Initial assessments may include interviews, tests to determine reading and math scores, interest profile and development of the Employment Development Plan. A full

assessment includes work history, job skills, and other assessment tools which can be used in determining the skills and job readiness of a participant, such as Key-Train, TABE, ACT, Compass, or Work Keys.

A key requirement of the Trade Program is customer focused case management services which are offered to all adversely affected workers and adversely affected incumbent workers for the purpose of providing workers the necessary information and support needed to achieve sustainable reemployment. To ensure and track effective case management, Mississippi is currently adapting its WINGS operating system to electronically capture case management activities: documentation, communication, assessment, evaluation and reporting. Mississippi has compiled a checklist siting the Department of Labor employment and case management services requirements for all local WIN Job Center staff and has provided training for staff as well.

- Training is available under the Trade Act indefinitely for workers certified TAA eligible and who have never received this benefit. Case managers in the WIN Job Centers utilize the following six criteria along with in-depth interviews and computer driven assessments to determine if a Trade eligible participant is potentially eligible for training under the Trade Program.
 - There is no suitable employment available.
 - The worker would benefit from the appropriate training.
 - There is a reasonable expectation of employment following completion of training.
 - Training is reasonable available to the worker by government or private sources.
 - The worker is physically, mentally, and educationally equipped to complete training.
 - Training is suitable and available at a reasonable cost.

Case managers compile a training request packet for the participant and submit it to the state Trade coordinator for approval/denial. The packet includes all necessary documentation necessary for a determination to be made with regard to training.

- Trade participants and the case managers are notified in writing of all decisions, with the participant given fourteen (14) days to appeal the decision. Once a customer enters approved training, there is coordination with Unemployment Insurance for an individual's ongoing income support.

Develop and manage resources to integrate data provided through different agencies administering benefits and services in order to ensure consistent program administration and fiscal integrity, as well as reliable fiscal and performance reporting.

- TAA, Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), Re-Employment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA), WIA, and W-P/Employment Service all use the Mississippi's Workforce Investment Network Global System (WINGS) computer system to collect universal information (customer demographics, Veteran information, migrant worker information, employment status, disability, older worker, low income, public assistance, needs and barriers, etc.) for each customer. This system also tracks the various program enrollments. WINGS is a case management based system, which captures information to

assist in determining eligibility for various government and community based programs. It also tracks customer participation under the various programs in which participants may be enrolled, and program exit outcomes.

- TRA claims and payments originate in the Automated Comprehensive Claims and Employment Service (ACCESS MS) system. This system interfaces with WINGS and JTAA to receive daily updates on participants TAA program training, waivers and other Trade program services. TRA payments are issued based on program eligibility criteria.

Customer focused case management services are a key requirement of the Trade Program. These services are offered to all adversely affected workers and adversely affected incumbent workers through a team approach for the purpose of providing workers the necessary information and support needed to achieve sustainable reemployment. To ensure and track effective case management, Mississippi is currently using its WINGS operating system to electronically capture case management activities: documentation, communication, assessment, evaluation and reporting. Mississippi has compiled a checklist of the Department of Labor employment and case management services requirements for all local WIN Job Center staff and has provided training for staff as well.

The TAA partnership team uses assessments to identify participants' service needs through: diagnostic testing, skills assessments, in-depth interviewing, and evaluation of employment barriers and goals. They provide Labor Market Information as well as training options to assist participants in making informed decisions. Initial assessments may include interviews, tests to determine reading and math scores, interest profile and development of the Employment Development Plan. A full assessment includes work history, job skills, and other assessment tools that can be used in determining the skills and job readiness of a participant, such as Key-Train, TABE, Compass, or Work Keys.

H. WIA Waiver Requests

1. Authority to Transfer up to 50% of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds between These Two Programs

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) Office of Grant Management (OGM) is the administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the State of Mississippi. OGM requests that it be granted the authority to approve transfers of up to 50% of adult and dislocated worker funds between these two programs, if such a transfer is requested by one or more of the State's four local workforce investment areas. If granted, this waiver would take effect on July 1, 2012, and would remain in effect until this waiver authority is revoked by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 14-08, Change 1, allowed a similar transfer of up to 30% of adult and dislocated funds based upon language in the Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act of 2009, which adopted the FFY 2009 Federal budget. Mississippi wishes to increase transfer authority from 30% to 50% in order to allow each of the four local areas maximum flexibility to serve the needs of their respective adult and dislocated worker customers. Worker dislocations often occur with little warning and are hard to predict. A workforce area may want to use its dislocated worker funds to serve low income workers, enrolled in the adult program, who lack recent labor force attachment if large worker dislocations do not occur. Conversely, a workforce area may want to transfer adult funds to the dislocated worker program if a number of large layoffs occur and rapid response funds are inadequate to provide necessary services. Granting workforce areas the ability to move funds to the areas of greatest need will optimize customer service.

In keeping with the guidelines set forth at WIA section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR Part 661.420, please grant this waiver request.

Identification of Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The original transfer language is in WIA section 131(b)(4) and in 20 CFR 667.140, which capped transfers between the adult and dislocated worker programs at 20%. The transfer percentage was raised to 30% by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 2009, as communicated in TEGL 14-08, Change 1. This waiver request would make one simple change: increasing the transfer amount to 50%.

Actions Taken to Remove State Statutory or Regulatory Barriers

There are no State barriers to remove.

Waiver Goals and Expected Outcomes if the Waiver is Granted

Mississippi devotes a larger percentage of adult and dislocated worker funds to training than most other states in the nation. In part, this is due to increased program flexibility. If a given workforce area, or the State, has a dollar left in either the adult or dislocated worker allocations, and an "in need" adult or dislocated worker applicant requests training

in a demand occupation, the training will be provided. The first priority at the State and local level is to cover skill acquisition and to use available dollars as flexibly as possible to meet customer needs. If this waiver is granted, our commitment to training and to the maximization of customer services will continue unabated.

Individuals Impacted

All adult and dislocated worker customers will benefit from the increased flexibility. A given adult or dislocated worker will not have to wait until the next program year to receive training if the funds in the program they are enrolled in, adult or dislocated worker, are exhausted while funds in the other program remain available. This is a real scenario. Every year prior to the granting of the original transfer request, either the adult or dislocated worker program ceased providing training early in the fourth quarter of the program year while enough dollars remained in the other program to continue funding training through the year's end. Each year, about 1,000 additional training requests are funded due to the granting of waiver authority. This request is particularly critical in the coming program year due to the recession.

Monitoring Process

OGM will continuously monitor each subrecipient's use of Federal awards through reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to provide reasonable assurance that the subrecipient administers Federal awards in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the State plan, including approved waivers, and that the performance goals are achieved.

OGM will continuously monitor transfers and training expenditures to ensure compliance with transfer limits by program staff and fiscal staff when requests are made from local workforce areas. OGM staff will continue to attend board meetings to review the transfer rationale and budget and to verify that the transfer does not exceed 50%. This will ensure that all transfers continue to be used to maximize training availability.

Local Board and Public Review and Comment

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

2. Requesting Authority to waive the limitation on use of funds for capitalization of businesses at WIA Section 181 (e) to permit WIA funds to be used to capitalize a small business up to \$5,000.

Identification of Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived:

As the administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act in Mississippi, the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) is requesting a waiver of Section 181(e) that limits the use of funds for capitalization of businesses. If granted, the waiver will be limited to the use of the Oil Spill National Emergency Grant EM-20634-10-60-A-28 funds to capitalize a small business up to \$5,000 for individuals who are eligible for and enrolled as participants in the Gulf Oil Spill NEG program. Under the waiver, this activity must be conducted in concert with entrepreneurial or microenterprise training for the individuals benefiting from the capitalization.

If granted, this waiver would take effect on the date the waiver is approved by the U. S. Department of Labor.

In keeping with the guidelines set forth at WIA section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR Part 661.420, MDES is seeking your favorable consideration of this waiver request.

Background and Justification for this Waiver:

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security is seeking this waiver to assist the many hard-working Mississippians who lost income from the oil spill and want to restart or continue their small businesses and need assistance to begin that process. For instance, there are three hundred and sixty-eight licensed, commercial shrimp vessels in Mississippi. Vietnamese-American shrimpers own and operate over 60 percent of the vessels. Typically, before the shrimping season, commercial fishers incur costs such as fuel, maintenance/repair, equipment, and supplies. However, lost fishing time during the oil spill, the public misperception of tainted seafood, and smaller catches last season have put those costs out of reach without assistance and are threatening to put more fishermen out of business.

If the Department of Labor waives the regulation on business recapitalization grants to assist boat owners, it will enable the fishermen to work. Each case-managed fisherman could receive a \$5,000 grant that would put fishermen, deckhands, and other crewmembers back on the water.

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security has used this program very successfully in the past. After Hurricane Katrina hit Mississippi's coastline, the Twin Districts Workforce Investment Area implemented a similar waiver to operate highly successful programs.

Twin Districts worked directly with small businesses and fishermen allowing those small businesses to receive valuable entrepreneurial and/or micro-enterprise training that they would not normally have acquired. MDES will provide similar services to a range of small businesses impacted by the oil spill.

Many other small businesses were adversely affected by the oil spill. For instance, Sales Tax Receipts for Bay St. Louis and Waveland, which had rebounded by 2009 from

Hurricane Katrina, lost all their gains in 2010. The unemployment rates for the three coast counties are also increasing at a greater rate over the last two years than is the rate for the state as a whole. With the current downturn in the local economy caused by the oil spill, this can be one of many services that local small businesses can take advantage of in order to keep them going.

The BP Oil Spill devastated the livelihoods of many small business owners who were not able to generate income because of the loss of tourist dollars and fishery closures, as evidenced by the tax receipt and unemployment data referenced above. Without the capitalization grant, these businesses may not be able to continue operations. The primary goal and focus of this waiver is not just the \$5,000 to capitalize the business as much as providing training that will be invaluable both to them and the State of Mississippi.

Actions Taken to Remove State Statutory or Regulatory Barriers:

There are no known state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver. The only known barriers are federal in nature as described above.

Waiver Goals and Expected Outcomes if the Waiver is Granted:

MDES has conducted outreach to identify and to enroll eligible individuals into the Gulf Oil Spill NEG. These individuals have lost employment or a substantial share of their income due to the Gulf oil spill and this waiver, if granted, will provide a means for many of them to engage in self-sustaining work and assist in rebuilding the economic infrastructure of the oil spill impacted areas. This is critically important during the current recession, when unemployment rates in the affected parts of the Gulf Coast exceed 10% and approach 20% in the seasonal industries most affected by the oil spill.

The waiver will also enhance recovery collaboration and coordination among Oil Spill affected communities and counties; the Twin Districts LWIA; MDES; the Mississippi Development Authority; Mississippi Emergency Management Agency; Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; and the SBA.

The State understands that business capitalization funds cannot be used for revolving loans. The State also understands that no more than 25% of the National Emergency Grant funding may be used for business capitalization.

Individuals Impacted by this Waiver:

Granting this waiver will be in alignment with Mississippi's workforce plan and the National strategic vision of promoting and developing integration of Entrepreneurship into the Public Workforce System, as stated in TEN 25-09. This waiver will also facilitate collaboration among MDES, the Twin Districts LWIA, Local Economic Development Agencies and small businesses.

Process Used to Monitor Progress in Implementing the Waiver:

OGM will continuously monitor each subrecipient's use of Federal awards through reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to provide reasonable assurance that

the subrecipient administers Federal awards in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the State plan, including approved waivers, and that the performance goals are achieved.

OGM will perform on-site review of participant files, with review of source documents, to provide oversight and monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the waiver, as well as identify any issues or obstacles to providing services under this waiver. The fiscal management staff will ensure that processes are in place for compliance with accounting principles and fund expenditure oversight.

Process for Notice to the Public and Local Boards and the Opportunity to Comment:

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

3. Waiver to permit the State to replace the performance measures at WIA Section 136(b) with the common measures.

The State of Mississippi hereby submits the following request for waiver.

Waiver title/purpose-

The State of Mississippi wishes to waive the 17 State and Local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) performance measures and to continue using the Common Measures statewide. It is in the best interest of the State to continue using the Common Measures. We have polled our four workforce investment areas, and all four concur with this approach.

Identify the statutory or regulatory requirements for which the waiver is requested and goals to be achieved as a result of waiver and how those goals relate to U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration’s “WIA Reauthorization and Reform Overview” and “Planning Guidance for Two Years of Strategic Five Year State Plan”.

Mississippi is seeking to waive the provisions found at WIA sections 136 (b-c), which describe the core indicators of performance for employment and training activities authorized under WIA section 134 and WIA youth activities authorized under section 129. Approval of the waiver of the Common Measures will allow the State and local areas to continue using the measures that are now the standard from the Department of Labor.

Describe actions that the state or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers.

There are no state statutory or regulatory barriers to the implementation of this waiver.

Describe the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted.

This waiver will allow Mississippi to continue operation of the state’s workforce system guided by the Common Measures and provide the DOL, WIA partners, other stakeholders in the WIA system accurate reporting of program outcomes in currently approved format.

Describe the individuals affected by the waiver.

All customers of the workforce investment system will benefit from this waiver.

Describe the processes that will be used to monitor the progress in implementing this request.

The State will regularly monitor performance and will renegotiate performance levels with DOL as necessary based on outcomes. As part of the ongoing monitoring process, the State will regularly assess the performance tracking systems to ensure that data is being collected and reported accurately and timely.

Local Board and Public Review and comment

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

4. Authority to Permit Local Workforce Areas to Utilize up to 10% of Their Adult and Dislocated Worker Funds to Train Incumbent Workers and For the State to Use up to 10% of Rapid Response Funds to Train Incumbent Workers in Order to Avert Layoffs

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) Office of Grant Management (OGM) is the administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the State of Mississippi. OGM requests that it be granted the authority to allow local workforce areas to utilize up to 10% of their adult and dislocated worker funds to train incumbent workers. In addition, OGM requests authority to expend up to 10% of the State's rapid response funds to fund incumbent worker training. Rapid response funds would only be spent on incumbent worker training as part of a layoff aversion strategy.

If granted, this waiver would take effect on July 1, 2012, and would remain in effect until this waiver authority is revoked by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

In keeping with the guidelines set forth at WIA section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR Part 661.420, please grant this waiver request.

Identification of Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

WIA section 665.210(d)(1) allows "innovative incumbent worker training programs" if funded by Governor's 15% reserve, authorized pursuant to WIA section 128(a). This waiver request seeks to expand Mississippi's ability to provide innovative incumbent worker training in order to avert layoffs (rapid response funds) and, if local funds are utilized, to both avert layoffs and to increase incumbent worker skills and wages as part of a local economic development initiative. Rapid response funds will only be used to avert layoffs.

Actions Taken to Remove State Statutory or Regulatory Barriers

There are no State barriers to remove. For the last four years, Mississippi was given waiver authority to conduct incumbent worker training as described in this request.

Waiver Goals and Expected Outcomes if the Waiver is Granted

Mississippi devotes a larger percentage of adult and dislocated worker funds to training than most other states in the nation. In part, this is due to increased program flexibility. The first priority at the State and local level is to fund skill acquisition and to use available dollars as flexibly as possible to meet customer needs. If this waiver is granted, our commitment to training and to the maximization of customer services will continue unabated.

It is far more cost effective to avert a layoff than to fund retraining after a worker loses a job and their paycheck. Similarly, local areas should have the option to use a small portion of their local adult and dislocated worker funds both to avert layoffs and to help grow good jobs and increase worker skills and wages.

Individuals Impacted

All Mississippi workers will benefit from the requested flexibility. A given worker will not have to receive a layoff notice or lose his or her job to receive training. This request is particularly critical in the coming program year due to the recession and the critical need to both avert layoffs and to increase worker skills and wages.

Monitoring Process

OGM will continuously monitor each subrecipient's use of Federal awards through reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to provide reasonable assurance that the subrecipient administers Federal awards in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the State plan, including approved waivers, and that the performance goals are achieved.

Local Board and Public Review and Comment

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

5. Waiver of WIA Section 101(31)(B) to increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training.

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) Office of Grant Management (OGM), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the State of Mississippi, submits this request for a general waiver to increase the employer reimbursement for on-the-job training (OJT) to 75 percent reimbursement for small businesses. For the purposes of this waiver, “small business” is defined as an employer with 100 or fewer employees. WIA Section 101(31)(B) and 20 CFR 663.710 currently provide for reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of an OJT participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the OJT.

In keeping with the guidelines set forth at WIA Section 189(i)(4)(b) and 20 CFR Part 661.420, please accept the following as a request for a waiver.

Identification of Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived-

Federal regulations at WIA Section 101(31)(B) and 20 CFR 663.710 govern employer reimbursements for extraordinary costs associated with on-the-job training. The current limit on employer reimbursements for OJT is 50 percent.

Actions Undertaken by the State to Remove State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers-

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted-

The anticipated goals are as follows:

- Increased flexibility for local workforce areas to serve those businesses that demonstrate the greatest need for financial assistance to support employee training and skills development.
- Small businesses provide approximately 75 percent of the net new jobs added to the economy. Small businesses hire a large proportion of employees who are younger workers, older workers, and part-time workers. However, these businesses often lack the resources to sufficiently develop employee skills in order to keep pace with the ever increasing demands of the marketplace.

Individuals Impacted by the Waiver-

WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker participants, local workforce areas, and business customers from small businesses that are most affected by this waiver. Local Workforce Investment Boards will have greater flexibility to utilize WIA financial resources where the

greatest impact will be felt, while linking employers with job seekers capable of learning the required skills sets.

Process Used to Monitor Progress Upon Implementation of the Waiver-

OGM will continuously monitor each subrecipient's use of Federal awards through reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to provide reasonable assurance that the subrecipient administers Federal awards in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the State plan, including approved waivers, and that the performance goals are achieved.

Local Board and Public Review and Comment-

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

6. Waiver to allow the use of WIA formula youth funds to provide training services to eligible WIA youth through the issuance of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security – Office of Grant Management (MDES-OGM), as the administrative entity of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in the State of Mississippi, submits this request for a general waiver to allow the use of WIA formula youth funds to provide training services to eligible WIA youth through the issuance of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

This proposed waiver will provide the Local Boards with greater flexibility for responding to the needs of their customers, and will help ensure that the WIA funds allocated to each local area are being utilized in a way that will maximize customer service. The waiver will apply to Program Year 2012 and subsequent years.

In keeping with the guidelines set forth at WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR Part 661.420(c), please accept the following as a request for a waiver.

Identification of Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

WIA Section 129 and 20 CFR 664.510 prohibit the use of designated WIA formula youth funds for an Individual Training Account (ITA) delivery system for youth. Current law allows older youth to receive ITAs only if they are dually enrolled in the Adult service delivery system. Youth below 18 years of age cannot use the Adult system.

This regulation has impacted the performance measures for older youth in Mississippi's four local workforce areas. If older youth are enrolled as adults in order to receive ITAs, the youth performance standards are negatively affected. It is also cost prohibitive to process youth in two service delivery systems.

Actions Undertaken by the State to Remove State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers

There are no State or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

Goals of the Waiver and Expected Programmatic Outcomes if Waiver is Granted

The primary goal of this waiver is increased flexibility for the local areas to implement and manage innovative and comprehensive workforce investment systems that are efficient and responsive to the labor market and individual participant needs, aptitudes and interests. Approval of this waiver would allow the local area to streamline the provision of services and information to individual youth participants through the WIN Job Centers.

Other expected outcomes include:

- The enhancement and improvement of local area youth programs through individualized services that emphasize customer choice in academic and occupational learning;

- Removal of barriers to employment for older youth;
- More direct and efficient methods to meet the immediate needs of job seekers and employers by utilizing available funds to provide individuals specific training in self-sufficiency-level demand occupations;
- Improvement of customer satisfaction ratings through the provision of informed customer choice that is directly aligned with the local labor market and the assessed aptitudes and interests of each youth participant;
- Reduction of costs to local areas in terms of oversight and management of the current system of service delivery; and
- Increased ability of the local areas to meet and exceed the required negotiated performance measures.

The issuance of ITAs to eligible youth will require the development of a comprehensive plan for delivery of services in accordance with local area recommendations. Local Youth Councils and Local Workforce Investment Boards will provide guidance in the development of the implementation plans for their areas. The plans will reflect area-specific selection criteria and performance outcomes.

Individuals Impacted by the Waiver

The ITA process is applicable generally to older youth who do not wish to pursue post-secondary education but who may lack the skills to be successful in employment. All WIA Older Youth who are in need of training services, but who do not currently qualify for ITAs, will benefit from the waiver. And training providers benefit because they will not be required to follow two separate processes to serve Adults and Dislocated Workers and Older Youth.

Process Used to Monitor Progress Upon Implementation of the Waiver

OGM will continuously monitor each subrecipient's use of Federal awards through reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to provide reasonable assurance that the subrecipient administers Federal awards in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the State plan, including approved waivers, and that the performance goals are achieved. The Local Areas will monitor the issuance of ITAs to older youth by their areas' respective one-stop operators. Local areas will use existing oversight procedures to monitor the progress of the waiver toward meeting and surpassing the stated goals.

Local Board and Public Review and Comment

Notice of this waiver request is incorporated into the 2012-2017 State Plan and was posted for a thirty-day comment period on the Mississippi Department of Employment Security web site at: www.mdes.ms.gov. E-mail notification requesting review and comment was also sent to local workforce areas and other workforce stakeholders. No public comments were received.

Section III - Integrated Plan Assurances and Attachments

ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS – PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

☒	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS	
1.	☒	The state established processes and timelines, consistent with WIA Section 111(g) – and, where appropriate, 20 CFR 641.325 (g) – to obtain input into the development of the Integrated Workforce Plan and to give opportunity for comment by representatives of local elected officials, local workforce investment boards, businesses, labor organizations, other primary stakeholders, and the general public.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 641.325(f), (g), (h), 20 CFR 641.335	<i>No Comments Received as of 9/17/12.</i>
2.	☒	The state afforded opportunities to those responsible for planning or administering programs and activities covered in the Integrated Workforce Plan to review and comment on the draft plan.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20 CFR 661.220(d)	<i>Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) held planning sessions and sent plan requirements to workforce stakeholders.</i>
3.	☒	The final Integrated Workforce Plan and State Operational Plan are available and accessible to the general public.		<i>Plan was placed on MDES website for an indefinite period of time.</i>

4.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state afforded the State Monitor Advocate an opportunity to approve and comment on the Agricultural Outreach Plan. The state solicited information and suggestions from WIA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. At least 45 days before submitting its final outreach, the State provided a proposed plan to the organizations listed above and allowed at least 30 days for review and comment. The State considered any comments received in formulating its final proposed plan, informed all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore, and included the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the plan.	WIA Sections 112(b)(9), 111(g) 20 CFR 661.207 20CFR 661.220(d) 20 CFR 653.107 (d) 20 CFR 653.108(f)	<i>No Comments Received as of 9/17/12. The State Monitor Advocate assisted in the drafting of the Agricultural Outreach Plan.</i>
5.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In the development of the plan, the state considered the recommendations submitted by the State Monitor Advocate in the annual summary of services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.	20 CFR 653.108(t)	<i>The State Monitor Advocate assisted in the drafting of the Agricultural Outreach Plan.</i>
6.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established a written policy and procedure to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIA Sections 111(g), 112(b)(9), 117(e) 20 CFR 661.207	<i>Policy # 3, see Policy Attachment for State Plan</i>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/> Where SCSEP is included in the Integrated Workforce Plan, the state established a written policy and procedure to obtain advice and recommendations on the State Plan from representatives of the State and area agencies on aging; State and local boards under the WIA; public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations providing employment services, including each grantee operating a SCSEP project within the state, except as provided under section 506 (a)(3) of OAA and 20 CFR 641.320(b); Social service organizations providing services to older individuals; Grantees under Title III of OAA, Affected Communities, Unemployed older individuals, Community-based organizations serving older individuals; business organizations and labor organizations	20 CFR 641.315(a)(1-10), 641.325 (f), (g), (h)	<i>Not Applicable. The State will submit the SCSEP State Plan as a stand-alone plan.</i>

ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - REQUIRED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION or COMMENTS
8.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state made available to the public state-imposed requirements, such as state-wide policies or guidance, for the statewide public workforce system, including policy for the use of WIA title I statewide funds.	WIA Sections 112(b)(2), 129, 134 20 CFR 665.100	<i>MS Code 25-4-105, see Policy Attachment for State Plan</i>
9.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established a written policy and procedure that identifies circumstances that might present a conflict of interest for any state or local workforce investment board member or the entity that s/he represents, and provides for the resolution of conflicts. The policy meets the requirements of WIA Sections 111(f) and 117(g).	WIA Sections 112(b)(13), 111(f), 117(g)	<i>Included in Policy # 2 and in Policy # 3, see Policy Attachment for State Plan</i>
10.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state has established a written policy and procedure that describes the state's appeals process available to units of local government or grant recipients that request, but are not granted, designation of an area as a local area under WIA Section 116.	WIA Sections 112(b)(15), 116(a)(5) 20 CFR 661.280 20 CFR 667.700	<i>Policy # 2, see Policy Attachment for State Plan, and procedure formulated in 2000 - 2005 State Plan @ 2000-2005 Mississippi State Plan</i>
11.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established written policy and procedures that describe the state's appeal process for requests not granted for automatic or temporary and subsequent designation as a local workforce investment area.	20 CFR 667.640 20 CFR 662.280	<i>Policy # 2, see Policy Attachment for State Plan, and procedure formulated in 2000 - 2005 State Plan @ 2000-2005 Mississippi State Plan</i>
12.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	WIA Sections 112(b)(6), 117(b) 20 CFR 661.300(a), 20 CFR 661.325	<i>Policy # 2, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
13.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years.	WIA Sec 117(c) 20 CFR 661.325	<i>Policy # 2, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/> Where an alternative entity takes the place of an SWIB, the state has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under section 111(e) and the legal requirements for membership.	WIA Sections 111(e), (b) 20 CFR 661.210	<i>Not Applicable to Mississippi</i>

15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Where the alternative entity does not provide representative membership of the categories of required SWIB membership, the state has a written policy or procedure to ensure an ongoing role for any unrepresented membership group in the workforce investment system. (Only applicable in cases where a state uses an alternative entity as its SWIB, and that entity does not provide for representative membership by individuals in the categories required by WIA sec. 111(b).)	WIA Sections 111(b), (e) 20 CFR 661.210(c)	<i>Not Applicable to Mississippi</i>
16.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	When applicable, the state takes any action necessary to assist local areas in developing and implementing the One-Stop system.	WIA Sections 112(b)(14), 134(c) W-P Section 8(c)	<i>Policy # 4, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
17.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established procedures for determining initial and subsequent eligibility of training providers.	WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(4) 20 CFR 663.515, 663.535	<i>Policy # 5, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
18.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All partners in the workforce and education system described in this plan will ensure the physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities in One-Stop Career Centers.	WIA Section 188 W-P Section 8(b) 29 CFR part 37 20 CFR 652.8(j)	<i>Policy # 4 (see section E), see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
19.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from One-Stop Career Center services.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37	<i>MDES has an informational tool kit that is used by all staff to provide outreach to all populations and subpopulations. Toolkits are also provided to workforce partners. MDES increases access to workforce services using e-WIN Access Points in libraries, MDHS offices, Department of Correction probation offices, and other community sites.</i>

20. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state implements universal access to programs and activities to all individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, services delivery, partnership development, and numeric goals.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.42	<i>MDES has an informational tool kit that is used by all staff to provide outreach to all populations and subpopulations. Toolkits are also provided to workforce partners. MDES increases access to workforce services using e-WIN Access Points in libraries, MDHS offices, Department of Correction probation offices, and other community sites.</i>
21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of section 188, including that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIA Section 188 29 CFR 37.20	<i>Yes, the State EEO Officer uses on-line training workshops and onsite monitoring to insure compliance.</i>
22. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of section 188.	WIA Section 185	<i>The MDES EEO Officer collects demographic data for compliance review.</i>
23. <input type="checkbox"/>	For WIA Single-Area States only, the state has memorandums of understanding between the local workforce investment board and each of the One-Stop partners concerning the operation of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.	WIA Sections 112(b)(5), 116(b), 118(b)(2)(B), 20 CFR 661.350(a)(3)(ii)	<i>Not Applicable to Mississippi</i>

ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS

	STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established written policy and procedures that outline the methods and factors used in distributing funds, including WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth formula and rapid response funds. The policy establishes a process for funds distribution to local areas for youth activities under WIA Section 128(b)(3)(B), and for adult and training activities under WIA Section 133(b), to the level of detail required by Section 112(b)(12)(a). In addition, the policy establishes a formula, prescribed by the governor under Section 133(b)(2)(B), for the allocation of funds to local areas for dislocated worker employment and training activities.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), (C), 128 (b)(3)(B), 133(b)(2)(B), 133(b)(3)(B) 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<i>Policy # 34, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
24a.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Dislocated Worker funding formulas, the state’s policy and procedure includes the data used and weights assigned. If the state uses other information or chooses to omit any of the information sources set forth in WIA when determining the Dislocated Worker formula, the state assures that written rationale exists to explain the decision.	WIA Section 133(b)(2)(B) 20 CFR 667.130(e)(2)(i)-(ii)	<i>Policy # 34, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the SWIB help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the state consults with chief elected officials in local workforce investment areas throughout the state in determining the distributions.	WIA Sections 111(d)(5), 112(b)(12)(A), 128(b)(3)(B), 133(b)(3)(B), 20 CFR 661.205(e)	<i>Policy # 34, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
26.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established written policy and procedures for any distribution of funds to local workforce investment areas reserved for rapid response activities, including the timing and process for determining whether a distribution will take place.	WIA Sections 133(a)(2), 134(a)(2)(A) 20 CFR 667.130(b)(2), (e)(4), 665.340	<i>Policy # 3, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
27.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The state established written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIA Title I activities.	WIA Section 112(b)(16)	<i>Policy # 7 and Policy # 33, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>

28.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria to be used by local workforce investment boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the governor and local workforce investment boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities.	WIA Sections 112(b)(18)(B), 123, 129	<i>Policy # 33, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
29.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written criteria for a process to award a grant or contract on a competitive basis for Summer Youth Employment Opportunities element of the local youth program, where a provider is other than the grant recipient/fiscal agent.	WIA Sections 123, 129(c)(2)(C) 20 CFR 664.610.	<i>Policy # 33, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
30.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state distributes adult and youth funds received under WIA equitably throughout the state, and no local areas suffer significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan.	WIA Section 112(b)(12)(B)	<i>The state uses the formula prescribed by DOL and uses the hold harmless provision.</i>
31.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to ensure the proper disbursement and accounting of funds paid to the state through funding allotments made for WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, and the Wagner-Peyser Act.	WIA Sections 112(b)(11), 127, 132, 184 W-P Sections 9(a), (c) 20 CFR 652.8(b), (c)	<i>The state performs onsite monitoring of LWIAs and contractors. MDES is audited by the MS State Auditor's Office. The four LWIAs are audited by independent auditors and provide MDES with copies of their audits. Policies #11, #22, & #34, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
32.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements in WIA through annual, onsite monitoring of each local area.	WIA Sections 184(a)(3), (4) 20 CFR 667.200, .400(c)(2), 667.410	<i>Policy # 11, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
33.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIA Sections 136(f)(2), (f)(3), 122, 185(a)(4)(B) 20 USC 1232g 20 CFR 666.150 20 CFR part 603	<i>The state follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education as required in 1974 (FERPA) as amended, and in WIA and applicable Department regulations.</i>

34.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state will not use funds received under WIA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIA Section 181(b)(7) 20 CFR 663.730	<i>This requirement is incorporated in all State contracts and agreements to include local workforce area agreements.</i>
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ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - ELIGIBILITY

		STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENT
35.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the “deficient in basic literacy skills” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(i) CFR 664.205(b)	<i>Policies 16 – 20, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
36.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Where the SWIB chooses to establish them, the state established definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding “requires additional assistance to complete and educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion.	WIA Sections 101(13)(C)(iv) 20 CFR 664.200(c)(6), 664.210	<i>Policies 16 – 20, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>
37.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state established policies, procedures, and criteria for prioritizing adult title I employment and training funds for use by recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area when funds are limited.	WIA Section 134(d)(4)(E) 20 CFR 663.600	<i>Policies 16 – 20, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i>

38. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The state established policies for the delivery of priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses by the state workforce agency or agencies, local workforce investment boards, and One-Stop Career Centers for all qualified job training programs delivered through the state's workforce system. The state policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service; and 2. Ensure that covered persons are aware of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Their entitlement to priority of service; b. The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service; and c. Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services. 3. Require local workforce investment boards to develop and include policies in their local plan to implement priority of service for the local One-Stop Career Centers and for service delivery by local workforce preparation and training providers. 	<p>WIA Sections 112(b)(17)(B), 322 38 USC Chapter 41 20 CFR 1001.120-.125</p> <p>Jobs for Veterans Act, P.L. 107-288 38 USC 4215 20 CFR 1010.230, 1010.300-.310</p>	<p><i>Policy 35, see Policy Attachment for State Plan.</i></p>
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ASSURANCES AND ATTACHMENTS - PERSONNEL AND REPRESENTATION

STATEMENT	REFERENCE	DOCUMENTATION and COMMENTS
<p>39. <input type="checkbox"/> The state assures that Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) significant office requirements are met.</p> <p>Note: The five states with the highest estimated year-round MSFW activities must assign full-time, year-round staff to outreach activities. The Employment and Training Administration designates these states each year. The remainder of the top 20 significant MSFW states must make maximum efforts to hire outreach staff with MSFW experience for year-round positions and shall assign outreach staff to work full-time during the period of highest activity.</p> <p>If a state proposes that its State Monitor Advocate work less than full-time, the state must submit, for approval by the Department, a plan for less than full-time work, demonstrating that the state MSFW Monitor Advocate function can be effectively performed with part-time staffing.</p>	<p>WIA Section 112(b)(8)(A)(iii), 112(b)(17)(A)(iv) W-P Sections 3(a), (c)(1)-(2) 20 CFR 653.107(a), 107(i), 653.112(a), 653.108(d)(1)</p>	<p><i>A staff person has been assigned this responsibility.</i></p>
<p>40. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Departmental regulations.</p>	<p>W-P Sections 3(a), 5(b) 20 CFR 652.215 Intergovernmental Personnel Act, 42 USC 4728(b)</p>	<p>The state uses its State Personnel Board and policies to hire public employees. Staffing agencies are not used.</p>

41. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The state has designated at least one person in each state or Federal employment office to promote and develop employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for individuals with disabilities.	W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211	<i>There is a designated staff person in each office that ensures workforce services are made available to persons with disabilities. MDES has an ongoing relationship with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) to certify WIN Job Centers.</i>
42. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If a SWIB, department, or agency administers state laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services.	W-P Section 8(b) 20 CFR 652.211	<i>MDRS is represented on the SWIB, and co-located at some WIN Job Centers.</i>



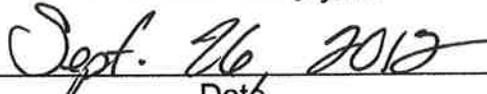
PHIL BRYANT
GOVERNOR

**State Integrated Workforce
STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES CERTIFICATION**

The State of Mississippi certifies on the 26th day of September in 2012 that it complied with all of required components of the Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, Social Security Act, Trade Adjustment Assurance Act, and Jobs for Veterans Act. The State also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and state laws and regulations.



Governor Phil Bryant



Date

ATTACHMENT A

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEES AND PLAN SIGNATURES

Name of WIA Title I Grant Recipient Agency:

Mississippi Department of Employment Security
Address: 1235 Echelon Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Telephone Number: 601-321-6003
Facsimile Number: 601-321-6004
E-mail Address: mhenry@mdes.ms.gov

Name of State WIA Title I Administrative Agency: Same as Grant Recipient

Name of WIA Title I Signatory Official

Mark Henry, Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Employment Security
Address: 1235 Echelon Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Telephone Number: 601-321-6003
Facsimile Number: 601-321-6004
E-mail Address: mhenry@mdes.ms.gov

Name of WIA Title I Liaison: Not Applicable

Name of Wagner-Peyser Act Grant Recipient/State Employment Security Agency:

Mississippi Department of Employment Security
Address: 1235 Echelon Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Telephone Number: 601-321-6003
Facsimile Number: 601-321-6004
E-mail Address: mhenry@mdes.ms.gov

Name and Title of State Employment Security Administrator (Signatory Official):

Mark Henry, Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Employment Security
Address: 1235 Echelon Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Telephone Number: 601-321-6003
Facsimile Number: 601-321-6004
E-mail Address: mhenry@mdes.ms.gov

Name and Title of the State Labor Market, Workforce Information, or Research Director:

Wayne Gasson, Workforce Information Director
Address: 1235 Echelon Parkway, Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Telephone Number: 601-321-6239
Facsimile Number: 601-321-6243
E-mail Address: wgasson@mdes.ms.gov



PHIL BRYANT
GOVERNOR

September 26, 2012

Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis
U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Ave., NW,
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Madam Secretary:

As the Chief Executive Officer of the State of Mississippi, I certify that the agencies and officials designated above have been duly designated to represent the State in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, title I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. Later changes in the designation of officials will be provided to the U.S. Department of Labor as such changes occur.

I further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this Plan and the assurances herein.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Bryant", written in a cursive style.

Phil Bryant
Governor
State of Mississippi