

**Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services**

***2016 Annual Report***

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

1281 Highway 51 North

Madison, Mississippi 39110

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**Mission Statement**

It is the mission of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) to provide appropriate and comprehensive services to Mississippians with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. Programs and services assist individuals with disabilities to gain employment, retain employment and to live more independently.

**Philosophy**

The Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services is committed to being recognized as the premier agency for Mississippians with disabilities by creating a culture of care with compassionate, valued, and knowledgeable staff. We will promote an environment where customers and staff work together to achieve our common goal of empowering and improving the lives of Mississippians with disabilities.

**Welcome from Executive Director**

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS), I am pleased to present our state fiscal year (SFY) 2017 Annual Report. It represents my second full year in office as MDRS Executive Director.

Our agency serves over 100,000 Mississippians with disabilities each year with our mission to provide quality services in a timely and effective manner. Some of our accomplishments this fiscal year include:

Disability Determination Services (DDS)

• Exceeded Budgeted Workload by processing 1,679 claims over Budgeted Goal

• Expanded use of Video equipment for Consultative Examination and processing

Disability Hearings

Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP)

• Provided services to nearly 4,000 individuals across the State providing the opportunity for

these individuals to live at home as opposed to a long term care facility.

• Provided nearly a $60,000 cost savings per individual per year to the State of Mississippi

through the administering of two Home and Community Based Programs.

• Provided 326 home modifications to individuals across the State to ensure

individuals with disabilities are safe and secure in their homes.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB)

• Successfully restructured the VR and VRB offices in order to comply with the federal mandates contained in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA).

• Assisted over 3,000 individuals in successfully meeting their employment goal.

• Expanded our Business Development Office to successfully build relationships with the business community in an effort to secure great careers for individuals with disabilities.

• Completed the 4th Summer Internship Program (SIP) for 73 interns, allowing students to obtain first-hand work experience in their chosen field.

• Conducted four job fairs across the State in which nearly 150 businesses participated and over 1,200 individuals with disabilities were able to obtain face to face contact with these employers.

• Provided a Return on Investment to the State of Mississippi of 2.6 for every state dollar appropriated to our VR and VRB programs.

The information contained within this report will provide you with even more information about MDRS. Please know that you are a key part to our successes, and we thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Chris M. Howard

MDRS Executive Director

**Executive Summary/Program Overview**

**AbilityWorks, Inc.**

AbilityWorks is a network of 15 community rehabilitation programs providing vocational assessment, work adjustment training for individuals with disabilities. This is possible through a wide array of contract and subcontract services provided to local business and industry. During SFY 2017, AbilityWorks served a total of 1,444 individuals with disabilities. AbilityWorks establishes cooperative agreements with local businesses to provide community based work experience, customized training and on-the-job training.

**Assistive Technology**

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined as the application of technology to alleviate barriers that interfere with the lives of individuals with disabilities, and it is intended to help the individual maintain or enhance his or her ability to function personally, socially, and/or vocationally. MDRS Rehabilitation Engineers and Rehabilitation Technologists provide consultations on all AT referrals. The Rehabilitation Technologists and Specialists perform initial evaluations and assessments, set up AT equipment, provide follow-up evaluations, design and fabricate original items and provide specifications and final inspections for AT services. The Assistive Technology division staff evaluates MDRS clients for the most appropriate assistive technology, thus enabling them to return to work and/or live independently. During the SFY 2017, the Assistive Technology division served a total of 1,196 individuals with disabilities.

This information only reports clients who were assigned to the Assistive Technology division during SFY 2017 and do not reflect clients who continue to be served from previous fiscal year(s).

**Disability Determination Services**

We operate in a partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to determine the medical eligibility of individuals to receive benefits from Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income as directed by federal guidelines from SSA. This office handles disability claims from all 23 SSA offices in Mississippi.

**Special Disability Programs**

We specialize in assisting individuals with the most severe physical disabilities to remain active in their homes and communities. Services are provided based on need as determined by functional assessment and are provided through an individualized plan of services and supports (PSS). The Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP) offers services that include, but are not limited to: case management, attendant care, durable medical equipment and specialized medical supplies, home and vehicle modifications, respite care, and transition services. During the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017, the Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP) provided independent living services for 4,057 individuals with significant (severe) disabilities. OSDP administers the Traumatic Brain Injury/Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund. A full copy of that report can be found at www.mdrs.ms.gov.

**Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

We help over 13,000 Mississippians a year overcome limitations imposed by physical or mental disabilities in order for that person to secure or maintain employment. In the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) assisted 12,150 Mississippians with disabilities in receiving services including, but not limited to: counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, physical and mental restoration, job training, assistive technology, and job placement. Individuals served by VR have a wide array of disabilities including, but not limited to: hearing loss or deafness, amputations, mental and emotional disorders, epilepsy, developmental disease and disorders, traumatic brain injuries, orthopedic impairments, residuals from cancer, and speech impairments. The total number of VR consumers employed during SFY 2017 was 3,035.

Deaf Services – We help people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or late deafened find employment, attend education and training programs, and learn more about their community resources. The MDRS Deaf Services Program continues to promote excellence by striving to assist new RCD’s (Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf) to reach the required communications skills level on the Signed Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), an American Sign Language assessment developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology. Adequate communication skills are a pre-requisite to meaningful counseling and guidance with people who are Deaf and use manual communication.

This skill, along with other specialized training, has been a vital factor in the successful rehabilitation of individuals with deafness or significant hearing loss. In SFY 2017, Deaf Services were provided to 3,058 Mississippians, resulting in 1,385 successful rehabilitations.

Supported Employment - We assist individuals with the most significant disabilities who require intensive support services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. Each MDRS district has a Supported Employment Team consisting of a specialized VR/SE counselor, and a Vocational Training Instructor who oversees the work of Job Trainers working on site with our consumers. During SFY 2017, 548 individuals received Supported Employment services, 59 resulting in successful employment.

Transition Services - We work with eligible secondary school students with disabilities, their families, and school personnel to assure there is an integrated program of education and vocational training available to provide a seamless transition from school to work. In SFY 2017, the number of students receiving transition services was 2,842 and 443 students found employment. Examples of transition services are vocational-technical training, vocational evaluation, work adjustment training, on the job training, job search skills, and work experience programs. These services may be available to students both on and off campus or at one of the 15 AbilityWorks as a part of their school day.

**Vocational Rehabilitation Services for the Blind**

We specialize in working with individuals who are blind or visually impaired to ensure opportunities for inclusion into the workforce, community, and home. Of the 3,497 successful employment outcomes by MDRS, 462 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB). VRB provided consumers services such as counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, orientation and mobility training, job training, and assistive technology. The total number of Mississippians with disabilities served by VRB during SFY 2017 was 1,521.

Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind – The Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind provides traditional intensive evaluation, training, and adjustment services on the campus of the University of Mississippi Medical Center. In SFY 2017, the Addie McBryde Center provided training to 125 consumers.

Business Enterprise Program - The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides support for self- employment opportunities in the food service industry for Mississippians who are legally blind. These BEP entrepreneurs operate a variety of businesses including vending machine routes, snack bars and cafeterias on military bases. In SFY 2017, 35 individuals operated successful businesses as BEP vendors.

Independent Living Services for the Blind - We serve individuals who are legally blind and either over the age of 55 or have a significant secondary disability by providing a variety of independent living services. In SFY 2017, ILB served over 1,287 consumers through indirect services such as health fairs, vision screening, peer groups, and outreach. ILB provided direct services to 1,041 consumers.

Itinerant Teacher Program - Itinerant teachers work closely with VRB counselors to coordinate services, evaluate client needs, develop living-needs plans and instructional materials, and provide on-site training for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. In 2017, the Itinerant Teacher Program provided 79 services for VRB consumers.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**FFY 2016 Section 110 Grant**

**Program Funding: Title One Section 110 Match Funding**

Title One Section 110 Match Funding

Section 110 Grant $42,781,732 (78.7%)

State Match $11,578,792 (21.3%)

Total Funding $54,360,524 (100.0%)

**In Depth Look at VR and VRB**

Demographics of Persons Served

GenderFemale 6,340 46.38%

Male 7,331 53.62%

Age at Application  
10-20 - 2816

21-30 - 2042

31-40 - 2022

41-50 - 2256

51-60 - 2516

61-70 - 1454

71-80 - 483

81-100 - 82

Education Level at Application

No Formal Schooling 0.197%

Elementary Education (Grades 1-8) 3.035%

Secondary Education (No High School Diploma) 16.589%

High School Graduate or Equivalency Certificate 32.397%

Post-Secondary Education (No Degree) 13.722%

A Degree of Vocational Technology Certificate 2.750%

Post-Secondary Education (Academic/Associates Degree) 6.334%

Bachelor’s Degree 7.095%

Master’s Degree or Higher 3.159%

Special Education (completion or attendance) 12.274%

Education Not Listed 2.274%

Race

American Indian or Alaskan Native 1.82%

Asian 0.36%

Black or African American 41.12%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 0.25%

Multi-racial 2.76%

Hispanic/Latino .91%

**In Depth Look at VR and VRB**

Status of Persons Rehabilitated

Employment Status of Persons Rehabilitated  
Vending Stand Operator/Clerk 5

Self-Employment (excluding BEP) 465

Employment in Integrated Setting 3,026

Unpaid Family Worker 1

Total Rehabilitated 3,497

Employment in Integrated Settings  
Service Worker 535

Secretarial, Office, Clerical Worker 434

Skilled Craft 362

Sales 324

Professional 280

Laborer 209

Executive 163

Operative 129

Food & Food Preparation 78

Technical/Paraprofessional 65

Transportation & Material Moving 62

Production Occupations 58

Building/Grounds Cleaning & Maint. 51

Personal Care 43

Education, Training & Library 35

Healthcare Practitioners & Technical 32

Installation, Maintenance & Repair 32

Construction & Extraction 31

Protective Service 24

Healthcare Support 22

Community & Social Service 17

Architectures & Engineering 7

Business & Financial Operation 7

Farming, Fishing & Forestry 7

Arts, Design, Entertainment,

Sports & Media 6

Computer & Mathematical

Legal 4

Life Physical & Social Science 4

Total Employed in Integrated Setting 3,026

Persons Served by Primary Disability  
Cognitive and Mental 4,669

General Physical 3,492

Orthopedic 536

Respiratory 65

Hearing Loss, Communicative 2,829

Deafness 230

Deafblind 4

Blindness 88

Legally Blind, Other Visual 1,395

Application Status 363  
Total 13,671

Clients Served and Closed for 2016  
Clients Served 13,671  
Individualized Plans for Employment Written 4,270  
Successfully Employed 3,497

**In Depth Look at DDS & OSDP in 2016**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Office of Disability Determination Services  Claims Processed 86,177  Average Processing Time T2-81 days/T16-74 days  Average Cost per Case $313.00  Accuracy Rate 95% | Office of Special Disability Programs\* [No. Served]  Independent Living Waiver 2,732  TBI/SCI Trust Fund 113  TBI/SCI Waiver 904 |

**Proof of Performance**

Office of Disability Determination Services

***Processing time \*\****

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **National Average** | **Mississippi Average** |
| 2015 | 110 Days | 89 Days |
| 2016 | 83/86 Days | 90/85 Days |
| 2017 | 83/85 Days | 81/74 Days |

***Cost per case***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **National Average** | **Mississippi Average** |
| 2015 | $462 | $316 |
| 2016 | $491 | $310 |
| 2017 | $498 | $313 |

***Production per work year***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **National Average** | **Mississippi Average** |
| 2015 | 310 | 357 |
| 2016 | 313 | 324 |
| 2017 | 306 | 329 |

Office of Special Disability Programs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of Clients Served** | **Annual Cost Savings to the Division of Medicaid** |
| 2015 | 3,874 | $216,208,403 |
| 2016 | 4,043 | $222,365,841 |
| 2017 | 3,636 | $162,485,568 |

*\*Figures shown above are based on the Division of Medicaid cost reports for the Independent Living Waiver and the Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver. \*OSDP numbers are reported from the State Fiscal Year.*

**District & Office Locations**

**District I**

*(Calhoun, Coahoma, Desoto, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Tate, Tunica, Quitman, Yalobusha)*

51 County Road 166

Oxford, MS 38655

(662) 234-3171 VR

(662) 234-6092 VRB

(662) 234-5744 OSDP

**District II**

*(Alcorn, Benton, Itawamba, Lee, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union)*

2620 Traceland Drive

Tupelo, MS 38801

(662) 842-1010 VR

(662) 840-9946 OSDP

613-A Pegram Drive

Tupelo, MS 38801

(662) 844-5830 VRB

**District III**

*(Bolivar, Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Washington, Yazoo)*

104 Professional Plaza

Greenwood, MS 38930

(662) 453-6172 VR

(662) 455-1432 VRB

(662) 453-2253 OSDP

**District IV**

*(Clay, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Oktibbeha, Webster)*

207 Industrial Park Road

Starkville, MS 39759

(662) 323-9594 VR

(662) 324-1881 OSDP

48 Datco Industrial Drive

Columbus, MS 39704

(662) 328-8807 VRB

**District V**

*(Hinds, Warren)*

3895 Beasley Road

Jackson, MS 39213

(601) 898-7004 VR

(601) 898-7034 OSDP

2550 Peachtree Street Extension

Jackson, MS 39216

(601) 987-7403 VRB

**District VI**

*(Attala, Leake, Madison, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Smith)*

1032 Center Pointe Boulevard

Pearl, MS 39208

(601) 709-5601 VR

(601) 709-5625 VRB

(601) 709-5657 OSDP

**District VII**

*(Clarke, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Neshoba, Newton, Noxubee, Winston)*

1003 College Drive

Meridian, MS 39307

(601) 483-3881 VR

(601) 483-5391 VRB

(601) 482-1594 OSDP

**District VIII**

*(Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lincoln, Lawrence, Marion, Pike, Walthall, Wilkinson)*

1221 Parklane Road

McComb, MS 39648

(601) 249-2498 VR

(601) 684-3392 VRB

(601) 249-4646 OSDP

**District IX**

*(Covington, Forrest, Greene, Jones, Lamar, Perry, Wayne)*

17 J M Tatum Industrial Drive, Suite 130

Hattiesburg, MS 39401

(601) 545-5619 VR

(601) 545-5613 VRB

18 J M Tatum Industrial Drive

Hattiesburg, MS 39401

(601) 545-5644 OSDP

**District X**

*(George, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone)*

13486 Fastway Lane

Gulfport, MS 39503

(228) 575-3789 VR

(228) 575-3788 VRB

(228) 575-3785 OSDP

**Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services**

Your perspective is extremely valuable, and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback!

Please send direct comments or questions to:

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

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