

**Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services**

***2018 Annual Report***

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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.

Vision Statement

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.

\*All numbers are reported by state fiscal year (SFY) July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018 with the exception of those for Disability Determination Services, which is entirely federally funded. DDS numbers reflect the federal fiscal year (FFY) October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2018

**Welcome from the Executive Director**

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS), I am pleased to present our state fiscal year (SFY) 2018 Annual Report. It represents my third 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 1,327 claims over Budgeted Goal
* Production Per Worker Year (PPWY) exceeded Regional and National goals
* Lowest cumulative Cost per Case in the Region
* Decreased pending Disability Hearings by 80%

***Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP)***

* Provided services to over 3,700 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 183 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)***

* Continue to implement and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities while in high school
* Partnered with Community Rehabilitation Partners to provide Pre-Employment Services – Transition camps to students with Disabilities
* Provided a transition camp at Eagle Ridge for students who are deaf
* Assisted over 2500 individuals with disabilities to successfully obtain and retain employment
* Completed the 5th Summer Internship Program (SIP) for 112 interns – 91 came from VR and 21 came from VRB – the program allowed students to obtain first-hand work experience in their
* chosen field
* Conducted five job fairs across the state with approximately 160 registered employers and 11, 373 total job seekers who submitted over 1,515 applications on-site, resulting in 649 interviews and 158 job offers made on-site with 746 projected number of hires during the next year

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

AbilityWorks is a network of 15 community rehabilitation programs providing vocational assessment and 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 2018, AbilityWorks served a total of 1,602 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 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 2018, 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 2018 and does 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 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. The Office of Special Disability Programs 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 2018, the Office of Special Disability Programs provided independent living services for 3,771 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](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov/).

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

We help over 10,000 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 2018, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services assisted 10,759 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. VR also assisted 229 potentially eligible clients that are under the Transition Program. 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 2018 was 2,133.

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, 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 2018, Deaf Services were provided to 2,534 Mississippians resulting in 1,035 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 2018, 347 individuals received Supported Employment services, 31 resulting in successful employment.

Transition & Youth Career Services

We work with potentially eligible students with disabilities between the ages of 14 through 21 to provide pre-employment transition services, as well as our eligible secondary school students with disabilities, their families, and school personel, to assure there is an integrated program of education and vocational training available to begin to build a foundation for a career pathway, and then to help provide a seamless transition from school to work. In SFY 2018, the number of students receiving transition services was 1,918 and 123 students found employment. Services may be provided 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 2,505 successful employment outcomes by MDRS, 372 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind. 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 2018 was 1,436.

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 2018, the Addie McBryde Center provided training to 118 consumers.

Business Enterprise Program

The Business Enterprise Program 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 2018, 38 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 2018, ILB served over 1,000 consumers through indirect services such as health fairs, vision screening, peer groups, and outreach. ILB provided direct services to 973 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 2018, the Itinerant Teacher Program provided 68 services for VRB consumers.

**VR/VRB Program Funding**

**Title One Section 110 Match Funding**

**2018**

Section 110 Grant $43,540,850 (78.7%)

State Match $11,784,245 (21.3%)

**Total Funding** $55,325,095 (100.0%)

**In Depth Look at VR and VRB**

Demographics of Persons Served

GenderFemale 5,591 46, 73%

Male 6,372, 53.26%

Age at Application  
10-20 - 2,315

21-30 - 1,774

31-40 - 1,779

41-50 - 1,945

51-60 - 2,233

61-70 - 1,418

71-80 - 416

81-100 - 84

Education Level of Persons Served

Any degree above Masters; Masters Degree 1.66%

Bachelor’s degree 4.99%

Elementary Education (grade 1-8) 2.53%

High School graduate or GED 14.25%

No Formal Schooling 0.24%

Occupational credential beyond graduate degree 0.03%

Occupational credential beyond undergrad degree 0.06%

Post- secondary education, no degree 16.34%

Post- secondary education, academic/Associates deg. 3.14%

Secondary Education, no HS diploma; Occup 36.81%

Special Education (completion or in attendance) 8.22%

Vocational/technical certificate/post sec AA degree 1.35%

Adult Secondary Education Program (Non-State) 0.16%

Adult Secondary Education Program (State) 1.01%

Career/ Tech Training Program:

Leading to a Recognized Post Secondary credential) 1.66%

Not Leading to a Recognized Post Secondary Credential) 0.38%

Employer Training Program 0.01%

Education not listed 7.15%

Race

American Indian or Alaskan Native 0.20%

Asian 0.28%

Black or African American 42.23%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 0.04%

Multi-racial 2.51%

White or Caucasian 53.56%

Hispanic or Latino 2.52%

Race not listed 0.05%

Status of Persons Rehabilitated

Employment Status of Persons Rehabilitated

Self-Employment (excluding BEP) 236

Employment in Integrated Setting 2,269

Total Rehabilitated 2,505

Employment in Integrated Settings

Office worker 241

Skilled Craft 162

Service Worker 138

Management 127

Transportation & Material Moving 125

Food Preparation & Food 121

Sales & Related Occupations 110

Production Occupations 94

Personal Care 89

Laborer 85

Sales 85

Education, Training & Library 84

Healthcare Practitioners & Technical 84

Construction & Extraction 82

Building/Grounds Cleaning& Maint. 80

Healthcare Support 69

Installation, Maintenance & Repair 64

Secretarial/Office/Clerical 62

Professional 61

Community & Social Service 58

Protective Service 55

Operative 46

Business & Financial Operation 41

Farming, Fishing & Forestry 22

Technical/Paraprofessional 21

Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media 20

Architectures & Engineering 13

Legal 13

Computer & Mathematical 9

Life Physical & Social Science 6

Clerical and Administrative Support 1

Military Specific Occupations 1

*Total Employed in Integrated Setting 2,269*

Persons served by Primary Disability

Cognitive and Mental 3,758

General Physical 3,073

Orthopedic 489

Respiratory 46

Hearing Loss, Communicative 2,401

Deafness 207

Deadblind 3

Blindness 90

Legally Blind, Other Visual 1,277

Application Status 620

*Total Employed in Integrated Setting 11,964*

Clients Served and Closed for 2018

Clients Served 11,964

Clients potentially eligible 229

Individual Plans for Employment Written 4,303

Successfully Employed 2,505

**In Depth Look at VR and VRB**

Office of Disability Determination Services

Claims Processed 78,580

Average Processing Time T2-81 days/T16-74 days

Average Cost per Case $313.00

Accuracy Rate 95%

T2 benefits are based on the amount of years a person has worked.

T16 benefits are based on a person’s income and assets.

Office of Special Disability Services Programs

Number Served

Independent Living Waiver 2,441

TBI/SCI Trust Fund 85

TBI/SCI Waiver 829

**Proof of Performance**

Office of Disability Determination Services

***Processing time***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **National Average** | **Mississippi Average** |
| 2011\* | 110 Days | 97 Days |
| 2012\* | 102 Days | 93 Days |
| 2013\* | 107 Days | 91 Days |
| 2014\* | 104 Days | 89 Days |
| 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** |
| 2011 | $488 | $299 |
| 2012 | $435 | $279 |
| 2013 | $455 | $311 |
| 2014 | $462 | $316 |
| 2015 | $462 | $316 |
| 2016 | $491 | $310 |
| 2017 | $498 | $313 |

***Production per work year***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **National Average** | **Mississippi Average** |
| 2011 | 290 | 340 |
| 2012 | 324 | 370 |
| 2013 | 322 | 368 |
| 2014 | 310 | 357 |
| 2015 | 310 | 357 |
| 2016 | 313 | 324 |
| 2017 | 306 | 329 |

*\*Prior years reporting is based on Overall Processing time. The reporting for FFY2016 forward is based on claim type (T2 vs T16)*

Office of Special Disability Programs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of Clients Served** | **Annual Cost Savings to the Division of Medicaid** |
| 2012 | 3,378 | $176,145,487 |
| 2013 | 3,487 | $206,635,981 |
| 2014 | 3,739 | $220,322,128 |
| 2015 | 3,874 | $216,208,403 |
| 2016 | 3,636 | $162,485,568 |
| 2017 | 3,270 | $156,960,081 |

*\*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.*

**Districts & Office Locations**

District I

51 County Road 166

Oxford, MS 38655

VR: (662) 234-3171

VRB: (662) 234-6092

OSDP: (662) 234-5744

District II

2620 Traceland Drive

Tupelo, MS 38801

VR: (662) 842-1010

OSDP: (662) 840-9946

615-A Pegram Drive

Tupelo, MS 38801

VRB: (662) 844-5830

District III

104 Professional Plaza

Greenwood, MS 38930

VR: (662) 453-6172

VRB: (662) 455-1432

OSDP: (662) 453-2253

District IV

207 Industrial Park Road

Starkville, MS 39760

VR: (662) 323-9594

OSDP: (662) 324-1881

48 Datco Industrial Drive

Columbus, MS 39704

OVRB: (662) 328-8807

District V

3895 Beasley Road

Jackson, MS 39213

VR: (601) 898-7004

OSDP: (601) 898-7034

2550 Peachtree Street

Jackson, MS 39296

VRB: (601) 987-7403

District VI

1032 Center Pointe Blvd., Suite A

Pearl, MS 39208

VR: (601) 709-5601

VRB: (601) 709-5625

OSDP: (601) 709-5657

District VII

1003 College Drive

Meridian, MS 39304

VR: (601) 483-3881

VRB: (601) 483-5391

OSDP: (601) 482-1594

District VIII

1221 Parklane Road

McComb, MS 39649

VR: (601) 249-2498

VRB: (601) 684-3392

OSDP: (601) 249-4646

District IX

17 J M Tatum Industrial Drive

Hattiesburg, MS 39401

VR: (601) 545-5619

VRB: (601) 545-5613

18 J M Tatum Industrial Drive

Hattiesburg, MS 39401

OSDP: (601) 545-5644

District X

13486 Fastway Lane

Gulfport, MS 39503

VR: (228) 575-3789

VRB: (228) 575-3788

OSDP: (228) 575-3785

*Additional locations can be found at www.mdrs.ms.gov using the location finder.*

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

(A digital copy of this report can be found at [www.mdrs.ms.gov](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov/))

*Please send direct comments or questions to:*

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

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