

RECOVER. RESTORE. REBUILD. RENEW.

2005

ANNUAL REPORT



Workforce Investment Network
in Mississippi

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GOVERNOR'S LETTER

It is with great pride that I present the Annual Report for the Workforce Investment Act in Mississippi for Program Year 2005. Since its inception in 1998, the Workforce Investment Act has provided the framework for the Workforce Investment Network, or WIN in Mississippi.

During Program Year 2005, the Mississippi Department of Employment Security administered the WIA for the State. This report details the progress and positive outcomes that have been realized in the fifth fully operational year for the program.

This report would not be complete without revealing the enormous efforts on behalf of WIN in Mississippi and partners in the post Hurricane Katrina era. MDES, Local Workforce Investment Areas, and WIN partners worked tirelessly together so that we could recover, restore, rebuild and renew the portions of our state that were devastated by this nation's worst natural catastrophe, Hurricane Katrina.

The WIN Job Centers provided critical assistance to help our citizens with Disaster Unemployment Assistance, job placement, skills training, relocation, and other services. The WIN Job Centers assisted businesses with job postings, applicant screenings, on-the-job training programs and many other workforce services to help our State's businesses keep doing business. The four Local Workforce Investment Areas worked tirelessly to get our displaced workers into temporary and permanent jobs.

Workforce development is economic development. WIN in Mississippi has helped shape our state's workforce into one that is filled with well-trained, qualified workers. A robust and plentiful workforce is one of the major attractions for businesses and industries that are considering locating in Mississippi.

One of the most vital elements of this excellent system is the participation at the local level of elected officials, business leaders, and state agency partners. This collaboration, working in conjunction with the State Workforce Investment Board, the Local Workforce Investment Areas, and Local Workforce Boards, has manifested an instrument that ensures the needs of businesses and job seekers are met through tailored solutions designed to enhance local workforce development and economic growth.

In the coming year, I pledge my support and to work with the WIN in Mississippi partners to maximize all available resources so that we can work in concert towards ***Increasing Employment in Mississippi***.

The WIN in Mississippi system is a stakeholder in Mississippi's economic growth. And our economic growth touches the lives of everyone in Mississippi.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Haley Barbour". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Haley Barbour, Governor

WIN IN MISSISSIPPI

Responds to the Nation's Greatest Disaster

The WIA annual report for Program Year 2005 cannot be written without reporting on the massive effort by all agencies, partners, professionals, and other entities within the WIN system to respond to the restoration, recovery, rebuilding, and renewal of the Gulf Coast and affected areas of the state from the horrific destruction of Hurricane Katrina.



HURRICANE KATRINA: *Putting a Face on Disaster*

The brutal storm Katrina unleashed its ferociousness on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and parts of Louisiana and Alabama early in the morning of August 29. In the aftermath, more than 1.3 million homes and businesses in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama were without electricity. In Mississippi, streets and homes were flooded as far as six miles inland, and the eastbound lanes of Interstate 10 between Gulfport and Biloxi were impassable because of storm debris.

Lives were lost. Homes and businesses vanished. Thousands fled, leaving their homes, their hopes and livelihoods behind, putting their lives on hold.

Afterwards, the task of recovery was seemingly overwhelming. Governor Haley Barbour stepped into the breach and determined that the citizens of Mississippi would prevail. "We will Recover. We will Restore. We will Rebuild. And then we will Renew," he stated.

In many ways, the savage disaster brought out the best in Mississippi's state and local governments.

Within two weeks of Hurricane Katrina, twenty-four of the State's WIN Job Centers were open with extended hours to provide employment services and to process applications for unemployment benefits. The remaining centers outside the Gulf Coast area that were damaged opened soon afterwards.

The Bay St. Louis WIN Job Center was completely destroyed. The Biloxi, Gulfport, Pascagoula, and Picayune WIN Job Centers on the Gulf Coast were significantly damaged. In spite of the loss of property and the personal suffering of staff, MDES began processing Disaster Unemployment Assistance and other disaster related Unemployment Benefit claims within two weeks on the Gulf Coast.

WIN Says Thanks, Y'all

During the recovery and restoration periods following the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina, the WIN in Mississippi system made many new friends across the country. Eleven states sent people and/or equipment to Mississippi, some of them managed pieces of our WIN system's business from venues within their own state agencies, and some found unique and enterprising ways to support us during this difficult time. From all of us who comprise the WIN in Mississippi system, we extend a genuine expression of gratitude. We can never thank you enough, but we can commit that, when and if the time comes, we will be there for you.





WIN

Works With Department of Labor Discretionary Grants

National Emergency Grant

Two days after the hurricane, on August 31, the State applied for a \$50 million Disaster National Emergency Grant (NEG). The Department of Labor approved the grant on September 2. While Disaster NEGs were created to primarily provide temporary jobs for clean up efforts, the State determined early on that much more was needed. Working closely with the Governor's Office, the local workforce investment areas and the Department of Labor, the State received approval to expand the allowable activities to:

- Provide service statewide;
- Provide temporary jobs in cleanup, humanitarian, and support efforts necessary to address the total impact of Hurricane Katrina;
- Provide training opportunities necessary to lead to permanent employment; and
- Provide supportive services necessary to ensure that individuals could successfully participate in training opportunities and get or retain employment.

The State also asked for and received sweeping waiver authority for its formula and NEG programs.

Using the model implemented by Florida, the local workforce areas were able to have eligible individuals in temporary jobs such as teacher aides, bus drivers, and Disaster Recovery Center managers within 45 days of the storm. Shortly after that, the local workforce areas, working with community/junior colleges and other training entities, set up training classes to meet the immediate need for workers in construction and other fields. Between September 6, 2005 and June 30, 2006, almost 7,750 individuals received training and/or temporary jobs services under the Hurricane Katrina NEG.

High-Growth and High-Demand Grants

To address other post-Katrina needs, the Department of Labor awarded the State two High-Growth and High-Demand H-1B Grants. The High-Growth Grant focuses on businesses and industries other than construction, while the Pathways to Construction Grant focuses on the construction industry only. MDES and the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges are working together to address immediate and critical training needs.

Disability Program Navigators

Mississippi is one of 17 states that received funding for the Disability Program Navigator Initiative. Shortly after the storm, the Department of Labor deployed mobile units and Navigators from other states to assist individuals with disabilities in coping with the disaster. The Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, the project operator in Mississippi, coordinated the efforts with DOL and provided a home base for the Navigators on the Gulf Coast through the Gulfport Ability Works, Incorporated Office. Navigator support efforts were provided through November 2005.

continued —

Reintegration Counselors

The WIN Job Centers remain committed to providing services tailored to individual needs. With the new challenges Hurricane Katrina created, MDES applied for and received a grant from the Department of Labor to hire twenty-five Reintegration Counselors. These specially trained counselors provided reemployment and reintegration services throughout the state in areas with high concentrations of individuals displaced by Katrina. Working closely with other agencies and non-profit service organizations, the counselors networked to find resources for their clients to help them get back to work.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

Working with the Department of Labor and the States of Kentucky and Florida, ten mobile units were deployed in eight locations on the Gulf Coast. Each unit had 10 uplink capabilities with 10-12 computer stations and laptops for satellite access to the Internet. The mobile units replaced the regular offices and created two additional service locations.

Unemployment insurance claims were processed in the mobile units and under tents by MDES staff from throughout the state. Unemployment Insurance professionals from eleven other states assisted the WIN Mobile Unit staff.

A Claims Call Center was created and operated for at least one month after the disaster. Since then, the call center has remained open to provide the telephone claim filing option to our customers.

Job Placement

The WIN Job Center focus quickly shifted to putting people back to work. Media flights of television, radio, and newspaper announcements were aired throughout the state, encouraging people to visit their local WIN Job Center to look for jobs and reminding employers to list their jobs with MDES and to take full advantage of the resources available to them.

WIN

Works With Department of Labor Discretionary Grants *(continued)*



The MDES staff were in daily conferences with the United States Department of Labor and other federal entities to identify and capture all funding streams available to our state for relief and restoration of benefits and job opportunities.

Included in this initiative is a National Emergency Grant of over \$50 million to help Mississippi residents begin the recovery process with money for temporary jobs and training. Other programs funded through the NEG monies included initiatives for job seekers and businesses.

RECOVERY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The following projects were funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and provided job search services, training opportunities, and supportive services to individuals and businesses impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

High Growth H-IB Grant

This grant pays for short-term job training in high demand occupations other than construction trades offered at local community and junior colleges.

Pathways to Construction H-IB Grant

This grant funds short-term job training for the construction industry in the areas of residential, commercial, industrial, heavy highway, shipbuilding, and heavy marine sectors at local community and junior colleges and area businesses.

Reintegration Assistance Program

This initiative provides counseling and services to individuals displaced due to Hurricane Katrina. The Reintegration Counselors assist in meeting the basic needs that will allow individuals to reenter the workforce.

continued —

Working Your Way Back Home Initiative

This program offers Mississippi evacuees who were displaced over 151 miles from their home help in finding employment and/or getting the training and skills they need to get a job, and reimburses them for the cost of relocating. The initiative represents a public and private sector venture between the U. S. Department of Labor and Manpower, Inc.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

This assistance is provided under a contract with an employer in the public or private sector. Through this training, occupational training is provided by an employer in exchange for the reimbursement of a portion of the trainee's wages to compensate for the employer's extraordinary costs. An OJT contract must be limited to the period of time required for an individual to become proficient in the occupation for which training is provided. The employer must provide Workers' Compensation or a comparable benefit.

Customized Training

This training is designed to meet the special requirements of a business or group of businesses. Training is conducted with a commitment by the business to employ, or, in the case of incumbent workers, continue to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training. Employers are reimbursed for a portion of the cost of training workers.

WIN

Partners with Mississippi Public Broadcasting

To assist in getting vital information out to those who had been affected by Katrina, public information was disseminated through unpaid broadcasts donated by statewide media companies including Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB).

Beginning in September 2005, a series of paid/leveraged media flights with several 100,000-watt, clear channel radio networks including the Mississippi Public Broadcasting agency began airing announcements with pertinent information regarding resources and assistance.

Additional Public Service Announcements were produced and aired on the above-mentioned outlets as new and relevant information became available.

During the first four months of the Recovery and Restoration period, WIN in Mississippi staff and partners were featured in live, on-air broadcasts from MPB. These broadcasts helped the listeners understand and access available services.



During the first four months of the Recovery and Restoration period, members of MDES executive and senior management were featured in live, on-air broadcasts from Mississippi Public Broadcasting, as well as on private sector broadcast networks. The hour-long radio broadcasting every Thursday morning on MPB became affectionately known as the WIN Job Center Radio Hour.

MDES:

The New Administrative Agency for WIN in Mississippi

In calendar year 2005, the Mississippi Legislature passed a bill that transferred all responsibility and administration of the Workforce Investment Act to the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). MDES serves as the lead executive agency to increase employment opportunities in Mississippi.

In addition to the WIA funds, MDES administers the funds received from the U.S. Department of Labor for activities and services supported by the Wagner-Peyser Act, Unemployment Insurance, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, services are provided for Dislocated Workers and Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Corps recruiting, and Veterans Assistance.

MDES has taken up the challenge to consolidate the workforce activities by emphasizing cooperation among state agencies to increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skills attainment. These measures have helped improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State.

Through partnerships, the WIN Job Centers provide comprehensive services to all Mississippi businesses for employee recruitment and job applicants referral and to job seekers by offering job search and placement assistance, career counseling, job training programs, and other special employment programs. Worker training and skills upgrading are also provided in order to build a workforce that meets the needs of a growing state.

MDES has further implemented a set of goals and formulated strategies to produce its results-oriented strategic plan. The changes have been positive and exciting, and the mission is simple: **Increasing Employment In Mississippi.**



The Mobile WIN Job Centers are the flagships in the MDES fleet. As part of the Workforce Investment Network, the Mobile WIN Job Center has all of the leading edge technology and equipment that can be found in many of Mississippi's comprehensive WIN Job Centers. The vehicle has an Internet satellite uplink for job seekers conducting job searches. Businesses can also post jobs and screen qualified workers. There are full-functioning computer workstations, and an instructor screen for use in on-site classroom programs. The MDES Mobile WIN Job Center provides on-the-spot services for employment seekers and educational activities regarding job training and career exploration. The Mobile WIN Job Centers played an important and essential role in the recovery and restoration efforts after the Hurricane Katrina disaster by replacing permanent WIN Job Centers that were damaged by the storm. Utilization of the Mobile WIN Job Centers has also occurred at high schools, job fairs and Rapid Response activities.

continued —

MDES:

The New Administrative Agency for WIN in Mississippi (continued)

WIA and WIN: An Overview

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 established the framework for the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi.

The WIN in Mississippi system includes comprehensive WIN Job Centers that are a single source, user-friendly resource for employment and training services for job seekers and businesses.

WIN combines federal, state and community workforce development programs and services and makes them easily accessible at the 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 the business customer seeking qualified workers as well as for job seekers.

In Program Year 2005, there were four Local Workforce Investment Areas in the state that received WIA and NEG grants to administer various local programs.

The Boards of Supervisors of each area established a Local Workforce Investment Board comprised of local business and public sector representatives.

These boards and local elected officials are responsible for designing local WIN services to meet the needs of the community.

The local area boards develop plans that address local needs and are consistent with the overall vision of the Governor for workforce development.



LELAND SPEED, *Executive Director*
Mississippi Development Authority

“As the state’s lead economic and community development agency, the Mississippi Development Authority enjoys a strong partnership with the WIN in Mississippi system, which is administered by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. Through its network of WIN Job Centers, MDES is aggressive in its efforts to identify unique ways and means of strengthening our workforce which, in turn, enables MDA to become more and more competitive in the manner in which we can attract new companies and industries to Mississippi.”

MDES:

The New Administrative Agency for WIN in Mississippi (continued)

WIN Partners and Professionals

The WIN in Mississippi system represents a collaborative effort with private business, local elected officials and local and state public agencies. This collaboration ensures that the needs of local businesses and job seekers are met in the community through tailored solutions designed to promote workforce development and economic growth.

WIN in Mississippi Partners*

Mississippi Department of Employment Security
Local Workforce Investment Areas
Local Elected Officials
State Board for Community and Junior Colleges
Mississippi Department of Education

Mississippi Department of Human Services
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
Mississippi Development Authority
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**May include other partners in the local areas*

State Workforce Investment Board

The State Workforce Investment Board is a vital part of the WIN in Mississippi system. The Board membership represents the diverse population of the State, with a majority of the members representing small and large businesses.

Other members include representatives of labor, education, local government and community leaders.

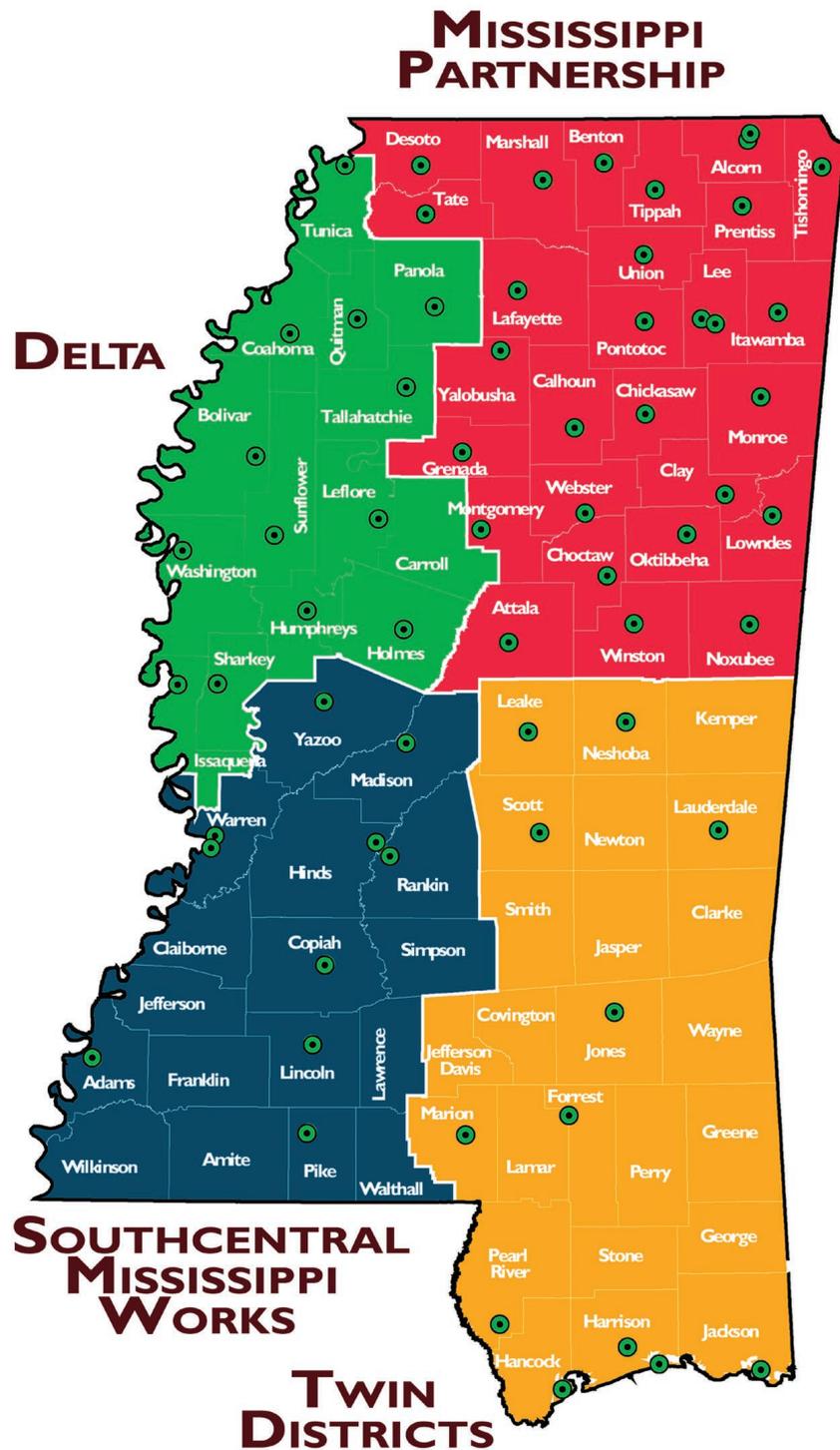
This dedicated group of individuals assists the Governor in meeting the federally mandated responsibilities under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and ensures that the vision for an effective workforce development system is realized.



GEORGE SCHLOEGEL, *Chairman*
Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board

“To upgrade the quality of life for Mississippi citizens it is imperative that we assist the unemployed in finding good jobs. Furthermore, it is equally imperative that we train our Mississippi workers for the better paying jobs of the future. For too long, Mississippi was satisfied to attract businesses and industries that paid minimum wage to our Mississippi workers. That day has passed. Today, Mississippi must assist companies who are willing to pay better wages for better performance and better productivity. Then, and only then, will Mississippi climb higher in per-capita income.”

WIN IN MISSISSIPPI WIN Job Center Locations



DELTA

South Delta Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 1776
Greenville, MS 38702
662-335-6889

WIN Job Centers:

Batesville
 Tylertown Plaza
 10316 Woodland Road
 662-563-7318

Belzoni
 501 Hayden Street
 662-247-2264

Carrollton*
 Courthouse Square
 Lexington Street
 662-453-7141

Charleston*
 Child Support Office
 662-453-7141

Clarksdale
 Federal Building
 236 Sharkey Avenue, 3rd Floor
 662-624-9001

Cleveland
 119 South Commerce Avenue
 662-843-2704

Greenville
 800 Highway 1 South
 Delta Plaza
 662-332-8101

Greenwood
 313 Lamar Street
 662-453-7141

Indianola
 226 N. Martin Luther King Dr.
 662-887-2502

Lexington
 106 West Wood Avenue
 662-834-2426

Marks*
 263 East Main Street
 662-624-9001

Mayersville*
 Issaquena Courthouse
 132 Court Street
 662-332-8101

Rolling Fork*
 120 Locust Street
 662-332-8101

Tunica
 1054 S. Fitzgeralds Boulevard
 Robinsonville, MS 38664
 662-363-2764

MISSISSIPPI PARTNERSHIP

Three Rivers Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 690
Pontotoc, MS 38863
662-489-2415

WIN Job Centers:

Ackerman *
 Courthouse Annex
 662-285-6998

Amory
 1619 Highway 25
 662-256-2618

Ashland/Access Point *
 Justice Complex
 662-224-6310

Booneville
 101 Cunningham Boulevard
 662-720-7459

Calhoun City *
 102 South Main Street
 662-628-8345

Columbus
 400-B Wilkins Wise Road
 662-328-6876

Corinth
 31 CR 401
 662-287-3247

Corinth Affiliate
 714 Taylor Street
 662-286-3308

Eupora *
 114-A Highway 9 North
 662-258-7086

WIN Job Center Locations (continued)

Fulton *

34 East Marion Street
662-862-3824

Grenada

1751 Poplar Street
662-226-2911

Hernando

225 Loshier Street
662-429-9874

Holly Springs *

230 College Street
662-252-7664

Houston

665 North Jefferson Street
662-456-3563

Iuka

1107 Maria Lane
662-423-9231

Kosciusko

115 Northside Shopping
Center
662-289-2621

Louisville

600-B North Court Avenue
662-773-5051

Macon *

16129 Highway 45
662-328-6876

New Albany *

301 North Street
662-534-1933

Oxford

2130 West Jackson Avenue
662-234-3231

Pontotoc *

29 East Washington
662-489-3956

Ripley *

111 East Spring Street
662-837-7411

Senatobia

4975 Highway 51 North
662-562-3351

Starkville

100 Felix Long Drive
662-323-2272

Tupelo

146 S. Thomas Street, Suite A
662-842-4371

Tupelo/Access Point

2176 Eason Boulevard
662-620-5250

Water Valley *

307 Main Street
662-473-2445

West Point

117 East Jordan Avenue
662-494-4144

Winona *

109 Liberty Street
662-283-4105

SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

**Central Mississippi
Planning and
Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296
601-981-1511**

WIN Job Centers:

Brookhaven

545 Brookway Boulevard
601-833-3511

Canton / Madison Co.
152 Watford Parkway Drive
601-859-7609

Hazlehurst
1016 Carroll Drive
601-894-2121

Jackson
420 East Woodrow Wilson
Drive
601-321-7931

Jackson
350 West Woodrow Wilson
Drive, Suite 300
601-981-2171

McComb
416 Marion Avenue
601-684-4421

Natchez
310 Briarwood Road
601-442-0243

Pearl
212 St. Paul Street
601-939-0786

Vicksburg
1625 Monroe Street
601-638-1452

**Vicksburg/Specialty
Center**
100 Smokey Lane
601-638-2770

Yazoo City
306 East Jefferson Road
662-746-1141

continued —

WIN Job Center Locations (continued)

TWIN DISTRICTS

**Southern Mississippi
Planning and
Development District**
700 Hardy Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
601-545-2137

WIN Job Centers:

**Bay St. Louis County
Office**
3060 Longfellow Drive
228-467-9572

Biloxi
2306 Pass Road
228-388-7997

Carthage
202 C.O. Brooks Street
601-267-9282

Columbia
1111 Highway 98
601-736-2628

Forest
229 South Davis Street
601-469-2851

Gulfport
12121 Highway 49 North
228-539-6800

Hattiesburg
4100 Mamie Street
601-264-0502

Laurel
1721-B West 10th Street
601-649-7813

Meridian
2000 Highway 19 North
601-483-1406

Pascagoula
1604 Denny Avenue
228-762-4713

Philadelphia
1120 East Main Street, Suite 11
601-656-2811

Picayune
1839-B Cooper Road
601-798-3472

* Part-time offices

WIN JOB CENTERS



WIN Job Centers Work With Job Seekers and Laid-Off Workers

The centerpiece of the WIN in Mississippi system, in terms of services and program delivery, is the network of comprehensive WIN Job Centers throughout the State.

These centers provide customers easy access to a variety of services in the areas of employment, education, training, human services, and economic development.

Job Search and Placement Assistance

WIN Job Center staff help job seekers create or update résumés, conduct job searches and prepare for job interviews.

The staff also provide information on high demand occupations and available job training to help job seekers be more competitive in the job market.

Internet Access for Job Openings and Résumé Posting

Job seekers have access to Internet connected computers, and the WIN Job Center staff are available to assist with computer-based career exploration and job openings.

Access to Office Equipment: Computers, Fax Machines, Photocopiers

A customer conducting job searches has the use of computers, telephones, fax machines and photocopiers at no cost.

Information on and Referral to Training

The WIN Job Centers are the customer's entry point to employment services and training programs.

Training programs are available to eligible individuals enrolled in WIA who cannot find adequate employment through normal job search strategies.

This assistance may include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, skills upgrading, job readiness training, and adult education and literacy activities.

Adult and dislocated worker training requires the use of an Individual Training Account (ITA) voucher that allows a customer to choose from a list of eligible training providers.

continued —

WIN JOB CENTERS *(continued)*



Robert Freeman

The James F. Walls Award recognizes a single individual for outstanding dedication to customers, fellow employees, and the local community workforce agency. This year it was awarded to Robert Freeman, Branch Director – Biloxi WIN Job Center.

Sunday, August 28, 2005, a day before Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Robert Freeman left his home with his wife and two young children to evacuate to a shelter fifty miles inland. They carried only what they would need for a brief period. Being Gulf Coast natives, they knew the routine – gather limited necessities, return home in a few days to clean up debris, and get back to life shortly thereafter. This time it would be different. On Monday, August 29, Robert Freeman and his family were homeless.

Within a few days, Robert was back at his job and attended a meeting of the local staff of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) to organize service delivery. Those present determined to not let the disaster take away their commitment to personal service for the Mississippians depending on them. Robert exemplified dedication to providing service to others in spite of his personal loss and obstacles.

Robert and other MDES staff worked twelve-hour days, six and seven days each week, to receive and assist customers filing unemployment benefit claims. Over 1,000 claims were taken each day, and Robert was on the front lines every day. He was responsible for opening and managing a mobile center in the parking lot of a Disaster Recovery Center in nearby Ocean Springs, working closely with local emergency officials and FEMA.

Robert's family bought a new house and worked to reestablish normalcy to their lives. Robert has recently taken on new responsibilities as manager of the Biloxi WIN Job Center. In that capacity, he is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the center, where all employment and workforce services are provided to customers in a single location.

continued —

WIN JOB CENTERS *(continued)*

WIN Job Centers Work With Businesses

If you're doing business in Mississippi – or if you're considering a move here – you'll find the WIN in Mississippi system and the WIN Job Centers are eager to assist with searching for qualified employees, researching state, local and federal regulations, exploring the state's economic development services and more.

Supporting the employment needs of businesses, the WIN Job Centers are the focal point of the WIN in Mississippi system. The services provided by the WIN Job Centers are vast and comprehensive. They serve as the state's workforce broker: bringing people and jobs together.

The WIN in Mississippi system works to gather and produce meaningful information that identifies business needs and employee skill levels. The WIN Job Centers provide information on a variety of services and referrals to training opportunities to help businesses meet their human resources recruiting, screening and training needs. Unless otherwise stated, these services are provided at no cost to businesses.

Recruitment and Screening

- Recruit, screen and refer a variety of job seekers, ranging from entry level workers to skilled professionals
- Recruit full-time, part-time, and seasonal workers
- Post job openings
- Host job fairs
- Partner with businesses to clarify job descriptions and eligibility criteria
- Screen applicants to ensure that the right workers with the right skills are interviewed

Training

- On-the-Job Training (OJT) is designed to help businesses find workers by reimbursing a portion of expenses incurred during the initial training process. The WIN Job Center reimburses a company up to one-half the cost of training eligible workers through OJT. The amount received is based on the trainee's wage at hire date. The amount available to be reimbursed depends upon the intensity of the skills required for the position. OJT is limited to 50% of a business's workforce and the discretion of the Local Workforce Investment Area's Board. Businesses may be reimbursed for up to six months. The length of training usually ranges from 160 hours to 1,040 hours per employee. Upon completion of the training, the company may be eligible for the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit. *(To be eligible, a business must have at least two full-time employees and provide Workers' Compensation Coverage.)*

Workforce Investment Act Cost Effectiveness

Formula Programs

Adult Program

Cost Per Participant \$328

Dislocated Worker Program

Cost Per Participant \$426

Youth Program

Cost Per Participant \$1,765

Total WIA Program

Cost/Participant \$508

continued —

WIN JOB CENTERS *(continued)*

- Refer businesses and job seekers to training programs that support the human resource needs of businesses
- Provide information on other types of training services such as pre-employment, incumbent worker, and customized training which assist the company with the cost of skills upgrading

Other Services

- Provide businesses with access to the labor pool
- Provide information about wages and employment trends
- Keep companies informed about state demographic and economic information
- Provide information on Alien Employment Certification guidelines. These guidelines are for businesses who want to seek foreign workers to fill company employment needs but are unable to recruit specially skilled individuals from local labor markets.
- Provide office space for interviewing and on-site screening
- Inform businesses of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) that offers employers a federal tax savings of up to \$2,400 per person for hiring an individual who qualifies under a specific target group
- Assist companies with Rapid Response services to help manage a layoff

WIA Training

	ITA	OJT	
Adult	3,587	2,829	
Dislocated Worker	2,762	1,434	
Youth	136		
	6,485	4,263	10,748
NEG	3,142	1,616	4,758
	9,627	5,879	15,506

WIN Job Centers Work With Community and Junior Colleges

The workforce education program, administered by the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges (SBCJC), is designed to assist a Mississippi company in developing the productive workforce it needs.

The strategy for completing this goal includes a custom job-training program designed and carried out in partnership with the company through the local community or junior college that serves the county where the company is located. The local community or junior college will work with the company to develop a plan for the number and type of individuals to be trained and the time frame for training.

Those plans in the form of training projects are funded with State of Mississippi appropriated funds on a year-to-year basis, which is in addition to the federal funds that support the Workforce Investment Network (WIN).

continued —

WIN JOB CENTERS *(continued)*

Pre-employment Training

Pre-employment training provided by the local community or junior college can take from one to four weeks, while trainees attend on their own time. This training provides, among other things, an opportunity to demonstrate initiative in attendance and work ethics, and may include sessions in interpersonal skills, team building, diversity in the workplace, or some specific job skill before any commitment is made by the company to employ an individual.

Post-employment, Retraining, and Upgrade Training

Training is designed to meet the specific needs of the company and includes, but is not limited to: management skills, leadership, team building, maintenance, robotics, OSHA, safety, lean manufacturing, capacity building, and performance excellence.

Travel

Most of the travel and lodging cost associated with train-the-trainer instruction is reimbursable in accordance with the State of Mississippi per diem rate. All travel must be pre-approved by the Workforce Division of the SBCJC.

Media Development

The Workforce Development section of the Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU) at Mississippi State University, through support by the SBCJC, can provide technical support services for the development of training media such as technical manuals, videos, and e-learning modules.

Tax Credit

The Skill Training Income Tax Credit is an incentive for eligible businesses to offer training to their Mississippi employees. The credit is comprised of the expenses the business incurs in that training. The training does not have to be held on the community or junior college campus to qualify for credit. For expenses to qualify for the Skills Training Credit, the training program must be offered by, or approved by, the community or junior college in the district where the employer is located.

LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS

DELTA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

South Delta Planning and Development District, Grant Recipient

Primary Contact: Mitzi Woods

Post Office Box 1776

831 South Broadway

Greenville, Mississippi 38702

Phone: 662-335-6889

Fax: 662-332-5175

Description

The Delta Workforce Investment Area (DWIA) is comprised of fourteen counties in the northwestern area of the state and operates under the fiscal direction of the South Delta Planning and Development District (SDPDD). The role of DWIA is to provide funding and support to the WIN Job Centers and to the public and non-profit providers who operate the youth programs. Additionally, the DWIA provides assistance with Rapid Response orientation sessions to dislocated workers.

Local Area Accomplishments

WIN Job Centers Relocated and Improved – The Belzoni and Rolling Fork WIN Job Centers were renovated. The Greenwood WIN Job Center was relocated and also renovated.

Staff Training – Staff at the Delta WIN Job Centers received in-house training in Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel and *Spanish for Requesting Personal Information and Data*.

Small Business Center Expands Services – The SDPDD Small Business Center provided up-to-date counseling, training, and research assistance in all aspects of small business management. In Program Year 2005, the SDPDD Small Business Center counseled 271 new clients as well as 49 existing clients. Of these clients, approximately 50 started or will start new businesses in the DWIA area.

WIN in Mississippi Factoid:

In Program Year 2005, Mississippi became one of the first states in the nation to implement the common measures for Workforce Investment Act programs and the work-flex waiver authority.

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LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS *continued*

On-The Job Training Policies Standardized – DWIA staff were part of an MDES taskforce to standardize OJT policies and procedures in anticipation of the new policies taking effect on July 1, 2006. As a result, 6,775 adults and 6,312 dislocated workers, 73 older youth, and 746 younger youth were served. A total of 5,238 entered employment.

Job Fairs Held – Job fairs were held in Batesville and Clarksdale in addition to those organized for the Katrina evacuees in Greenville and Greenwood.

Rapid Response Orientations Conducted – Rapid Response activities were conducted in Marks, Cleveland, Greenwood, and Greenville.

Youth Programs Enhanced – Incentives played a role in the increase of GED and Education Functional Levels. Forty-one participants received a GED. Youth providers having the highest GED rates were South Panola School District, which had 15, and Bolivar County Community Action Agency, which had 16 GED recipients.

Five participants from ETI, Inc. participated in a two-day conference at Delta State University sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation and the University of Michigan to bring youth from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas together to discuss means and ways of community change. Job shadowing, guest speakers, service projects, field trips, and mentors provided enrichment opportunities for youth.

Marie Horne, DWIA Youth Coordinator, attended a Department of Labor Conference on Common Measures.

Disaster Recovery and Rebuilding Activities – Job fairs to assist hurricane evacuees were held in Greenwood and Greenville. In Greenwood, 43 employers were available to over 400 job applicants, and 209 job offers were made. In Greenville, 24 employers made 180 job offers to over 450 applicants.

In the DWIA, 56 people were enrolled in the Temporary Work Program in jobs at WIN Job Centers, Community Action Agencies, Rehabilitation Services, and city and county offices. Jobs included office workers, social services aides, debris cleanup and materials handlers. On-The-Job Training and Individual Training Account vouchers were provided to eligible clients. Specialized training was provided in geospatial technology, small business development and welding.

Awards

The National Association of Development Organizations presented DWIA with an Innovation Award for its WIA Employer Incentive Package, designed to provide incentives to prospective employers looking to locate in the Mississippi Delta.

The Warren Washington Issaquena Sharkey Community Action Agency presented a Community Service Award to the Delta Workforce Investment Area for its work with the Katrina evacuees.

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THE MISSISSIPPI PARTNERSHIP

Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Fiscal Agent

Primary Contact: Clark Casteel

Post Office Box 690

75 South Main Street

Pontotoc, Mississippi 38863

Phone: 662-489-2415

Fax: 662-489-0958

Description

The Mississippi Partnership Workforce Investment Area (MPWIA) provides services to 27 counties in northeast Mississippi. Three Rivers Planning and Development District (TRPDD) serves as the Fiscal and Administrative Agent for the local area. All one-stop WIN Job Centers are under a consortium of four one-stop operators who serve as local lead agencies. They include Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Northeast Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community College, and Itawamba Community College. Currently, 13 youth service providers conduct WIA programs for economically disadvantaged youth.

Local Area Accomplishments

WIA Enrollment Increased – During Program Year 2005, the MPWIA increased the number of new WIA customers served through the WIN Job Centers to 11,549. This reflects a 74% increase over the previous year. Additionally, the Mississippi Partnership had 2,218 individuals in on-the-job training and individual training accounts during this time.

Oxford WIN Job Center Relocated – Northwest Mississippi Community College and Mississippi Department of Employment Security relocated the Oxford WIN Job Center to a new facility. The new Oxford WIN Job Center features additional space for new partners, a computer lab, a GED classroom and an employer interview room.

Area Job Fairs Held – The MPWIA hosted two job fairs. The Northeast Mississippi WIN Job Fair was held in Corinth. The event hosted 57 registered employers. Over 800 job seekers visited the employers, and 353 job offers were made the day of the job fair.

The Marshall-Benton Area Job Fair was held in Holly Springs. The event hosted 40 registered employers. Over 400 job seekers visited the employers, and 141 job offers were made the day of the job fair.

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LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS *continued*

Youth Services Enlarged – Due to the early implementation of the Common Measures, all MPWIA in-school youth programs were required to become senior transition programs to help economically disadvantaged seniors move from secondary school to post-secondary education or employment.

Youth providers were able to serve 825 youths during Program Year 2005. Based on preliminary data, MPWIA met all of the common performance measures for youth.

The MPWIA also operated two youth mentorship programs, one of which was a collaboration comprised of Lift, Inc., Pioneer Community Hospital in Aberdeen, and Itawamba Community College. A total of 18 participants entered the program, with 14 completing the Itawamba Community College occupational skills training program and 11 students receiving a Certified Nursing Assistant license.

An additional mentorship program was developed between RTP of Mississippi, East Mississippi Community College, and Sara Lee Foods. There were 23 youths enrolled and all completed a two-week job readiness skills course, after which 16 of those were placed in employment.

Disaster Recovery and Rebuilding Activities – Although the MPWIA was not directly impacted by Hurricane Katrina, the area economy was impacted in the storm's aftermath. The MPWIA received a total of \$3,208,780 in National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds to help offset the effects of Hurricane Katrina. The MPWIA allocated \$2,064,878 to the temporary employment program and \$1,020,000 to on-the-job training, Individual Training Accounts and short-term training programs.

The MPWIA has enrolled a total of 895 NEG participants. Of that number, 179 received temporary jobs, 366 received on-the-job training, 242 received individual training accounts and 66 received short-term training.

Awards

Presented by the MPWIA – The Ackerman, Amory, Booneville, Calhoun City, Columbus, Eupora, Grenada, Hernando, Holly Springs, New Albany, Oxford, Pontotoc, Ripley, Senatobia, Water Valley, and Winona WIN Job Centers received special recognition for meeting their enrollment goals for the Program Year.

Received by the MPWIA – Monroe County Families First operates an innovative RIF (Reading Is Fundamental) program called Shared Beginnings. Shared Beginnings provides books and motivational activities for teen parents and their children.

Due to the success of this program, the staff was recognized as Region IV Volunteers of the Year by the Reading Is Fundamental agency. The staff received the award at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. in June 2006. The staff members receiving this award included: Ann Tackett, program director; Fernando Davis, WIA instructor/case manager; and Antoinette Alexander, resource coordinator.

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SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Grant Recipient

Primary Contact: James McGuffee

1170 Lakeland Drive

Jackson, Mississippi 39216

Phone: 601-981-1511

Fax: 601-981-1515

Description

Southcentral Mississippi Works (SMW) Workforce Investment Area serves 17 counties in the central and southern portion of the state through a network of ten WIN Job Centers. Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, in partnership with Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District, acts as the administrative entity for the local WIA Board and the local elected officials and provides guidance and oversight for workforce activities in the 17 county area.

Local Area Accomplishments

Senior Transition Youth Program Enhanced – The Senior Transition Youth Program continued to provide services to eligible youth located within the area. The program worked to enhance work readiness, college preparedness and transition-to-work skills of WIA eligible high-school seniors who graduated during the Program Year. The program, which is coordinated by senior transition coordinators working through the WIN Job Centers, utilized local community resources and business leaders to provide real-world perspectives and workshop experiences for students who will make the transition from high school into the world of work.

Disaster Recovery and Rebuilding Activities – The Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Investment Area served individuals within the workforce area who were impacted by Hurricane Katrina through a variety of workforce related services. The area experienced a large influx of affected individuals who relocated temporarily into the area. The result was a significant increase in the numbers of individuals served through the area's WIN Job Centers.

Temporary Workforce Recovery Employment afforded eligible individuals the opportunity to work on a short-term basis, and gave assistance to organizations and agencies providing relief services to affected individuals. On-The-Job Training and Individual Training Account vouchers were made available to individuals whose circumstances warranted the need for training in order to pursue new career paths.

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TWIN DISTRICTS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, Grant Recipient

Primary Contact: Gary Lukens

700 Hardy Street

Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401

Phone: 601-545-2137

Fax: 601-545-2164

Description

The Twin Districts Workforce Area (TDWA) is comprised of 24 counties in the southeastern part of Mississippi. Acting as grant recipient/fiscal agent for the Twin Districts Area is Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District. Staff services are provided by Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, and the sub-fiscal agent of the East Central Planning and Development District.

Local Area Accomplishments

WIA Enrollment Increased – During this program year, regular WIA formula funds were obligated by the third week of July 2005. A system had been established to review, de-obligate and re-obligate funds throughout the year for Individual Training Account vouchers and On-the-Job Training activities. Additionally, all youth funds were obligated through competitive contracts for youth providers in our area. Through these regular formula dollars, approximately 71,547 individuals (adults, dislocated workers and youth) have received WIA services.

WIN Job Centers Relocated and Enhanced – Due to the damage inflicted by Hurricane Katrina, several WIN Job Centers in the TDWA area were relocated and rebuilt, including Gulfport, Biloxi and Pascagoula. The Meridian WIN Job Center celebrated its grand opening on December 13, 2005. The new office is located at 2000 Hwy. 19 North. The Pascagoula WIN Job Center held its grand opening on May 24, 2006. Governor Haley Barbour was the honorary speaker. The new Pascagoula WIN Center is located at 1604 Denny Avenue.

NEG Funds Allocated – National Emergency Grant (NEG) funds were provided directly to 1,720 public sector employment clients who were seeking work. Only a small portion of NEG funds were used in an administrative capacity. This allowed the majority of the funds to be expended for direct services to eligible customers.

Disaster Recovery and Rebuilding Activities – The magnitude and expansive damage caused by Katrina was historically unprecedented, and presented a large number of obstacles that had to be overcome in order to deliver services to customers.

continued —

LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS *continued*

Under the direction of its Local Workforce Investment and Elected Officials Boards, the Twin Districts staff was able to quickly redirect and reshape many policies and procedures already in existence. This allowed for delivery of the training programs to customers in a relatively short period of time. The training was accomplished in partnership with several State community and junior colleges, MDES, and other TDWA partners.

In the weeks and months following Katrina, through the allotment of the state's National Emergency Grant, Twin Districts staff immediately:

- Began Damage Assessment Surveys
- Began Public Service Employment Activities
- Implemented Short Term Training Courses
- Requested Appropriate Waivers from DOL
- Implemented OJT training programs
- Implemented ITA vouchers



The Governor's Job Fair Network

The Governor's Job Fair Network works with the leaders of communities throughout the State to organize and conduct community based job fairs. The focus of each job fair is to help the unemployed to become employed.

The Governor's Job Fair Network goes only into communities that desire a job fair event. Community leaders including mayors, county supervisors, chambers of commerce, economic development offices, WIN Job Centers, private industry and media representatives are some of the entities that initiate the request for scheduling a job fair in their area. The job fairs have been tremendously successful in matching the unemployed with business and industry of the State.

The Governor's Job Fair Network has a very narrow focus: to help those who are unemployed find immediate and meaningful employment, and to help businesses meet their employment needs.

Navigator Program

In November 2004, Mississippi was selected to participate in the Disability Program Navigator Initiative. Funded jointly by the U. S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration, this initiative helps individuals with disabilities access the services and supports they need to reach their employment goals and become self-sufficient utilizing the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi. Nearly \$24 million has been distributed among 17 states to date, including Mississippi. During Program Year 2005, Mississippi continued to enhance its operation of this project.

The Disability Program Navigator Initiative promotes full seamless access for jobseekers with barriers to employment to those programs and services that enhance successful entry or reentry into the workforce and that increase employment. Navigators serve as resources to the WIN Job Centers and, as necessary, work in tandem with other partners of the WIN System to coordinate service delivery to individuals with disabilities. Mississippi has nine Navigators throughout the state in the following WIN Job Centers: Canton, Clarksdale, Columbus, Greenwood, Gulfport, Hattiesburg, McComb, Pearl, and Tupelo. MDES partners with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services to deliver the Disability Program Navigator Initiative in Mississippi.

JOB FAIR RESULTS July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

Total number of Job Fairs:	14
Total number of employers served:	799
Total number of job applicants served:	20,240
Total number of job offers made the day of the job fair:	6,276
Total number of projected hires during the next year from job fair applicants:	7,650

continued —

Eligible Training Providers

Individuals who wish to access WIA training services first work with WIN Job Center staff to determine their eligibility to receive Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Once approved for training, WIA participants may select programs from a catalog of approved providers. Since the inception of WIA, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in Mississippi has been published in a variety of formats, including printed copies, CDs distributed to WIN Job Centers and local areas, and an Internet based list.

During Program Year 2005, the ETPL underwent extensive enhancements to become a completely Internet-based system. The enhanced website went live on October 1, 2005 and has simplified the way that eligible providers and institutions wishing to become providers submit applications to have training programs approved for inclusion on the list. This new system has also sped up the approval process, moved the State to a paperless system and better meets the technology needs of the 21st Century workforce. Additional enhancements are planned for the ETPL to further respond to the needs of WIN Job Center staff, businesses, and job seekers.

Governor's Workforce Development Conference

The Governor's Workforce Development Conference was held in January 2006, and was attended by over 700 workforce-related professionals. The goals of the conference were to:

- Promote and improve coordination and communication among individuals involved in WIA programs and in the design and provision of workforce-related activities and services;
- Offer training, guidance and technical assistance in areas of workforce issues and concerns;
- Provide forums that promote and enhance partnership within the workforce development system in Mississippi; and
- Extend opportunities for the exchange of information and ideas that will serve to promote growth and improvement of the State's one-stop center network.

Presented by:
State Administrative Entity for WIN in Mississippi

Wanda Land
Office of Grant Management
Mississippi Department of Employment Security
1235 Echelon Parkway
Jackson, Mississippi 39213
Phone: 888-844-3577
Fax: 601-321-6598

For a copy of the addendum to this report, contact MDES



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT *of* EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

For more information, call:

1-888-844-3577

Or visit: www.mdes.ms.gov



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