



The Office of the
Mississippi Secretary of State

Five Year Strategic Plan

For the Fiscal Years 2021 - 2025

1. Agency Mission Statement

The Secretary of State’s Office will serve the citizens of the State of Mississippi and will fulfill statutory requirements for Business Services, Charities, Education & Publications, Elections, Policy & Research, Public Lands, Regulation & Enforcement, and Securities in a transparent, efficient and cost effective manner.

2. Statement of Agency Philosophy

The Secretary of State was first established in the 1817 Constitution of the State of Mississippi. Over the years, the Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State has been entrusted with a number of duties, responsibilities, and functions by the State Legislature. We are dedicated to being both a service and information agency - committed to modeling efficient, effective operations and prudent resource management.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

(From the “Statewide Strategic Plan for Performance and Budgetary Success – Building a Better Mississippi” created by the Mississippi Legislature in July 2014)

- a. STATEWIDE GOAL – “To develop a robust state economy that provides the opportunity for productive employment for all Mississippians”
- b. STATEWIDE GOAL – “To ensure that current and future generations have access to the state’s abundant natural resources through restoration, protection, conservation and wise development of those resources”
- c. STATEWIDE GOAL – “To create an efficient government and an informed and engaged citizenry that helps to address social problems through the payment of taxes, the election of capable leaders at all levels of government and participation in charitable organizations through contributions and volunteerism”

4. Overview of the Agency 5-Year Strategic Plan

Over the next five years, the Secretary of State will continue to increase efficiency through electronic improvements to replace paper processes. This supports the Agency’s mission to fulfill duties in a transparent, efficient, and cost-effective manner. The Secretary of State’s Office will continue to operate as a results-based, goal-driven Agency.

Specifically, the Agency will complete the implementation of the following projects:

- a) Online Management of Public Lands. Online management of 16th Section lands began in 2019. School districts are able to file annual reports and submit leases online. We will complete a timber bid management system with GIS functionality by December of 2019. District management functions and additional reporting will be developed for 16th

Section lands. A revision to the online auction system will be developed for tax forfeited lands, which will include GIS functionality. We will update the invoicing process for tidelands.

- b) Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. President Donald Trump signed a \$380,000,000.00 Omnibus Bill in March 2018. The State of Mississippi received \$4,483,541.00. This number was calculated by the U.S. Government using the State of Mississippi, Voting Age Population. As instructed by the Elections Assistance Commission (EAC), these funds may be used to replace voting equipment that utilizes a voter-verified paper record; implement a post-election audit system that provides a high-level confidence in the accuracy of the final vote tally; upgrade election-related computer systems to address cyber vulnerabilities identified through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or similar scans or assessments of existing election systems; facilitate cybersecurity training for the state chief election official's office and local election officials; implement established cybersecurity best practices for election systems; and fund other activities that will improve the security of elections for federal office. The State of Mississippi is required to match the Federal funds by 5%. This amount is \$224,117.00. As of June 30, 2019, the State matched these funds. During the 2018 Regular Legislative Session, the Legislature approved a \$210,000.00 re-appropriation of FY2018 appropriated funds to FY2019. The remaining balance of \$14,117.00 was paid from the Agency's FY2019 Appropriation. These funds are interest-bearing funds. The interest is added to the amount payable to the counties. The counties will receive funds after completing the application for funds with the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office (MSOS). Once the request has been approved, the county may instruct vendors of their choosing to complete the work. Once the county has submitted all proofs of work performed and proof of payment, including detailed invoices, the MSOS will request payment to be made either via PayMode or a warrant to be issued. Since June 30, 2019, MSOS has distributed \$427,460.20 to the following ten (10) counties: Calhoun, Coahoma, Desoto, Greene, Jackson, Lamar, Lincoln, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union. The Secretary of State's Office has expended \$278,112.94 of these funds for the upgrade of the Statewide Election Management System (SEMS). The budget period for these funds are March 23, 2018 – March 22, 2023.
- c) Y'all Business Website. The Agency is currently working on updating data as each dataset matures and new data is released. The Agency will continue to devote assets to business data on a county by county basis.
- d) Increase Network Security and Infrastructure. MSOS has been recognized as a leader in state government cybersecurity. The Agency will continue to improve security by using the latest software and network infrastructure. The Agency will move the MSOS network infrastructure to a software defined network in order to eventually move network resources to a cloud solution or a virtual Disaster Recovery site. The Agency uses the latest technology from cybersecurity industry leaders to provide internal network security and to secure the network perimeter. Protecting online resources from misuse is a priority for Secretary of State's Office. This year, the Agency implemented an API-based business fraud prevention process to verify the identity of external users. The Agency will continue to use the latest security technologies to protect data, such as software that utilizes artificial intelligence and machine learning. Similarly, the Agency will review and identify data in need of encryption.

- e) Moving the Statewide Elections Management System to the State Data Center.
Providing increased resiliency and protection for the elections process is a primary goal for Secretary of State's Office. The Agency is in the process of moving part of the Statewide Elections Management System (SEMS) to the State Data Center at ITS. This facility offers redundant generators and uninterruptible power supplies, lighting protection, environmental monitoring, operations personnel, controlled access, and security guards. These services will increase the physical security and operational stability of SEMS.

5. External / Internal Assessment

- Changes in the economy, positive or negative, may affect the number of business filings processed – which may increase or decrease Business Services revenues.
- Legislative directives may change the course of projects and priorities. (Examples – Voter ID legislation, Help America Vote Act, Campaign Finance, The Vulnerable Adults Act, etc.)
- As more database hacking and network insecurities rise, IT costs follow this trend. The Agency has a strong focus on protecting sensitive information and will adopt and implement the latest cybersecurity products and practices needed to secure data in the Agency's custody.

6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program

A. PROGRAM #1 - BUSINESS SERVICES

I. BUSINESS SERVICES (BS) GOAL A

To provide a wide range of services to individuals and companies who conduct business in Mississippi, including those starting a business within the state.

BS OBJECTIVE #A1:

Timely and accurately file all corporate, LLC, partnership, and other business documents to allow new and existing businesses to complete business transactions within the state.

Outcome: All business documents filed and posted to Agency website.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output - Number of business documents filed

Efficiency - Documents filed website within two business days

BS OBJECTIVE #A2:

Timely and accurately file all Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) documents to allow lenders and borrowers the security necessary to conduct business in Mississippi.

Outcome: All UCC documents filed and posted to Agency website.

A2.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of UCC documents filed

Efficiency – UCC documents posted on website within two business days.

A2.2 STRATEGY

Output – Number of UCC searches requested and completed

Efficiency – UCC searches completed within two business days

BS OBJECTIVE #A3

Timely and accurately file other Mississippi business documents received.

Outcome: All other business documents completed and returned to customer.

A3.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of notary applications processed

Efficiency – Notary applications processed within two business days

A3.2 STRATEGY

Output – Number of apostille applications processed

Efficiency – Apostille applications processed within two business days.

BS OBJECTIVE #A4

Provide excellent customer service to those doing business in Mississippi.

Outcome: All inquiries answered timely and accurately.

A4.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of phone calls received

Efficiency – Answer at least 92% of all calls within 10 seconds

A4.2 STRATEGY

Output – Number of work orders (other business searches) requested and completed

Efficiency – Work orders completed within two business days

ii. BUSINESS SERVICES (BS) GOAL B

To create an efficient government agency to regulate business-related matters assigned under the Agency’s purview: charitable organizations and fundraisers, the sale of securities and securities dealers, scrap metal dealers and processors, the pre-need funeral industry, perpetual care cemeteries, and other regulatory matters.

BS OBJECTIVE #B1:

Register and regulate all charitable organizations and fundraisers who solicit contributions in Mississippi.

Outcome: All charity and fundraiser documents filed and posted to Agency website.

B1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of Charity/Fundraiser registrations and renewals processed

Efficiency – Registrations and renewals posted to website within two business days of receipt of completed package of documents

BS OBJECTIVE #B2:

Investigate charity complaints and/or violations of the State’s charitable laws and levy fines or dissolve charities, when necessary.

Outcome: All examinations and investigations performed timely.

B2.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of examinations / investigations / complaints

Efficiency – Make contact with complainant within two business days

BS OBJECTIVE #B3:

Register and regulate both the sale of securities and the securities professionals who sell them.

Outcome: All securities documents filed and posted to Agency website.

B3.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of security registrations and renewals (offerings)

Efficiency – Offerings reviewed within five business days of receipt of complete security document package

B3.2 STRATEGY

Output – Number of security registrations and renewals (firms/agents)

Efficiency – Firms/agents reviewed within 10 business days of receipt of complete security document package

BS OBJECTIVE #B4:

Investigate securities complaints and/or violations of the State’s securities laws and levy fines. When necessary, work with federal and state prosecuting authorities to investigate violators of the State's securities laws.

Outcome: All examinations and investigations performed timely.

B4.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of examinations/investigations/complaints

Efficiency – Make contact with complainant within two business days

BS OBJECTIVE #B5:

Register and regulate scrap metal dealers and processors, the pre-need funeral industry, perpetual care cemeteries, and athlete agents. Publish Mississippi Administrative Bulletin and Mississippi Administrative Code.

Outcome: All regulatory documents filed and posted to Agency website.

B5.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of scrap metal dealers and processors registered

Output – Number of pre-need establishments and agents registered

Output – Number of perpetual care cemeteries registered

Output – Number of athlete agents registered

Output – Number of proposed and final Administrative Bulletin filings

Output – Number of Administrative Code filings

BS OBJECTIVE #B6:

Investigate complaints and/or violations scrap metal dealers and processors, the pre-need funeral industry, perpetual care cemeteries, and athlete agents. Suspend, deny, and revoke licenses, freeze trust funds, issue cease and desist orders, refer for criminal prosecution, and levy fines when necessary.

Outcome: All examinations and investigations performed timely.

B6.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of examinations/investigations/complaints

Efficiency – Make contact with complainant within two business days

B. PROGRAM #2 – ELECTIONS

i. ELECTIONS GOAL A

Train local elections officials as required by law.

ELECTIONS OBJECTIVE #A1:

Train local elections officials, who run elections in Mississippi.

Outcome: Train local elections officials on responsibilities in conducting election at the local level.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Hold multiple training sessions for county and municipal election officials

Efficiency –82 attendees to complete the Online Poll Manager Training

Efficiency – 60% of Poll Workers to successfully complete the Online Poll Manager Training on their first attempt.

Efficiency – 50 updated Voter Registrations via Online Voter Registration website

ii. ELECTIONS GOAL B

Ensure public access to campaign finance and lobbyist reports filed with the Agency.

ELECTIONS OBJECTIVE #B1:

Timely process and make publicly available all required campaign finance and lobbyist filings and reports.

Outcome: Public access to campaign finance and lobbyist reports.

B1.1 STRATEGY

Output - Number of campaign finance and lobbyist reports

Efficiency – 100% of reports posted to Agency website within two business days of receipt

C. PROGRAM #3 – PUBLICATIONS

i. PUBLICATIONS GOAL A

Produce and distribute official state publications including the General Laws, Local & Private Laws, House and Senate Journals, and the Judiciary Directory and Court Calendar, as well as the Official and Statistical Register of the State of Mississippi, more commonly known as the Blue Book.

PUBLICATIONS OBJECTIVE #A1:

To produce and distribute official state publications, agency publications, and other internal educational and meeting materials, in a timely and accurate manner.

Outcome: Hard copy or electronic publications distributed.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of statutorily required documents produced

Output – Number of agency publications documents produced

Output – Number of website/online posting of new materials

Output – Number of bills chaptered and recorded

Efficiency – Statutorily required documents published by the established date

ii. PUBLICATIONS GOAL B

To oversee educational, outreach and constituent programs, including the Promote the Vote education program for K-12 students.

PUBLICATIONS OBJECTIVE #B1:

Educate Mississippians on Agency services and other outreach topics.

Outcome: Engage Mississippians with the Agency.

B1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of constituent customer service requests for documents or information

Efficiency – Constituent requests completed within two business days

B1.2 STRATEGY

Output – Number of educational events, speaking engagements, study groups, and/or public hearings

Output – Number of students/schools participating in the Promote the Vote program

Efficiency – Participation rate in Promote the Vote

Efficiency – 11,000,000 visits to www.sos.ms.gov

D. PROGRAM #4 - PUBLIC LANDS

i. PUBLIC LANDS GOAL A

To return fair value for state owned leased land and ensure that current and future generations have access to the state’s abundant natural resources through restoration, protection, conservation, and wise development of those resources.

PUBLIC LANDS OBJECTIVE #A1:

Manage the Public Trust Tidelands, including fast lands and submerged lands, through application of conservation, preservation, and protection policies and principles to preserve and maintain their ecosystems and to prevent their despoliation and destruction.

Outcome: Lease Public Trust Tidelands, where appropriate, to generate revenue for the disbursement by the Legislature through the Department of Marine Resources for programs and projects relating to conservation, reclamation, preservation, acquisition, education, and enhancement of public access to the tidelands.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of Tidelands leases managed

Output – Keep property records up to date on the Secretary of State’s Office website at www.sos.ms.gov

Efficiency – Collection of leasehold rents or assessments within 30 days or assess a late penalty

Efficiency – Collection of leasehold rents or assessments within 90 days or cancel the lease

PUBLIC LANDS OBJECTIVE #A2:

Oversee management and leasing of more than 640,000 acres of 16th section public school trust lands by 106 local school districts by working cooperatively with the Mississippi Forestry Commission to manage the timber lands.

Outcome: Conserve, preserve, protect and manage 16th section public lands in Mississippi.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Publish notices of public bids for hunting and fishing leases, agricultural leases, and mineral leases on 16th section public school trust lands

Output – Number of 16th section leases managed

Output – Keep property records up to date on the Secretary of State’s Office website at www.sos.ms.gov

Efficiency – Review of leases with average turnaround time of less than 10 business days

ii. PUBLIC LANDS GOAL B

Return properties forfeited to the State for non-payment of taxes to productive use by generating tax revenue for local tax rolls through the sale to individuals, businesses, or state agencies.

PUBLIC LANDS OBJECTIVE #B1:

Return parcels to productive use on the local tax rolls.

Outcome: Timely and accurately process applications for tax-forfeited land purchases.

B1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of tax forfeited applications processed

Output – 500 tax forfeited properties sold

E. PROGRAM #5 - SUPPORT SERVICES

i. SUPPORT SERVICES GOAL A

To create and maintain an environment of support to Agency employees, customers, and vendors, while modeling efficient and effective operations and prudent resource management in the support of the functions and duties of the Agency.

SUPPORT SERVICES OBJECTIVE #A1:

Provide administrative and technical support to the Agency to allow Agency employees to function to the highest level.

Outcome: Agency supported by administrative, executive, and technical staff.

A1.1 STRATEGY

Output – Number of payments processed

Efficiency – Payments processed within an average of less than 10 working days of invoice receipt

Output – Number of technical services help desk calls received

Efficiency – Technical help desk calls answered and tickets closed within an average of less than five business days

Output – Number of pieces of mail processed

Efficiency – Mail processed within an average of less than one working days of mailroom receipt

Output – Support Services less than or equal to 27% Total Agency Expenditures