

Mississippi Public Service Commission
5-Year Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025

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MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

5-Year Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2021-2025

1. Mission Statement

The Mississippi Public Service Commission (“Commission” or “PSC”) is a regulatory and quasi-judicial body led by three elected Commissioners. The Commission regulates telecommunications, electric, gas, water, and sewer utilities. The mission of the PSC is to protect the public interest of Mississippi utility consumers, while at the same time balancing the financial and operational interests of utility ratepayers, shareholders, member-owners and utility companies. The PSC is charged with the duty of ensuring that public utilities provide safe, adequate, and reliable utility service at just and reasonable rates. The agency carries out legislative mandates such as the “No Call” program and administration of the Dual Party Relay System Service trust fund in addition to exercising safety jurisdiction over gas pipelines, investigating consumer complaints regarding utilities and conducting both formal and informal hearings.

2. Agency Philosophy

The Mississippi Public Service Commission is dedicated to providing professional and impartial services with the highest degree of integrity, honesty, and dedication. In all of its endeavors, the PSC will be unbiased and forthright. In addition, the agency will closely monitor and evaluate all technical tools available to ensure efficient operation. As with any productive and successful entity, either public or private, the PSC will continually evaluate its workforce in an effort to maximize productivity to see that the citizens of the state of Mississippi are being served in the most economical, dignified, and professional manner possible.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

Statewide Goal # 1: Economic Development

Relevant Benchmarks:

- Business Climate

Energy price and availability in commercial and industrial sectors

Statewide Goal # 2: Natural Resources

Relevant Benchmarks:

- Energy

Total energy production

Renewable Energy Production

Statewide Goal # 3: Infrastructure

Relevant Benchmarks:

- Public Utilities

Ratio of supply of electricity generation capacity to demand

4. Overview of the Agency 5-Year Strategic Plan

The Mississippi Public Service Commission will focus on effective utility regulation through implementation of programs aimed at improving efficiency. The Commission hopes to implement an enhanced electronic filing system, which will increase efficiency internally as well as streamline the filing process for interested parties.

The Commission's Pipeline Safety Division will focus on preventing natural gas pipeline incidents through increased operator awareness as well as the number of inspections of pipeline systems. This will lead to a decrease in the need for emergency response and greater protection of the public. Miss. Code Ann. § 77-13-7, "The 811 Law," has now been in effect for three years and continues to be an invaluable tool in the prevention of accidents. This division will

also work toward greater transparency by enhancing information available on the Commission’s website.

The “No Call” Division of the Commission will work toward enhancing efficiency through streamlined processes and targeted enforcement actions. This approach should allow for an increase in assessment and collection of penalties for violation of the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act (MTSA). The MTSA and the Caller ID Anti-Spoofing Act (ASA) were amended in 2016 to include cellular telephones and again in 2019 to include certain charitable contributions, to allow for businesses to be added to the No-Call list and to increase fines, further bolstering the Commission’s ability in this ever-changing arena. Another effective tool to help constituents is the MS No-Call App that was released in November of 2017. This free app is a faster, easier way for constituents to sign up and file complaints. Thus, a constituent may report a violation by calling the PSC, by filing a complaint online via the recently updated PSC website, or by using the cell phone app. The ultimate effect of these efforts will be a decrease in the total number of violations.

5. Agency’s External/Internal Assessment

- Federal Regulations could impact the cost of energy production in Mississippi.
- State and Federal Funding largely determine the extent to which the PSC is able to maintain adequate staffing and equipment.
- Federal Audit of Pipeline Safety determines federal reimbursement for program operation.

6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program for FY 2021-2025

PROGRAM NUMBER 1

Utility Regulation

Goal A: Maintain Adequate and Reliable Utility Service Through Just and Reasonable Rates

OBJECTIVE A. 1: Expediently process utility dockets and maintain reasonable utility rates

Outcome: Reduce time to resolve Utility Complaint

Outcome: Average Price of Electricity for Residential Customers in Mississippi as a Percentage of the National Average - Investor-owned Utilities (%)

Outcome: Average Price of Electricity for Residential Customers in Mississippi as a Percentage of the National Average - Electric Cooperatives (%)

Outcome: Average Monthly Residential Electric Usage in Mississippi as a Percentage of the National Average (%)

A.1.1. STRATEGY: Develop a comprehensive electronic filing system

Output: Number of cases filed yearly

Efficiency: Cost of implementation of electronic filing system

A.1.2. STRATEGY: Reduce overall number of utility complaints

Output: Total Utility Docket Cases

Output: Total Utility Complaints

Output: Electric Complaints

Output: Telecom Complaints

Output: Water Complaints

Output: Gas Complaints

Output: Sewer Complaints

Efficiency: Electric Complaints as a Percentage of Total (%)

Efficiency: Telecom Complaints as a Percentage of Total (%)

Efficiency: Water Complaints as a Percentage of Total (%)

Efficiency: Gas Complaints as a Percentage of Total (%)

Efficiency: Sewer Complaints as a Percentage of Total (%)

Efficiency: Average Cost per Utility Complaint (\$)

A.1.3. STRATEGY: Ensure fair and reasonable rates for electricity

Output: Electric utility rate changes

Efficiency: Average Price of Electricity per Kilowatt Hour in Mississippi for Residential Customers - Investor-owned Utilities (Cents/ kWh)

Efficiency: Average Price of Electricity per Kilowatt Hour in Mississippi for Residential Customers - Electric Cooperatives (Cents/ kWh)

Efficiency: Average Price of Electricity per Kilowatt Hour - National Average (Cents/ kWh)

Efficiency: Average Monthly Residential Electricity Usage in Mississippi (kWh)

Goal B: Natural Gas Pipeline Safety

OBJECTIVE B.1: Protect the public and environment from the accidental release of natural gas involving intrastate natural gas pipeline systems.

Outcome: Reduce Pipeline Accidents

Outcome: Increase pipeline inspections

Outcome: Reduce incidents due to violation of "811" law

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Ensure gas system operator compliance with federal regulations through thorough inspections.

Output: Number of Pipeline Inspections

Output: Gas Pipeline Operators

Efficiency: Average cost per pipeline inspection

Efficiency: Average cost per investigation of "811" violation

Goal C: Enforcement of the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act (MTSA)

OBJECTIVE C.1: Engage in targeted enforcement of the MTSA.

Outcome: Reduce No-Call Complaints

Outcome: Solicitors Assessed Penalties

Outcome: Penalties Collected

B.1.1 STRATEGY: Enhanced tracking system to generate violation reports, which will lead to increased judgments against violators and decreased complaints.

Output: Registered Telephone Solicitors

Output: Total No-Call Complaints

Output: Total Telephone Customers Served

Efficiency: Cost per No-Call Complaint

Efficiency: Cost per Telephone Solicitor