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MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION on JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

2022-2026  
STRATEGIC PLAN

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(096-00)

# MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE

## 2022-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

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### **Comprehensive Mission Statement**

The mission of the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance (“Commission”) is to enforce the standards of judicial conduct, inquire into judicial disability and conduct, protect the public from judicial misconduct, and protect the judiciary from unfounded allegations of misconduct. The purpose of the Commission is to be rehabilitative and educational as well as disciplinary.

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### **Statement of Agency Philosophy**

The Commission is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the judiciary while balancing a judge’s ability to make findings of fact and reach legal conclusions without disrupting his independence and efficiency.

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### **Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks**

The following are the statewide missions, goals and benchmarks most directly intertwined with the Commission’s mission.

#### Statewide Primary Mission and Philosophy

- + Protect the integrity of the judiciary and well-being of the public.
- + Practice accountability and transparency.
- + Prioritize efficiency and effectiveness of government service to taxpayers and citizens.

#### Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

- + **Judicial Integrity:** To protect Mississippians from instances of judicial misconduct and/or disability
- + **Judicial Competency:** To educate and rehabilitate the judiciary where possible
- + **Commission Recognition:** To educate court clerks, practicing attorneys, law enforcement officers, and the general public on the Commission and its mission

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## Overview of Agency's 5-Year Strategic Plan

The Commission has considered funding and activity levels and has conducted a review of its efficiencies, strengths and weaknesses in order to establish the following work plan for 2022-2026.

### Agency Direction in 2022

#### Online Complaints

Initial complaints of judicial misconduct, which are currently processed manually, will be added to the online application system. Upon completion of this project, 100% of Commission's applications will be online and paperless.

#### Complaint Tracking and Electronic Processing/Maintenance of Complaint Files

Complaint tracking is currently being added to electronic filing/database system, and all future complaint files will be scanned and maintained electronically.

#### Canons and Rules Review

Commission will begin conducting a comprehensive review of its Canons and Rules to ensure relevancy and eliminate any redundancies and impediments.

#### Maintain/Continue Commission Services

- Hold regular Commission meetings in order to conduct Commission business
- Hold electronic/virtual meetings on a rotating basis to expedite complaint resolution
- Hold electronic/virtual hearings as available to reduce cost and expedite complaint resolution
- Investigate all complaints, as directed
- Litigate and adjudicate disciplinary cases
- Provide information to the public via speaking engagements at civic organizations
- Educate incoming law enforcement officers on Commission and encourage their participation in the complaint process
- Participate in national seminars as contributors, students and leaders
- Assist and utilize legal interns from Mississippi College School of Law and University of Mississippi School of Law
- Present programs to Court Clerks' seminars
- Present programs to Judicial seminars
- Provide education and guidance to judges requesting assistance
- Coordinate with Judicial College in maintaining judicial educational excellence
- Present Continuing Legal Education seminars
- Evaluate agency best practices, efficiencies, income and expenditures
- Review Canons, Rules of Procedure, and seek revisions as needed

## Agency Direction in Years 2022 to 2026

### Maintain/Continue Full Slate of Services

- Hold regular board and committee meetings in order to conduct Commission's business
- Hold electronic/virtual meetings on a rotating basis to expedite complaint resolution
- Hold electronic/virtual hearings as available to reduce cost and expedite complaint resolution
- Investigate all complaints
- Adjudicate disciplinary cases
- Provide information to the public via speaking engagements at civic organizations
- Educate incoming law enforcement officers on Commission and encourage their participation in the complaint process
- Participate in national seminars as contributors, students and leaders
- Assist and utilize legal interns from Mississippi College School of Law and University of Mississippi School of Law
- Present programs to Court Clerks' seminars
- Present programs to Judicial seminars
- Provide education and guidance to judges requesting assistance
- Coordinate with Judicial College in maintaining judicial educational excellence
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## Agency's External/Internal Assessment and Internal Management Systems

### 5.1 External/Internal Assessment

The Commission's mission is narrowly focused and requires advanced skills in its undertaking. As such, personnel/payroll is the largest expenditure for the Commission, and its total budget is controlled exclusively by the legislature.

Internally, the Commission has the capability to exact fines against offending judges; however, those fine amounts must be approved by the Mississippi Supreme Court and are typically nominal in amount. Further, the final imposition of the fine by the Supreme Court is, on average, a year from the time initially recommended for imposition by the Commission.

Externally, Commission has no ability to influence its budget, other than traditional lobbying methods, and likewise has no ability to influence the number of offending judges requiring the imposition of fines. As a practical matter, even if it could influence the number of instances of judicial misconduct resulting in fines, the outcome would not justify those means.

### 5.2 Internal Management Systems

The Commission is required to meet monthly, although in previous years has reduced the meeting frequency to alternating months. Utilizing virtual capabilities allows for Commission to meet monthly in order to facilitate meeting more frequently and increasing the efficiency of the complaint review process.

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## Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures

Commission has only one focus: Establish and enforce the ethical conduct of judges.

Goal A: Judicial Integrity: Protect the integrity of the judiciary and well-being of the public.

Objective A.1. Receive and process all complaints of judicial misconduct in a timely and efficient manner.

Outcome: Competent judiciary and citizenry protection.

A.1.1. Strategy: Streamline the complaint filing process, complaint review and procedures by which Commission handles its regular business.

Output: Number of complaints processed

Output: Procedure by which complaints are processed

Output: Time in which complaints are fully adjudicated

Efficiency: Percentage of complaints completed electronically

Efficiency: Percentage of Commission meetings held virtually or electronically

Efficiency: Percentage of complaints fully resolved within three (3) months

Explanatory: Number of complaints received

Goal B: Judicial competency: To educate and rehabilitate the judiciary where possible

Objective B.1 Provide guidance to judges seeking direction and teach at Continuing Judicial Education (CJE) seminars.

Outcome: Number of judges maintaining requisite number of CJE's.

Outcome: Competent judiciary and citizenry protection.

Goal C: Communications, Outreach and Organizational Effectiveness: Proactively educate court clerks, law enforcement officers, practicing attorneys, and the general public.

Objective C.1. Increase public and professional awareness of Commission's mission, activities, and services and enhance organizational effectiveness.

Outcome: Number of outreach/educational events.

C.1.1. Strategy: Demonstrate a commitment to being fiscally responsible and responsive.

Output: Number of inquiries answered.

Efficiency: Percentage of participants satisfied with the level of service provided (from participants' surveys).

Efficiency: Percentage of expenditure budget spent.

Efficiency: Percentage of Commission staff actively engaged in speaking/teaching engagements and seminars.

# MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SNAPSHOT

## FOUNDATION

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance (“Commission”) is to enforce the standards of judicial conduct, inquire into judicial disability and conduct, protect the public from judicial misconduct, and protect the judiciary from unfounded

allegations of misconduct. The purpose of the Commission is to be rehabilitative and educational as well as disciplinary.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

### PHILOSOPHY

The Commission is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the judiciary while balancing a judge’s ability to make findings of fact and reach legal conclusions without disrupting his independence and efficiency.

### VALUE STATEMENTS

- Remain focused on and committed to serving the judiciary and the public.
- Maintain the public’s confidence in the judiciary.
- Make full use of current technology and best practices.
- Serve the judiciary and the public efficiently and ethically.
- Be a good steward of the resources entrusted to the agency.
- Cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship with allied state, regional and national organizations and agencies.

## STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Goals	Strategies	Benchmarks
<b>PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIARY AND WELL-BEING OF THE PUBLIC</b> Receive and process all complaints of judicial misconduct efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline the complaint filing process, complaint review and procedures by which Commission handles its regular business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of complaints processed</li> <li>• Procedure by which complaints are processed</li> <li>• Time in which complaints are fully adjudicated</li> <li>• Percentage of complaints completed electronically</li> <li>• Percentage of Commission meetings held virtually or electronically</li> <li>• Percentage of complaints fully resolved within three (3) months</li> <li>• Number of complaints received</li> </ul>
<b>JUDICIAL COMPETENCY</b> Educate and rehabilitate the judiciary where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance to judges seeking direction and teach at Continuing Judicial Education (CJE) seminars.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of judges maintaining requisite CJE hours</li> <li>• Competency of judiciary and citizenry</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</b> Proactively educate court clerks, law enforcement officers, practicing attorneys and the general public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase public and professional awareness of Commission’s mission, activities and services, and enhance organizational effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of outreach/educational events</li> <li>• Number of inquiries answered</li> <li>• Percentage of participants satisfied with the level of service provided</li> <li>• Percentage of expenditure budget spent</li> <li>• Percentage of Commission staff actively engaged in speaking/teaching engagements/seminars</li> </ul>