

Board of Registered Professional Geologists

LBO Number 826-00

**5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2023 - 2027**



July 8, 2021

BOARD OF REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Comprehensive Mission Statement:

The Mississippi Board of Registered Professional Geologists was created to safeguard life, health, property, and to promote the public welfare. The overall mission of this agency is to ensure that those publicly practicing geology, environmental geology, engineering geology, geophysics, geochemistry and other subdisciplines of geology, are adequately educated, trained, and experienced so that the public's health, safety and welfare are indeed being protected.

Our mission includes the licensure and regulation of the public practice of geology by those who make geologic determinations and evaluations which may affect the public welfare. The practice of geology and its scope is defined in the Mississippi Registered Professional Geologists Practice Act of 1997 (§73-63-1 *et seq*, Mississippi Code, Amended 1972).

2. Philosophy:

The Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists is dedicated to the protection of the environment, the public's health, safety and welfare, and to the competent public practice of geology. The philosophy of the Board is to fulfill its responsibilities to its enrollees/registrants and to the public with the highest professional standards, quality of service, and equitable treatment of all individuals. The Board maintains and operates by a Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics contained in its Rules and Regulations. The Board continually promotes a positive working relationship with private sector companies, universities, other State agencies, and geological licensure boards in other states to develop and share information to better serve the public.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks:

- Statewide Goal #1 – To make available and accessible, quality public higher education at an affordable cost that prepares Mississippians to become productive, financially self-sufficient members of society while meeting the human resource needs of Mississippi and its employers, including the creation of new jobs through the commercialization of university-based research

Relevant Benchmarks for Goal #1

- Licensure exam pass rates for graduates with four-year degrees in a licensed field of study, by field of study
- Percentage of graduates in high-needs disciplines who enter and remain in practice in Mississippi in the high-need discipline five years and ten years following graduation, by discipline
- Licensure exam pass rate for graduate school graduates by discipline

- Percentage of graduates in high-need disciplines practicing in Mississippi, by discipline
- Statewide Goal #2 – 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
 - Relevant Benchmarks for Goal #2
 - Number of government employees per 10,000 population
 - Average wait time for state government services
 - Regulatory efficiency: average length of time to resolution of documented complaints to professional licensing agencies
 - Number and average cost of regulatory actions taken, by regulatory body and type of action
 - State dollars saved by providing government services online

4. Overview of the Agency's Five-Year Strategic Plan:

- In FY 1998 the Board established policies, procedures and rules necessary to initiate the implementation of Mississippi Annotated Code Sections 73-63-1 through 73-63-57 (Supp. 1997). These activities have continued since that time focusing on the development and dissemination of applications for registration and enrollment and the thorough review of qualifications and registration or enrollment of qualified applicants. As such, these remain as targeted activities of the agency.
- The Board established and continues to promote and expand the use of the two geologic competency exams (the FG (Fundamentals of Geology) and the PG (Practice of Geology)). The FG was adopted as an "Exit/Assessment" examination by the three (3) state universities that offer degrees in geology. The Board approves the candidates for the exam and administers the exams twice a year. These exams are developed by the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG®) and are used by all 32 states requiring geological licensure. The Board's Director actively participates in the functions of ASBOG.
- In FY 1999, the Board established a regulatory program to investigate complaints and impose penalties and disciplinary actions. The Board will continue to actively investigate complaints and take appropriate disciplinary actions. The Board will streamline this process to reduce the time to resolution.
- The Board has further established a procedure for the application and issuance of temporary work permits for those registered/licensed as professional geologists in other states. The Board has successfully increased awareness of the option through the Board's website and will continue to promote the application process.

- The Board has developed reciprocity/comity agreements with Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and will develop new agreements with other states.
- Online license renewal continues to grow and has now reached the 69% mark (64% for FY 20, 63% for FY 19, 60% for FY 18, 50% for FY 17). This does provide a significant savings of time and resources. The Board will continue to improve the process which will ultimately increase the number of online renewals.
- The Board of Registered Professional Geologists has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Mississippi Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors which defined the basis of the relationship between these two boards. Once each year select members of each board and their respective Executive Directors meet to discuss overlapping professional practice and regulatory issues. It is the Board's goal to maintain this avenue of discourse into the future.
- The Board's Executive Director has compiled the Board's historical databases into a complete record of all who have applied and/or have been registered or enrolled with this Board. This type of compilation has been completed for other official records of the Board and new files will continue to be added. This has significantly streamlined digital access to all of the Board's current and historical records. Some minor work remains to further streamline the process. This compilation of the Board's records has improved the functionality of the Board's operations and speed of services provided by the Board. In addition to serving the public better, these actions give the Board the ability to analyze its efficiency and services.
- The Board has implemented measures to actively measure the performance measures outlined below. This has been accomplished through several means including daily activity/response logs and through accounting procedures. Continuing the use of these measures will sustain efficiency of the Board's operations.
- The Board continues to improve the Board's website to make different services and public information available to its registrants/enrollees and to the general public. The Board anticipates an overall growth in the demand for geologists. The goals and objective outlined above will allow the Board to more efficiently handle that growth and better serve its registrants/enrollees and the public.
- The Board will continue to develop a strategy to communicate opportunities for continuing education resources to the registrants and enrollees. These opportunities will be of interest to continued professional development of professional geologists and have a relevancy to the geology of Mississippi.

5. Agency's External/Internal Assessment and Management Systems:

- Following the previous significant decline (~10% from CY 16 to CY 17), the number of registrants and enrollees (i.e. RPG's and GIT) has reached a level of stability during the past 5 years. From calendar year 2017 to 2021 the number of total enrollees has fluctuated within about 3% annually. This leveling off of the number of enrollees suggests an established stability exists within the field of employed Geologists across the numerous sectors served by the Board. This steady level of registration/enrollment has not affected the Board's operation or revenue.
- The Board is striving to optimize its services and functions, and reducing costs through improvements in its online services, digitizing records, database and website improvements.

6. Agency Goals and Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program of Licensure & Regulation for FY 2023 through FY 2027:

GOAL A: MAINTAIN TRANSPARENCY OF AGENCY TO THE PUBLIC, OTHER AGENCIES, AND REGISTRANTS/ENROLLEES (Source: §73-63-1 *et seq*, Mississippi Code, Amended 1972)

Objective A.1. Maintain Access by Registrants/Enrollees and the Public to Information including Public Records

Outcome: Request for information/action fulfilled within 3 business days (%)

A.1.1. STRATEGY: Digital scanning of the Board's public records and make them available on the Board's website

Output: Number of records/information published on the Board's website

Efficiency: Annual cost to publish records/information

Efficiency: State dollars saved by providing services online (Statewide Strategic Plan)

A.1.2. STRATEGY: Disseminate relevant information to registrants, enrollees, and the public through meetings

Output: Number of meetings with students and professionals

Efficiency: Average travel cost per meeting with students and professionals

GOAL B: THOROUGH REVIEW OF QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANTS FOR REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGIST AND GEOLOGIST-IN-TRAINING (Source: §73-63-1 *et seq*, Mississippi Code, Amended 1972)

Objective B.1. Maintain Uniform Standards and Practice for Qualifying Applicants

Outcome: RPG/GIT applicants who meet or exceed the minimum uniform standards (%)

B.1.1. STRATEGY: Continued use of existing comprehensive method of applicant review

Output: Number of new registrants and enrollees

Output: Number of registrants and enrollees

Efficiency: Average number of days between receipt of a complete application and Board review (Statewide Strategic Plan)

Efficiency: Average Board cost to process an application

GOAL C: ADMINISTRATION OF QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS AND BOARD PARTICIPATION (Source: §73-63-1 *et seq*, Mississippi Code, Amended 1972)

Objective C.1. Qualify Applicants and Administer Exams

Outcome: Change (year to year) in number of exams administered to graduating students (%)

Outcome: Change (year to year) in number of exams administered to GIT applicants (%)

Outcome: Change (year to year) in number of exams administered to RPG applicants (%)

Outcome: FG (Fundamentals of Geology) exam pass rates for graduates with 4-year degrees (%) (Statewide Strategic Plan)

Outcome: PG (Practice of Geology) licensing exam pass rates for graduates with 4-year degrees and 4 years work experience (%) (Statewide Strategic Plan)

C.1.1. STRATEGY: Continued use of existing comprehensive method of qualifying potential examinees

Output: Number of examinees taking qualifying examinations

Efficiency: Board cost per exam administered

C.1.2. STRATEGY: Board/Executive Director active involvement with ASBOG®

Output: Number of ASBOG® meetings attended by Board Members or Executive Director

Efficiency: Cost per ASBOG® meeting attended

GOAL D: INVESTIGATIONS OF COMPLAINTS, ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS, AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL GEOLOGISTS PRACTICE ACT OF 1997 (Source: §73-63-1 *et seq*, Mississippi Code, Amended 1972)

Objective D.1. Investigate and Process Complaints and Complete Disciplinary Actions in a Timely Manner

Outcome: Complaints and disciplinary actions processed within 3 months (%)

Outcome: Complaints and disciplinary actions processed within 6 months (%)

Outcome: Complaints and disciplinary actions processed within 12 months (%)

D.1.1. STRATEGY: Use a strategic, streamlined and structured method to process complaints and expeditiously complete disciplinary action

Output: Number of pending investigations (Statewide Strategic Plan)

Output: Number of completed investigations (Statewide Strategic Plan)

Efficiency: Average length of time to resolution of documented complaints (days) (Statewide Strategic Plan)

Efficiency: Average cost per investigation (Statewide Strategic Plan)