

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION

Five Year Strategic Plan

For the Fiscal Years 2027 – 2031



Prepared for:

**Legislative Budget Office
and Department of Finance and Administration
Office of Budget and Fund Management**

Submitted by:

**Mississippi Library Commission
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Mississippi Library Commission

1. **Comprehensive Mission Statement:**

The Mississippi Library Commission is committed – through leadership, advocacy, and service – to strengthening and enhancing libraries and library services for all Mississippians.

Vision:

All Mississippians have access to quality library services in order to:

- achieve their greatest potential,
- participate in a global society, and
- enrich their daily lives.

2. **Philosophy and Core Values:**

The Mississippi Library Commission is committed to providing resources to every citizen of the state through quality public library service. MLC offers a variety of programs to public libraries that assist in their abilities to acquire and process materials, employ knowledgeable staff, and keep up to date with emerging and traditional service methods. We are dedicated to the idea that library service is for everyone, no matter the circumstance, and to providing methods to equalize service for all Mississippians.

3. **Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks:**

Statewide Goal: To make available a quality K-12 public education for all Mississippians that prepares them, upon high school graduation, to either enter the labor force with an employable skill or to successfully complete a higher education program.

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:**

The Mississippi Library Commission's overarching mission is to strengthen and enhance library services for Mississippians through direct and indirect services. The agency's two (2) bureaus offer unique services to Mississippi libraries, state agencies, and Mississippi citizens. Each bureau represents a budgetary program.

MLC's objectives are to continue to support Mississippi's public libraries through state aid and federal grants; ensure the Personnel Incentive Grants Program is monitored to follow compliance with the accreditation measures in place; continuing education for library staff at all levels and skill sets; consulting services to provide researched and cited advice on all aspects of public library service; maintaining and expanding both traditional and emerging library services for all Mississippians in appropriate formats through support of resource sharing, talking books and Braille, special collections and services, and MAGNOLIA; adhering to a comprehensive technology plan that includes national and international standards and network security; and managing the agency's facilities and property to ensure the agency's employees can carry out the agency's goals and objectives in a safe and comfortable environment.

Over the next five years, using the ongoing objectives identified above, MLC plans to coordinate and assume equity in availability of its services by researching and exploring how emerging technologies can expand access to library resources; focusing on ways to expand library access to Mississippians with visual disabilities; developing focused programming that meets the needs of public library staff; enhancing technology opportunities utilizing the E-rate federal program; and any other objectives identified in this process.

5. Agency's External/Internal Assessment

The Mississippi Library Commission acts as a conduit for state and federal funding passed through in the form of grant awards to public library systems to enhance and increase services provided to the taxpayers of Mississippi. The actual amounts of grant awards are dependent on state appropriations and federal grant awarding. Grants management and reporting is inherent to the program. The state's accounting system provides the means of reporting.

Many of the agency's programs—consulting, continuing education, technology services, the primary resource library, Talking Books, summer reading program, and Center for the Book—are eligible to be paid with federal money and are aligned with the Library Services and Technology Act's purposes and priorities. The federal programs the agency carries out are laid out in our LSTA 5-Year Plan, which requires performance measures and annual reporting. Changes in the LSTA overall program can affect the agency in the form of opportunities or challenges.

Other reporting includes the following: each public library system is required to submit an Annual Statistical Report. These reports are cumulated and submitted as a required State report to IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services), a federal agency. All

public library systems are required to submit annual audits to MLC which include reports of agency expenditures.

The agency is currently in jeopardy of losing federal funding beginning in fiscal year 2027. In January 2025, the federal administration initiated steps to eliminate the IMLS and the funding it provides to states through the Grants to States program. This program's authorization is set to expire on September 30, 2025, and will no longer be statutory. Further, the agency submitted a budget justification and only requested \$5.5M specifically for the agency's closure. As of the filing of this strategic plan and the agency's budget request for FY27, MLC anticipates it will no longer receive federal funding.

6. Agency Program Goals

Program: Library Services Bureau

GOAL A: Support and Enhance the Library Workforce

OBJECTIVE A.1. Mississippi public library staff will have the advice, training, and support necessary to provide quality services and programs in their communities.

Outcome: Number of continuing education workshops held per year

A.1.1. STRATEGY: Learning opportunities will be provided on a variety of topics designed to address the needs of library directors, mid-level managers, staff, and trustees.

Output: Number of continuing education workshops held per year

A.1.2. STRATEGY: Advice, research, and support will be offered to each public library through a team of library consultants and other staff.

Output: Number of library visits by commission staff

GOAL B: Strengthen Libraries by Sharing Resources

OBJECTIVE B.1. By sharing resources, information, and access, Mississippi libraries will have strong, diverse collections available to all Mississippians so that they may discover resources and engage in their communities.

Outcome: Number of items available for use at MLC (primary resource library)

B.1.1. STRATEGY: MLC will encourage, enable, and pursue resource sharing opportunities for public libraries for print, electronic, and non-traditional resources in order to meet the needs of Mississippians, including individuals of diverse backgrounds and ethnicity.

Output: Number of items available for use at MLC (primary resource library)

Output: Number of items available for use statewide on the interlibrary loan system

Output: Number of items borrowed and loaned on the interlibrary loan system

Output: Number of searches on MAGNOLIA

B.1.2. STRATEGY: MLC will make resources available so that Mississippians may improve their general knowledge and skills through reading and discussion programs.

Output: Number of children participating in statewide summer library program

GOAL C: Serve All Mississippians

OBJECTIVE C.1. Mississippians, including those with visual and physical disabilities, will have access to materials in the appropriate format.

Outcome: Number of patrons utilizing Braille, Audio, etc. (Talking Book Services)

C.1.1. STRATEGY: MLC will administer the Library of Congress's National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled program to equalize library service to persons having difficulty using a library.

Output: Number of patrons utilizing Braille, Audio, etc. (Talking Book Services)

Program: Administrative Services Bureau (includes Executive Office)

GOAL A: Enhance the technological environment of Mississippi libraries

OBJECTIVE A.1. MLC seeks to enhance the technological capabilities of Mississippi libraries by offering support and services through a variety of projects and

programs designed to address both the internal and external technological needs impacting library operations.

Outcome: Number of helpdesk tickets resolved

A.1.1. STRATEGY: Advice, research, and support will be offered to each public library as needed in any area of technology.

Output: Number of helpdesk tickets resolved

A.1.2. STRATEGY: Collaborate with the Mississippi Information Technology Services agency to provide enhanced internet access.

Output: Number of helpdesk tickets resolved

A.1.3. STRATEGY: Assistance in preparing and submitting all required forms will be provided so that libraries obtain the most value and understanding of the program.

Output: Number of helpdesk tickets resolved