

MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FISCAL YEARS 2027-2031

1. Mission Statement

The Mississippi State Board of Dental Examiners ("the Board") is a legislatively-mandated state regulatory agency charged with the responsibilities of examining, licensing, registering, and regulating the practices of dentistry and dental hygiene to ensure competency (through examination and licensure) and ethics (through registration and regulation) among all dental professionals in the State of Mississippi for the ultimate goal of safeguarding and enhancing the health and welfare of the citizens of this State. As such, the Board is neither affiliated with nor functions as a subsidiary of any private or professional organization.

2. Philosophy

The Mississippi State Board of Dental Examiners' philosophy is to safeguard and enhance the health and welfare of the citizens of this State by fulfilling its responsibilities of examining, licensing, registering, and regulating the practices of dentistry and dental hygiene to ensure competency and ethics among all dental professionals in the State.

3. Relevant statewide goals and benchmarks

Benchmark 1 – Cost of Government

- The Mississippi Board of Dental Examiners (MSBDE) is a special funded agency and operates without additional taxpayer burden. All revenue for operations is received from license and permit applications, license fees, cost recovery for disciplinary actions.

Benchmark 2 – Government Efficiency

- Regulatory Efficiency: average length of time to resolution of documented complaints
 - MSBDE will set a goal to complete complaint investigations from the date of the filing of the complaint through Board determination to be an average of nine (9) to twelve (12) months.
 - MSBDE will set a goal to reduce the time of issuance of a license from date of application to issuance from 4-8 weeks to fourteen (14) working days or less.
- Number and average cost of regulatory actions taken by regulatory body and type of action.
 - MSBDE will continue to utilize emerging technologies to provide electronic access to licensing and investigative materials electronically to decrease mailing and delivery costs.
 - The Deputy Director assumed additional responsibilities for compliance in FY24. This will help to ensure the Board is on target to meet the current and future, as well as to ensure compliance with the issuance of licenses and permits and with board disciplinary orders.
- State dollars saved by providing government services on-line (e.g., document retrieval, issuance of new permits, and license renewal).
 - MSBDE has engaged with new licensing and regulatory software and transitioned to this system in FY25 and FY26. The system will provide a user-friendly online experience which integrates our licensing application and renewal processes into our website for ease of access.
 - MSBDE is moving to be 100% digitized environment. At present, we are approximately 90% compliant with this objective.

- MSBDE is issuing renewals of licenses and permits in an electronic format. This further reduces postage, printing, and office supplies expenses.
- MSBDE will work to reduce the use of office equipment and supplies. Over the next 1-4 years, we will move to more centralized printing, scanning, and faxing technology. We will reduce the use of individual office printers.

4. Overview of the agency's five-year strategic plan

Ongoing projects from past strategic initiatives include:

- Network and System upgrades – The Agency transitioned the network to the private cloud infrastructure with the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services. This transition was at no cost to the Agency initially and has saved the funds which would have been needed to purchase a new onsite server. However, FY27 will add an additional cost for data storage with MS ITS, and the Board may have to consider purchasing equipment to host data internally due to projected costs associated with ITS private hosting services.
- The Board engaged with a new software developer and transitioned to a new licensing and enforcement management system in FY25-FY26.
- MSBDE's newsletter, *The Dental Digest*, will continue and will be sent in an electronic format biannually or more often as needed. The ability to keep our licensees updated and informed of changes in Board Regulations and emerging trends in dental health will enhance communication and compliance. The newsletter is sent electronically and therefore has no cost to the agency or State other than personnel time to create the newsletter.

5. External/internal assessment

Factors, which if they occur, may impact the accomplishment of the goals or strategic plans:

- A significant increase or decrease in the number of licensed dentists, dental hygienists, and radiology permit holders in the State of Mississippi.
- A significant increase or decrease in the number of complaints received, investigations initiated, and disciplinary actions issued by the MSBDE.
- Legislation affecting the Mississippi State Board of Dental Examiners or the Dental Practice Act.
- Legislation concerning mid-level providers or expanded function dental hygienists and dental assistants who are not currently permitted in Mississippi.
- The loss of CODA accreditation by any Mississippi dental or dental hygiene program.
- Technological limitations or emerging advancements in computer hardware, software, information retrieval and management.
- Loss by resignation or retirement of key agency staff.

6. Agency's goals, objectives, strategies, and measures by program

GOAL 1: To enhance access to dental health care for more Mississippians.

OBJECTIVE: To improve licensing efficiency and approvals to promote the expansion of the dental profession workforce in Mississippi by removing obstacles to the licensing process, while ensuring a user-friendly renewal of licenses process for current licensed dentists and dental hygienists.

STRATEGY 1

Improve efficiency in the licensing and permitting application process by:

- Enhancing the electronic licensing management software to accommodate all application types
- Provide a stronger customer service support culture from the Board's staff as evidenced by the reduction of the length of time between the application process and the issuance of a license
- Increase the number of Board meetings using an online platform for the purposes of expediting Board approvals of licenses and permits.

OUTPUT: Evidenced by the comparison of new licenses issued and renewals by comparing data over the past 5 years

OUTCOME: Measured by the year end number of licenses, permits, renewals, and registrations.

STRATEGY 2

To partner with the Mississippi's dental and dental hygiene programs and associations to support the process of examination and licensing of graduates and encouraging them to establish their professional career in Mississippi.

OUTPUT: Engagement of the Board and Board staff with on-site visits and support to students in the dental profession and building partnerships with all the current CODA accredited Mississippi Programs.

OUTPUT: Engagement of the Board's leadership with the Mississippi Dental Association, Mississippi Dental Society, and the Mississippi Dental Hygiene Association.

STRATEGY 3

Maintain active membership in national associations which promotes a collaborative effort in supporting and recruiting dental professionals, ensuring clinical standards in examinations, and engaging in emerging national trends in the recruitment and retention of dental professionals.

GOAL 2: To operate the agency in an efficient manner to serve the citizens of the state of Mississippi and to provide a customer friendly culture to support the public at large with a responsive and professional interaction with the Board and Board staff as it relates to complaints or concerns.

OBJECTIVE: To maximize the use of available resources with a minimal monetary impact to the citizens of Mississippi and without the need to increase fees to licensees and permit holders.

OUTPUT: Decrease the time of investigations from date of filing to resolution to an average of 6-9 months.

STRATEGY 1

Receive complaints electronically and assign them to investigative staff within five to ten working days.

STRATEGY 2

Ensure compliance with disciplinary actions and orders from the Board within the parameters set forth in the Board order.

STRATEGY 3

Ensure that both the complainant and the licensee are notified within ten working days of the Board's resolution.

STRATEGY 4

To increase the public's access to the Board staff via a safe and inviting office space with parking, accessibility by individuals with special needs, and improvement in a customer-friendly culture with the interaction of agency staff and the public at large.

STRATEGY 5

To implement an active social media presence for the agency to assist consumers of dental services by educating and engaging the public with educational information.

GOAL 3: To operate the agency in an efficient manner and to serve current and prospective Mississippi licensees.

OBJECTIVE: To maximize the use of available resources without the need to increase fees for licensees and permit holders.

OUTPUT: Decrease the time between application submission and license issuance to fourteen working days.

STRATEGY 1

Receive all application types and supporting documents electronically.

STRATEGY 2

Ensure compliance with the issuance of licensing by building a collaborative team process which engages licensing needs with legal and investigations to determine compliance with licensing standards to promote education of licensees and to enhance the protection of Mississippi consumers of dental care.

STRATEGY 3

Zero acceptance of payments of applications or Board issued fines in office by directing all payments thorough the Board's online portal to expedite the licensing process.