

2017  
two thousand seventeen



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
REHABILITATION SERVICES

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services  
**Annual Report**

- 3 Welcome
- 4 AbilityWorks
  - Assistive Technology
  - Disability Determination Services
  - Special Disability Programs
- 5 Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Deaf Services
  - Supported Employment
  - Transition Services
- 6 Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind
  - Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind
  - Business Enterprise Program
  - Independent Living Services for the Blind
  - Itinerant Teacher Program
- 7 Program Funding
- 8 In Depth Look at VR & VRB
- 11 In Depth Look at DDS & OSDP
- 12 Districts & Office Locations

## MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS) to provide appropriate and comprehensive services to Mississippians with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. Programs and services assist individuals with disabilities to gain employment, retain employment and to live more independently.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services is committed to being recognized as the premier agency for Mississippians with disabilities by creating a culture of care with compassionate, valued, and knowledgeable staff. We will promote an environment where customers and staff work together to achieve our common goal of empowering and improving the lives of Mississippians with disabilities.

\*All numbers are reported by state fiscal year (SFY) July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017 with the exception of those for Disability Determination Services, which is entirely federally funded. DDS numbers reflect the federal fiscal year (FFY) October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017



**Chris M. Howard**  
*Executive Director*

# WELCOME

## from the Executive Director

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS), I am pleased to present our state fiscal year (SFY) 2017 Annual Report. It represents my second full year in office as MDRS Executive Director.

Our agency serves over 100,000 Mississippians with disabilities each year with our mission to provide quality services in a timely and effective manner. Some of our accomplishments this fiscal year include:

### ***Disability Determination Services (DDS)***

- Exceeded Budgeted Workload by processing 1,679 claims over Budgeted Goal
- Expanded use of Video equipment for Consultative Examination and processing Disability Hearings

### ***Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP)***

- Provided services to nearly 4,000 individuals across the State providing the opportunity for these individuals to live at home as opposed to a long term care facility.
- Provided nearly a \$60,000 cost savings per individual per year to the State of Mississippi through the administering of two Home and Community Based Programs.
- Provided 326 home modifications to individuals across the State to ensure individuals with disabilities are safe and secure in their homes.

### ***Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)***

#### ***Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB)***

- Successfully restructured the VR and VRB offices in order to comply with the federal mandates contained in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA).
- Assisted over 3,000 individuals in successfully meeting their employment goal.
- Expanded our Business Development Office to successfully build relationships with the business community in an effort to secure great careers for individuals with disabilities.
- Completed the 4th Summer Internship Program (SIP) for 73 interns, allowing students to obtain first-hand work experience in their chosen field.
- Conducted four job fairs across the State in which nearly 150 businesses participated and over 1,200 individuals with disabilities were able to obtain face to face contact with these employers.
- Provided a Return on Investment to the State of Mississippi of 2.6 for every state dollar appropriated to our VR and VRB programs.

The information contained within this report will provide you with even more information about MDRS. Please know that you are a key part to our successes, and we thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

Chris M. Howard

MDRS Executive Director

## ABILITYWORKS

AbilityWorks is a network of 15 community rehabilitation programs providing vocational assessment, work adjustment training for individuals with disabilities. This is possible through a wide array of contract and subcontract services provided to local business and industry. During SFY 2017, AbilityWorks served a total of 1,444 individuals with disabilities. AbilityWorks establishes cooperative agreements with local businesses to provide community based work experience, customized training and on-the-job training.

**1,444 CLIENTS SERVED**

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive Technology (AT) is defined as the application of technology to alleviate barriers that interfere with the lives of individuals with disabilities, and it is intended to help the individual maintain or enhance his or her ability to function personally, socially, and/or vocationally. MDRS Rehabilitation Engineers and Rehabilitation Technologists provide consultations on all AT referrals. The Rehabilitation Technologists and Specialists perform initial evaluations and assessments, set up AT equipment, provide follow-up evaluations, design and fabricate original items and provide specifications and final inspections for AT services. The Assistive Technology division staff evaluates MDRS clients for the most appropriate assistive technology, thus enabling them to return to work and/or live independently. During the SFY 2017, the Assistive Technology division served a total of 1,196 individuals with disabilities.

*This information only reports clients who were assigned to the Assistive Technology division during SFY 2017 and do not reflect clients who continue to be served from previous fiscal year(s).*

**1,196 CLIENTS SERVED**

## DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES

We operate in a partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to determine the medical eligibility of individuals to receive benefits from Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income as directed by federal guidelines from SSA. This office handles disability claims from all 23 SSA offices in Mississippi.

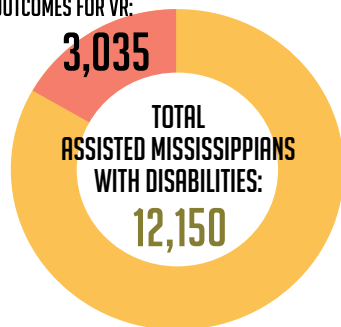
## SPECIAL DISABILITY PROGRAMS

We specialize in assisting individuals with the most severe physical disabilities to remain active in their homes and communities. Services are provided based on need as determined by functional assessment and are provided through an individualized plan of services and supports (PSS). The Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP) offers services that include, but are not limited to: case management, attendant care, durable medical equipment and specialized medical supplies, home and vehicle modifications, respite care, and transition services. During the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017, the Office of Special Disability Programs (OSDP) provided independent living services for 4,057 individuals with significant (severe) disabilities. OSDP administers the Traumatic Brain Injury/Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund. A full copy of that report can be found at [www.mdrs.ms.gov](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov).

**4,057 INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES PROVIDED**

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT  
OUTCOMES FOR VR:



We help over 13,000 Mississippians a year overcome limitations imposed by physical or mental disabilities in order for that person to secure or maintain employment. In the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) assisted 12,150 Mississippians with disabilities in receiving services including, but not limited to: counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, physical and mental restoration, job training, assistive technology, and job placement. Individuals served by VR have a wide array of disabilities including, but not limited to: hearing loss or deafness, amputations, mental and emotional disorders, epilepsy, developmental disease and disorders, traumatic brain injuries, orthopedic impairments, residuals from cancer, and speech

impairments. The total number of VR consumers employed during SFY 2017 was 3,035.

**3,035 SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

## DEAF SERVICES

We help people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or late deafened find employment, attend education and training programs, and learn more about their community resources. The MDRS Deaf Services Program continues to promote excellence by striving to assist new RCD's (Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf) to reach the required communications skills level on the Signed Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), an American Sign Language assessment developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology. Adequate communication skills are a pre-requisite to meaningful counseling and guidance with people who are Deaf and use manual communication.

This skill, along with other specialized training, has been a vital factor in the successful rehabilitation of individuals with deafness or significant hearing loss. In SFY 2017, Deaf Services were provided to 3,058 Mississippians, resulting in 1,385 successful rehabilitations.

**1,385 SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATIONS**

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

We assist individuals with the most significant disabilities who require intensive support services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. Each MDRS district has a Supported Employment Team consisting of a specialized VR/SE counselor, and a Vocational Training Instructor who oversees the work of Job Trainers working on site with our consumers. During SFY 2017, 548 individuals received Supported Employment services, 59 resulting in successful employment.

**59 SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENTS**

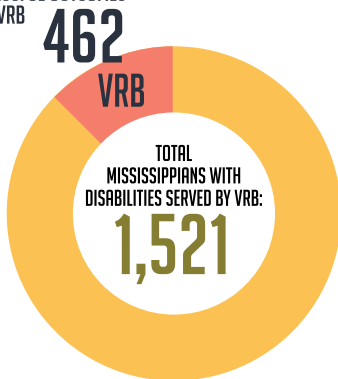
## TRANSITION & YOUTH CAREER SERVICES

We work with eligible secondary school students with disabilities, their families, and school personnel to assure there is an integrated program of education and vocational training available to provide a seamless transition from school to work. In SFY 2017, the number of students receiving transition services was 2,842 and 443 students found employment. Examples of transition services are vocational-technical training, vocational evaluation, work adjustment training, on the job training, job search skills, and work experience programs. These services may be available to students both on and off campus or at one of the 15 AbilityWorks as a part of their school day.

**443 SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES FOR VRB



We specialize in working with individuals who are blind or visually impaired to ensure opportunities for inclusion into the workforce, community, and home. Of the 3,497 successful employment outcomes by MDRS, 462 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB). VRB provided consumers services such as counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, orientation and mobility training, job training, and assistive technology. The total number of Mississippians with disabilities served by VRB during SFY 2017 was 1,521.

**462 SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

## ADDIE MCBRYDE REHABILITATION CENTER FOR THE BLIND

The Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind provides traditional intensive evaluation, training, and adjustment services on the campus of the University of Mississippi Medical Center. In SFY 2017, the Addie McBryde Center provided training to 125 consumers.

**PROVIDED TRAINING TO 125 CONSUMERS**

## BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides support for self-employment opportunities in the food service industry for Mississippians who are legally blind. These BEP entrepreneurs operate a variety of businesses including vending machine routes, snack bars and cafeterias on military bases. In SFY 2017, 35 individuals operated successful businesses as BEP vendors.

**35 SUCCESSFUL BEP VENDORS**

## INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

We serve individuals who are legally blind and either over the age of 55 or have a significant secondary disability by providing a variety of independent living services. In SFY 2017, ILB served over 1,287 consumers through indirect services such as health fairs, vision screening, peer groups, and outreach. ILB provided direct services to 1,041 consumers.

**PROVIDED SERVICES TO 1,041 CONSUMERS**

## ITINERANT TEACHER PROGRAM

Itinerant teachers work closely with VRB counselors to coordinate services, evaluate client needs, develop living-needs plans and instructional materials, and provide on-site training for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. In 2017, the Itinerant Teacher Program provided 79 services for VRB consumers.

**PROVIDED SERVICES TO 79 CONSUMERS**

# VR/VRB PROGRAM FUNDING

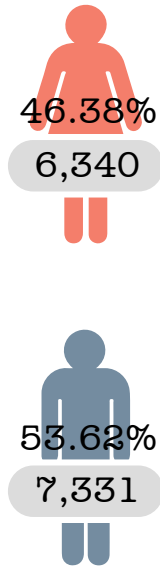
## Title One Section 110 Match Funding

	<b>2017</b>
Section 110 Grant	\$42,781,732 (78.7%)
State Match	\$11,578,792 (21.3%)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$54,360,524 (100.0%)</b>

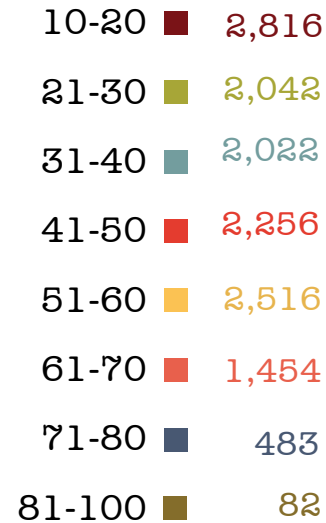
# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Demographics of Persons Served

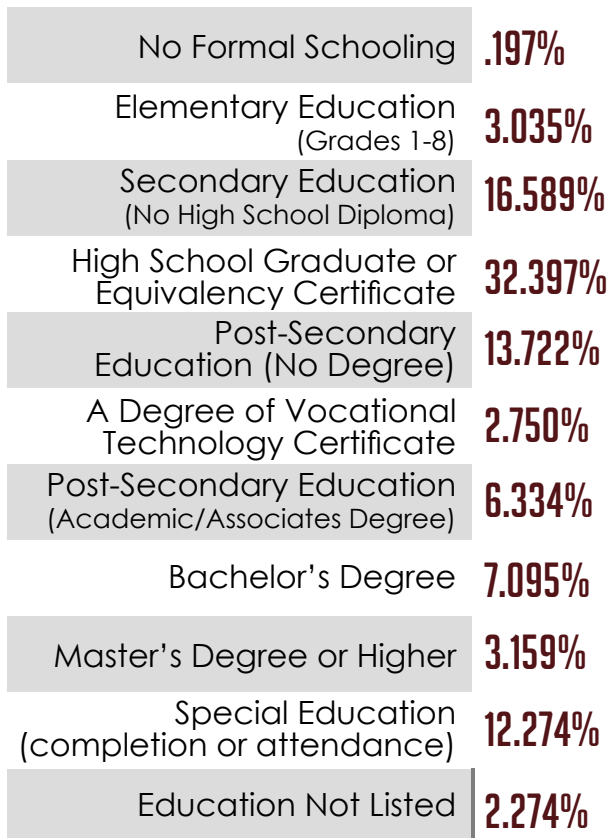
### Gender



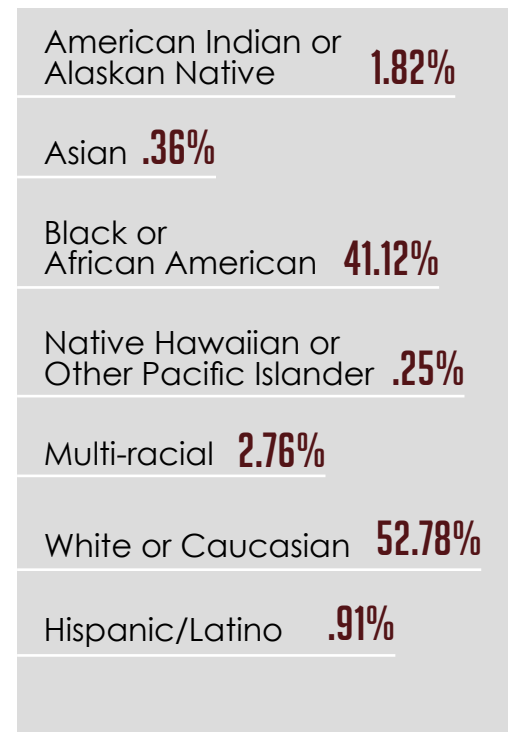
### Age at Application



### Education Level at Application



### Race

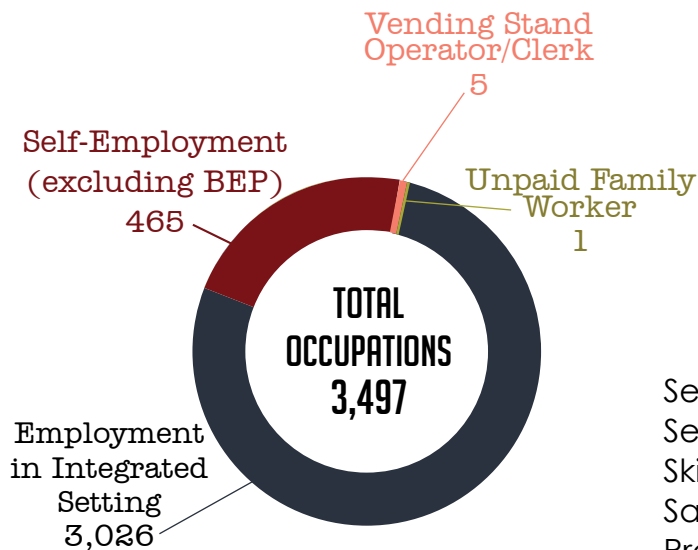




# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Status of Persons Rehabilitated

### Employment Status of Persons Rehabilitated



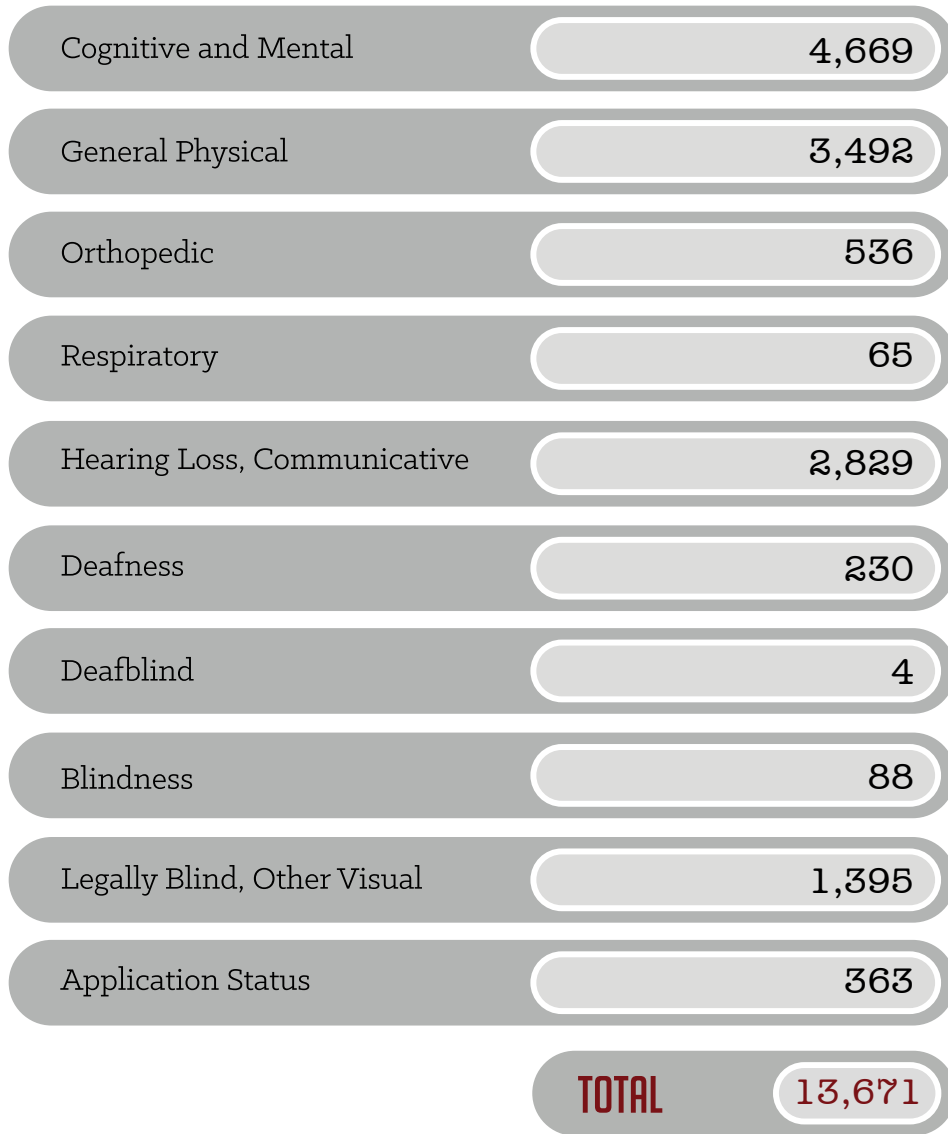
### Employment in Integrated Settings

Service Worker	535
Secretarial, Office, Clerical Worker	434
Skilled Craft	362
Sales	324
Professional	280
Laborer	209
Executive	163
Operative	129
Food & Food Preparation	78
Technical/Paraprofessional	65
Transportation & Material Moving	62
Production Occupations	58
Building/Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	51
Personal Care	43
Education, Training & Library	35
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	32
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	32
Construction & Extraction	31
Protective Service	24
Healthcare Support	22
Community & Social Service	17
Architectures & Engineering	7
Business & Financial Operation	7
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	7
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	6
Computer & Mathematical	5
Legal	4
Life Physical & Social Science	4

**3,026**

# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Persons served by Primary Disability



## Clients Served and Closed for 2017



# IN DEPTH LOOK AT DDS & OSDP

## Office of Disability Determination Services

Claims Processed	86,177
Average Processing Time	T2-81 days/T16-74 days
Average Cost per Case	\$313.00
Accuracy Rate	95%

T2 benefits are based on the amount of years a person has worked.

T16 benefits are based on a person's income and assets.

## Office of Special Disability Programs

	Number Served
Independent Living Waiver	2,732
TBI/SCI Trust Fund	113
TBI/SCI Waiver	904

# PROOF OF PERFORMANCE

## Office of Disability Determination Services

### Processing time

Year	National Average	Mississippi Average
*2011	110 Days	97 Days
*2012	102 Days	93 Days
*2013	107 Days	91 Days
*2014	104 Days	89 Days
*2015	110 Days	89 Days
2016	83/86 Days	90/85 Days
2017	83/85 Days	81/74 Days

\*Prior years reporting is based on Overall Processing time. The reporting for FY2016 forward is based on claim type (T2 vs T16).

### Cost per case

Year	National Average	Mississippi Average
2011	\$488	\$299
2012	\$435	\$279
2013	\$455	\$311
2014	\$462	\$316
2015	\$462	\$316
2016	\$491	\$310
2017	\$498	\$313

### Production per Work Year

Year	National Average	Mississippi Average
2011	290	340
2012	324	370
2013	322	368
2014	310	357
2015	310	357
2016	313	324
2017	306	329

## Office of Special Disability Programs

\*Figures shown above are based on the Division of Medicaid cost reports for the Independent Living Waiver and the Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver. \*OSDP numbers are reported from the State Fiscal Year.

Year	Number of Clients Served	Annual Cost Savings to the Division of Medicaid
2011	3,346	\$168,355,878
2012	3,378	\$176,145,487
2013	3,487	\$206,635,981
2014	3,739	\$220,322,128
2015	3,874	\$216,208,403
2016	4,043	\$222,365,814
2017	3,636	\$162,485,568

# DISTRICTS & OFFICE LOCATIONS

## District I

51 County Road 166  
 Oxford, MS 38655  
 OVR: (662) 234-3171  
 OVRB: (662) 234-6092  
 OSDP: (662) 234-5744

## District II

2620 Traceland Drive  
 Tupelo, MS 38801  
 OVR: (662) 842-1010  
 OSDP: (662) 840-9946

615-A Pegram Drive  
 Tupelo, MS 38801  
 OVRB: (662) 844-5830

## District III

104 Professional Plaza  
 Greenwood, MS 38930  
 OVR: (662) 453-6172  
 OVRB: (662) 455-1432  
 OSDP: (662) 453-2253

## District IV

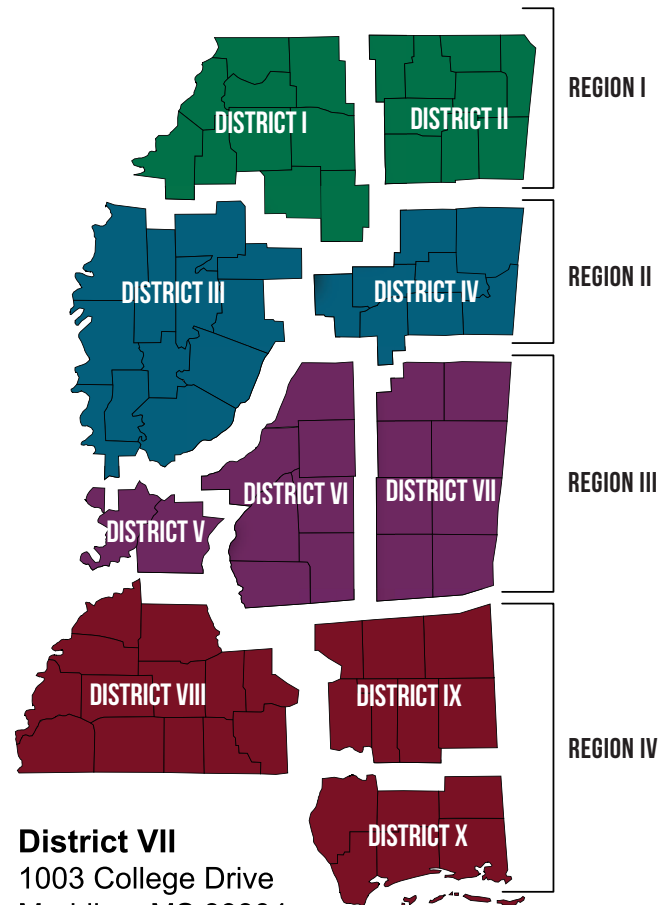
207 Industrial Park Road  
 Starkville, MS 39760  
 OVR: (662) 323-9594  
 OSDP: (662) 324-1881  
 48 Datco Industrial Drive  
 Columbus, MS 39704  
 OVRB: (662) 328-8807

## District V

3895 Beasley Road  
 Jackson, MS 39213  
 OVR: (601) 898-7004  
 OSDP: (601) 898-7034  
 2550 Peachtree Street  
 Jackson, MS 39296  
 OVRB: (601) 987-7403

## District VI

1032 Center Pointe Blvd., Suite A  
 Pearl, MS 39208  
 OVR: (601) 709-5601  
 OVRB: (601) 709-5625  
 OSDP: (601) 709-5657



## District VII

1003 College Drive  
 Meridian, MS 39304  
 OVR: (601) 483-3881  
 OVRB: (601) 483-5391  
 OSDP: (601) 482-1594

## District VIII

1221 Parklane Road  
 McComb, MS 39649  
 OVR: (601) 249-2498  
 OVRB: (601) 684-3392  
 OSDP: (601) 249-4646

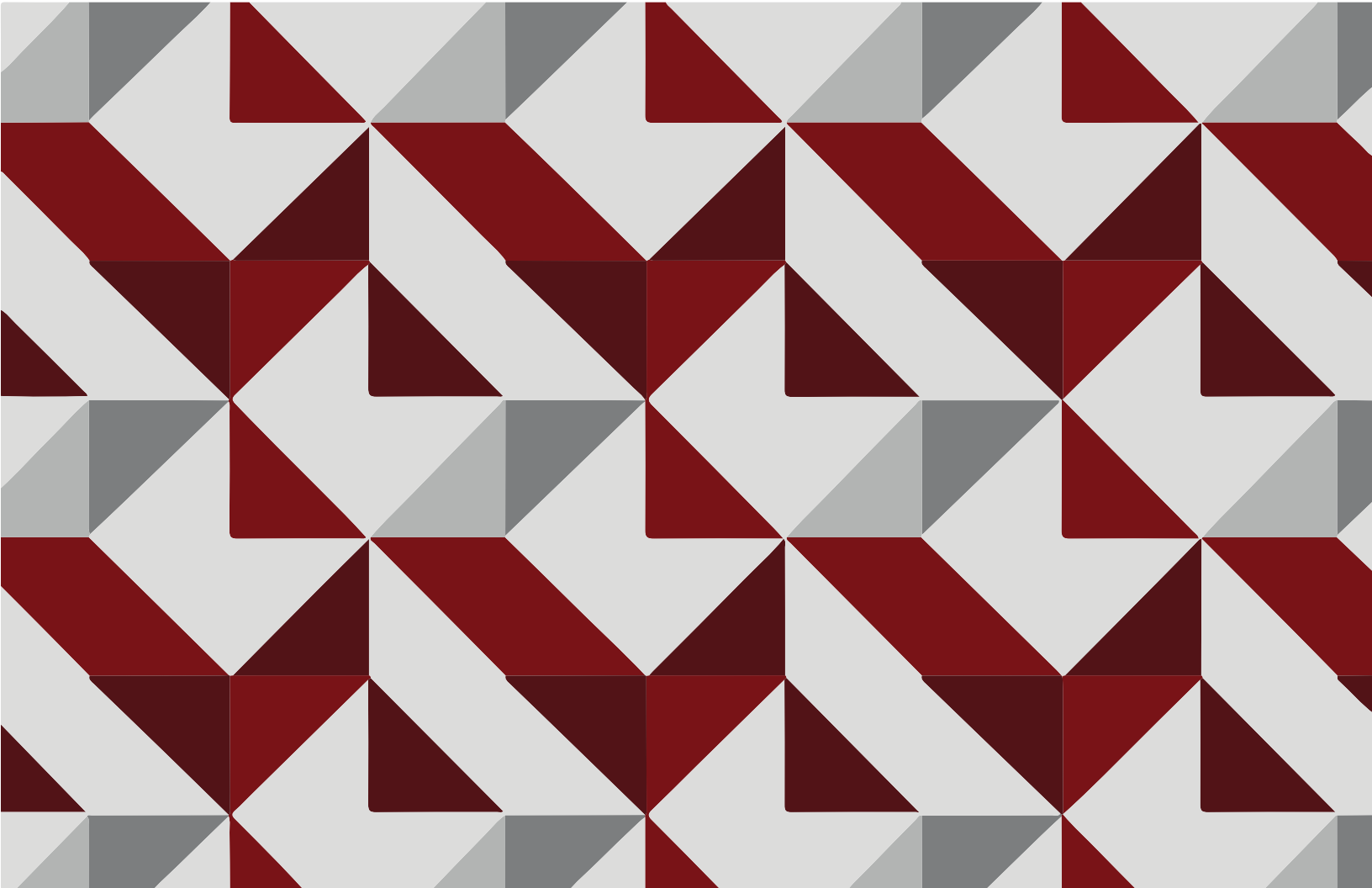
## District IX

17 J M Tatum Industrial Drive  
 Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
 OVR: (601) 545-5619  
 OVRB: (601) 545-5613  
 18 J M Tatum Industrial Drive  
 Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
 OSDP: (601) 545-5644

## District X

13486 Fastway Lane  
 Gulfport, MS 39503  
 OVR: (228) 575-3789  
 OVRB: (228) 575-3788  
 OSDP: (228) 575-3785

**Additional locations can be found at [www.mdrs.ms.gov](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov) using the location finder.**



Your perspective is extremely valuable,  
and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback!  
(A digital copy of this report can be found at [www.mdrs.ms.gov](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov))

*Please send direct comments or questions to:*

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services  
Attn: Office of Communications  
Post Office Box 1698  
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1698  
1.800.443.1000  
[www.mdrs.ms.gov](http://www.mdrs.ms.gov)



*Opportunities for Independence*