



Mississippi

STEPS

Subsidized Transitional Employment Program & Services

Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS)

State agency charged with the responsibility of operating and administering a state-federal assistance program in Mississippi in accordance with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-193), the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-171), and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5).



Mississippi Department of Employment Security

The mission of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security is to shape the State's workforce and increase employment on Mississippi by connecting employers with qualified employees and employees with jobs to improve their quality of life.



Partnership

- Joint Venture between MDHS and MDES
- Encourage Mississippi Employers to begin hiring new workers
- Take advantage of one-time federal Temporary Assistance for needy Families (TANF) dollars available to Mississippi.

Mississippi Steps Program

- The Mississippi Subsidized Transitional Employment Program and Services (STEPS) Program is a transitional employment program that is designed to provide subsidized employment opportunities for Mississippi families with dependent children earning at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Mississippi STEPS Goals

- Increase employment in Mississippi
- Provide an incentive to employers to hire workers
- Promote sector strategy initiatives
- Assist Dislocated Workers return to work
- Provide employment opportunities for Temporary Assistance for Needy (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients

Employer Qualifications

An Eligible Employer was required to:

- Be a Mississippi-based employer,
- Offer program participant a permanent job,
- Have Workers Compensation coverage for workers or be self-insured if required by law, and
- Have an accounting system in place.

Participant Eligibility

An eligible participant had to:

- be a U.S. citizen,
- be a resident of the State of Mississippi,
- be at least 18 years of age,
- have at least one *verified dependent child, who is a U.S. citizen, within the specified degree of relationship, under the age of 18, living in the home, and*
- fall at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2009-2010 POVERTY GUIDELINES

Number of persons in the household	Poverty Guidelines
• 2	\$36,425
• 3	\$45,775
• 4	\$55,125
• 5	\$64,475
• 6	\$73,825
• 7	\$83,175
• 8	\$92,525

For families with more than 8 persons, add \$3,740 for each additional person.

Occupational Eligibility and Prohibitions

MS STEPS could not be utilized for the following:

- Occupations dependent on commission or draw
- Intermittent seasonal occupations
- Part time or temporary occupations
- Any occupation-illegal or controversial in nature including but not limited to bartending and adult entertainment

Occupational Eligibility and Prohibitions

MS STEPS could not be utilized for the following:

- To fill a vacancy due to layoff or hiring freeze
- When there is a layoff in the same or equivalent job
- Terminated employment with intention of filling vacancy with STEPS funds
- To employ individuals under the age of 18

Placement Limitations

- No more than 50% of the employer's full-time workforce can participate in the MS STEPS program at any one time.
- Employer placements are limited in duration to six months. Monitoring procedures were implemented to ensure an employer does not terminate a participant early and request another participant for the same position for another six months in order to extend their subsidy reimbursement beyond six months.

Employer benefits

- Maximum Reimbursement for 1040 Hours
- Six Month Subsidized Wage and Benefits Reimbursement
 - Months one and two- 100%
 - Month three – 75%
 - Months four and five – 50%
 - Month six – 25%

20 Percent Requirement

- TANF funds and the employer's costs for supervising and training the subsidized employee were used to count toward the 20 percent state requirement.
- No more than 25 percent of the employee's wage counted toward the 20 percent requirement.

Number of Employers

Program Period: January 7, 2010 – September 30, 2010

- Participants were placed with businesses in 78 of the 82 counties in Mississippi.
- 1,304 employers participated

Number of Participants

Program Period: January 7, 2010 – September 30, 2010

As of October 1, 2010 - 3236 participants were assigned to subsidized employment

- 1219 quit or were terminated
- 364 completed the full six month
- 1653 completed the program (with less than six months of employment when program ended)

Employer Agreements

- Agreements were signed by participating employers to encourage long term employment.
- No data is available to support the number of employers retaining employees after the six (6) month subsidy period/program ended.

Type of Jobs

- Administrative Assistant
- Cashier
- Child Care Attendants
- Construction Worker
- Cook
- Customer Service Representative
- Delivery Driver
- Engineers
- Furniture Maker
- General Laborer
- Housekeeper
- Manager
- Maintenance Worker
- Medical Assistant
- Nurses (CNA, LPN and RNs)
- Office Manager
- Service Installer
- Teacher
- Truck Driver
- Welder

Average Hourly Wage

- The average hourly wage for an entry level position in Mississippi is \$7.92 hour.
- The average hourly wage for the Mississippi STEPS program was \$8.65 per hour which is .73 cents more per hour.

Program Costs

Program Period: January 7, 2010 – September 30, 2010

- Total obligations to employers \$13,907,727
- Actual payments to employers \$ 8,015,076
- Administrative and programmatic staff costs \$ 3,670,764
- Total Expenditures to date \$11,685, 840



Summer **STEPS**

Subsidized Transitional Employment Program & Services

The Purpose of the Summer STEPS Program

- A partnership between MDHS and MDES to provide employment to individuals age 18 to 24 the chance to work and gain useful skills.
- The program provided up to 320 hours of 100% subsidized employment with private for profit, private non-profit or public hospitals.
- Program Period: July 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010

Number of Participants

Program Period: July 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010

Summer STEPS – as of October 1, 2010

- Total number who participated: 3393
- Total number quit or terminated: 393
- Total number that completed the 320 hours: 455
- Total number participating until September 30, 2010 : 2682

Program Costs

Program Period: July 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010

• Payments to participants -	\$4,082,361
• Programmatic staff cost	\$ 590,857
Total Expenditures to date	\$ 4,673,218

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