

MISSISSIPPI LEADS REGION IN WORK DISABLED

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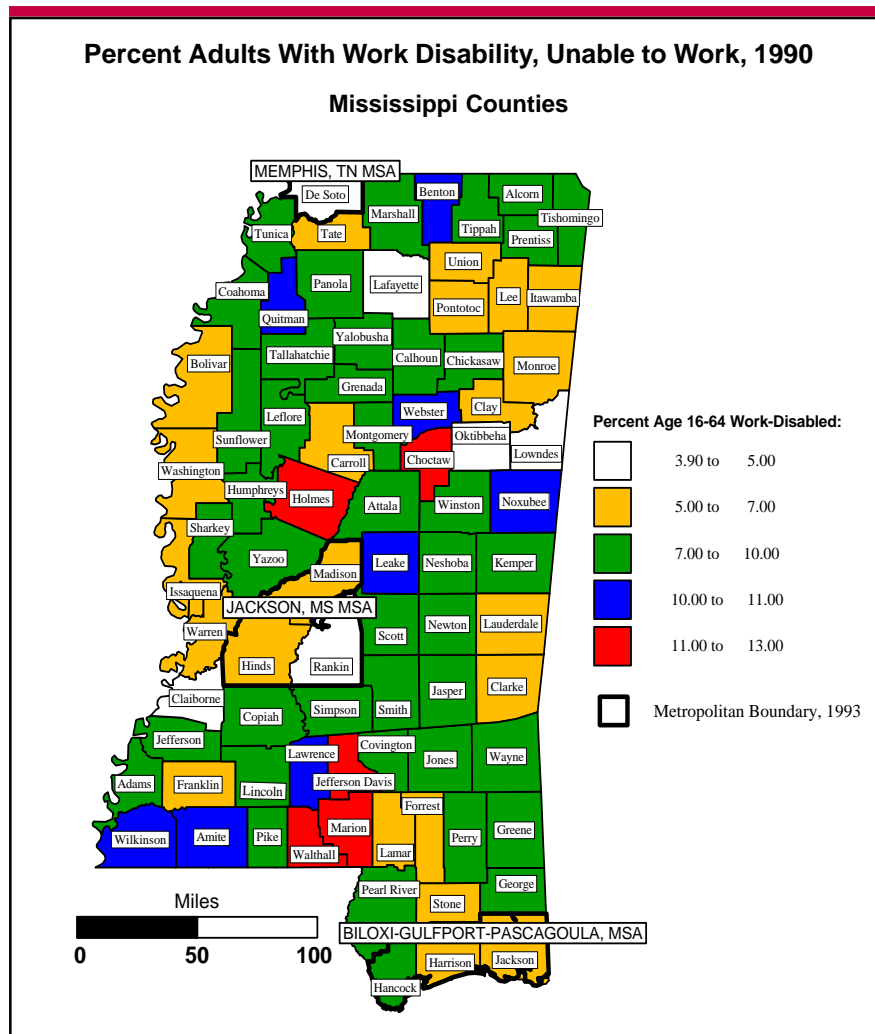
In spite of growing support by the business community for the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the challenges faced both by persons with a work disability and employers seeking productive workers are significant during the current corporate "downsizing" era. Research by the U.S. Census Bureau shows that functional disabilities—the inability to perform many ordinary daily tasks—vary by age, sex, race, ethnicity, and income and this compounds the employment problem for many Americans. The quality of a local labor force varies perhaps even more significantly by the physical capabilities of potential workers than it does by their literacy levels and educational training. Based upon data from the Census Bureau, this report shows that Mississippi leads the region in the proportion of its working-age population who have a work disability.

These 1990 data, the latest available at the county-level, describe persons age 16-64 who are not institutionalized (not in a hospital, incarcerated, etc.) and who have a mobility limitation (ML) or a work disability (WD).

Nationally, about ten percent (10.4%) of working-age adults have a

mobility limitation or a work disability and, of those, about eight percent (8.2%) have a work disability and four percent (4.2%) reporting being unable to work. These figures vary throughout the South but, in virtually every case, Mississippi has a higher incidence rate than her neighbors. About

fourteen percent (14.3%) of Mississippi's working-age adults have either a ML or WD with seven percent (7.1%) being unable to work. These figures are indeed higher than the national averages in area states but, with one exception, are lower than the comparable figure for Mississippi. (The single exception is that Arkansas has a slightly higher percentage of adults with either a mobility limitation or work disability (11.2%) than does Mississippi (11.0%.) With a higher rate of work disability, Mississippi thus has a smaller pool to draw upon for economic growth and development and a higher bur-



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den on social services. This places the state with a higher need for supported employment programs and activities.

An important aspect of these data is that there is substantial spatial variation in the distribution of work disability across the state. The accompanying map shows the county distribution of the percent of adults with a work disability who are unable to work. Several aspects of this graphic display are worth noting. One is that the three metropolitan areas in the state tend to have smaller proportions of their potential labor force with work disabilities. This is particularly so for the Jackson and Memphis (TN) metro areas. Another is that most counties have between 7 and 10 percent of their potential workforce

unable to participate due to a disability. A third point is that the Delta, a region with large pockets of poverty, falls on the lower end of the work disability distribution, with most of its counties having from 5 to 10 percent with work disabilities. A final aspect of this map is that there is a cluster of counties in south Mississippi having the highest levels of work disability. The counties of Jeff Davis, Marion, and Walthal are joined by the central Mississippi counties Choctaw and Holmes in the highest category. These data suggest that while Mississippi leads the region in work disability rates, there is a considerable variation within the state in the distribution of these problems.

Work Disability and Mobility Limitations of Civilian, Noninstitutionalized Persons, Age 16 to 64, 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census

	Total Pop. Age 16-64	With a work disability(WD)or a mobility limitation(ML)							
		With a Work Disability				With a ML			
		Total	%	Unable to work	%	Total	%	Unable to work	%
United States	157,323,922	16,407,688	10.4	12,826,449	8.2	6,594,029	4.2	3,102,003	2.0
Alabama	2,529,507	320,625	12.7	244,826	9.7	149,556	5.9	68,630	2.7
Arkansas	1,425,891	191,291	13.4	159,337	11.2	93,889	6.6	38,930	2.7
Florida	7,809,820	872,787	11.2	676,233	8.7	342,721	4.4	167,466	2.1
Georgia	4,161,119	478,899	11.5	368,025	8.8	201,711	4.8	92,909	2.2
Louisiana	2,582,263	344,183	13.3	265,770	10.3	165,189	6.4	68,802	2.7
Tennessee	3,123,140	366,646	11.7	304,032	9.7	182,282	5.8	80,954	2.6
Mississippi	1,557,588	222,506	14.3	171,042	11.0	110,274	7.1	48,771	3.1
Adams	21,040	3,258	15.5	2,459	11.7	1,731	8.2	648	3.1
Alcorn	19,670	3,058	15.5	2,442	12.4	1,760	8.9	844	4.3
Amite	7,749	1,310	16.9	1,113	14.4	837	10.8	265	3.4
Attala	10,575	1,945	18.4	1,444	13.7	1,035	9.8	425	4.0
Benton	4,691	911	19.4	587	12.5	492	10.5	121	2.6
Bolivar	23,907	3,450	14.4	2,308	9.7	1,556	6.5	669	2.8
Calhoun	8,863	1,516	17.1	1,226	13.8	804	9.1	258	2.9
Carroll	5,466	708	13.0	538	9.8	348	6.4	143	2.6
Chickasaw	10,688	1,814	17.0	1,303	12.2	783	7.3	378	3.5
Choctaw	5,278	926	17.5	779	14.8	586	11.1	206	3.9
Claiborne	7,174	1,017	14.2	646	9.0	331	4.6	243	3.4
Clarke	10,294	1,432	13.9	1,204	11.7	705	6.8	325	3.2
Clay	12,386	1,856	15.0	1,034	8.3	724	5.8	324	2.6
Coahoma	17,291	2,840	16.4	2,055	11.9	1,426	8.2	729	4.2
Copiah	16,563	2,756	16.6	2,008	12.1	1,263	7.6	626	3.8
Covington	9,786	1,745	17.8	1,393	14.2	974	10.0	350	3.6
De Soto	44,763	4,417	9.9	3,634	8.1	1,989	4.4	870	1.9
Forrest	43,619	5,454	12.5	4,413	10.1	2,711	6.2	1,019	2.3
Franklin	4,792	694	14.5	529	11.0	323	6.7	184	3.8
George	10,247	1,461	14.3	1,126	11.0	763	7.4	354	3.5
Greene	5,848	944	16.1	759	13.0	492	8.4	218	3.7
Grenada	12,788	1,782	13.9	1,435	11.2	978	7.6	369	2.9
Hancock	19,196	3,222	16.8	2,821	14.7	1,762	9.2	879	4.6
PHarrison	95,596	13,993	14.6	11,609	12.1	6,725	7.0	2,930	3.0
Hinds	161,483	20,079	12.4	14,620	9.1	8,654	5.4	4,056	2.5
Holmes	11,807	2,538	21.5	1,799	15.2	1,420	12.0	562	4.8
Humphreys	6,742	1,190	17.7	793	11.8	520	7.7	149	2.2
Issaquena	1,119	153	13.7	101	9.0	65	5.8	37	3.3
tawamba	12,562	1,314	10.5	1,053	8.4	667	5.3	339	2.7
Jackson	72,606	8,813	12.1	7,467	10.3	4,072	5.6	1,706	2.3
Jasper	10,011	1,822	18.2	1,365	13.6	980	9.8	462	4.6
Jefferson	4,892	1,063	21.7	614	12.6	443	9.1	116	2.4
Jefferson Davis	8,167	1,769	21.7	1,360	16.7	955	11.7	504	6.2
Jones	37,692	6,146	16.3	5,155	13.7	3,607	9.6	1,928	5.1
Kemper	5,966	1,064	17.8	782	13.1	467	7.8	145	2.4
Lafayette	22,432	1,885	8.4	1,532	6.8	868	3.9	448	2.0

	Total Pop. Age 16-64	With a work disability(WD)or a mobility limitation(ML)							
		With a Work Disability				With a ML			
		Total	%	Unable to work	%	Total	%	Unable to work	%
Lamar	19,353	2,214	11.4	1,879	9.7	1,201	6.2	518	2.7
Lauderdale	44,201	5,724	12.9	4,228	9.6	2,898	6.6	1,223	2.8
Lawrence	7,405	1,354	18.3	1,117	15.1	807	10.9	266	3.6
Leake	10,753	1,896	17.6	1,490	13.9	1,085	10.1	537	5.0
Lee	41,263	4,828	11.7	3,876	9.4	2,199	5.3	1,045	2.5
LeFlore	21,212	3,171	14.9	2,182	10.3	1,498	7.1	696	3.3
Lincoln	18,271	2,756	15.1	2,373	13.0	1,680	9.2	820	4.5
Lowndes	35,652	4,158	11.7	3,009	8.4	1,720	4.8	767	2.2
Madison	33,826	3,677	10.9	2,799	8.3	1,861	5.5	814	2.4
Marion	14,814	3,207	21.6	2,509	16.9	1,685	11.4	651	4.4
Marshall	18,705	2,853	15.3	2,027	10.8	1,397	7.5	542	2.9
Monroe	21,844	2,923	13.4	2,322	10.6	1,535	7.0	618	2.8
Montgomery	7,216	1,435	19.9	1,075	14.9	694	9.6	347	4.8
Neshoba	14,727	2,664	18.1	1,770	12.0	1,214	8.2	602	4.1
Newton	12,034	1,732	14.4	1,409	11.7	986	8.2	372	3.1
Noxubee	7,142	1,457	20.4	1,021	14.3	755	10.6	318	4.5
Oktibbeha	27,195	2,405	8.8	1,804	6.6	1,211	4.5	571	2.1
Panola	17,520	2,748	15.7	2,122	12.1	1,476	8.4	633	3.6
Pearl River	24,226	3,870	16.0	3,430	14.2	2,332	9.6	931	3.8
Perry	6,612	1,049	15.9	947	14.3	631	9.5	303	4.6
Pike	21,575	3,272	15.2	2,736	12.7	1,779	8.2	827	3.8
Pontotoc	13,622	1,599	11.7	1,346	9.9	851	6.2	444	3.3
Prentiss	14,592	2,132	14.6	1,755	12.0	1,246	8.5	520	3.6
Quitman	5,734	1,121	19.6	811	14.1	582	10.1	211	3.7
Rankin	55,468	6,002	10.8	4,756	8.6	2,723	4.9	1,392	2.5
Scott	14,442	2,387	16.5	1,797	12.4	1,181	8.2	538	3.7
Sharkey	3,913	528	13.5	406	10.4	317	8.1	119	3.0
Simpson	14,051	2,329	16.6	1,908	13.6	1,221	8.7	583	4.1
Smith	8,912	1,518	17.0	1,208	13.6	849	9.5	357	4.0
Stone	6,595	941	14.3	778	11.8	412	6.2	189	2.9
Sunflower	16,509	3,300	20.0	1,815	11.0	1,195	7.2	562	3.4
Tallahatchie	8,482	1,554	18.3	1,212	14.3	822	9.7	395	4.7
Tate	13,301	1,872	14.1	1,344	10.1	747	5.6	424	3.2
Tippah	11,942	1,756	14.7	1,506	12.6	1,088	9.1	458	3.8
Tishomingo	10,955	1,597	14.6	1,403	12.8	906	8.3	413	3.8
Tunica	4,429	750	16.9	560	12.6	411	9.3	193	4.4
Union	13,568	1,706	12.6	1,359	10.0	855	6.3	375	2.8
Walthal	8,161	1,724	21.1	1,313	16.1	1,044	12.8	332	4.1
Warren	28,756	3,809	13.2	2,642	9.2	1,572	5.5	736	2.6
Washington	39,062	6,173	15.8	4,113	10.5	2,752	7.0	1,238	3.2
Wayne	11,716	2,274	19.4	1,648	14.1	1,071	9.1	464	4.0
Webster	6,002	1,097	18.3	958	16.0	639	10.6	266	4.4
Wilkinson	5,511	1,163	21.1	758	13.8	575	10.4	235	4.3
Winston	11,387	1,672	14.7	1,290	11.3	861	7.6	319	2.8
Yalobusha	1,262	1,262	18.0	1,003	14.3	678	9.7	264	3.8
Yazoo	14,187	2,502	17.6	1,722	12.1	1,216	8.6	514	3.6

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Frank M. Howell, Principal Investigator.