



CMPDD Workforce Program Earns Statewide Recognition for Regional Impact

CMPDD is proud to announce that our Reconnect Program has been named the 2025 Workforce Program of the Year by AccelerateMS. The award was presented at the MS Horizons Workforce Strategy Symposium, recognizing CMPDD's leadership in launching and administering one of the state's most impactful training initiatives.

The Reconnect Program aims to provide short-term, industry-aligned credential training to individuals across central Mississippi, helping adult learners re-enter the workforce or advance into higher-paying, in-demand fields. The initiative is supported by more than \$4 million in funding from AccelerateMS, and is administered by CMPDD through South Central MS Works, the workforce development area serving 17 counties.

The Reconnect Program was selected for the award based on its scale, speed of implementation, and strategic vision. It demonstrates a workforce model that is listed below:

- responsive to industry needs, offering short-term training aligned with job openings in information infrastructure, manufacturing, and transportation
- accessible to adult learners, removing barriers to re-entry through flexible schedules, support services, and local training partners
- regionally coordinated, leveraging CMPDD's planning capacity to align with broader economic development goals

"This award is a reflection of the incredible collaboration across our region," said Robin Parker, CMPDD Workforce Director. "Reconnect is about more than training, it's about empowering people to reimagine their future and reconnect with real opportunity."

Dr. Courtney Taylor, Executive Director of AccelerateMS, said this year's awards were created to spotlight "innovation, dedication, and collaboration", and the CMPDD Reconnect Program represents all three.

Presented in front of nearly 500 education, workforce, and industry leaders, the Program of the Year award validates CMPDD's role in leading workforce solutions that are scalable, inclusive, and result driven.

The success of Reconnect not only enhances our local workforce pipeline but also reinforces CMPDD's position as a key driver of economic and workforce innovation in Mississippi.

We look forward to continuing this momentum and keeping you updated as we expand training access, strengthen employer partnerships, and connect hundreds more Mississippians to high-quality careers.

Central Mississippi Area Agency on Aging: Empowering Seniors, Enriching Communities

For the past three (3) years, the Central Mississippi Area Agency on Aging (CMAAA) has proudly partnered with Michael Jordan Transportation to deliver a vital service for seniors in Hinds County. Together, they have completed more than 1,000 trips, ensuring that older adults have safe, reliable transportation to and from medical and dialysis appointments. This partnership continues to strengthen independence and health for seniors who might otherwise face barriers to care.

The Assisted Senior Transportation Program is open to Hinds County residents age 60 and older, who need transportation outside city limits, including destinations in Madison and Rankin counties. The service is provided at no cost. For seniors living on fixed incomes, this program serves as an invaluable lifeline, connecting them to critical healthcare while easing financial burdens. Through this partnership, Michael Jordan Transportation and CMAAA work together to meet this community need while

demonstrating that our older adults are valued and respected.

Michael Jordan Transportation ensures every ride is dependable and compassionate. Drivers go the extra mile to make seniors feel safe, comfortable, and cared for. For many riders, these trips are not just about reaching a destination, they represent connection, dignity, and reassurance that their community cares.

CMAAA and Michael Jordan Transportation remain dedicated to expanding their outreach and continuing this mission of service. For more information on the Assisted Senior Transportation Program, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 601-981-1516.



CMPDD's Medicaid Waiver Program Update

The Elderly & Disabled Medicaid Waiver (E&D Waiver) is a statewide program designed to provide in-home assistance to qualified Medicaid beneficiaries. Beneficiaries must be 21 years of age or older. They must qualify by either SSI Medicaid or 300% of SSI Medicaid. They must require assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, eating, ambulation and/or transferring; or instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) such as laundry, light housekeeping, errands, and/or assistance on community outings. Registered Nurses (RN) and Licensed Social Workers (LSW) work together as a team to assess the referred client, submit for approval of services to the Division of Medicaid (DOM), and manage and coordinate the approved services for all clients.

If a beneficiary does not qualify for SSI Medicaid and is enrolled on any Waiver program, the monthly income limit for 2025 is \$2,901 (before deductions). The income limit is evaluated and adjusted accordingly each year.

Home & Community-Based Services Elderly and Disabled Waiver's Administrative Codes have been

updated and published on the Division of Medicaid's website. The updated Administrative Codes have an effective date of June 1, 2025. The updated codes establish requirements and guidelines for all providers across all five (5) different Waiver programs.

- August 2025 marked the release of the Division of Medicaid's compiled list of questions and answers regarding the updated Administrative Codes.
- Some of the areas addressed included staff make-up of case management teams that may consist of two (2) Registered Nurses, two (2) Licensed Social Workers, or one (1) Registered Nurse and one (1) Licensed Social Worker.
- All Case Managers must successfully complete mandatory training courses covering a variety of subject areas related to abuse, neglect, exploitation, person-centered thinking, HIPAA compliance and confidentiality, and professional documentation practices.

CMPDD's Waiver and Workforce Investment divisions continue partnerships to employ Social Workers

who have received their bachelor's degree in social work, and are seeking to work as a licensed social worker case manager. The salary-based 12-week program provides dedicated study time, information, preparation for taking the licensure exam, and supervised observation of case management home visits. Trainees also receive the traditional benefits of insurance coverage, leave time accrual, and other employee benefits. At the end of the 12-week training period, and after passing the licensure exam, the trainee will automatically transition to a permanent LSW Case Manager position.

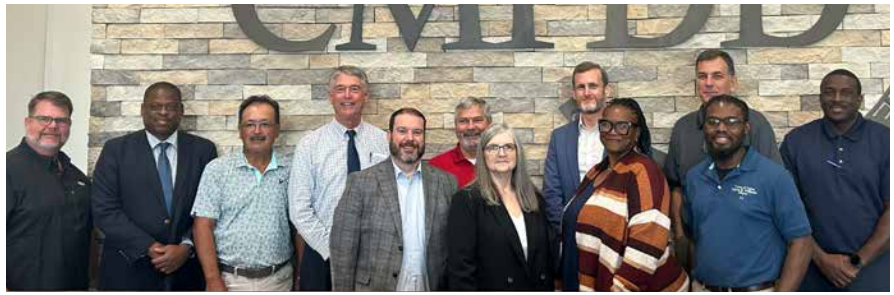
*Individuals who own an agency and are seeking to become a Medicaid Waiver service provider should contact the Division of Medicaid, Long-Term Care Bureau at 601-359-6141.

For more information on Elderly & Disabled Waiver services, please contact CMPDD's Mississippi Access to Care (MAC) Center at 1-844-822-4622. Or contact Teresa Burrell-Shoto, RN, Case Management Director at 601-855-5914 or tburrell@cmpdd.org.

CMMA/Clerks Meeting

Both the Central Mississippi Mayors Association (CMMA) and the City Clerks Association will meet in December. These groups share best practices with each other and discuss issues that directly affect their jobs and municipalities. CMMA will start accepting scholarship applications for 2026 applicants beginning December 1, 2025.

The CMMA Scholarship is for students from Copiah, Hinds, Madison,



Rankin, Simpson, Warren, or Yazoo counties who will be continuing their education at a college or university within the state. The scholarship can

cover the cost of tuition, textbooks, or room and board. For more information regarding the scholarship please visit www.cmpdd.org/cmma.

Grants Update

Delta Regional Authority (DRA)

CMPDD staff submitted multiple grants to the Delta Regional Authority in this quarter. One (1) grant was submitted for consideration of the Community Infrastructure Funds (CIF), three (3) grants were submitted for the State Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) and one (1) proposal was submitted for a strategic planning grant. CMPDD staff also assisted with the submission of two (2) Supplemental Disaster Recovery Fund (SDRF) applications in August of this year. The SDRF was a month-long opportunity for communities affected by federally declared disasters from 2023-2024 to submit funding requests to strengthen and improve their communities for future natural disasters. Staff also applied for the 2025-2026 Pilot Program. The Pilot Program is an opportunity provided by DRA to help better train and assist CMPDD staff for educating and assisting local communities in DRA grants and opportunities. DRA announced an August deadline for their Community Infrastructure Program (CIF) grants for FY25. This program allows applicants to apply for up to \$2,000,000 for necessary infrastructure, workforce, or business growth programs to increase economic development along the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions. DRA is anticipating re-opening funding for FY2026 grants soon.

Economic Development Authority (EDA)

CMPDD staff is assisting eligible communities with submission of FY2025 Disaster Supplemental Grant Program applications. This opportunity makes approximately \$1.45 billion available to support economic recovery activities in areas that received major disaster declarations, because of hurricanes, wildfires, severe storms and flooding, tornadoes, and other natural disasters occurring in calendar years 2023 and 2024. EDA's FY 2025 Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) aims to support communities recovering from major disasters and set them on a path to exceed pre-disaster conditions and transform their local economies in new and vibrant ways. For more information, please visit www.cmpdd.org/development.

Planning Updates

The Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) continues its efforts to support cities and counties across the region as they plan for future growth and development. For elected officials serving our member governments, CMPDD serves as a vital resource for navigating the complexities of local planning and zoning.

CMPDD is currently working with the City of Brandon, City of Clinton, City of Florence, City of Flowood, City of Madison, City of Magee, City of Pearl, Town of Braxton, Yazoo County, and Simpson County on a range of comprehensive planning and zoning initiatives.

Each project is uniquely tailored to the community it serves, with a focus on addressing current needs while preparing for long-term growth. Whether it's updating zoning ordinances, managing infrastructure demands, guiding residential or commercial development, or preserving the character of a community, CMPDD provides technical support and policy guidance every step of the way.

Comprehensive plans offer a valuable roadmap for aligning community goals with actionable strategies. Zoning ordinances then become the legal tools to help implement that vision. CMPDD assists local governments in creating or updating both documents to reflect current conditions and future priorities.

These projects involve in-depth research, mapping, and community engagement. CMPDD works closely with elected officials, staff, and residents to ensure that each plan is practical, forward-thinking, and grounded in local input.

As your community continues to grow and change, CMPDD remains committed to supporting local leadership with professional planning services that promote smart, sustainable development throughout Central Mississippi.

Celebrating Residents' Rights Month

October is Residents' Rights Month, a nationally recognized observance designated by Consumer Voice. This month honors individuals living in long-term care facilities, assisted living communities, and those receiving care in their homes or communities.



The purpose of Residents' Rights Month is to highlight the dignity, autonomy, and rights of all who receive long-term services and support. It's a time to reflect on how we can uplift residents' voices and ensure they are treated with respect and compassion every day.

What Is a Long-Term Care Ombudsman?

An Ombudsman is an independent, neutral advocate who helps protect the rights and well-being of residents in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and residential care homes. In Mississippi, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program plays a vital role in ensuring residents' voices are heard. Ombudsmen investigate complaints, mediate disputes, educate residents and families about their rights, and work toward improving care at both individual and systemic levels. While they don't issue rulings, Ombudsmen serve as trusted allies, helping residents, families, and care providers find understanding and resolution.

How They Connect

Residents' Rights Month and the Ombudsman Program share a common mission to promote dignity, respect, and empowerment for residents. Here's how they work hand-in-hand:

- **Raising Awareness:** Ombudsmen help educate residents, families, and staff about the rights of those receiving care—such as the right to privacy, choice, and safe, quality care.
- **Empowering Voices:** Residents are encouraged to speak up, make choices about their care, and know that their concerns will be heard and respected.
- **Problem-Solving:** During this month (and all year long), Ombudsmen assist with concerns, mediate conflicts, and ensure fair and compassionate outcomes.

Every Month Is Residents' Rights Month

While October gives us the opportunity to spotlight residents' rights, the advocacy and dedication of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program extend throughout the year. Their ongoing work reminds us that every resident deserves dignity, respect, and a voice in their care every day of every month.

For more information on the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, please contact the Area Agency on Aging at 601-981-1516.

City of Crystal Springs Adopts Updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance

In September, the City of Crystal Springs officially adopted a new Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, marking a major milestone in the city's ongoing efforts to guide future growth and development. These updated planning documents reflect the community's current needs, long-term vision, and commitment to sustainable development.

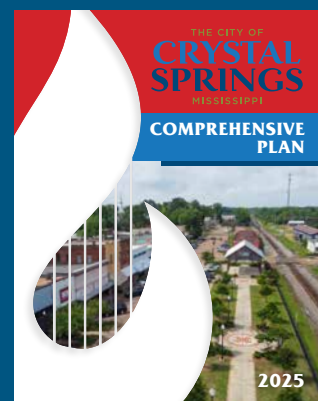
Developed in partnership with the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), the new Comprehensive Plan outlines the city's goals for land use, infrastructure, housing, economic development, transportation, and community services. It provides a strategic framework to help city leaders and residents make informed decisions about Crystal Springs' future.

Alongside the Plan, the updated Zoning Ordinance provides the legal foundation to implement the vision laid out in the Comprehensive Plan. The revised ordinance includes modernized zoning districts, clearer development standards, and streamlined procedures to support responsible growth while preserving the character of Crystal Springs.

To make these important documents more accessible and user-friendly, the city has published them online in an interactive digital format using ESRI StoryMap. This platform allows users to explore the plan and zoning ordinance through maps, graphics, and narrative content that explain key recommendations and changes in an engaging, visual format.

City officials encourage residents, developers, and community stakeholders to review the new documents and utilize the StoryMap tool to better understand how future growth will be guided.

With these updated tools in place, Crystal Springs is better positioned to manage growth, protect community assets, and promote a vibrant, sustainable future.



CMPDD releases the Draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), serving as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), has released the draft 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for public review. The plan establishes a 25-year vision for the transportation system in Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Counties and outlines strategies and projects to address the region's long-term mobility needs.

As the designated MPO for this region, one of CMPDD's primary responsibilities is developing and implementing a Metropolitan Transportation Plan. This long-range plan identifies the policies, programs, and projects to be advanced through 2050 with the goals of improving safety, managing congestion, supporting coordinated land use development, and expanding mobility options.

The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan evaluates the current transportation network, identifies future needs, and recommends projects prioritized for funding. Together, these efforts provide a comprehensive blueprint to guide transportation decision-making and investment across the region.

Updated every five (5) years, the plan reflects emerging demographic trends, evolving land use patterns, federal requirements, and regional priorities. The 2050 Plan takes a multimodal approach, addressing not only roadways and bridges but also public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

Public Input and Regional Priorities

Development of the draft plan was informed by extensive public engagement, including multiple surveys, meetings, and outreach events. Residents consistently identified safety, congestion management, and infrastructure maintenance as top priorities. Additional feedback emphasized the importance of expanding transit options, improving traffic signal coordination, and enhancing bicycle and pedestrian networks.

Planning for Growth

By 2050, the region's population is projected to increase by approximately 133,000 residents, reaching more than 606,000. Employment is expected to grow by more than 73,000 jobs. Without infrastructure improvements, this growth is forecast to result in a 36 percent increase in vehicle miles traveled and a 45 percent increase in travel hours.

Investment Strategy

The plan outlines more than \$3 billion in anticipated funding for transportation projects through 2050, including:

- roadway maintenance
- congestion management through new and widened roadways
- bridge rehabilitation and safety improvements
- public transit enhancements
- bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements

The draft also identifies a set of long-range “visionary” projects that may advance if additional funding becomes available.

Balancing Transportation, Economy, and Environment

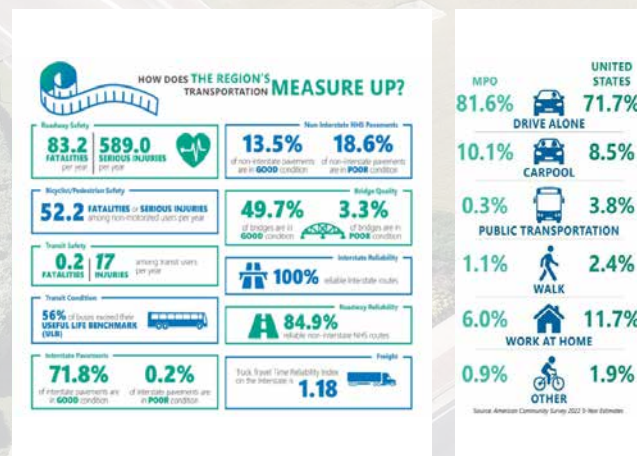
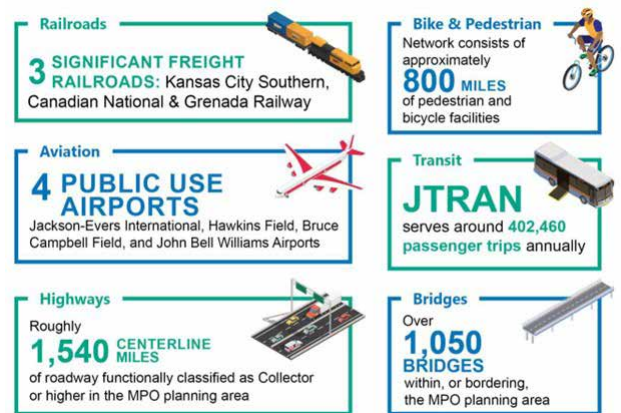
The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is built around five (5) overarching goals: expanding transportation choices, improving safety and resiliency, maintaining system reliability, supporting economic vitality, and balancing transportation investments with community and environmental considerations.

Next Steps

CMPDD is inviting residents, local governments, and stakeholders to review and provide comments on the draft plan before it is finalized and adopted. Public comments will be accepted through November 5, 2025.

To view the draft plan and submit feedback, visit CMPDD's website, www.cmpdd.org/public-notice/, or email comments directly to mpl@cmpdd.org.

Multimodal System Snapshot



CMPDD Partners with Hinds Community College to deliver the first AWS I2PA Program in the city of Jackson

In a milestone for workforce development in Mississippi, CMPDD partnered with Hinds Community College, Accelerate MS, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and industry contractors to launch and complete the state's first locally developed and delivered AWS Information Infrastructure Pre Apprenticeship (I2PA) program in Jackson, MS.

Held at Hinds CC's Jackson Campus, the four week paid training program graduated 20 students, delivering strong completion and job placement rates while establishing a replicable model for future workforce initiatives.

A First for Mississippi: Locally Developed, Industry Backed

Unlike previous I2PA programs directly coordinated by AWS, this initiative marked the first time the I2PA model was developed and delivered entirely by Mississippi partners, with CMPDD, Hinds CC, and Accelerate MS leading program design and implementation.

CMPDD played a central role in:

- bringing partners to the table by facilitating coordination among education, economic development, and industry stakeholders
- aligning training with regional workforce strategy by ensuring the program met labor market demand from AWS's \$10 billion data center investment in Madison County
- providing technical assistance by helping integrate the program into broader planning and development goals for the region

CMPDD's role extended beyond coordination, the district helped align the training with regional workforce strategy and supported its integration into broader economic and

development goals for Central Mississippi. "This program is a great example of what regional collaboration can accomplish when we connect industry, education, and workforce planning," said Robin Parker, CMPDD Workforce Director. "We're proud to help create opportunities that lead to real jobs and lasting impact." The results speak for themselves: 20 participants completed the training, earning both OSHA 10 and AWS I2PA certifications. Many have already secured employment with AWS contractors, and all graduates left with hands-on, paid experience in data center operations, a growing and high-demand sector.

This initiative directly supports Mississippi's workforce pipeline for data center careers, an urgent need as AWS begins construction on two major facilities in Madison County, expected to create thousands of jobs.

CMPDD's leadership in this program underscores the value of locally developed and regionally coordinated solutions. The success of this I2PA implementation shows that when workforce programs are rooted in regional strategy, supported by industry, and scaled through community colleges, they can deliver long term economic impact.

The partners, CMPDD, Hinds CC, Accelerate MS, AWS, and industry contractors, are already exploring ways to expand or replicate this training in other areas.

The AWS I2PA program at Hinds Community College demonstrates what's possible when regional planning, workforce strategy, and private industry come together. CMPDD is proud to have helped lead this landmark effort, and we remain committed to supporting innovative, scalable workforce solutions that create real opportunities for residents across central Mississippi.

Hazard Mitigation Planning

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local jurisdictions to maintain an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to maintain grant eligibility for certain pre- and post-disaster grant programs available through the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). All jurisdictions are reminded to review their adopted Hazard Mitigation Plans annually to ensure accuracy with current visions and needs and to account for any

development or population changes that might have occurred that could increase or decrease a community's risk to a particular hazard.

Predicting where the next disaster will occur, and how severe its impact will be on a community is difficult. Given the right conditions, natural disasters, such as tornadoes and flash floods, can occur at anytime and anyplace. Their human and financial consequences can be significant. Mitigation Planning is intended to assist communities in determining

their risks to natural disasters and developing an action plan to address the known risks by lessening the impact of natural disasters when they do take place. Currently, CMPDD is assisting Richland, Brandon, Florence, and Copiah County with a 5-year update to their Hazard Mitigation Plan. CMPDD planners will be reaching out to governments that have a Hazard Mitigation Plan expiring soon and CMPDD will remain available to assist local governments with their annual reviews.

CMDC BULLETIN

Commissioner De'Keither Stamps, President of the Central Mississippi Development Company, Inc. (CMDC), announced the approval of no new loans.

CMDC is pleased to announce the completion of the Hobbs Automotive project in Laurel, MS. The project utilized the SBA 504 loan program. The project will create 20 new jobs in the private sector.

CMDC is a commercial lender certified by the U. S. Small Business Administration and works with local banks and other financial institutions in providing debt capital for small businesses. CMDC provides fixed rate low interest long term financing for small businesses and saves thousands of dollars in debt service on fixed assets. This type of financing removes the problem of variable rate financing on long-term assets. Many economic forecasters are certain that interest rates will rise. These predictable interest rate increases will not negatively impact the cash flow of those small businesses that have fixed rate low interest loans through the U. S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 504 Loan Program. The most recent fixed interest rates under this loan program were:

SBA 504 Loan Program Interest Rates

<u>TERM (YEARS)</u>	<u>INTEREST RATE</u>
10 (September 2025)	5.78%
20 (September 2025)	6.02%
25 (September 2025)	6.00%

Also, CMDC serves as the Loan Review Board for the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District's (CMPDD's) Minority Business Enterprise Loan Program (MBELP). MBELP receives its funding from the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The interest rate on loans made through this program to a minority owned business is currently 5.50% per annum. The term of a loan can be up to 15 years depending on the use of the loan proceeds (commercial buildings, equipment, inventory, working capital, etc.).

Commissioner De'Keither Stamps invites bankers, commercial loan officers, business owners, real estate developers, and general contractors to contact Dwayne Perkins at 601-981-1625, or visit our website at www.cmpdd.org. See the tab labeled "Small Business Loans."

CMPDD Accepts Applications for Transportation Alternatives Projects

In August the CMPDD began accepting applications from communities within the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area for proposed Transportation Alternatives Projects.

The Transportation Alternatives Program provides federal grant funds for projects that expand transportation options and enhance the overall quality of life. Eligible projects include those that promote

non-motorized transportation options, such as the construction of sidewalks, multi-use paths, bike lanes and other pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Communities selected to receive MPO grant funding may be awarded up to 80% in federal funds for construction and construction engineering costs.

A total of \$7 million in federal funding is currently available through the MPO's call for Transportation Alternatives projects. Completed

applications must be submitted by September 30th. CMPDD will evaluate and score all application received, and the MPO anticipates announcing projects selected for Transportation Alternatives grant funding in November 2025.

For additional information about the MPO's application process, visit www.cmpdd.org/tap/.



Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy 2022-2026



CEDS Update

In September 2025, CMPDD completed the annual update to our 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is required by the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and is an important component to regional planning and grant work. The CEDS tracks the needs and wants of local governments in our district and establishes a record of potential projects that may need or qualify for grant funding. In 2026, CMPDD will begin working on the next five-year CEDS plan.

If the name and address of the recipient needs to be updated, please contact our office at 601-981-1511.

Serving with Purpose and Sailing with SHIP: A Look inside the SHIP Volunteer Program

Central MS Planning & Development District's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides free, unbiased, individual counseling, and assistance to people who are Medicare eligible, their families, and their caregivers. By working closely with our SHIP volunteers, we will continue to provide support, assistance, and awareness in the seven county areas we serve.

To date, we have a total of seven (7) volunteers, and the program is constantly growing. Volunteers receive in-depth training to ensure they are well-versed in Medicare rules, benefits, and changes. With this knowledge, they can effectively assist individuals in their respective areas and share information about our program. The volunteer services are just as essential as the Insurance Counselors. Their desire to help others is vital to the success of our outreach mission of assisting the senior population. For many SHIP volunteers, the program offers more than just a chance to give back, it's a meaningful opportunity to connect with people and make a difference in their lives.

We spoke to some of the volunteers, and they reported that their experiences

have enriched their lives, deepened their understanding of healthcare issues, and fostered a strong sense of purpose. Ms. Felicia Brookins stated that "I love the opportunity to engage with people and educate them on the program. This area can be very confusing with different terminology and plan benefits. When a person can talk to you face to face and you are patient, smiling, and understanding, you help clear the confusion up for them. They feel heard and considered."

Ms. Brenda Hutchinson stated, "I've only been to one event, but it was great to be in a place where everyone was there to help each other. I've heard from so many seniors who are confused and frustrated because they don't understand their choices. This is a wonderful opportunity to help them understand, feel empowered, and be knowledgeable."

These responses make volunteering worthwhile. We are actively seeking eager, compassionate individuals who can join in on our efforts. Becoming a SHIP Volunteer is simple. Individuals from all backgrounds are welcome to join the team. Training and ongoing support are provided to all volunteers to ensure that they feel confident

and supported in their roles. For more information, contact the SHIP Insurance Counselors at 601-981-1516.



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