

MISSISSIPPI BUREAU OF NARCOTICS DRUG THREAT ASSESSMENT

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MISSISSIPPI BUREAU OF NARCOTICS

DRUG THREAT ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2026

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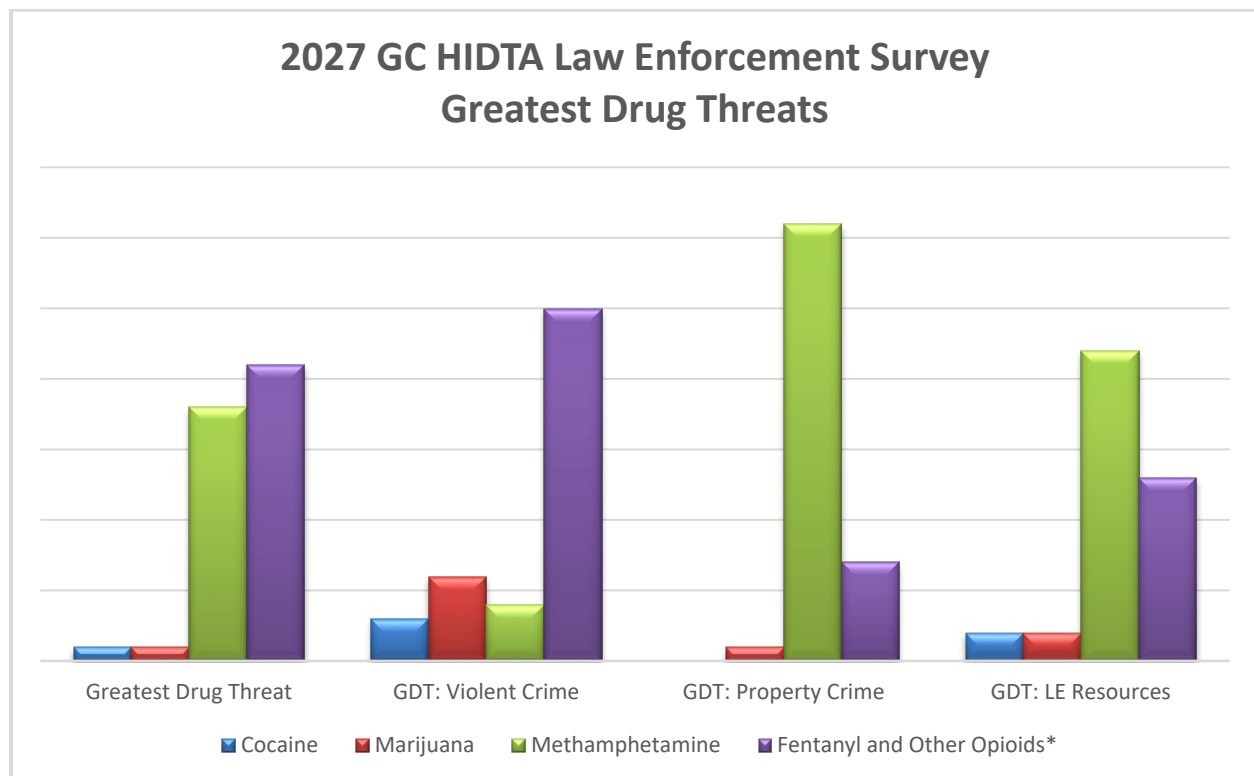
I. SCOPE

The Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics Drug Threat Assessment is produced each year to identify, quantify, and prioritize the nature, extent, and scope of the threat of illegal drugs and related crimes in Mississippi. It examines the illicit drug marketplace and threats posed by drug trafficking and money laundering organizations within the state, along with additional contributing factors including geographic location, types of industries, and cultural and economic diversities that may enhance access to illicit drugs. It is also intended to help policymakers, law enforcement and community leaders understand the nature and extent of drug problems in Mississippi, enabling them to formulate effective strategies to allocate resources appropriately to address those challenges. This document fulfills grant requirements issued by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and has been approved by the Gulf Coast High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Executive Board.

(Data throughout this document is preliminary due to delayed reporting and backlogged crime lab results)

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DRUG THREATS IN MISSISSIPPI



Fentanyl & Other Opioids

Despite a decline in total MBN seizures and cases over the past year, fentanyl remains a primary threat in Mississippi, involved in over half of all reported overdoses. This decline in overdoses

could be from the decrease in potency in both pills and powder form. Geographically, seizure patterns have shifted; districts that saw high volumes in 2024 experienced a decrease in 2025, while areas with previously low activity saw a significant spike. While the market was once dominated by counterfeit pills, dealers are increasingly shifting to raw fentanyl powder due to its higher potency. As a result, authorities are now seizing as much fentanyl in powder form as pills, with a growing number of controlled substances testing positive for the drug.

Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine, often referred to as ICE, is the most dominant and available drug across the state, after marijuana. Methamphetamine is consistently identified as the most dangerous of the top substances authorities deal with and methamphetamine has been identified in 41% of overdoses reported to MBN in 2025. Almost all methamphetamine originates in Mexico, is controlled by the cartel, and its purity level makes it highly addictive. The drug is readily available in large quantities, often shipped via mail from other states, which further contributes to its lower price. Its widespread availability is driven by its reduced cost and the significant profit margin for drug traffickers, making it simpler to obtain.

Marijuana

The Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics (MBN) continues to intercept large-scale marijuana shipments sourced out-of-state and transported via commercial parcel services, private and commercial vehicles, and even private aviation. This persistent influx has strained law enforcement. The threat is further compounded by a radical shift in the drug's composition; modern THC levels have skyrocketed, making today's high-potency products chemically distinct from the lower-potency versions of the past. As these potent products become more available, their appeal among younger populations has grown, presenting an evolving public health crisis characterized by significantly more severe health implications.

Heroin

Mississippi is seeing less heroin primarily because the illicit drug market has shifted toward synthetic opioids like fentanyl, which are cheaper, more potent, and easier for traffickers to produce and transport. While heroin was a major driver of the opioid epidemic in the 2010s, it has been largely replaced by fentanyl in Mississippi's drug supply, leading to a significant decrease in heroin-related deaths and arrests.

Cocaine

While cocaine cases have not yet returned to pre-2020 levels, they have increased steadily over the past several years. MBN reports a significant rise in the drug's presence, noting that bulk cocaine is currently more accessible and priced lower than usual. This shift in the market is reflected in a 151% increase in seizures from 2024 to 2025, making cocaine an increasing prevalent substance MBN agents are encountering and buying. Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) remain the dominant force in the supply chain, maintaining control from initial transportation to wholesale distribution. To move these substantial quantities, traffickers primarily rely on mail and parcel services, as well as both commercial and private transportation networks.

Diverted Pharmaceuticals

Prescription opioids are still the most diverted pharmaceutical in Mississippi and in the United States. MBN saw an increase in the number of narcotics seized and a slight increase in the number of depressants, although the number of cases involving prescription drugs was down when compared to last year. Overdoses overall are down significantly, although the percentage of prescription related overdose deaths were higher in 2024 and 2025 when compared to previous years. Pharmacy burglaries were down 73 percent compared to 2024, but slightly higher than 2023.

New Psychoactive Substances

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), often called "legal highs," "designer drugs," or "research chemicals," are substances designed to mimic the effects of traditional illegal drugs (like cannabis, cocaine, or LSD) while remaining outside of international drug control laws. New Psychoactive Substances don't show up often in seizures and buys, but MBN saw enough to know that they are a threat. The majority of what was seized was synthetic cannabinoids, MDMA, and psilocybin mushrooms, but a small number of stimulants and synthetic benzodiazepine were also seized along with a small amount of LSD and PCP.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL AND RELATED THREATS

GEOGRAPHY

Mississippi serves as a premier drug trafficking thoroughfare primarily due to its geography as the "Crossroads of the South." The state sits at the vital intersection of I-20, the main east-west artery for cartels moving product from the Southwest border to Atlanta, and I-55, which connects Gulf Coast ports to major hubs like Memphis and Chicago. This "hub-and-spoke" interstate network allows traffickers to move bulk shipments of fentanyl, meth, and cocaine across the country with maximum efficiency and multiple route options to evade detection.

Beyond the highways, the state's rural landscape, particularly in the Mississippi Delta, provides ideal "staging areas" where large shipments can be broken down in anonymous stash houses before reaching their final destinations. This logistical advantage is compounded by the Mississippi Gulf Coast, which offers maritime entry points for smaller vessels. Essentially, the state acts as a strategic "land bridge" connecting Mexican supply chains to the high-demand markets of the Midwest and the Eastern Seaboard. Mississippi has commercial bus lines that service the state and seven passenger airports, and numerous small or private air strips located within the state. Mississippi has about 3,000 miles of railroad tracks used by major companies like Norfolk Southern and Illinois Central. While these rails and the Amtrak service between New Orleans and Chicago are vital for travel and trade, they also serve as a major path for traffickers to move and distribute large quantities of drugs throughout the region.

HIGHWAY INTERDICTION IN MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi's interstate system provides a wide-open corridor for movement across the United States for drug traffickers to move illicit substances in and across the state. Mississippi's extensive

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highway system is actively monitored by dedicated drug units; however, these law enforcement efforts are consistently outpaced by the sheer scale of smuggling and a lack of adequate funding.

Three major arteries intersect in the state:

- I-20 (The East-West Corridor): This is one of the primary routes used by Mexican cartels to move product from the Southwest border (Texas/Mexico) toward major distribution hubs in Atlanta and the Eastern Seaboard.
- I-55 (The North-South Corridor): This links Gulf Coast ports and the New Orleans area directly to Memphis (a massive national distribution hub) and Chicago.
- I-59: Connects the Gulf Coast directly to Birmingham and the Appalachian region.
- The Intersection: The fact that I-20 and I-55 intersect in Jackson creates a "hub-and-spoke" model where traffickers can easily switch directions to evade law enforcement or change destinations.

Other interstates across the state:

- I-10 follows the coastal area of Mississippi giving traffickers access to Birmingham, Mobile, New Orleans, Houston, Montgomery, Miami, Atlanta, and other major drug distribution areas in the southeast.
- I-269 is a 26-mile outer bypass that circles the outskirts of the Memphis metropolitan area allowing drug traffickers to completely bypass the heavily patrolled urban center.
- I-22, formerly U.S. 78, is a 202-mile interstate that links Memphis to Birmingham, while passing through several key North Mississippi hubs, including Holly Springs, New Albany, Tupelo, and Fulton.

Along with the convenience of interstates, Mississippi also has numerous state highways that provide drug traffickers with a variety of avenues of approach to their target areas. State highways 51, 61, 45 and 49 run north/south, and highways 6, 26, 72, 78, 80, 82, 84, 90 and 98 run east/west. These highways intersect the interstates and permit additional opportunities for drug traffickers to transport their drugs undetected.

In 2025, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Interdiction Unit seized 104 pounds of methamphetamine, 2,335 pounds of marijuana, 80.2 pounds of cocaine, 20 pounds of fentanyl, 51 pounds of Psilocybin Mushrooms, 17 pounds of THC Edibles, 2,124 THC vapes, 31.6 pounds of THC Hash/Wax, and 3 stolen vehicles on Mississippi's interstates and highways. MBN significantly disrupted local trafficking operations through the seizure of over \$3.5 million in U.S. currency. In addition to the currency, the agency confiscated 26 vehicles, including two stolen units recovered, and 502 firearms, 15 of which were confirmed stolen. Notably, MBN seized a single-engine, low-wing aircraft with an appraised value of \$36,267 and in a joint operation with federal authorities, MBN helped seize an 80-acre ranch and two residences, with the total asset value exceeding \$1.8 million.

DEMOGRAPHICS

As of early 2026, Mississippi's population is estimated to be approximately 2.95 million. The state

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is currently experiencing a slight population decline, about -0.2% annually, with growth concentrated in suburban counties like DeSoto and Madison, while rural areas in the Delta continue to see significant decreases.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

- White: 58.6%
- Black or African American: 37.7%
- Hispanic or Latino: 4.1% (This is the fastest-growing demographic group in the state).
- Two or More Races: 1.6%
- Asian: 1.3%

Age and Gender

The population is slightly older than the national average, with a median age of 38.4 years.

- Under 18 years: 22.9%
- 65 years and over: 18.0%
- Female: 51.6% | Male: 48.4%

Top 5 Most Populated Cities in 2025

- Jackson 139,500 Decreasing
- Gulfport 75,328 Increasing
- Southaven 57,937 Increasing
- Biloxi 48,336 Stable
- Hattiesburg 48,874 Stable

ECONOMICS

Mississippi continues to face significant economic challenges compared to the rest of the U.S.

- Median Household Income: Approximately \$56,447 (compared to the U.S. median of ~\$75,000).
- Poverty Rate: 17.8%, which is consistently among the highest in the nation.
- Unemployment Rate: 3.1% (as of December 2025)
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 25.1% (below the national average of ~38%).

Mississippi continues to face significant economic challenges when compared to national averages, characterized by a median household income of approximately \$56,447, well below the U.S. median of \$75,000. Despite a relatively stable unemployment rate of 3.1% as of December 2025, the state's poverty rate remains consistently among the highest in the nation at 17.8%. These financial disparities are further compounded by educational gaps; only 25.1% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, falling nearly 13 percentage points below the national average of 38%. Collectively, these factors highlight a persistent socioeconomic landscape that influences the state's broader public health and safety challenges.

Mississippi's largest employers are a mix of state-run institutions, major retail chains, and heavy manufacturing giants. As of 2025–2026, the following organizations lead the state in total headcount:

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1. Top 5 Major Employers

Employer	Category	Approx. Employees	Primary Location(s)
State of Mississippi	Government	32,000	Statewide
Walmart Inc.	Retail	25,000+	Statewide
Ingalls Shipbuilding	Manufacturing	12,000	Pascagoula
University of MS Medical Center	Healthcare	10,000	Jackson
Sanderson Farms	Agriculture	9,000 - 17,000	Laurel (Headquarters)

Key Private Sector Leaders

- Nissan North America: Located in Canton, this plant is a cornerstone of Mississippi's automotive industry, employing roughly 5,000 to 6,300 workers.
- North Mississippi Health Services: Based in Tupelo, this is the largest private healthcare system in the state, with approximately 7,200 employees.
- Amazon: With multiple fulfillment centers across the state (notably in Canton and Madison), Amazon has quickly climbed the ranks, employing over 6,000 Mississippians.
- Southern Tire Mart: A major national player headquartered in Columbia, employing over 10,000 people across its entire footprint.

Higher Education & Research

- Mississippi State University (MSU): Consistently ranked as a top employer, MSU employs roughly 4,000 to 6,800 staff and faculty in Starkville.
- University of Mississippi (Ole Miss): Employs over 5,000 people at its main campus in Oxford.

Regional Industrial Hubs

- The Gulf Coast: Dominated by Ingalls Shipbuilding (defense) and the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino (hospitality/gaming), which employs about 4,000 people.
- The Delta: Employment is heavily driven by education (Mississippi Valley State) and agriculture-related manufacturing (Milwaukee Tool in Greenwood).
- Following its merger with Wayne Farms to become Wayne-Sanderson Farms, its employment numbers fluctuate depending on whether you count just Mississippi-based processing or the entire multi-state workforce.

IV. MISSISSIPPI DRUG THREATS

OVERALL SCOPE OF DRUG THREATS

Fentanyl is ranked highest as a drug threat in Mississippi according to the respondents of the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey. Most respondents reported that the availability has increased, and some said it has stayed the same over the past year with only a few saying it has decreased. The importation of methamphetamine into Mississippi is still a major problem and the violence that is associated with it. Survey respondents ranked it first for its association with violent crime, property crime and law enforcement resources. The influx of marijuana into the state, the evolving marijuana market, characterized by high-THC products and increasing appeal to young

people, presents a growing challenge. The strategic market flooding of cocaine by the Cartels has made it cheaper and more accessible to lower-income demographics that previously could not afford it. While the volume of traditionally diverted pills is declining due to tighter monitoring, the market is being flooded with counterfeit pharmaceuticals. The growing number of synthetic drugs indicates a shift away from traditional plant-based drugs toward “designer” chemicals that are cheaper to produce, harder to detect, and significantly more lethal. Organized crime in Mississippi shows a shifting landscape where traditional street gangs are increasingly professionalizing their operations through direct partnerships with Mexican cartels. This has led to an increase in both the sophistication of drug trafficking and the lethality of local violence.

FENTANYL AND OTHER OPIOIDS

ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

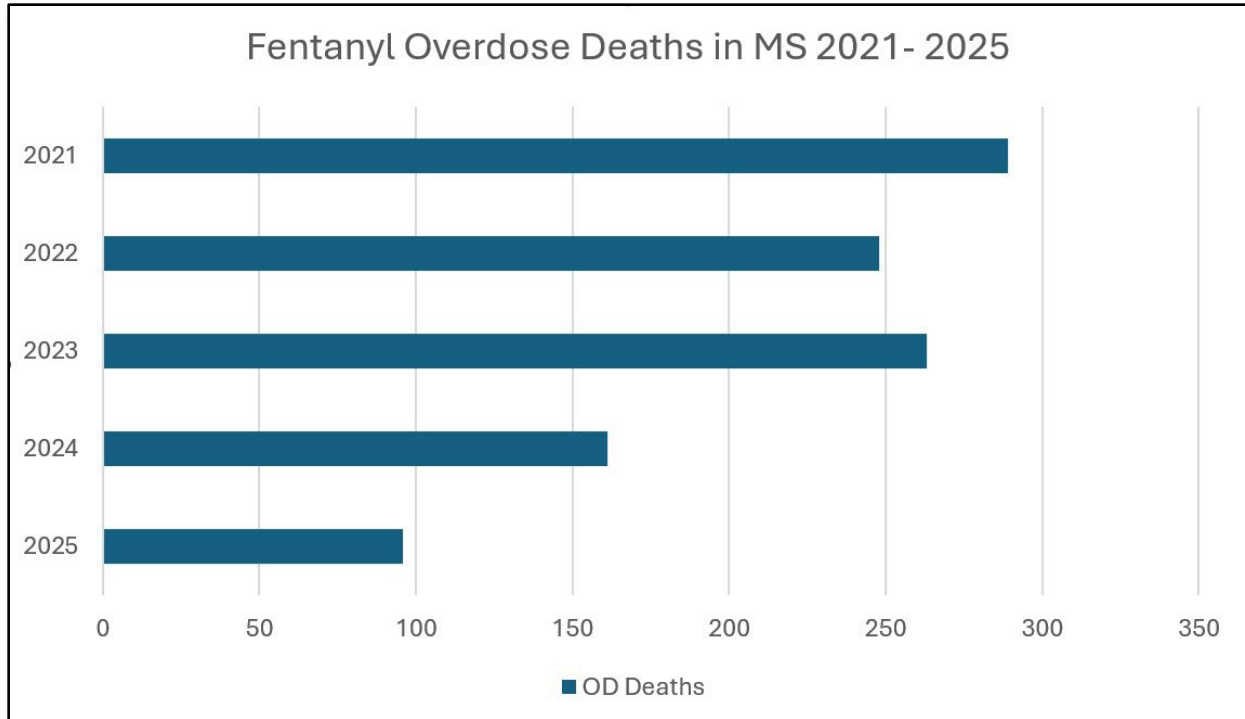
Fentanyl is the greatest drug threat in the state of Mississippi. Fentanyl is a factor in half of all overdose deaths in Mississippi and nearly three-fourths of opioid related deaths. MBN has seen a reduction in seizures of fentanyl for 2025. Fentanyl is so cheaply manufactured that it is still being used to cut other illicit substances to further the profits of drug dealers and trafficking organizations.

ABUSE

Starting in the 1990s, a rapid increase in the prescribing of opioids led to the current opioid epidemic. With prescription opioids now being harder to obtain, fentanyl and other illicit opioids are more in demand. Cartels and many local drug dealers are cutting other drugs with fentanyl and selling it on the street to increase profits. These drug distributors are selling fentanyl laced counterfeit pills that appear to be Oxycodone, Xanax, Percocet, or other similar drugs, causing overdose deaths involving fentanyl to rise.



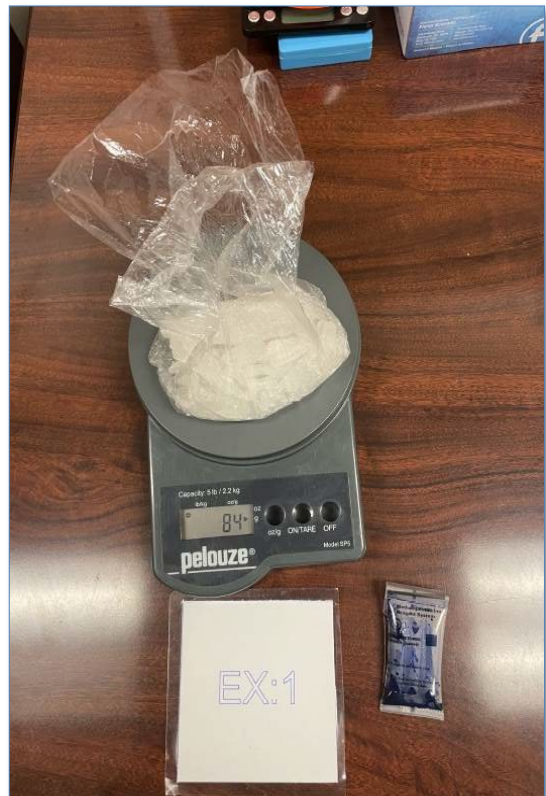
Fentanyl and its analogues were factors in 96 overdose deaths in 2025. That is a 37% drop from 2024. This mirrors the national trend of reduced overdose deaths due to fentanyl and its analogues. In 2024, there were 152 overdose deaths involving fentanyl and its analogues reported to MBN. This represents a drop of 41% from 2023. Fentanyl and its analogues were involved in 53% of overdose deaths reported to MBN. These reductions are likely due to the availability of naloxone, fentanyl test strips, expanded addiction treatment, and increased security on the US Southwest border. There were at least 258 overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2023. There were at least 248 overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2022, which is approximately 63% of all the overdose deaths reported for 2022. There were at least 289 overdose deaths involving fentanyl in 2021, which is approximately 58% of all the overdose deaths reported for 2021. Out of the total opioid deaths, fentanyl was involved in approximately 80% for 2021 and 2022, 86% for 2023, 97% for 2024, and 74% was reported to MBN.



The use of fentanyl appears to be on a slight increase. According to the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH), 369 people sought treatment for fentanyl as their primary substance from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, compared to 344 the previous year. Fentanyl is a major factor in substance abuse cases reported by DMH. In 2025, the Mississippi Forensics Laboratory analyzed 1,016 cases of fentanyl and its analogues during the calendar year for 2025. That is approximately a 25% increase from 816 in 2024.

AVAILABILITY

MBN saw a steady increase in the number of cases initiated involving fentanyl from 2021 through 2024. In 2025, MBN initiated 147 cases and made 65 arrests involving fentanyl and its analogues. That's a 39% drop from 2024 cases initiated by MBN. MBN initiated 241 cases involving fentanyl in 2024 compared to 130 cases in 2023, 66 cases in 2022, 39 cases in 2021, and 19 cases in 2020. 95 arrests were made by MBN for fentanyl related charges including sale and possession during 2024. That's approximately a 32% drop in fentanyl related arrests. MBN is also noticing an increase in the numbers of cases where other drugs, particularly counterfeit prescription pills, have been determined to contain fentanyl. In 2024, MBN seized over 13,000 grams of fentanyl and over 27,000 dosage units of fentanyl as



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counterfeit pills. MBN seized over 9,200 grams of fentanyl and over 9,300 dosage units of fentanyl. Drops of approximately 29% and 66% respectively.

PRODUCTION



Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid that can be prescribed to treat patients with chronic pain or severe pain following surgery. It is a Schedule II controlled substance like morphine but 50 to 100 times more potent. Transdermal patches or lozenges are prescribed forms of fentanyl, which can be diverted for misuse and abuse. Fentanyl is also illicitly manufactured primarily in foreign clandestine labs and smuggled through Mexico to the United States. Fentanyl is being mixed with other illicit drugs like methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin to increase the potency of those drugs. Additionally, it is sold as powders, nasal sprays, and counterfeit prescription opioids pills. Counterfeit pills are made without any official supervision or quality control so often counterfeit pills contain lethal doses of fentanyl. A lethal dose of fentanyl may be as small as 2 mg for an adult. 2 mg of fentanyl is

comparable in mass to 10-20 grains of salt.

A study by University of Maryland researchers, published in the journal Science, suggests that regulatory changes implemented in China several years ago have successfully restricted the precursor chemicals required for fentanyl production. This conclusion is supported by DEA data showing that while fentanyl potency surged during the early pandemic, it began a steady decline after 2022, a trend indicating that manufacturers are struggling to source high-grade materials and are consequently diluting their product. With this shift in the drug supply, producers in Mexico and Canada have found alternative sources.

TRANSPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION

China and Mexico are the largest producers of fentanyl that makes its way into the United States. Fentanyl is smuggled into the United States via shipping containers, mail or across the U.S. Mexico border. Once in the US, fentanyl is largely transported into and through Mississippi via three major routes: Interstate 10, Interstate 20, and Interstate 55.



ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Fentanyl related violence is still prevalent in Mississippi. To further their drug activities and protect their turf, gangs and drug trafficking organizations commit violent crimes such as assault, burglary, homicide, and robbery. It is common to seize multiple firearms during investigations

associated with fentanyl. In the state of Mississippi, local drug dealers and/or regional drug traffickers are dangerous because of the suspects' possible gang and drug cartel affiliations. Abusers are commonly known to commit crimes to purchase these drugs.

METHAMPHETAMINE



ASSESSMENT OF THREAT

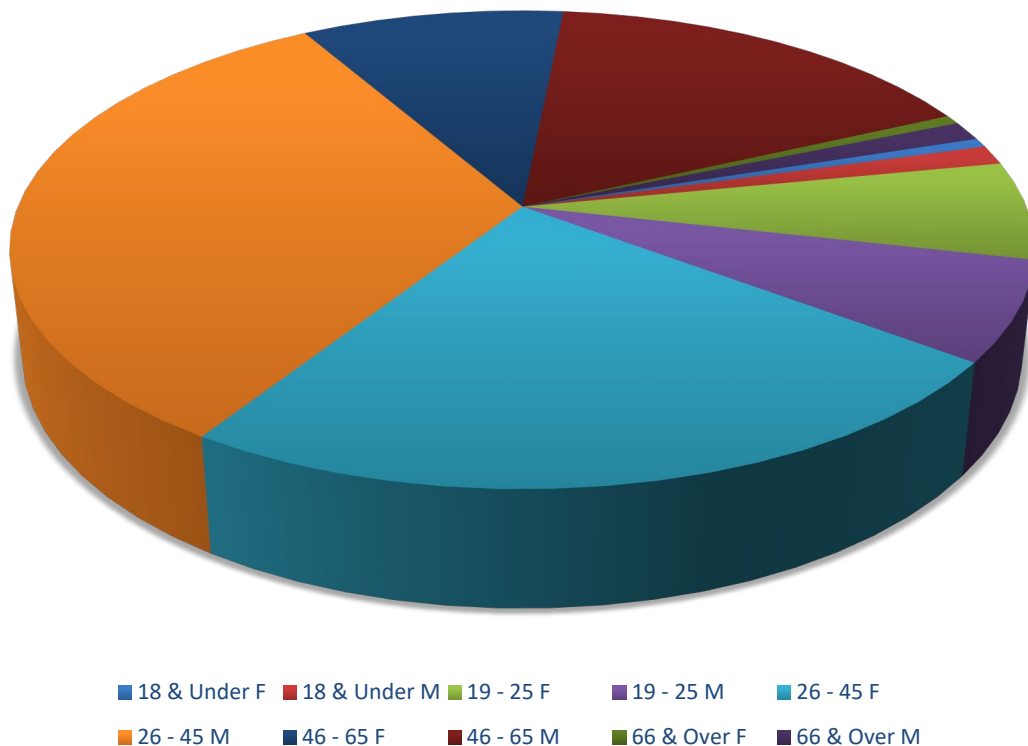
Methamphetamine, specifically high-purity "ICE", remains the most prominent and dangerous drug threat across Mississippi. Due to industrial-scale production and sophisticated logistics, including large-scale shipments through the mail from other states, the drug is now more accessible and affordable than ever. This high availability and reduced cost have created a significant profit motive for traffickers, leading to a surge in both law enforcement seizures and controlled purchases. Whether classified as the primary or secondary drug of concern in specific local jurisdictions, its high potency and ease of acquisition make it the most destructive substance currently facing our region. Methamphetamine was identified as the second greatest threat by 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents, but it ranked first in the categories of greatest violent crime threat, greatest property crime threat, and greatest law enforcement resources threat. The connection to Mexican drug cartels, the serious short-term and long-term health consequences, and methamphetamine involved overdoses are a significant and ongoing challenge for law enforcement. Mexican 'super labs' have largely replaced local manufacturing, flooding the market with a highly potent version of methamphetamine and the combination of increased purity and reduced cost has made the drug more accessible.

ABUSE

The vast majority of methamphetamine is now sourced from Mexico, yielding a high-purity product with extreme potency. This is the drug's purest form and is at least 85% pure and sometimes found to be 95-100% pure. As a result, this stimulant is exceptionally addictive and destructive, often triggering intense psychological effects alongside rapid physical decline. Abusers typically find that to achieve their desired outcome, they must take the drug in larger dosages, more frequently, or in an alternative manner. Addicts of methamphetamine for an extended period may find it impossible to experience pleasure from anything other than the drug, which encourages usage. People who use methamphetamine long-term may also develop symptoms such as severe anxiety, disorientation, insomnia, mood swings, and violent conduct, in addition to being addicted to the drug. They may also exhibit a variety of psychotic symptoms, including delusions, paranoia, and auditory and visual hallucinations. Methamphetamine users who have previously experienced psychosis have been found to relapse spontaneously when under stress. Psychotic symptoms can occasionally linger for months or years after a person stops using methamphetamine.

In 2025, the DMH reported 996 individuals were admitted for methamphetamine abuse as a primary substance. This is compared to 710 individuals admitted in 2024, 376 in 2023 and 390 in 2022. Methamphetamine admissions made up 28% of total admissions in 2025. There were 388 admissions for methamphetamine as a secondary substance and 132 as a tertiary substance. Men

**MSDMH 2025 CUMMLATIVE DATA
METHAMPHETAMINE PRIMARY SUBSTANCE ADMISSIONS**



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ages 26-46 made up 33%, females ages 26-45 made up 24% and males ages 46-65 made up 17% of methamphetamine admissions. In 2025, 42% of the fatal overdoses reported to MBN by coroners involved methamphetamine. This is down slightly from 2024 with 45%.

AVAILABILITY

Due to its abundance and low cost, methamphetamine smuggled by Mexican cartel members is in high demand among distributors because of its purity and is widely available throughout the state. 72% of the Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents reported that the availability for methamphetamine has increased in the past year and 28% of the respondents reported that it has remained the same. 60% of respondents reported that the demand has increased and 40% reported the demand has remained the same. The Mexican drug cartels, particularly the Sinaloa Drug Cartel and the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), control the wholesale trafficking of methamphetamine and other drugs in the United States. Drug trafficking organizations at the national, regional, and local levels are heavily involved in methamphetamine distribution.



MBN made 545 arrests for methamphetamine related charges, including sale, possession, and manufacture, during 2025. MBN initiated a total of 973 cases involving methamphetamine in 2025. This is a decrease from 2024, which had a total of 1,132 methamphetamine cases. The numbers for 2024 and 2025 could be subject to adjustments based on the return of crime labs. Methamphetamine cases initiated in 2025 by MBN involved the

seizure of 440 combined pounds of solid methamphetamine, over 4.5 milliliters of methamphetamine in solution, and approximately 8,847 dosage units of methamphetamine.

ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Investigating drug traffickers has become increasingly dangerous due to the suspects' potential ties to drug cartels and gangs. Intelligence confirms the presence of four Mexican cartels and at least eleven organized criminal gangs, including motorcycle and neighborhood-based gangs, currently managing drug distribution operations throughout Mississippi. The presence of these gangs significantly increases the risk of violent conflict and industry rivalry.

Methamphetamine manufacturers and abusers display agitation and paranoia. This creates situations where violence is more likely to occur. When methamphetamine is created locally, or "homemade," in clandestine laboratories, violence is typically linked to weapons and booby-traps aimed at police enforcement personnel carrying out their official tasks.

PRODUCTION

Stricter regulations and enforcement have caused local methamphetamine production to collapse, leaving Mexico-based DTOs to fill the void. Today, almost all methamphetamines found in Mississippi is produced in Mexico and smuggled through the Southwest border. Data from 2024–2025 indicates that the “ice” variety that now dominates the market has a median purity level reaching as high as 98%. This uniformity is a direct result of the P2P manufacturing method used by cartels, which has pushed average purity from roughly 57% in 2003 to nearly 100% today. For law enforcement and the courts in Mississippi, this means that the legal definition of “ice”, 80% purity, is almost always met or exceeded. The current supply is so consistently potent that traditional distinctions between different grades of the drug have effectively disappeared.

TRANSPORTATION

Methamphetamine is smuggled into the state typically in private and commercial vehicles and through the US Postal Service and parcel services. The 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents indicated that Caucasian Americans, Black Americans, and Mexicans are all involved in the transportation of methamphetamine. California and Texas are the major source states but Mississippi’s border states along with Florida, Arizona, Oklahoma and Nevada are also source states.

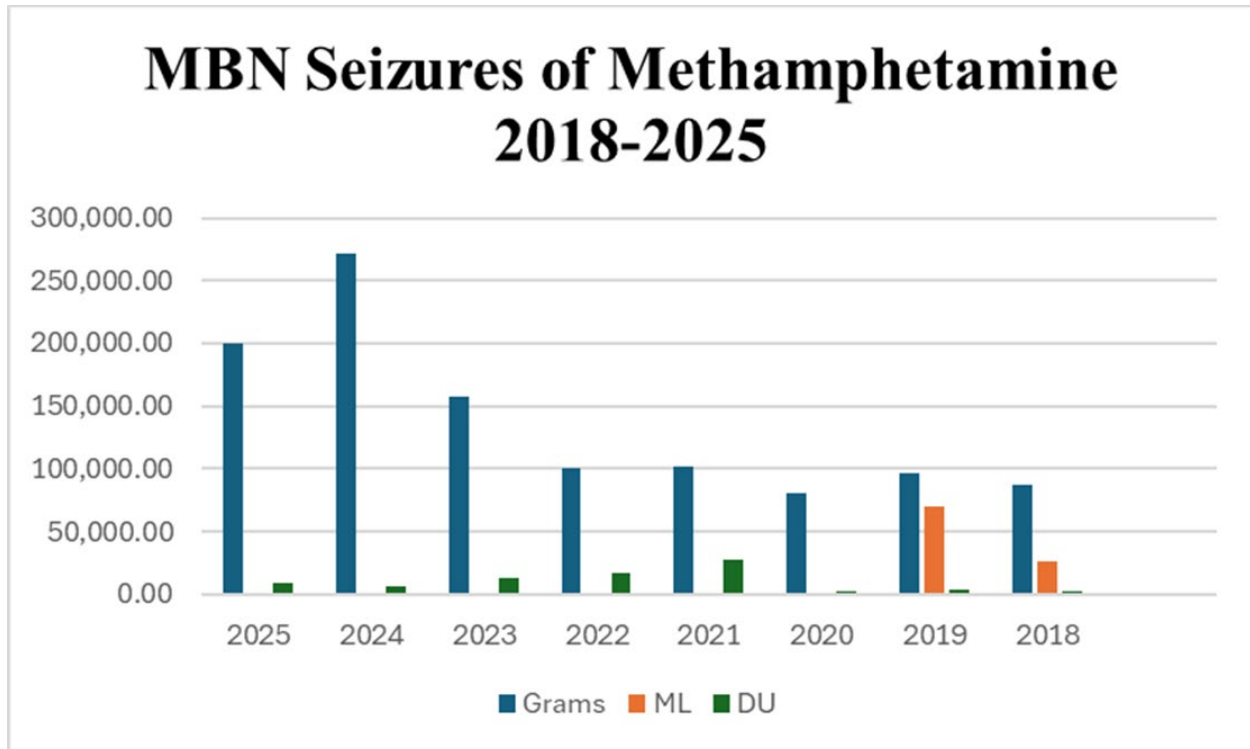
DISTRIBUTION

While methamphetamine production is dominated by Mexican drug-trafficking organizations, the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey indicates wholesale and retail distribution is dominated by Black Americans and Caucasian Americans. 78% of respondents equally indicated that



Caucasian Americans and Black Americans dominate the wholesale distribution of methamphetamine and 7% indicated Mexican. 55% of the respondents indicated that Black Americans are mostly responsible for the retail distribution, 42% indicated Caucasian Americans and 3% indicated Mexican.

MBN records indicate that methamphetamine is trafficked across the state through a diverse network ranging from Mexican cartels and street gangs to local neighborhood sets and independent dealers. There were 545 arrests made by MBN for methamphetamine related charges, including sale, possession, and manufacture, during 2025, which is a decrease from 2024.



MARIJUANA



ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

Marijuana and cocaine tied as the 3rd greatest drug threat by 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents and is still considered the most encountered drug in most of the state. It is widely available and the demand for marijuana has increased. Large amounts of

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nonmedical marijuana and medical marijuana are still being shipped, transported, and flown into Mississippi from other states with legalized marijuana laws and from Mexico. The potency levels of THC in cannabis products, a rapidly expanding market, and the serious health concerns make it a growing threat.

ABUSE

As marijuana cultivation has shifted from traditional methods to the production of concentrates, THC levels have dramatically increased. In the 1990s, average THC levels were around 4%; today, many flower strains exceed 20–30%, and concentrates, dabs/wax, can reach 90%. The health implications of this "high-potency" era are very different from those of lower-THC products. The public's declining perception of marijuana's harmful effects makes this a dangerous situation. Higher concentrations of THC lead to a more rapid desensitization of the brain's cannabinoid receptors leading to higher tolerance and dependency. There is a strong link between high-THC levels and psychiatric episodes, like acute paranoia and schizophrenia. High THC levels also put immediate stress on the heart and can cause sudden spikes or drops in blood pressure, increasing the risk of a cardiovascular event in older users or those with underlying heart conditions

More people in Mississippi are being admitted for treatment of marijuana as the predominant substance of abuse each year. DMH data for 2025 mirrors data in 2024; marijuana was second, only to methamphetamine, as a primary substance for people admitted for illegal drug use, according to the DMH Cumulative Data Report. The group with the largest number admitted for marijuana use were males between the age of 26 and 45 with females in the same age range following. The group with the lowest admitted patients were females 66 years of age and over.

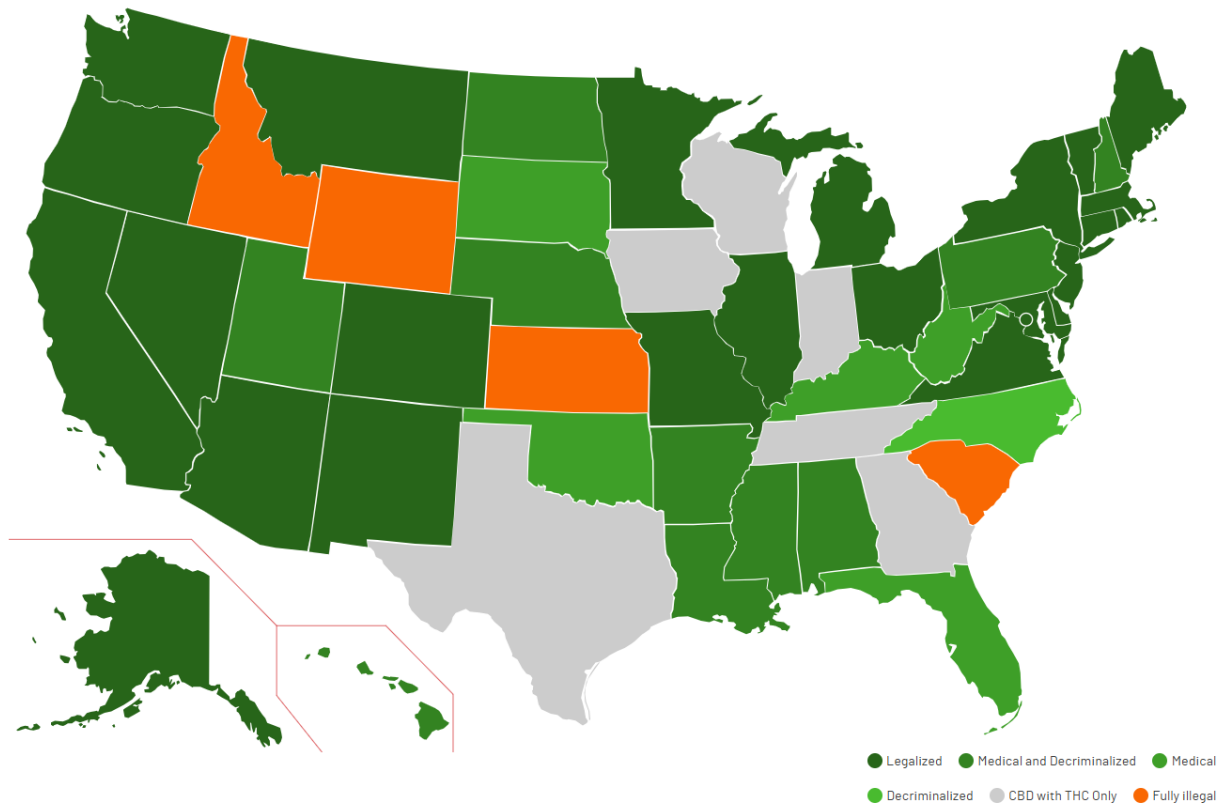
AVAILABILITY

According to the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey, 93% of respondents reported that marijuana availability was high in Mississippi last year. This coincides with what is also reported on a national level and with MBN, the Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (DCE/SP) and the DPS Interdiction Unit seizures.

While some marijuana still originates from Mexico, much of it comes from states where medical and/or recreational use is legal. This influx coincides with the growing number of states legalizing marijuana. Currently, 30 states have fully legalized marijuana, 32 states have decriminalized marijuana, 40 states have legalized marijuana for medical use, and 6 states have legalized CBD with THC only. There are only 4 states where marijuana is fully illegal - Idaho, Kansas, South Carolina, and Wyoming. Despite these state-level changes, marijuana remains federally illegal, classified by the DEA as a Schedule I drug with no accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

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Marijuana Legalization by State



Map courtesy DISA Global Solutions, Marijuana Legality by State Interactive Map – as of February 3, 2026

The Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program (MMCP) within the Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH) is responsible for patients and caregivers: for the use of medical cannabis as directed by a medical professional; medical practitioners: to certify patients for medical cannabis use, facilities: cannabis cultivation, processing and testing; and services: cannabis transportation and waste disposal.

According to the MMCP CY 2025 Annual Report, in 2025 MSDH approved 33,333 new patient registrations out of a total 33,356 applications received and approved 33,033 patient renewal registrations out of 33,377 applications received. This is compared to 28,533 approved new patient applications out of a total of 38,908 received and 20,281 patient renewal registrations out of 24,074 applications received in 2024.

As of December 15, 2025, there were a total of 66,041 total patient cardholders in Mississippi compared to 49,626 in 2024. There were 157 caregiver applications submitted and approved, 90 caregiver renewal applications submitted and approved, for a total of 247 caregivers and 259 registered certifying practitioners. In 2024, there were 182 approved caregiver applications, 63 caregiver renewal applications approved, with a total of 247 caregivers and 258 registered certifying practitioners.

ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Violent crime is not usually associated with marijuana in Mississippi. However, some marijuana producers and distributors will submit to violent crimes to protect their product. Cannabis growers for example, will often resort to counter-surveillance, trip wires and explosives to protect their crop from theft or seizure. In other states, marijuana retail distributors have been known to carry weapons to protect their merchandise and to guard against potential robberies during marijuana transactions. Mexican marijuana DTOs are reputed to be the most violent in the world. There were 178 MBN cases involving marijuana in 2025 where weapons were seized. This is compared to 196 in 2024.



PRODUCTION

There are three types of marijuana markets in the United States: illicit markets, state-approved medical marijuana, and state-approved recreational/personal-use markets. Each market operates differently and can be best described independently. Marijuana is grown utilizing different methods such as indoor, outdoor and hydroponic grow operations. Over the past few years, indoor grow operations were on the decline in Mississippi. These operations range in size from a small closet to entire residences. Indoor cannabis cultivation requires diligent oversight. In order to

produce a healthy plant, growers must provide their crops with light, heat, humidity, and fertilizer. Indoor grow operations also employ sophisticated means of production and concealment. Organizations often purchase homes in neighborhoods with mid to high-level income residents. Residential indoor operations are capable of producing marijuana crops four or more times in one year. There were 451 plants reported seized by MBN DCE/SP operations in 2025 compared to 12,185 plants in 2024.

TRANSPORTATION

Most marijuana is transported by private vehicle, commercial vehicle or mailed in packages utilizing parcel services like United States



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Postal Service, FedEx, UPS and other parcel services. According to the August 2025 Gulf Coast HIDTA Overdose Response Strategy bulletin, “Law enforcement data shows that approximately 9 out of 10 parcels containing illicit drugs shipped from California to Mississippi contain marijuana”.

In 2025, MBN had 7 package interdiction cases but had 224 traffic stop cases with a combination of 3,744 pounds of marijuana and 159 THC vapes seized. The DPS Interdiction Unit reported 2,335 pounds of bulk marijuana, 17 pounds of THC edibles, 2,124 THC vapes, and 31.6 pounds of THC hash/wax seized in 2025 during traffic stops and parcel interdictions and MBN DCE/SP unit reported a total of 13,457 pounds of marijuana seized. The 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents reported that 71% of marijuana is transported by Black Americans.

DISTRIBUTION



For drug traffickers, the potential profits from widespread distribution, combined with a perceived low risk of incarceration, continue to make marijuana an attractive commodity. Street gangs, more organized gangs, and drug trafficking organizations are all involved in the distribution of marijuana. Mexican drug traffickers are also involved in the distribution. Sixty-six percent (65%) of the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents reported the wholesale distribution of marijuana in 2025 increased and was by Black Americans and eighty-one (81%) of the respondents reported that the retail distribution was by Black Americans.

POWDER AND CRACK COCAINE

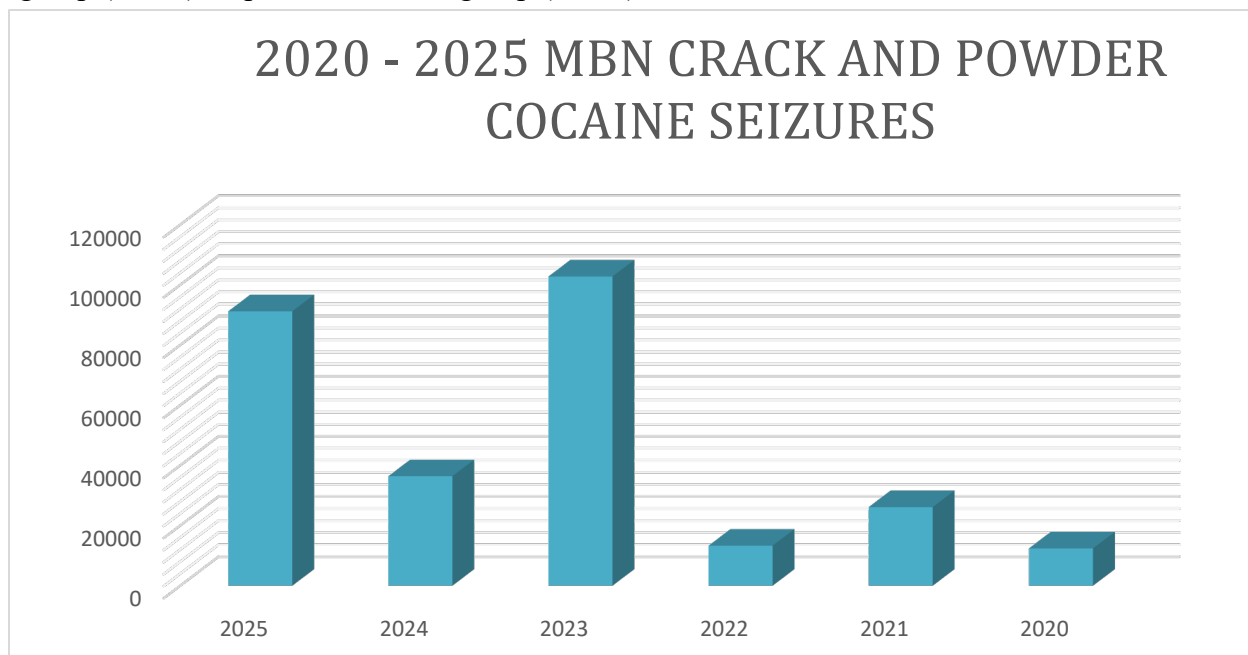
ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

MBN has seen an increase involving cocaine over the past several years. In 2025, MBN saw increases in the number of cases worked, the number of seizures and arrests and in the number of people who sought treatment for cocaine abuse. This is most likely due to the strategy of market saturation by Mexican cartels that has successfully driven down the street price of cocaine. This increased affordability has expanded the consumer base for this highly addictive drug to demographics that historically faced limited exposure due to cost. The damaging effects of cocaine still present a serious public health threat. The use and sale of cocaine, in any form, fuels criminal activity, especially violent crime, posing a dangerous and difficult problem for communities and law enforcement in Mississippi.

ABUSE

During 2025, MBN arrested 85 individuals for sale and possession of crack cocaine and 82 people for powder cocaine. This was approximately 15% of all the drug related arrests by MBN in 2025. Of those arrests, 95% of the arrests for crack cocaine were Black Americans and 73% of arrests for powder cocaine were Black Americans.

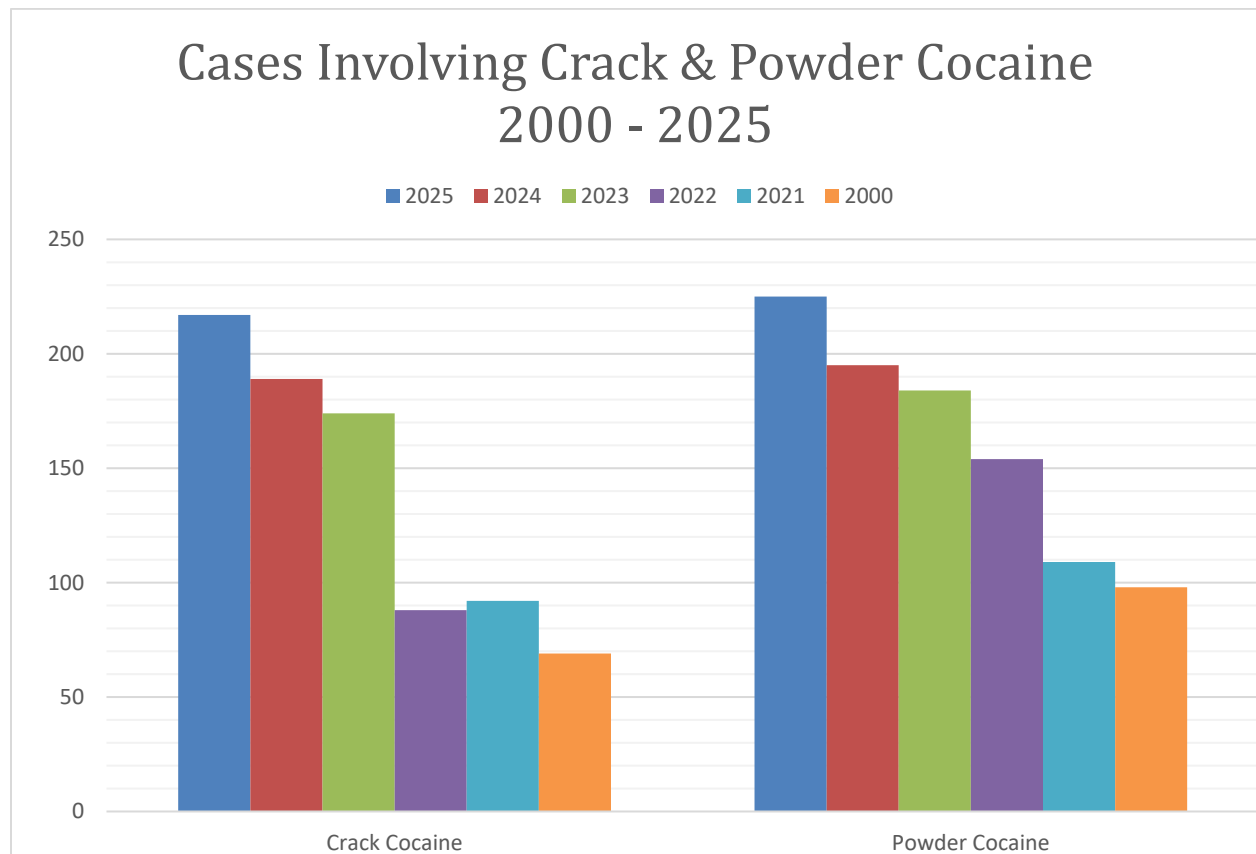
Data from the DMH Cumulative Data Report reveals a 48% increase in admissions for cocaine as the primary substance of abuse. In 2025, 409 individuals sought treatment for cocaine as their primary substance of abuse compared to 276 in 2024, 196 in 2023 and 195 in 2022. These cocaine-related admissions represent approximately 12% of total treatment admissions in 2025. Of those 409 individuals, 33% were males between 26 and 45 years old, and 26% were females between 26 and 45. Significantly, 2024 and 2025 mark the first time in several years that the younger age group (26-45) surpassed the older group (46-65) in cocaine-related treatment admissions.



AVAILABILITY

According to 50% of the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey respondents, cocaine availability remained the same in 2025 and 47% reported that it increased. In 2025, MBN seizures of cocaine increased 151% from 2024. MBN purchased or seized approximately 1,784 grams of crack cocaine and 89,412 grams of powder cocaine. In 2024 MBN purchased or seized approximately 1,337 grams of crack cocaine and 35,063 grams of powder cocaine but in 2023, MBN purchased or seized 1,170 grams of crack cocaine. 101,602 grams of powder cocaine.

There has been a steady increase in the number of MBN cases involving cocaine over the past 6 years. MBN worked 217 cases involving crack cocaine and 225 involving powder cocaine in 2025 compared to 189 involving crack cocaine and 195 involving powder cocaine in 2024, 174 cases involving crack cocaine and 184 cases involving powder cocaine in 2023, 88 cases involving crack cocaine and 154 cases involving powder cocaine in 2022, and even less in the previous 2 years.



ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Crack and powder cocaine are significant problems for Mississippi's residents and law enforcement. Cocaine has been responsible for some violence and criminal activity in Mississippi. Cocaine abusers commit thefts and robberies to fund their addictions. Cocaine retail distributors have been known to carry weapons to protect their merchandise and to guard against potential robberies during cocaine transactions. Mexican cocaine DTOs are reputed to be among the most violent in the world.

PRODUCTION

Cocaine is derived from the coca plant, which is primarily grown in the Andean region of South America. The countries with the most significant coca cultivation are Columbia, Peru and Bolivia. Colombia is the world's leading producer of coca and cocaine, Peru is another major cultivator of coca, and a significant source of cocaine production and Bolivia also cultivates coca, although to a lesser extent than Colombia and Peru. While these countries are the primary sources of coca cultivation, it's important to note that the processing of coca leaves into cocaine often occurs in clandestine laboratories within these countries or in neighboring regions.

TRANSPORTATION

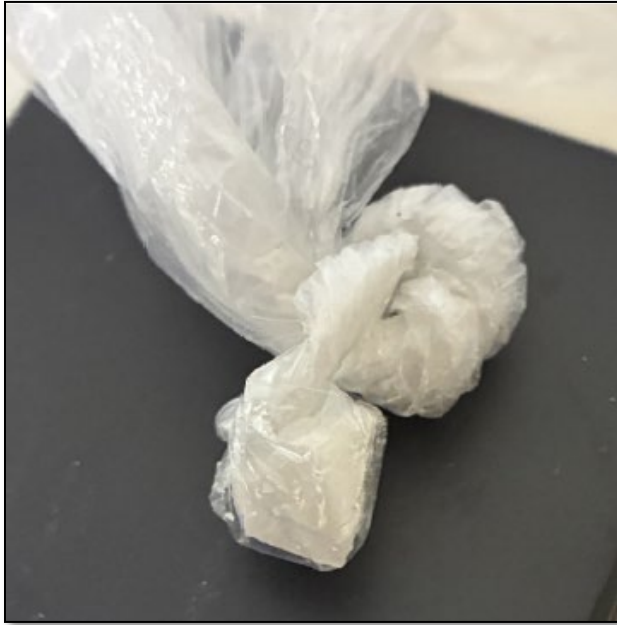
Most cocaine entering the United States, including Mississippi, originates from Mexico and transits through the Southwest Border in large quantities. Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) play a dominant role in this transportation.

Within Mississippi, cocaine is primarily distributed Black American DTOs and some Mexican, often moving from source cities like Houston and Dallas in Texas via personal vehicles or commercial



trucks along major highways like I-10, I-55, I-59, and I-20. Concealment methods vary, including hidden compartments in vehicles and electronically controlled false compartments. Additionally, personal carry-on luggage on buses and parcel services are used for transport. Mississippi distributors sometimes travel to Texas to obtain cocaine directly, but Mexican DTOs also utilize "mules", individuals solely tasked with transporting the drugs, for delivery within the state. The DPS Interdiction Unit reported that 80.2 pounds of cocaine was seized in traffic stops or package interdiction in 2025. According to the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey, 67% of respondents indicated that cocaine is primarily transported by Black Americans and 27% responded Mexican and that trafficking patterns have remained largely consistent with previous years.

DISTRIBUTION



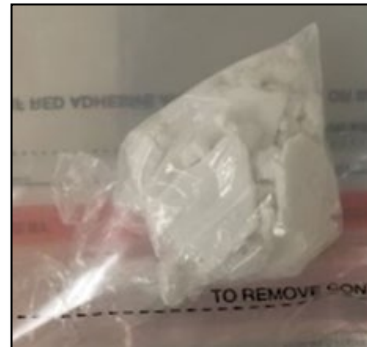
Independent drug trafficking organizations dominate local cocaine distribution in Mississippi. Large seizures, sometimes exceeding 20 kilograms, occur within the state, often involving shipments destined for cities like Chicago and Atlanta. Commercial courier services, such as trucking companies, independent truckers, and parcel services, are commonly used to transport both drugs into the state and drug proceeds out. Cocaine primarily enters Mississippi through Texas. Upon arrival, local suppliers frequently "cut" the cocaine, diluting it with other substances to maximize profits. Distribution occurs at various levels, from gram to ounce quantities, and powder cocaine is often converted into crack cocaine for street-level sales. The 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Law Enforcement Survey

reveals that nearly all respondents identify Black Americans as the primary wholesale distributors of cocaine, with most also citing them as the main retail distributors.

HEROIN

ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

Heroin continues to be a threat in Mississippi and in surrounding states, but it is on the decline. The price of heroin has decreased over the past several years as the purity of heroin has increased. Fentanyl is so cheaply manufactured that it is being used to cut with heroin and other opioids to further the profits of drug dealers and trafficking organizations.



MBN agents worked 21 cases involving heroin in 2025. This number is holding steady with 2024 where MBN Agents worked 20 heroin cases. MBN seized over 2,027 grams of heroin and 4 dosage units of heroin in 2025 as compared to 136 grams and .4 milliliters of heroin in 2024, and 71.31 grams and 13 dosage units of heroin in 2023. During 2024, white heroin was the predominant form of heroin seen in Mississippi; However, in 2025, brown heroin was the predominant form. Black tar heroin is the

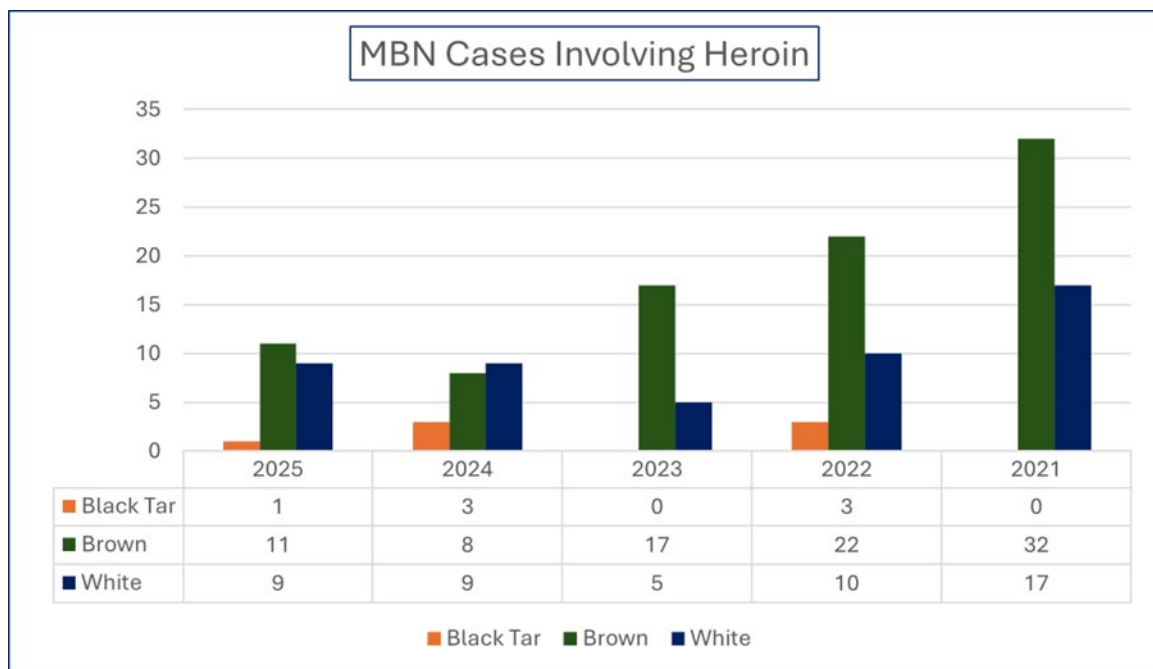
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last predominant form of heroin cases worked by MBN. In 2025, MBN seized 127.68 grams of brown heroin, 1,870.63 grams and 4 dosage units of white heroin and 28.88 grams of black tar heroin compared to the 35.06 grams of brown heroin, 66.03 grams of white heroin and 35.06 grams and .4 milliliters of black tar heroin seized by MBN in 2024. According to the 2027 Gulf Coast HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, respondents said the availability of heroin has decreased or stayed the same in the past year. Additionally, almost all respondents said that the demand has either stayed the same or decreased.



ABUSE

A rapid increase in the prescribing of opioids, started in the 1990s, led to an opioid epidemic and the use of heroin appears to be decreasing, due in part to the increase in fentanyl availability. Cartels and some local drug dealers are cutting heroin with fentanyl and selling on the street to increase profits. There were approximately seven overdose deaths involving heroin in 2025 that were reported to MBN. There are still overdose deaths that have not been reported, as well as crime lab results that have not been completed, whereas this number could rise. There were at least 10 overdose deaths involving heroin in 2024 and 13 overdose deaths involving heroin in 2023.



According to the DMH 43 people sought treatment for heroin as their primary substance from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. It was also reported that 20 people were treated for heroin as a secondary substance during 2025. This number is holding steady from the previous year. In 2024, 41 people were treated for heroin as a primary substance as compared to 111 admissions in 2023 and 166 admissions in 2022.

Though the number of cases initiated by MBN have fluctuated and decreased since 2022, it is important to note that of these cases, those individuals found to be in possession of heroin routinely had other controlled substances present, to include marijuana. 8 arrests were made by MBN of the 15 offenders for heroin related charges including sale and possession during 2025. The Mississippi Forensics Laboratory analyzed approximately 18 cases of heroin alone and approximately 86 cases of heroin combined with Fentanyl during the calendar year of 2025. Some of these cases that were analyzed may have been submitted for drug analysis prior to 2025.



PRODUCTION



Heroin is an opioid derived from morphine which comes from the poppy plant. Heroin generally comes in three different forms in the United States: powder, black tar, and pills. Powder heroin comes in brown and white. White powder heroin is usually the most desirable and originates in Southeast and Southwest Asia. Brown powder originates from Mexico and is darker in color and is usually less powerful. Black tar heroin, which has a black sticky appearance, almost exclusively comes from Mexico and South America. The third, least common form of heroin is pill form. These are often sold in gel capsules or made with pill presses and mixed with other powders like powdered lactose, quinine, and baby laxative. Usually, these pills mimic an opiate

pill. Pills are usually the cheapest and lowest-quality form of heroin.

TRANSPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION

Mexican DTOs dominate the trafficking of Mexican black tar heroin and Mexican brown powder heroin. Most of the heroin distributed in the United States comes across the southwest border and is controlled by Mexican Cartels. White powder heroin originates in Southeast and Southwest Asia. Heroin is typically transported by private and commercial vehicles from Mexico, and then across the United States from California and other southwestern states. Once in the U.S., heroin is transported into and through Mississippi via three major routes: Interstate 10, Interstate 20, and Interstate 55.



ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Heroin violence is minimal in Mississippi. However, gangs that are associated with selling small quantities of heroin, commit violent crimes including: assault, burglary, homicide, and robbery, to further their drug activities and to protect their turf. Most of the violent crimes that occur in Mississippi are not directly attributed to heroin use and distribution. It is not uncommon to locate multiple firearms during investigations associated with abusers to manufacturers to street-level dealers to traffickers. It is of great importance to repeat that local drug dealers and/or regional drug traffickers are dangerous because of the suspects' possible gang and drug cartel affiliations. Violence is prevalent when drug abusers are robbed while trying to purchase their drug of choice from drug dealers. Abusers are more closely associated with theft of items to be converted to cash to purchase these drugs.

DIVERTED PHARMACEUTICALS

ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

Pharmaceutical Drug Diversion, also referred to as Pharmaceutical Diversion, is when prescription medications are taken out of the licit market and/or used outside of the intended use. This continues to be a significant problem due to its significant impact on the supply chain and overall access to those who need it the most. MBN, along with its law enforcement and regulatory partners, routinely investigate and initiate criminal proceedings with those involved in diversion, albeit members of the medical community, professionals, and others. Pharmaceutical medications are still a central drug threat in Mississippi.

ABUSE

Prescription medication abuse can be best illustrated by the number of cases involving diverted medications and/or even based on the Mississippi Prescription Monitoring Program's (MS PMP) provisional data. The illicit diversion of pharmaceutical drugs, such as hydrocodone (brand names: Vicodin, Norco, etc.), oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin, etc.), dextroamphetamine (Adderall), tramadol (Ultram), alprazolam (Xanax), zolpidem (Ambien), clonazepam (Klonopin), methylphenidate (Concerta, Ritalin, Metadate CD), and similar medications are of major concern to law enforcement in Mississippi. MBN continues to partner with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration's Tactical Diversion Squad in Mississippi to identify trends, criminal activity, and mitigate the abuse by Mississippians and others.

MBN initiated a total of 2,014 cases during the calendar year 2025. Of these cases, 186 involved prescription narcotics (ex. hydrocodone), 54 cases involved prescription depressants (ex. alprazolam), and 36 involved prescription stimulants (ex. Amphetamine). MBN arrested a total of 66 individuals for pharmaceutical related cases involving sale, possession, and prescription forgery. According to the 2025 Mississippi Drug Threat Assessment, MBN initiated a total of 2,564 cases in the calendar year 2024. Of these cases, 192 involved prescription narcotics (ex. hydrocodone), 75 cases involved prescription depressants (ex. alprazolam), and 34 involved prescription stimulants (ex. Amphetamine). MBN arrested a total of 97 individuals for

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pharmaceutical related cases involving sale, possession, and prescription forgery. According to the 2024 Mississippi Drug Threat Assessment, MBN initiated 231 investigations involving prescription drugs in Calendar Year 2023. Of these cases, 181 cases involved prescription narcotics, 54 cases involved prescription depressants, and 23 prescription stimulants. Similarly, MBN initiated 286 investigations involving prescription drugs in Calendar Year 2022. Of these 232 cases involved prescription narcotics, 61 cases involved prescription depressants, and 31 cases involved prescription stimulants. Looking at Calendar Year 2021, MBN initiated 308 cases involving pharmaceuticals, whereas most of the cases involved prescription narcotics, followed by prescription depressants, and then prescription stimulants. Prescription forgeries, thefts, possession, and distribution are the primary means MBN initiates investigations involving diverted pharmaceuticals.

The MS PMP, which is housed under the Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, maintains a wealth of data as it relates to medications that are prescribed and dispensed. This valuable program provides a litmus test of current drugs that are being prescribed, and more than likely, being abused and diverted into the black market.

According to the MS PMP, the “Top 6” medications prescribed in Mississippi routinely includes hydrocodone (narcotic), dextroamphetamine (stimulant), oxycodone (narcotic), tramadol (opioid), alprazolam (depressant), zolpidem (depressant), and methylphenidate (stimulant). The “Top 5” are hydrocodone, dextroamphetamine, oxycodone, tramadol, and alprazolam, which are usually identified a drug of choice during MBN investigations. Calendar Year 2025 reflected a slight change from Calendar Year 2024, whereas there was an increase in the quantities of hydrocodone, dextroamphetamine, and oxycodone prescribed and dispensed from the previous year. During Calendar Years 2021 through 2025, hydrocodone was the most prescribed medication followed by either oxycodone or dextroamphetamine, and then tramadol and alprazolam following to round out the “Top 5”. There has been a strong correlation between the number of dosage units of medication dispensed and the medications encountered during criminal investigations. For more detailed information, please see the images below.

Calendar Year 2025

Active Ingredient	Prescription Count	Quantity
Hydrocodone	1,016,805	52,168,537
Dextroamphetamine	675,575	33,699,949
Oxycodone	565,413	36,010,570
Tramadol	360,276	19,490,122
Alprazolam	328,586	17,303,643
Methylphenidate	296,306	12,015,159

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Calendar Year 2024

Active Ingredient	Prescription Count	Quantity
Hydrocodone	1,015,324	52,062,299
Dextroamphetamine	607,189	30,771,039
Oxycodone	535,365	33,579,176
Tramadol	362,759	19,851,137
Alprazolam	326,897	17,403,360
Zolpidem	294,501	10,015,170

Calendar Year 2023

Active Ingredient	Prescription Count	Quantity
Hydrocodone	1,032,596	53,839,490
Oxycodone	512,832	32,061,377
Dextroamphetamine	512,743	26,607,212
Tramadol	365,784	20,264,075
Alprazolam	329,781	17,769,088
Zolpidem	299,335	10,078,715

Calendar Year 2022

Active Ingredient	Prescription Count	Quantity
Hydrocodone	1,064,473	55,763,482
Dextroamphetamine	499,675	25,350,768
Oxycodone	496,605	31,326,836
Tramadol	369,145	20,854,734
Alprazolam	336,450	18,219,377
Zolpidem	304,141	10,189,394

Calendar Year 2021

Active Ingredient	Prescription Count	Quantity
Hydrocodone	1,116,851	57,793,491
Oxycodone	484,687	30,383,905
Dextroamphetamine	447,096	23,026,210
Tramadol	391,098	22,060,590
Alprazolam	347,514	18,976,396
Zolpidem	315,508	10,429,214

Provisional data for “Top 6” pharmaceutical medications by prescription count with dispensed quantities (in dosage units) for 2021-2025. Source: Mississippi Prescription Monitoring Program (MS PMP).

AVAILABILITY

Some methods of obtaining pharmaceuticals include: 1) legitimately obtaining prescriptions then diverting a portion for abuse or financial gain, 2) being given by, bought from, or taken from a friend or relative, 3) stealing physician's prescription pads, 4) producing counterfeit prescriptions, 5) purchasing from internet pharmacies, and 6) calling pharmacists impersonating a medical provider. Some abusers go from practitioner to practitioner for the same medical condition to obtain multiple prescriptions for personal use and/or distribution. MBN also identifies practitioners who willingly help individuals abuse prescriptions drugs by writing prescriptions when there is no medical need, usually associated with some personal gain. Other abusers steal prescription blanks, manufactured prescriptions, or call-in prescriptions to secure quantities to support their habit. Some practitioners willingly help individuals abuse prescriptions drugs by writing prescriptions when there is no medical need. MBN continues to see intrastate and interstate organized crime groups who utilize high quality fraudulently manufactured prescriptions to secure large quantities of pharmaceuticals to illegally distribute inside and outside of Mississippi's borders.

ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Pharmacy burglaries, armed robberies of pharmacies, healthcare fraud, and other criminal activity are directly associated with pharmaceutical drug diversion. The most common criminal activity is embezzlement/theft from medical facilities which is under-reported. Prescription forgery and fraud are utilized by individuals and drug trafficking organizations to obtain desired medications illegally. Due to the increase in technology and collective experience, criminals exploit the manners in which citizens legally get medicines from pharmacies from simple, time proven methods to manufacturing authentic-looking prescriptions. Both have been found to successfully achieve unlawful acquisitions. If medications are not obtained from the legitimate supply chain, what kind of pills are really being obtained? Are the pills stolen from pharmacies, the wholesale drug distributors, imported from non-U.S. regulated entities, or counterfeit? These pills expose the public to grave danger.

Local independent dealers and abusers, who might be one and the same, also commit crimes against property, such as burglary and theft. These individuals burglarize pharmacies and the homes of legitimate prescription holders to obtain drugs. Pharmacy employees also are known to steal products directly from the shelves, to self-medicate or work in conjunction with drug dealers and operate as a source of supply. Intrastate and Interstate criminal groups are involved in drug-targeted burglaries. The threat of diverted pharmaceutical medication is enhanced through drug-targeted burglaries and robberies, which adds threats of violence and acts of violence into the mix.

In 2025, Mississippi had 12 pharmacy burglaries or attempted pharmacy burglaries which is considerably less than the previous year. In 2024, Mississippi saw a dramatic surge in pharmacy burglaries, with 48 pharmacies targeted. This represents a significant increase from 2023, which saw only nine incidents. Previous years recorded 14 burglaries in 2022, 22 in 2021, and 45 in 2020. It's important to note that these figures represent the total number of pharmacies targeted, regardless of whether entry was gained or medications were stolen. MBN continues to prioritize educating pharmacy employees on best practices to deter these crimes across the state.

The dangers associated with pharmaceutical diversion extend beyond property crimes. Crimes against persons, including assault and murder, are also a significant concern. Individuals involved in pharmaceutical abuse or dealing, whether as victims or perpetrators, face heightened risks. Abusers, often obtaining pills from diverse sources, and dealers engaged in criminal drug activity, can become victims of fatal violence. Conversely, they can also become perpetrators of murder through the use of deadly force. Law enforcement officers, particularly MBN Agents, are acutely aware of the potential for violence during pharmaceutical diversion investigations. They recognize the inherent risk of facing individuals capable of employing deadly force.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation of diverted pharmaceuticals is usually by privately owned vehicles and parcel service businesses. MBN continues to see pharmaceutical drugs transported in and thru the state. In 2024, MBN executed and/or responded to 691 interdiction stops of which 93 resulted in the seizure of diverted pharmaceuticals. According to the 2024 MBN Drug Threat Assessment, MBN was involved in 674 interdiction stops in 2023, resulting in the seizure of diverted pharmaceuticals in 86 of the stops. During 2022, 156 out of 784 stops resulted in the seizure of diverted pharmaceuticals. MBN participated in 733 interdiction stops that resulted in the seizure of diverted pharmaceuticals in 141 of the encounters in 2021. As with previous years, MBN participates in investigations when packages are intercepted from the United States Postal Service, FedEx, UPS, and other parcel services that are found to contain illegal drugs, including diverted pharmaceuticals.

DISTRIBUTION

Most diverted pharmaceuticals in Mississippi traditionally have been for individual personal use, especially when committed by healthcare professionals and others. Current trends are indicative that violators are traveling to multiple states to source their pharmaceutical supply and then distribution occurs in the bad actors' local jurisdiction. The sheer number of prescriptions written and quantities of pharmaceutical medications dispensed through licit business practices in Mississippi are concerning. The public's need for these medications is real, but the practice of protecting them cannot be overlooked. Ultimately, these numbers reflect that pharmaceuticals are readily available through a variety of legitimate means, and illicit sources, such as local "drug dealers", in Mississippi and beyond.

. NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

ASSESSMENT OF THE THREAT

Terms like "herbal highs," "herbal psychoactive substances," "novel psychoactive substances," "research chemicals," "designer drugs," and novel psychoactive substances "NPS" have all been used to refer to substances that have been engineered to replicate the effects of illegal drugs that are regulated or scheduled. Out of all NPS, synthetic cathinones and synthetic cannabinoids are the most misused. Apart from being extensively accessible via the internet, social media, specialty

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shops, and on the street, these chemicals can also be easily found in petrol stations, adult stores, and smoke shops. Mostly imported from China. Several classes of NPS are commonly encountered, including synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones, MDMA (ecstasy), GHB, LSD, DMT, PCP, psilocybin (mushrooms), benzodiazepines, and opioids.

ABUSE

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) pose a societal threat and addiction risk comparable to opioids, methamphetamine, and cocaine. While these substances are primarily marketed to the homeless and younger demographics, their use spans all age groups. The NPS market is characterized by high volatility; many "designer" drugs emerge briefly and disappear just as quickly. This rapid evolution makes them particularly attractive to individuals undergoing mandatory drug screenings, such as prisoners, parolees, and probationers, because standard tests often fail to detect these shifting chemical compounds. The most critical danger of NPS is the total lack of transparency regarding their chemical composition and potency. Some NPS have been detected in overdoses reported to MBN in 2025, including synthetic cannabinoids, MDMA, synthetic benzodiazepine and the designer psychoactive drug mCPP.

The DMH reported 23 admissions for benzodiazepine, 8 for hallucinogens, 4 for sedatives or hypnotics, 10 for stimulants and 10 for PCP as a primary substance of abuse. When combined, this is 1.6% of all admissions in 2025. When looking at the percentages of NPS compared to all admittances, the percentage in 2025 is lower than previous years. In 2025, the largest demographic admitted for NPSs abuse was men ages 26-45 and second was women ages 26-45.

SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS (SPICE)

Although they connect to the body's cannabinoid receptors, synthetic cannabinoids are not the same as the naturally occurring cannabinoids found in cannabis plants. There are several ways to use synthetic cannabinoids, such as: 1) spray or soak a plant or other base material before smoking it; 2) suspending it in an oil form to use in e-cigarettes; or 3) pressing it into fake prescription tablets. Sometimes, inaccurately, the mixture of substance, oil, or tablet is called synthetic marijuana.

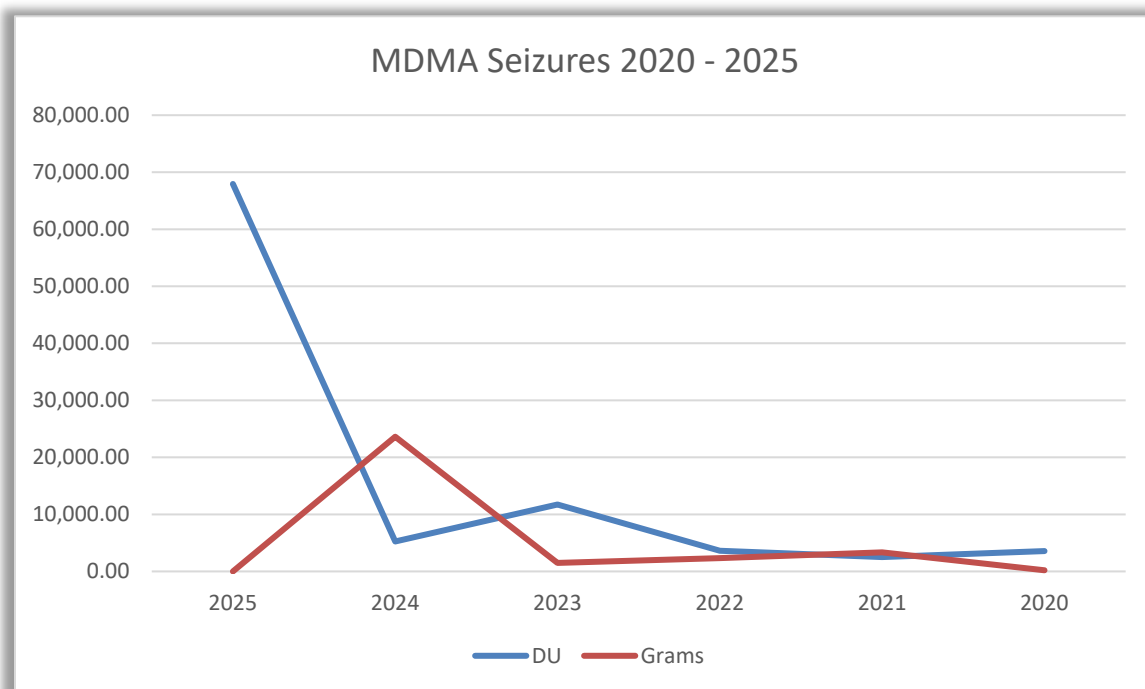
MBN initiated 22 cases involving synthetic cannabinoid in 2025 which resulted in 9 arrests and the seizure of 793.29 grams, 10,243.53 milliliters, and 61 containers. In contrast, there were 22 cases in 2024 involving synthetic cannabinoids, which resulted in 14 arrests and the seizure of 4121.45 grams, and 163 milliliters. MBN initiated 13 cases involving synthetic cannabinoids in 2023, which resulted in 6 arrests and the seizure of 6,958 containers, 7,108 grams, and 210 milliliters. In 2022, MBN initiated 17 cases involving synthetic cannabinoids, 3 people were arrested, 142 containers, 281 grams, 266 milliliters, and 2 dosage units of the drug were seized. In 2021, MBN initiated 44 cases, made 4 arrests, and seized 407 containers, 1644 grams, 1418 milliliters and 320 dosage units of the substance.

MDMA (ECSTASY)

MDMA, often known as ecstasy or methylenedioxymethamphetamine, is a psychoactive substance that is used recreationally. It produces feelings of enhanced energy, pleasure, emotional warmth, and skewed sensory and temporal perception. Chemically, it is comparable to both stimulants and hallucinogens. Although it was first well-liked by nightclub goers and "raves," the substance is now more widely used and goes by the names Molly and Ecstasy.



In 2025, there were 96 occurrences that resulted in arrests and the seizure of roughly 1,443 grams and 67,939 dosage units of MDMA and 28 arrests. Some of the crime lab results for these exhibits could return as methamphetamine as seen in 2024. In 2024, there was originally thought to be 120 occurrences involving MDMA, but in 70 of those cases, crime labs results came back negative for methylenedioxymethamphetamine, and contained a different drug like methamphetamine. In 2024, 23,620 grams and 5,253.5 MDMA pills or tablets were seized. There was a considerable spike in 2023 when compared to previous years; there were 1,486 grams and 11,720 pills or tablets seized in 2023 compared to 2,344 grams and 3,624 pills or tablets in 2022, 3,337 grams and 2,515 pills or tablets in 2021, and 197 grams and 3,557 pills or tablets seized in 2020.



OTHER HALLUCINOGENS

Acid, commonly known as lysergic acid diethylamide, or LSD, is a psychedelic substance that is well-known for its hallucinogenic effects. These effects can include altered awareness of one's surroundings, thoughts, and moods, as well as real feeling but unreal sensations and visuals. LSD is primarily offered on the black market as a recreational drug in the form of tiny tablets known as "microdots," capsules, or squares of gelatin called "windowpanes." Occasionally, it is mixed with absorbent paper and then cut into tiny pieces that are adorned with patterns or animated figures, dubbed "loony toons." LSD can be injected, however, it is usually eaten or held under the tongue.

Phencyclidine (PCP), also known as Angel Dust, is a recreational dissociative drug. Formerly used as an anesthetic agent. PCP exhibits hallucinogenic effects. As a recreational drug, PCP may be ingested, smoked, or inhaled.

In 2025, MBN worked 4 cases involving LSD and 1 case involving PCP. There were 7 grams and 24 dosage units of LSD seized and 1 gram of PCP. LSD and PCP seizures fell considerably compared to seizures in 2024, where 68 grams, 795 dosage units, and 3.3 milliliters of LSD were seized and 230 grams, 2.2 milliliters, and 4.8 dosage units of PCP were seized. These cases led to 5 arrests for possession or sale of LSD,

Psilocybin mushrooms are one of a polyphyletic group of mushrooms that contain any of various psychedelic compounds including psilocybin, psilocin, and baeocystin. When consumed or brewed into tea, mushrooms can produce a state of euphoria, altered thinking processes, closed and open-eye visuals, synesthesia, an altered sense of time, and spiritual experiences.

MBN saw an increase in the amount of psilocybin mushrooms seized in 2025; 20,877 grams were seized and 350 dosage units. When compared to 8,164 grams in 2024, that is a 156% increase in grams, but when compared to 160,792 seized in 2023, it is an 87% decrease in grams. MBN worked 20 cases involving psilocybin mushrooms in 2025 which led to 4 arrests. In 2025, MBN agents assisted agents with the DPS Commercial Transportation Enforcement Division (CTED) on a traffic stop of a box truck from California carrying large amounts of illegal substances, including 150 containers of Psilocybin mushrooms weighing 17,250 grams.



AVAILABILITY

Although the internet is the most popular source for NPS, individuals continue to seek NPS in stores offering adult products, smoking and drug supplies, and in gas stations and convenience stores. This poses a risk because these substances are unregulated and products that appear to be identical but are sold in stores may contain entirely different amounts of cannabinoids, cathinones, or other substances, or they may be contaminated with other substances like fentanyl.

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There are several different types of novel psychoactive substances (NPS) that are reappearing in the United States. They are sometimes called “new substances” by the media, but these substances were developed as early as the 1950’s and have been seen in the United States starting in 1999.

Nitazenes, a class of potent synthetic opioids that are derived from benzylbenzimidazole. Nitazenes were developed in the 1950s but have never been approved for medical use in the US. Some of the substances that fall into this category include butonitazene, etodesnitazine, flunitazene, isotonitazene (Iso), metonitazene, and N-pyrrolidino etonitazene (Pyro). They have psychoactive effects similar to morphine, oxycodone, heroin and fentanyl. Some are 10 times stronger than fentanyl, and while naloxone can reverse overdoses, multiple doses may be required. These substances are often found mixed with other drugs, and their presence is undetectable by standard drug tests. While nitazene deaths are not widely tracked, they are increasingly appearing in toxicology reports. Seven nitazenes were temporarily classified as Schedule I drugs, but this expired in April 2024. In a bulletin published and released by U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protections, Southeast Caribbean RIC and SCRIC-Southeast Caribbean Regional Intelligence Center, it is highly probable that China-based illicit actors are utilizing parcel services to smuggle nitazenes into the U.S. and throughout the Western Hemisphere. The SEC-RIC maintains high confidence in this assessment, citing law enforcement data and open-source intelligence. Specific seizures by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the FedEx international hub in Memphis, Tennessee, confirm that at least two nitazene analogues have already been shipped into the country by Chinese firms. Because this hub serves as a critical transshipment point, it represents a primary strategic location for law enforcement efforts to intercept these synthetic opioids.



Bromazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, is reappearing in the illicit drug market. Developed in the 1970s but never approved for medical use, bromazolam is structurally related to Xanax. It first appeared in the illicit drug supply in Sweden in 2016 and the US in 2019, with cases increasing significantly in 2021. Currently unscheduled federally, though some states have classified it as a controlled substance, bromazolam is typically sold online as tablets or powder, often mixed with other drugs like fentanyl or found in counterfeit Xanax pills. Limited scientific information exists about its effects, but anecdotal reports

suggest sedative and hypnotic properties, with users reporting muscle relaxation and pain relief. While found in post-mortem samples, its contribution to deaths is unclear due to polydrug use. Further research may lead to more states and the federal government scheduling bromazolam. In 2025, MBN worked 2 cases, a traffic stop and a search warrant, where 142 dosage units of bromazolam were seized.

Finally, tianeptine is an unapproved drug sold as a dietary supplement despite being a mu-opioid receptor agonist. Structurally similar to tricyclic



antidepressants, tianeptine is available in gas stations and online, often marketed for pain and stress relief. However, it carries a risk of dependence and addiction, with withdrawal symptoms similar to opioid withdrawal. Overdoses can be reversed with naloxone, and its accessibility has led to it being nicknamed "gas station heroin." While not FDA-approved, tianeptine is sold as a dietary supplement in the United States under brand names like "Zaza Red," "TD Red," and "Tianna.". Tianeptine use is increasing, with some viewing it as a potential opioid alternative.

ASSOCIATED CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Nationwide overdose deaths and violent incidents have been connected to the use of synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones. The use of steroids, PCP, bath salts, and other synthetic drugs has also been connected to violence. NPS can cause victims to lose their memories, get confused, or become amnesic, which can make it harder to prosecute them. Sales have shifted closer to the streets as law enforcement and policymakers have started to target shops selling synthetic cannabis.

PRODUCTION

NPS are synthetic substances that are designed to replicate the effects of other illegal drugs. They are generated from chemicals and do not require any plant material. A lack of standards means that consumers frequently aren't sure what they're getting. For instance, synthetic cannabis, which is frequently imported from China, is marketed in vibrant packaging meant to bolster the notion that it is "safe" to consume. Despite being created in 1912 by a German pharmaceutical business, MDMA's primary source of supply is currently less clear. It takes laboratory equipment and knowledge of organic chemistry to manufacture LSD. NPS that has already been synthesized is widely accessible in China and other Asian and European nations. It is frequently sent by mail carriers for domestic processing and packaging.

TRANSPORTATION

Privately owned cars and online parcel delivery services like the United States Postal Service (USPS), Federal Express (FedEx), and United Parcel Service (UPS) are typically used for the transportation of these different hallucinogens and synthetics.

DISTRIBUTION

In addition to being widely accessible online, gas stations and smoke shops are selling an increasing amount of NPS. Synthetic cannabis is now widely available for purchase as vape oils or legal e-liquids. The sales of these e-liquids are moving toward street sales as law enforcement pursues these kinds of stores. The distribution of MDMA and LSD usually takes place at private events and in the vicinity of college and high school campuses. These illegal narcotics are also distributed by certain Mississippi street gang members.

V. DRUG OVERDOSES

The Mississippi Code of 1972 Annotated, Section 41-29-159 (2012), requires that healthcare providers, coroners, and law enforcement officers notify MBN of all drug overdose deaths or suspected drug overdose deaths within 24 hours. Similarly, Section 41-61-59 (2012) mandates that MBN is informed of deaths that are caused by drug overdose or believed to be caused by drug overdose.

2025 – 192 cases reported involving 193 individuals experienced fatal overdoses.

2024 – 314 cases reported involving 297 individuals experienced fatal overdoses.

2023 - 400 cases reported involving 400 individuals experienced fatal overdoses.

2022 – 395 cases reported involving 395 individuals experienced fatal overdoses.

(Intelligence Division note: Although many coroners are reporting these deaths since the passage of this bill, there is no penalty for failure to report an overdose. Therefore, these figures may not be an accurate reflection of the actual number of overdose deaths in the State of Mississippi.)

Overdose deaths have MBN speculates that the distribution of NARCAN® (naloxone HCl) to first responders has resulted in a reduction of deaths secondary to drug (opiates) overdoses in our state. NARCAN®

(naloxone HCl) Nasal Spray is used for the treatment of an opioid emergency or a possible opioid overdose with signs of breathing problems, severe sleepiness, or not being able to respond. These statistics by no means represent the alarming numbers of non-fatal overdose cases not reported to MBN that, by speculation, could be in the thousands.

Overdose deaths began steadily climbing in the 1990s with overdoses involving opioid painkillers, followed by waves of deaths from heroin and, more recently, illicit fentanyl. Deaths peaked at nearly 110,000 in 2022, fell a little in 2023 and then plummeted to 27% in 2024, to around 80,000. That was the largest one-year decline ever recorded. The new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data runs through August 2025 and represents the first update of monthly provisional drug overdose deaths since the federal government shutdown.

An estimated 73,000 people died from overdoses in the 12 months that ended August 2025, down about 21% from the 92,000 in the previous 12-month period.

CDC officials reported that deaths were down in all states except Arizona, Hawaii, Kansas, New Mexico and North Dakota. But they noted it's likely that not all overdose deaths have been reported in every state, and additional data in the future might affect that state count. MBN speculates that the distribution of NARCAN® (naloxone HCl) to first responders has resulted in a reduction of deaths secondary to drug (opiates) overdoses in our state. NARCAN® (naloxone HCl) Nasal Spray is used for the treatment of an opioid emergency or a possible opioid overdose with signs of breathing problems and severe sleepiness or not being able to respond. These statistics by no means represent the alarming numbers of non-fatal overdose cases not reported to MBN that, by

speculation, could be in the thousands.

The misuse of and addiction to opioids, including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. Pew, www.pewtrusts.org, estimated in August 2021 that the total "economic burden" of opioid overdose, misuse, and dependence in the United States costs \$141.8 billion a year, including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the opioid overdose epidemic has occurred in three waves. They identify Wave One as an increase in prescription opioid overdose deaths in 1999. Wave Two began in 2010, with an increase in heroin overdose deaths. Wave Three began in 2013, with an increase in synthetic overdose deaths. Some say the United States is still in Wave Three and that Wave Four is just around the corner. Fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and non-opioid synthetic substances continue to make their way into the United States. Furthermore, municipal, state, and federal analyses are revealing new classifications of synthetic chemicals. Some of these drugs are synthetic benzodiazepines. Additionally, counterfeit substances continue to plague our communities, whereas medications that are not approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for medical use in this country are being consumed by Americans on American soil.

VI. ILLICIT FINANCE

Terrorist groups are always looking for novel ways to fund their activities. Drug and human trafficking organizations are employing both established and innovative methods to evade detection worldwide. Cybercriminals are perpetrating large-scale online fraud, corrupt individuals are exploiting anonymous transactions, and nation-states are involved in ransomware attacks and the financing of weapons proliferation. Illicit finance poses a significant threat to U.S. national security, prosperity, and democracy. The U.S. anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime must constantly adapt to these evolving threats. While progress has been made, vulnerabilities remain, and law enforcement needs the necessary tools to deny illicit actors funding.

The deadly fentanyl crisis in the US is intertwined with money laundering facilitated by legal loopholes unique to the American system. Mexican cartels, like the Sinaloa Cartel and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generacion (CJNG), produce the drug, receiving hundreds of billions of dollars annually. This illicit revenue is laundered through fake companies, complex accounting, and services shielded by attorney-client privilege, according to a U.S. Treasury assessment. "Factureros," or billers, create false invoices to further obscure the money trail.

China's growing global influence has coincided with the expansion of its criminal networks, bringing them, and their international ties (like those with the Sinaloa Cartel), to the forefront of U.S. policy, particularly due to the fentanyl crisis. These groups are increasingly dominant in money laundering, even supplanting the Black Peso Market for Mexican cartels. Beyond drugs and money laundering, their activities are intensifying at the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada

borders. Key concerns in 2025 include:

- The "Mirror Transaction" Scheme where Chinese Money Laundering Networks use an informal value transfer system, often involving a "mirror transaction."
- Potential violent clashes between Chinese and Mexican cartels as the latter expand methamphetamine smuggling in East Asia
- Whether Chinese groups will increase synthetic drug trafficking into Europe or cede the market to Mexican cartels.

FINANCE/MONEY LAUNDERING

Established in 1990, FinCEN analyzes Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) data to aid law enforcement in combating money laundering. The BSA's reporting requirements create a financial trail for investigators. FinCEN's expertise lies in deciphering complex money laundering schemes and uncovering hidden information within this data. Laundered money can move through various channels, from banks and casinos to international transfers, using tactics ranging from sophisticated financial transactions to simple currency smuggling. FinCEN analyzes this information, drawing from a vast database, to support investigations. Protecting the privacy of this data is a paramount concern for the agency. FinCEN also facilitates information sharing between agencies with related investigations.

Money laundering itself is a sophisticated process that involves hiding the illicit ownership or source of funds, often through a variety of financial crimes such as fraud, corruption, drug trafficking, tax evasion, and terrorism. In financial markets, this means that illicit actors exploit both traditional banking systems and emerging digital financial platforms to move, hide, and legitimize criminal proceeds.

The scale of money laundering globally is staggering, with estimates suggesting that between \$800 billion and \$2 trillion are laundered each year. The United States is responsible for a significant portion of this, accounting for at least \$300 billion annually, or roughly 15% to 38% of global illicit financial flows. From a financial analysis perspective, this underscores a fundamental risk to the U.S. economy and financial system, which is deeply interconnected with international markets. Despite the considerable efforts to combat these illicit flows, studies reveal that 90% of money laundering crimes go unreported. Even though 91.1% of investigations result in imprisonment, the reality is that most of these financial crimes remain undetected and unresolved.

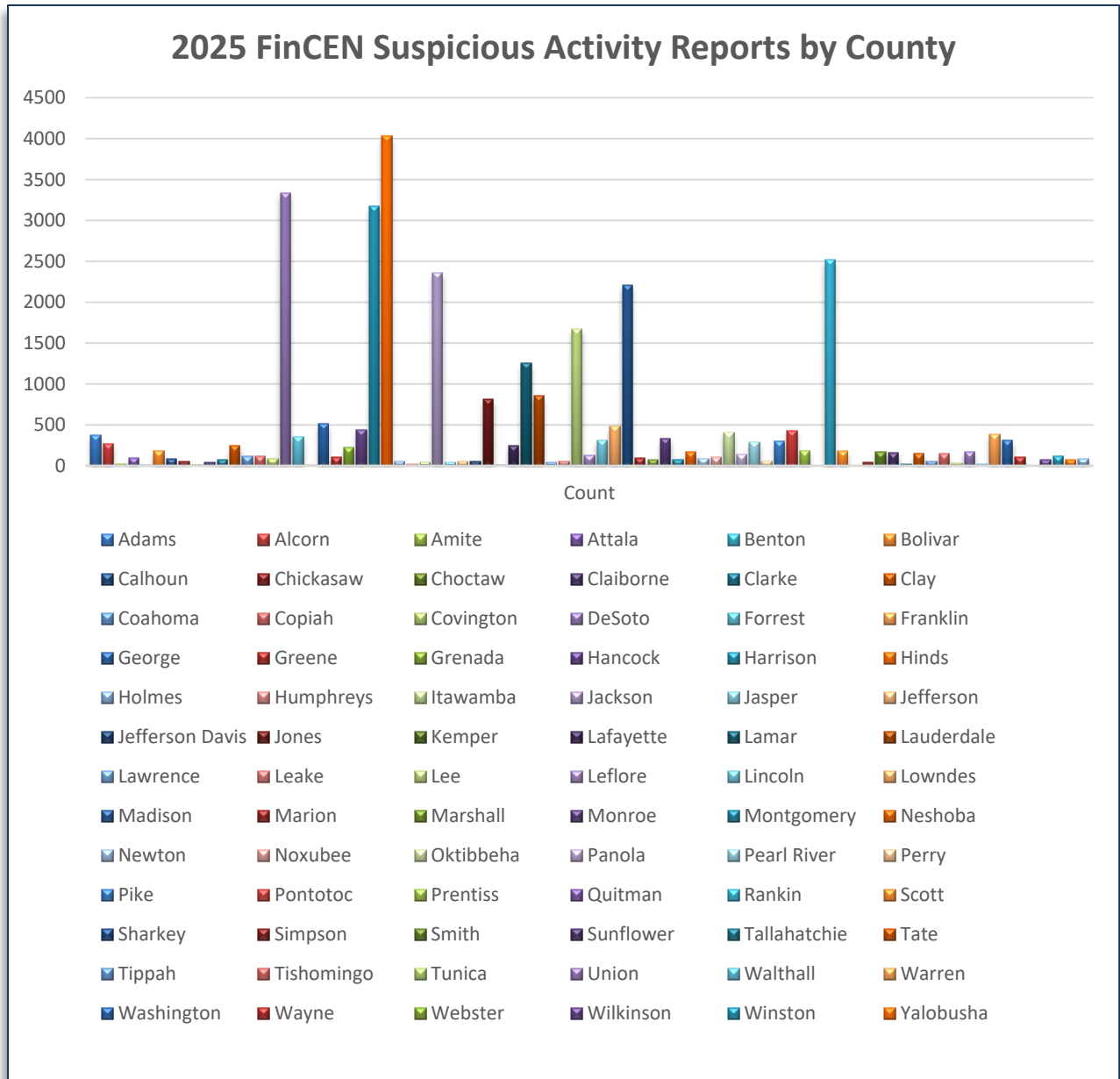
This underreporting and under-enforcement reflect systemic weaknesses in financial oversight and reporting mechanisms. The complexity of global finance, particularly the increasing use of digital currencies and financial technology, presents further challenges for detecting and preventing money laundering. Strengthening financial monitoring systems, improving cross-border collaboration, and leveraging emerging technologies will be crucial to closing this gap and enhancing the effectiveness of anti-money laundering efforts. Ultimately, the fight against money laundering requires an ongoing, adaptive approach that addresses both the vulnerabilities within the financial system and the ever-evolving tactics of criminal actors.

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Law enforcement utilizes the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCEN) to assist in identifying assets of drug dealers. The Suspicious Activity Report (SAR), Currency Transaction Report (CTR) and Currency Transaction Report for Casinos (CTR-C) are the FINCEN assets most utilized by law enforcement. Although FINCEN helps address the difficulties of tracking wired monies and/or monies moved via financial institution, the bulk movement of currency out of the United States and into the transit and source countries remains a problem for law enforcement.

MBN identifies a growing shift toward the dark web and cryptocurrency in specific regions; however, traditional methods like vehicle transport, postal services, and shared bank accounts remain the primary channels for moving drug proceeds. While digital platforms such as Cash App are gaining traction, physical currency continues to be the dominant medium for illicit transactions. To launder these funds, Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) frequently exploit bulk cash smuggling, casinos, and real estate. Historically, high-volume cash businesses, including barbershops, salons, car washes, and landscaping services, serve as key laundering fronts, alongside trucking companies, Mexican-owned restaurants, and Mexican owned grocery stores,

In 2025, MBN seized \$3,523,367.89 in illicit funds during criminal interdiction stops and other investigations of drug traffickers. MBN agents also seized other assets valued at \$2,502,211.94 for 2025 including a single-engine, low-wing aircraft with an appraised value of \$36,267 and in a joint operation with federal authorities, MBN helped seize an 80-acre ranch and two residences, with the total asset value exceeding \$1.8 million.



VII. TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

The devastating consequences of drug use know no geographic, economic, social, or ethnic boundaries. Each year, hundreds of thousands of people around the world, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, male or female, and even young children, die because of substance use disorders. Many others fall victim to drug-fueled violence (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Since 1971, MBN has played a vital role in combating abuse, misuse, sale, and trafficking of controlled substances. Throughout the nation’s “war on drugs,” MBN has taken a collaborative approach to enhance both public health and public safety by establishing and expanding purposeful partnerships with organizations such as the Mississippi Public Health Institute, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, and the Mississippi State Department of Health, as well as with other public and private entities.



Together, these agencies focus on developing treatment programs and initiatives that improve the lives of individuals in need of substance abuse treatment or medical care, while also preventing drug misuse through education and public awareness. By leveraging the strengths of multiple partners, Mississippi ensures that treatment and prevention resources related to substance abuse, mental health, and other medical issues are available as rapidly and effectively as possible.

TREATMENT

A. Overview of the Treatment System



The DMH administers the state's public system for substance use assessment, referral, prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Providers include state-operated programs, regional Community Mental Health Centers, and non-profit community-based organizations. The goal of this system is to deliver quality care across a continuum of accessible, community-based services, including prevention, outpatient treatment, withdrawal management, residential treatment (high- and low-intensity), opioid treatment, and recovery support (DMH, n.d.).

Inpatient chemical dependency units are available for female patients (25 beds) at the Mississippi State Hospital and for male patients (50 beds) at the East Mississippi State Hospital (Mississippi State Hospital, n.d.; East Mississippi State Hospital, n.d.).

B. Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs)

The Community Mental Health Centers a comprehensive range of Substance Use Services, including:

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- Prevention Services
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Individual, Group, and Family Counseling
- Recovery Support Services
- Primary and Transitional Residential Services (including Withdrawal Management)
- Vocational Counseling
- Mobile Crisis Response Teams

These services emphasize a person-centered recovery approach, combining Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and the 12-Step Recovery Model to help patients develop relapse prevention strategies, coping skills, and strong social support systems (DMH, n.d.).



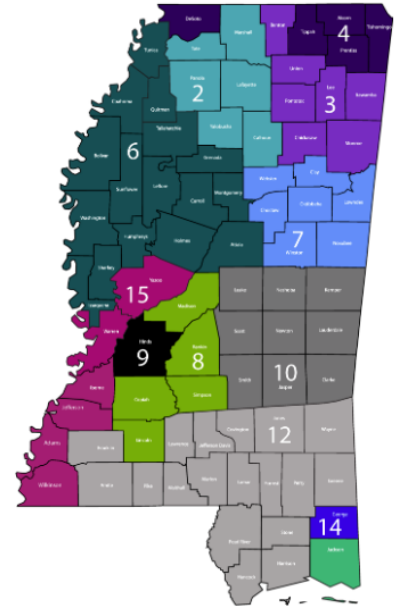
HELPLINE • 1-877-210-8513

C. Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT)

Funded by the DMH and operated through the CMHC's Mobile Crisis Response Teams partner with law enforcement to aid individuals—both children and adults—experiencing a behavioral health crisis. According to the DMH, these teams consist of trained mental health professionals who offer on-site support to individuals whose behavioral health needs exceed their ability to cope independently (DMH, n.d.).

Mobile Crisis Response Teams

REGION 2 866-837-7521	REGION 3 866-255-9986	REGION 4 888-287-4443
REGION 6 866-453-6216	REGION 7 866-866-6505	REGION 8 877-657-4098
REGION 9 601-955-6381	REGION 10 800-803-0245	REGION 12 (NORTH TEAM) 888-330-7772 Covington, Forrest, Greene, Jeff Davis, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Pearl River, Perry, Wayne
REGION 12 (WEST TEAM) 877-353-8689 Amite, Franklin, Lawrence, Pike, Walthall	REGION 12 (COAST TEAM) 800-681-0798 Hancock, Harrison, Stone	REGION 14 866-497-0690 George County
REGION 15 888-558-2077 Adams, Claiborne, Jefferson, Warren, Wilkinson, Yazoo	JACKSON COUNTY 833-630-1947	



D. Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Program



The MSDH operates an Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Program to prevent overdose deaths and combat the state's drug overdose epidemic (MSDH, n.d.-a). A critical component of this program is the distribution of Naloxone (Narcan), a life-saving medication capable of reversing opioid overdoses involving heroin, fentanyl, and prescription pain medications. Naloxone is available free of charge through MSDH and participating pharmacies. Individuals may request free Naloxone kits through the Mississippi Public Health Institute (MPHI) at odfree.org.

E. Drug Intervention Courts

Mississippi's Drug Intervention Courts are specialized judicial programs designed to manage cases involving drug-using offenders through comprehensive supervision, treatment, and accountability measures (Mississippi Administrative Office of Courts, n.d.). Participants engage in long-term treatment, counseling, and regular court appearances. Successful completion often results in reduced penalties, charge dismissals, or other rehabilitative benefits.

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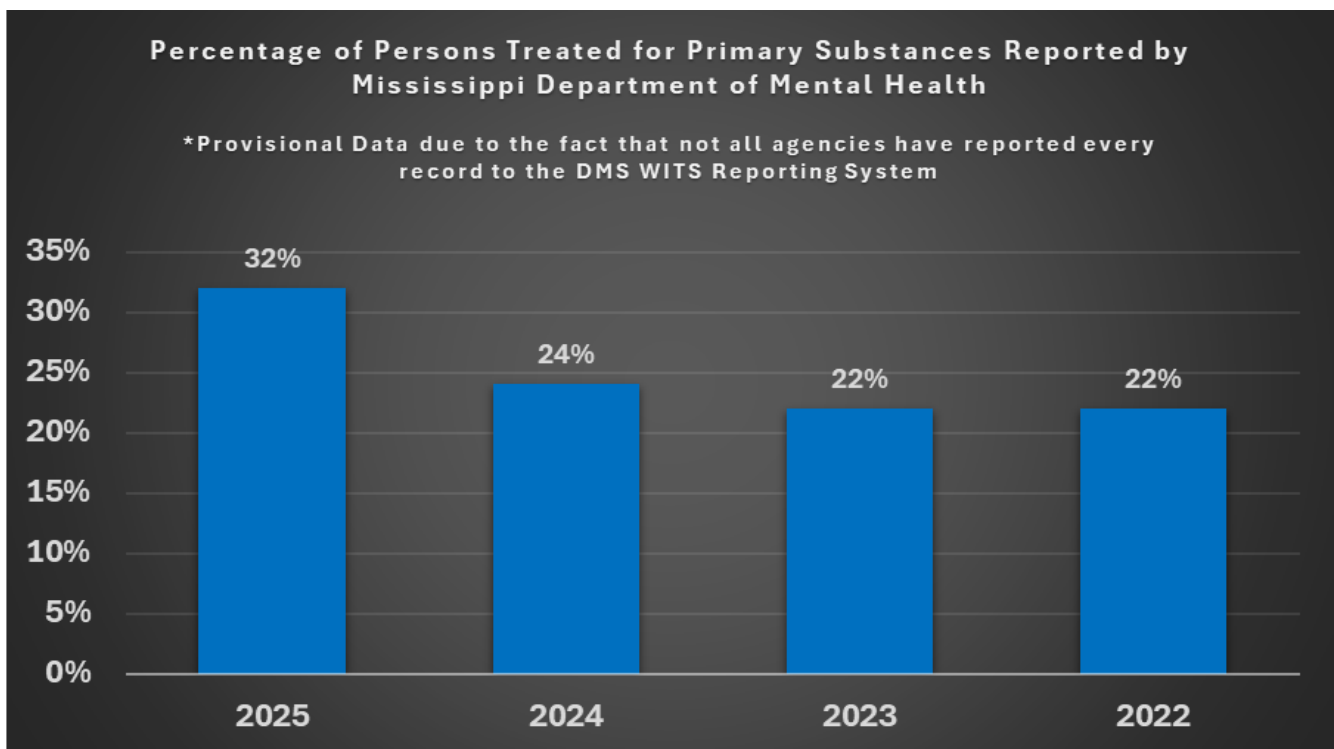
Key components of the Intervention Court model include:

- Early identification and referral of defendants to treatment
- Access to a continuum of treatment and rehabilitation services
- Frequent, mandatory drug testing
- Judicial engagement and monitoring
- Collaboration among courts, agencies, and community organizations



As of the most recent data, Mississippi operates 41 intervention courts, including 23 adult felony courts, 4 adult misdemeanor courts, 14 juvenile courts, and 4 family courts (Mississippi Administrative Office of Courts, n.d.).

F. Reported Statistics

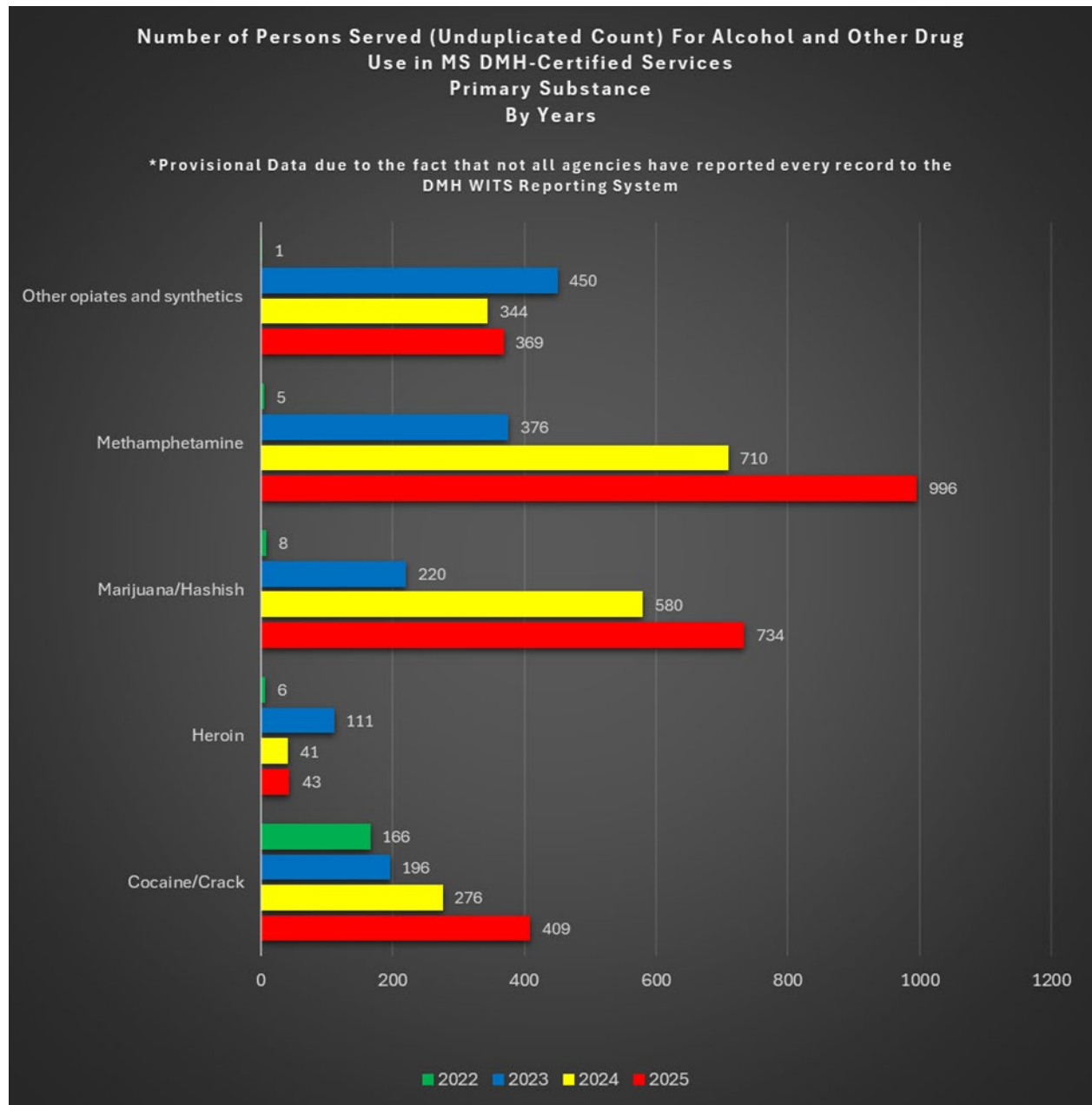


Each year, the DMH collects data on individuals receiving treatment for substance abuse, including alcohol and various drugs. Since 2022, reporting agencies have treated 11,155 individuals. Data for 2025 shows an 8% increase in treatment services provided compared to 2024. While this rise reflects expanded access to services and individuals receiving multiple types of treatment, it also suggests a continuing increase in substance abuse across Mississippi in recent years.

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The impact of COVID-19 in March 2020 significantly affected communities at the local, state, national, and global levels. The pandemic contributed to a rise in substance use, as many individuals faced stress, isolation, and economic hardship. Data from January 2022 through December 2025 highlights trends in drug and alcohol treatment across the state. Although alcohol remains one of the most abused substances in Mississippi, methamphetamine became the leading substance for treatment in 2025, with 996 individuals receiving care. Marijuana, cocaine, and other opiates and synthetic drugs continue to rank among the top five substances requiring treatment.

Overall, these statistics demonstrate not only the ongoing challenges of substance abuse in Mississippi but also the availability of treatment services to support individuals seeking recovery.



PREVENTION

A. Mississippi Opioid and Heroin Data Collaborative

The Mississippi Opioid and Heroin Data Collaborative, a partnership among MSDH, DMH, the MPH, the Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, and MBN, compiles and analyzes statewide data related to opioid prescriptions, overdose deaths, naloxone administrations, drug-related arrests, and treatment services. The objective is to provide accurate and timely information to inform public policy and guide intervention strategies (DMH, n.d.-b).



B. Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP)



The MS PMP, managed by the Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, is an electronic database that tracks controlled substance prescriptions throughout the state. The program aids healthcare providers in identifying potential prescription misuse and supports responsible prescribing practices (Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, n.d.).

With the legalization of medical cannabis, healthcare providers are now required to report cannabis dispensing data to the MS PMP every 24 hours (Mississippi Board of Pharmacy, 2023).

C. Prescription Drop Box Initiative

Through grants from DMH and the Mississippi Partnership Project, residents can access prescription drop boxes located statewide for the safe disposal of expired or unused medications. According to the DPS, there are 36 drop boxes located at police departments, sheriff's offices, and other state facilities (DPS, n.d.).



- Bay St. Louis Police Department
- Biloxi Police Department
- Brandon Police Department
- Byram Police Department
- Columbus Police Department
- D'Iberville Police Department
- Gulfport Police Department
- Jackson Police Department – JPD Headquarters
- Jackson Police Department – Precinct 1
- Jackson Police Department – Precinct 2
- Jackson Police Department – Precinct 3
- Jackson Police Department – Precinct 4
- Kemper County School District
- Long Beach Police Department
- Louisville Police Department
- McComb Police Department
- MHP – Batesville
- MHP – Biloxi
- MHP – Brookhaven
- MHP – Hattiesburg
- MHP – Jackson I-55
- MHP – Meridian
- MHP – Pearl
- MHP – Starkville
- MHP – Tupelo
- Moss Point Police Department
- MSU Campus Police Department
- Ocean Springs Police Department
- Oxford Police Department
- Pascagoula Police Department
- Pass Christian Police Department
- Pearl Police Department
- Ridgeland Police Department
- Smith County Sheriff's Department
- Vicksburg Police Department
- Waveland Police Department

Beyond enforcement, MBN and its partners prioritize prevention through initiatives such as the Drug Demand Reduction Program, which promotes statewide education and awareness campaigns. These efforts are reinforced through ongoing interagency collaboration aimed at expanding treatment access, improving prevention strategies, and sharing real-time data across disciplines.

As Mississippi's approach demonstrates, substance abuse cannot be addressed by enforcement alone. A coordinated, multi-disciplinary effort—integrating law enforcement, public health, mental health, and treatment professionals—offers the most effective path toward reducing drug misuse and improving public well-being. Through data sharing and joint programming, Mississippi's public and private entities continue to deliver timely, effective, and compassionate responses to the challenges of substance use disorders.



VIII. STREET AND OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

STREET GANGS



Mississippi Legal Definitions

- Criminal Street Gang: A group of three or more people with a formal or informal hierarchy that engages in felonious criminal activity.
- Gang Member: Anyone who belongs to a gang, acts as an agent/accessory for one, or voluntarily associates with gang-related criminal activity (including preparation or cover-up).

The Evolving Gang Landscape

Traditional, turf-oriented gangs are increasingly being supplemented or replaced by more fluid structures. While national-level and prison gangs exist, **neighborhood-based gangs** currently pose the highest threat for violent crime in the U.S.

1. Hybrid Gangs - Hybrid gangs represent a shift away from traditional gang "rules."

- Demographics: Typically, youth aged 14–19, characterized by mixed racial, ethnic, and gender participation.
- Behavior: Members may belong to multiple gangs simultaneously and often use social media for recruitment and coordination.
- Purpose: Driven primarily by profit (drugs, robbery, prostitution) rather than neighborhood or racial loyalty.
- Identification: They lack consistent codes or colors, often blending symbols from rival groups, making them difficult for law enforcement to track.

2. Cliques - Cliques are semi-autonomous groups that operate with significant independence from larger formal structures.

- Structure: They usually follow a leader and a specific set of rules but remain restrictive to outsiders.
- Revenue: Their primary income stems from extortion and local drug trafficking, though they also engage in high-level crimes like human smuggling and hitman services.

- Motivation: Participation is often driven by a desire for social status, popularity, and protection.

Mississippi Gang Activity in 2025

1. Major Hubs and Activity Levels

- Jackson: Remains the primary center for gang activity. Jackson Police reported in late 2025 that as many as 30 active gangs are operating within the city.
- The I-55 Corridor: This remains a critical "vein" for illicit economies, allowing gangs from hubs like Memphis to move drugs and human trafficking victims into and through Mississippi.
- The Delta: A major multi-agency investigation in late 2025 exposed deep-seated gang connections in the Mississippi Delta, specifically involving the transport of narcotics along U.S. Highway 61.

2. Notable 2025 Incidents

- Leland Homecoming Shooting (October 2025): The deadliest mass shooting in the history of the Mississippi Delta occurred in Leland, resulting in 7 deaths and 19 injuries. The FBI and MBI linked the event to a dispute between several individuals, a hallmark of rising localized gang-related volatility.
- Jackson St. Paddy's Day Parade (March 2025): A mass shooting in downtown Jackson during the festival highlighted the continued threat of public violence linked to gang-affiliated individuals.
- State Prison Violence: A joint investigation in 2025 uncovered that gang violence remains rampant within the state's correctional facilities, with at least 45 killings of incarcerated people recorded, many of which are tied to internal gang power struggles.

3. Corruption and "Cartel" Ties

- In October 2025, the FBI arrested 20 individuals, including 14 current or former law enforcement officers (including two sheriffs). These officers allegedly accepted bribes from undercover agents posing as Mexican cartel members to provide "safe passage" for drugs and cash through the Delta and into Memphis.
- Transnational Links: While local gangs handle street distribution, they are increasingly serving as the "last mile" for Mexican cartels (Sinaloa and CJNG) to move fentanyl and methamphetamine.

4. Legislative and Enforcement Response

- Gang Legislation: In February 2026, reflecting on 2025, Attorney General Lynn Fitch urged the legislature to pass stricter laws specifically targeting gang violence, citing the need for better tools to prosecute racketeering and gang-led recruitment.
- Federal Intervention: Due to the record-high per capita murder rate in Jackson, there has been a renewed surge of federal assistance from the FBI and DEA to disrupt the "high-level" gang outfits that manage the local drug trade.

The **Simon City Royals** have expanded their influence across the Southern United States. Especially the states of Mississippi and Alabama. They are reportedly one of four of the most prominent gangs in Mississippi. The other three are the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords and Aryan Brotherhood of Mississippi.



Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter offer free live streaming services that gangs utilize. It has been reported that gang members use these streaming services to identify real time locations of targeted individuals for assault or retaliation. Various social media platforms, such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook are utilized to advertise various illicit drugs. Additionally, these groups utilize encrypted messaging apps, such as WhatsApp and Signal, to communicate. Online payment systems, such as PayPal, Venmo, Cash App, and Green Dot, are facilitating payment arrangements among individuals and groups

for illicit drugs. Sellers and buyers often communicate in code by using emojis, hashtags, and acronyms to make transactions.

MBN initiated 80 cases associated with gang affiliations in the year 2024 compared to 144 cases associated with gang affiliations in the year 2023. This shows a decrease in the number of cases initiated in the year 2024 compared to 2023. There were 88 cases initiated in the year 2022 compared to 37 in the year 2021 and 36 cases initiated in the year 2020. Gangs were charged with possession of drugs, including but not limited to, fentanyl, powder and crack cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana. Charges also stemmed from sale of Fentanyl, methamphetamine, trafficking of marijuana and MDMA (Ecstasy), possession of narcotics, possession of depressants and possession of firearm by convicted felon.

The gangs with the heaviest presence in Mississippi in 2025 were the Gangster Disciples and Vice Lords, over much of the state and the Aryan Brotherhood and Simon City Royals, mostly in the northern part of the state. Others that were reported are the East Coast Crips,

	# of Gangs	Total Cases	Total Subjects	Total Arrests	Total Charges
2021 Totals	4	37	44	14	74
2022 Totals	8	88	130	69	167
2023 Totals	8	144	130	69	167
2024 Totals	9	80	94	36	142
2025 Totals	6	50	68	28	111

Rolling 60's, and Bloods in the southern region, and a host of neighborhood gangs that are usually loosely organized, like the Spider Gang and the Poo Bear Gang "PBG" operating in the Greenville area. Although not yet encountered, there has been recent intel of MS 13 gang members residing in our state. This follows what has been reported nationally also.

Throughout Mississippi, gangs use graffiti markings to identify their turf. Ages of identified gang members range from 13 years of age to 50 plus. In 2023, MBN Agents initiated more investigations involving gang members. From conversations with Mississippi law enforcement partners, gang activity continues to involve an increasing number of juveniles.



Known Gangster Disciples graffiti has been reportedly seen on US military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gang members have also begun to infiltrate police departments, using tactics and information they learn there to both outsmart and confront law enforcement and rival gangs.

Gang members are also using technology to monitor, target, and conduct counter-surveillance of law enforcement. Utilizing such tools as the internet, smartphones, drones, GPS devices, confidential informants, VoIP, PlayStation and Xbox, gang members can identify, locate, and disrupt law enforcement operations.



Gangster Disciples "represent" with the colors black and blue. Gang members are known to wear Georgetown Hoyas, Florida Gators, and Duke Blue Devils apparel. The predominant symbol used to represent them is the six-pointed Star of David (☆). The symbol pays homage to founder David Barksdale. The Gangster Disciples are active in 110 cities and in 31 states, predominantly in the midwestern and southeastern United States. Their most notable criminal activities include drug trafficking, robbery, extortion, murder, and prostitution.

Symbols often used to characterize the Vice Lords are hats cocked to the left side, rabbits wearing a bow tie (The Playboy logo), martini glasses, gloves, top hats, canes, five-point stars (points representing Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom and Justice), crescent moons, pitchforks pointing down, broken hearts with wings, pyramids with eyes above them, and five-point crowns. Their criminal activities include drug



trafficking, robbery, extortion, fraud, money laundering, boosting and murder.



Red is the color for Bloods, although some sets may use green. Bloods refer to each other as Dawg, Damu, or Piru. Numbers and symbols depend on a set affiliation. The word "Piru" refers

to the original Blood gang. Bloods use a crossed out “c” in words as disrespect for Crips. The word MOB means “Money Over Bitches.” Bloods are comprised of approximately 15,000 to 20,000 members. Criminal activities include drug trafficking, robbery, murder, burglary, prostitution, theft and extortion.

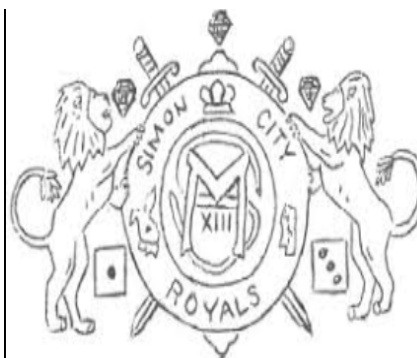
The Crips are one of the largest and most violent associations of street gangs in the United States with an estimated 30,000 to 35,000 members. The Crips are a primarily black gang. Crips will misspell words in an attempt to avoid using certain letter combinations that are viewed as disrespectful to the vandalizing gang. For instance, the letters “C” and “K” together stand for “Crip Killer,” therefore, the Crips will avoid using this letter combination and instead spell words that would normally end in “-ck” with two “C’s” so that the word “luck” is spelled “lucc.” Crips represent themselves by wearing blue; some sets may dress in purple. Crips refer to each other as Cuzz or Loc which itself is sometimes used as a moniker for Crip. “Crab” is the most disrespectful epithet to call a Crip and can warrant fatal retaliation. Numbers and symbols depend on set affiliation. Crips use the letter “c” in place of “b” as a way of disrespecting the rival gang, Bloods. Crips call themselves “Blood Killas” (BK) and wear British Knight (BK) tennis shoes. Criminal activities include drug trafficking, robbery, murder, burglary, prostitution, and theft.



trafficking, robbery, extortion, murder and domestic terrorism.

Symbols common to the Black P. (Prince) Nation, or the Black P. Stones, are a pyramid with 21 bricks, rising sun, eye, number 7, five-point star, and the crescent moon. Their colors are red, black and green. They have approximately 30,000 to 42,000 members nationwide. The Black P. Stones are also allied with the Almighty Latin Kings Nation, the most organized Hispanic street gang in the U.S., known for murder, drug trafficking, and robberies. The BPSN

The Simon City Royals have expanded their influence across the Southern United States. Especially the states of Mississippi and Alabama. The Simon City Royals are one of the predominant gangs in Mississippi. They were formally the Almighty Simon City Royal Nation. The Simon City Royals are now an affiliate of the All Folk Nation. As of 2003, Royal recruits in Mississippi are required to be sponsored by a member, serve a six-month probationary period (during which time they are referred to as "prospects"), and ultimately declare a lifetime commitment to the gang. The Simon City Royals have recently made a notable split creating a new set known as Sip City or Thirteen Dreams (a 501(c)(3) organization). Simon City Royals’ symbols include a shield with an R for Royal, 6-point star, cross, 3-pointed



crown and the royal knight. This organization is represented by the colors black, white and blue. Criminal activities include dealing of illegal drugs and other contraband, particularly in prison where members are incarcerated. They are also involved in racketeering and loan sharking.



The Latin Kings (also known as the Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation) is the most sizable Hispanic and Latino street gang across the globe. The gang was founded in Chicago, Illinois in 1954. The colors for the Latin Kings are black and gold. This gang makes use of a 5 or 3-point “sacred crown,” drawings of a lion and/or the “King Master,” and the acronyms LK, ALK, ALKN, ALKQN. Unlike most street gangs, the acceptance of female members is commonplace in most factions. The Latin Kings comprised of 20,000-35,000 members within the U.S. and up to 50,000 globally. The Latin

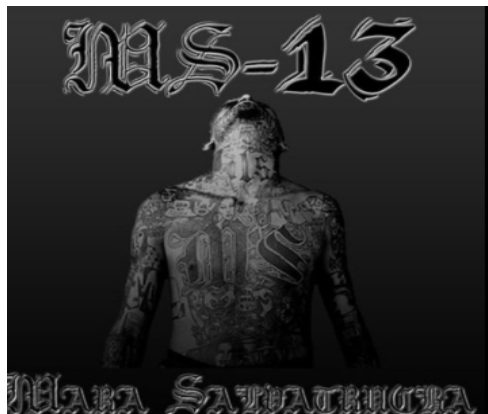
Kings have 160 chapters operating in 34 states in the U.S. The Latin kings conduct wide-scale racketeering activities within their spheres of influence and drug trafficking of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. Criminal activities include battery, extortion, robbery, murder, arms trafficking and drug trafficking.

The Aryan Brotherhood (AB), also known as the Brand, is a white supremacist prison gang and organized crime syndicate in the United States with roughly 20,000 members. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the gang makes up less than one-tenth of a percent of the prison population, but it is responsible for as many as 20% of the murders in the federal prison system. Throughout the state of Mississippi, there are approximately 400 known Aryan Brotherhood members consisting mostly of young Caucasian males. The Mississippi Brotherhood calls itself “the Family” and is ruled by a three-man



“Wheel” that divides the state into nine zones. The Wheel appoints a captain to oversee each zone and prison, with a network of sergeants-at- arms who enforce order and discipline, a treasurer to handle finances and numerous soldiers. Recruits are in “prospect status” for six months before they can be assigned a “blood in mission.” The gang was disrupted in 2016 when 42 members and associates were convicted of racketeering conspiracy, murder, and conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine. Representations common to the Aryan Brotherhood are: “Aryan Brotherhood,” “AB,” 666, Nazi symbolism such as SS, sig runes, and swastikas, as well as shamrocks and Celtic iconography. Criminal activities include drug trafficking, extortion, inmate prostitution and murder-for-hire.

Currently, law enforcement’s most concerning street gang is Mara Salvatrucha, known as MS-13. With approximately 10,000 members in the United States, MS-13 is notorious for its propensity for vicious violence. Initiation requires committing murder and many gang members have been convicted of homicide, some using machetes to behead their victims. Most of the gang is ethnically composed of Central Americans (mostly Salvadorans) who are active in urban and suburban areas.



Traditionally, MS-13 gang members wear Chicago Bulls hats in the gang's official colors blue & white, but members in Massachusetts have been known to wear Chicago Bulls hats in a variety of different colors to avoid identification. MS-13 gang members commonly use Chicago Bulls apparel to identify themselves. Tattoos common to the MS-13 are "MS," "Salvatrucha," "devil horns," the name of their clique, and more. MS-13 utilizes a system of hand signs for purposes of identification and communication. One of the most displayed is the "devil's head" which forms an 'M' when displayed upside down.

The hand sign is like the same symbol commonly seen displayed by heavy metal musicians and their fans. Founders of Mara Salvatrucha borrowed the hand sign after attending concerts of heavy metal bands. Criminal activities include drug trafficking, robbery, larceny, human trafficking, extortion, illegal immigration, murder, prostitution, racketeering, battery, kidnapping and arms trafficking. MS-13 members are involved in the smuggling of illicit drugs into the United States, primarily powdered cocaine and marijuana.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast has a population of Asian gangs in the Harrison, Hancock, and Jackson County areas. Some of the Asian gangs known to authorities are: The Dragon Family/Royal Family, True Viet Boys (TVB), and the Viet Boyz (2202 VBZ). Junior members are called "Baby Gangsters" (aka "Boy Gangsters"; "Tiny Baby Gangsters"). The Dragon Family is a well-known rival of the Viet Boyz. The dragon is most often used to symbolize these gangs. The revenue from organized crime comes mainly from the extortion of brothels, prostitution, money laundering, the distribution of narcotics, and counterfeit merchandise. Criminal activities include extortion, counterfeiting, prostitution, money laundering, drug trafficking, racketeering, murder, assault, robbery, arms trafficking, auto theft, and burglary.



The Viet Boys are known as one of the most violent Asian gangs. They are typically known for their stubbornness and protecting their turf. They have approximately 1,300 to 2,000 members.



This gang was created by Cambodians to protect their own people from getting attacked by Mexican gang members. The gang is allied with the Crips. Criminal activities include drug trafficking, robbery, assault, burglary, theft, homicide, and gambling.

The Mexican Mafia, also known as La Eme, has an estimated membership of between 350 and 400 validated members, comprised primarily of United States citizens and Mexican Nationals. The

Mexican Mafia did not originate in Mexico and is entirely a U.S. criminal prison organization. Tattoos common to the Mexican Mafia are symbols which include images of a black hand. The gang's primary symbol, which is often used in tattoos by members, is the national symbol of Mexico (eagle and a snake) atop a flaming circle over crossed knives. The number 13 is used to show allegiance to the Mexican Mafia. M is the 13th letter of the alphabet. Even though homosexuals are barred from entry into the gang, they are engaged heavily in homosexual prostitution in the prison system. Criminal activities both inside and outside the prison system involve extorting drug distributors outside prison and distributing various narcotics within and outside the penitentiary. The Mexican Mafia's main source of income is extorting drug distributors outside prison and distributing methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana within the prison systems and on the outside streets. Criminal activities include: murder, money laundering, arms trafficking, drug trafficking, kidnapping, pandering, racketeering, extortion, human trafficking, illegal immigration, fraud and illegal gambling.



OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS



At the present time, Mississippi has three international Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMG) which are the Sons of Silence, the Vagos and the Bandidos. The Bandidos and the Sons of Silence were the dominant OMG clubs in Mississippi and were two of the “Big Five OMG’s” in the nation. The “Big Five” consists of the five most notorious and violent motorcycle gangs in the United States. The Bandidos have chapters in the state located on the Gulf Coast, Jackson, Meridian, and North Mississippi. According to the American Motorcycle Association, 99% of motorcycle riders are law abiding citizens; thus, only one percent of all motorcycles are affiliated with a gang.

The FBI asserts that OMG’s support themselves primarily through drug dealing, trafficking in stolen goods, and extortion. They typically fight over territory and the illegal drug trade and collect \$1 billion in illegal income annually.

Many jurisdictions have reported an increase in overall Motorcycle Club and Outlaw Motorcycle Gang activity in recent years. This activity has centered on increasing membership by patching smaller clubs into larger clubs. In some instances, support clubs have been used to increase the visual effect of a dominant club when it rides through an area. Clubs are also displaying colors and support stickers on motor vehicles.



The Sons of Silence Motorcycle Club (SOSMC) is an international one-percenter outlaw motorcycle club founded in 1966 in Niwot, Colorado, by Bruce "The Dude" Richardson. Known for a strict, traditional, and intense prospecting process, the club has roughly 35 chapters across 12 U.S. states and Germany.

The Sons of Silence OMG became a full charter chapter in Rankin County in October 2008. As with most other gangs, a chapter must have five members to receive full status as a chapter. MBN intelligence has identified three members of the Sons of Silence OMG in Rankin and Scott Counties. The Sons of Silence's logo is an American eagle superimposed over the letter "A" (similar

to, and taken from, the Anheuser-Busch logo) flying under an arch and their motto is "donec mors non separat", Latin for "until death separates us."

According to the Mississippi Confederation of Clubs, the Bandidos OMG has chapter a in Gulfport, Hattiesburg, Jackson, and Meridian. The Bandidos are one of the five main OMGs that pose a serious national domestic threat and conduct much of the criminal activity linked to OMGs. It is not uncommon to observe colors, decals, and other identifiers while in communities. The Bandidos MC, also known as the Bandido Nation, is an OMG formed in Texas in 1966 and based in Houston. The Bandidos MC has approximately 2,000 members, and 303 chapters located in



22 countries. The Bandidos MC has 90 chapters located in the United States alone, through which they commit mass racketeering and drug distribution activities across the country. The Bandidos MC conducts drug trafficking, arms trafficking, prostitution, extortion, money laundering and murder.

The Pistoleros are a support club, or gang, for the Bandidos with five chapters in Mississippi located in Desoto, Lauderdale, Forest, Hinds and Harrison Counties. OMGs strive to initiate young members with no criminal history for



the purpose of acquiring a gun permit or to purchase weapons. The criminal activities are the same as the majority of other OMG's which include drug distribution, stolen motorcycles, money laundering, other Racketeer Influenced Organizations, and Continuing Criminal Enterprise type violations.

The Galloping Goose motto is: "Often Tested, Always Faithful". Their colors are purple and gold and their patch consists of a set of legs running. The torso on top of the set of legs is a large hand with the middle finger extended. In the background of the patch you can see an outhouse, this links back to an outhouse which used to be towed on a trailer in the club's early years when they went on runs. The patch has purple writing on a gold background. The Galloping Goose OMG is a one percent club and their rules of behavior sometimes include violent crimes.



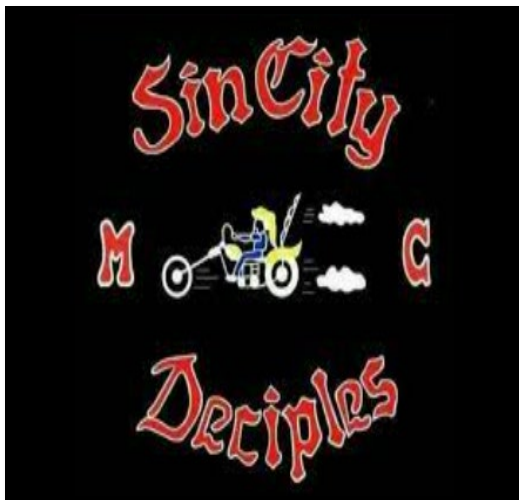
The Vagos' (also known as the Green Nation) motto is: "We Give What We Get." The Vagos arrived in Mississippi in 2011 and began wearing nomad cuts.



They are an international one percent OMG founded in California. Vagos MC has an estimated 900 patched members in 87 chapters in the United States. The Vagos Motorcycle Club patch consists of the Norse god of Mischief, Loki. He is depicted riding a motorcycle. One of the Vagos Motorcycle Club abbreviations is 22, referencing the 22nd letter of the alphabet. The Vagos Motorcycle Club color is green, which links back to the Mexican heritage of the Vagos Motorcycle Club founder. Vagos' also use the motto "VFFV," meaning "Vagos Forever Forever Vagos." Vagos MC is known for narcotics distribution, motorcycle theft, racketeering, and illegal weapons possession.

In 2013, the Iron Coffins initiated a local chapter in North Mississippi near Tupelo. The Iron Coffins originated out of Ohio in the 1960s and have chapters in several states in the Midwest, and now in Southern States. The Iron Coffins use the acronym "ICFFIC" which translates to "Iron Coffins Forever Forever Iron Coffins." The patch consists of a skeleton riding a motorcycle with wings. A biker displaying a 13 patch symbolizes that the biker either smokes marijuana, deals in it, or has a contact for methamphetamine. 666 displayed on a patch or tattoo, symbolizes the mark of Satan. 69 displayed on a patch or tattoo is symbolic of the well-known sexual position.





The Sin City Deciples motto is Death before Dishonor. The Club also uses the abbreviation of "DFFD," which stands for "Deciples Forever Forever Deciples." Though most club members are black, the club is open to all men, regardless of race or color. The club is known to have approximately 4,900 members including some military veterans. Members ride Harley Davidson Motorcycles. Members pride themselves on the tight knit brotherhood they have developed over years of riding with each other from state to state. The term "1934 Express" is also used, relating to the 19th, 3rd and 4th letters of the alphabet (S, C, D) for Sin City Deciples.

The Outcast Motorcycle Club is a black one percenter motorcycle club founded in Detroit, Michigan in 1969.

They are an all-black one percenter motorcycle club. After starting their Mother Chapter in Detroit, Michigan, they have grown to over 30 chapters in cities throughout the US. They do not have any chapters internationally. The Outcast Motorcycle Club patch is made up of a laughing skull, which has teeth and possibly cornrows. Behind the skull is an iron cross. The Outcast motto is "We Ride For Peace," making note of the spelling of the word "piece," rather than "peace." Also used by the Outcast Motorcycle Club is the acronym of "OFFO," which stands for Outcast Forever, Forever Outcast. The Outcast Motorcycle Gang, which has 67 chapters across the country, has chartered a chapter in Gulfport, Mississippi. They are rivals of the Demonic Angels and Jaundice Mafia and allies of the Bloodsuckers and Loyal Inc.



IX. OUTLOOK

The U.S. illicit drug market remains one of the most profitable in the world, driven by a complex interplay of supply, demand, and evolving trafficking trends. This high profitability attracts sophisticated and aggressive criminal organizations that continually adapt their routes and methods to bypass legislative changes and border enforcement. Mississippi remains a central battleground in this struggle, facing persistent challenges with drug trafficking, distribution, and the systemic violence that follows. While the state has recently seen a downward trend in overdose deaths, it remains a high-risk zone for synthetic opioids, further complicated by an opioid dispensing rate of 61.4 per 100 persons, a figure significantly higher than the national average. Currently, methamphetamine (ICE) remains one of Mississippi's most destructive problems, alongside a rising tide of fentanyl, cocaine, and various synthetics. The danger of these substances varies in nature but remains severe across the board; for instance, while hallucinogens carry unique psychological risks, they are generally less physically addictive than cocaine, which remains both highly addictive and lethal. Conversely, synthetic cannabinoids are arguably more dangerous than

traditional stimulants because their chemical compositions change unpredictably from batch to batch. As the state navigates this volatile landscape, it is currently undergoing a massive legislative overhaul to determine how to effectively allocate "opioid settlement" funds toward recovery and prevention.

TRENDS

- The importation, distribution and seizure of methamphetamine “ICE” from outside the state, continues to increase and is readily available.
- Illegal marijuana grown in other states will continue to be imported into Mississippi. As more states legalize marijuana, the number of marijuana seizures will grow.
- Pharmacy burglaries will increase as gangs become more organized.
- New and reemerging synthetic opioids will continue to make their way into Mississippi and will be involved in more overdoses.
- Activity on the Dark Web, where subjects avoid traceable transactions of currency and drugs, continues to grow in Mississippi.
- Criminals will continue to adapt and create new ways to traffic illegal narcotics and launder and hide their proceeds.
- Generational shifts in drug preference suggest an enduring change away from opioids. Laws for cannabis and psychedelics remain a major point of contention.
- Sedatives and anesthetics displacing fentanyl will increase dissatisfaction with the drug supply, reduce opioid exposure and decrease OD risk, but portend even more difficulty getting people into treatment.
- Traffickers developing new smuggling paths to bypass enforcement.
- The introduction of new synthetic substances to the market.

DEVELOPMENTS

- Industrial Purity: "Ice" purity levels in Mississippi remained consistently above 95%, driven by the P2P manufacturing method in Mexican "super labs."
- New "Schedule I" Additions: The Mississippi Legislature passed SB 2356 in March 2025, which added 16 new substances to the Schedule I controlled substances list due to their high potency and lack of medical use.
- Hemp/Kratom Regulation: New laws were enacted to regulate the sale of hemp-derived products not approved by the FDA and to impose a 25% excise tax on Kratom, signaling a tighter grip on "alternative" stimulants and synthetics.
- The DPS Interdiction Unit, led by MBN, is comprised of agents from MBN, MBI, CTED, and Capital Police. These interdiction agents help to combat the growing number of drugs coming to our state and passing through our state.

- MBN created the Violent Crimes Task Force in 2023 in Clay, Lowndes, Oktibbeha, and Noxubee counties to work together to combat and solve violent crimes in each county.
- MBN created the Northern Region Task Force and Southern Task Force Teams in 2025.
- President Trump's December 2025 executive order formally initiated the process to move marijuana to Schedule III. The order compels the DOJ to expedite the reclassification, yet the change is not immediate. As of early 2026, the final rule has not been issued, meaning marijuana's federal status as a Schedule I substance remains in effect for the time being.

PREDICTIONS

- More forms of powerful and dangerous opioids will continue to emerge.
- Money laundering will increasingly become harder to discover due to the numerous methods of transferring funds digitally over the internet.
- More drug dealers and traffickers will use virtual currency in efforts to avoid cash seizures from law enforcement.
- An increase and expansion in the use of technology, such as encrypted apps, to conceal drug involved/related communications to thwart law enforcement's efforts to protect public safety and public health.
- MBN expects Mississippi to experience the diversion of Medical Marijuana and continue to adapt to the changes in medicinal and recreational marijuana laws.
- The production of new chemicals and compositions for manufacturing synthetic fentanyl and other synthetic substances will increase.
- Narcotics will continue to be primarily trafficked across the state via interstate transportation, using both private and public carriers, as well as the postal service.
- Mississippi will continue to see more people in treatment programs for methamphetamine, cocaine and marijuana.
- There will be an increase in availability of counterfeit substances across the state as the demand for pharmaceuticals continues to climb.
- Abuse of synthetic drugs will continue to increase as people seek to obtain a legal high.
- Fentanyl will continue to be a desired drug, even though its use can be fatal.

X. METHODOLOGY

The Mississippi Drug Threat Assessment is produced annually by MBN's Intelligence Division to identify and quantify the nature, extent, and scope of the threat of illegal drugs and related issues in Mississippi. This document includes information from previous MBN Drug Threat Assessments, surveys from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, open-source documents, law enforcement sensitive information from other investigative agencies, internet websites, and anecdotal information from other reliable sources.

In preparation of this report, MBN Intelligence Analysts collected and analyzed the information required to quantify the threat and identify trafficking trends. The specific drug categories presented in the Mississippi Drug Threat Assessment are fentanyl and other opioids, methamphetamine, marijuana, powder and crack cocaine, heroin, diverted pharmaceuticals, and new psychoactive substances. The identification of specific intelligence gaps and projections for the future by drug type are also included. In addition, the Drug Threat Assessment identifies problems posed by the threat, the actions being taken by participating agencies, and the anticipated impact on the state.

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XII. DRUG PRICES ACROSS MISSISSIPPI

Drug Type	Weight	Jackson	Greenwood	Oxford	Tupelo	Starkville	Meridian	Hattiesburg	Gulfport	McComb
Powder Cocaine	Gram	\$60-\$100	\$80-100	\$60-120	\$100	\$80-100	\$60-80	\$100-120	\$100	\$50
	Eight-Ball	\$175	\$200-250	\$150-250	\$175-225	\$250	\$100-200	\$250-300	\$200	\$160
	Ounce	\$800	\$850	\$1,000-1,200	\$900-1,100	\$1,000	\$750-1,000	\$1,000-1,200	\$700	\$700
	¼ Kilo	\$5,000	\$6,000-10,000	\$6,000-9,000	\$4,800-6,500	\$6,200	\$5,000-6,000	\$7,000-10,000	\$5,000	N/A
	½ Kilo	\$9,000	\$14,000-19,000	\$15,000	\$9,000-12,000	\$14,000-\$15,000	N/A	\$9,000-10,000	\$9,000	N/A
	Kilogram	\$14,500	\$34,000-37,000	\$30,000-37,000	\$18,000-24,000	\$21,000	\$16,000-20,000	\$16,000-17,000	\$32,000-36,000	N/A
Crack Cocaine	Rock	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20
	Gram	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$50-100	\$80-100	\$100	\$100	\$40
	Eight-Ball	\$200-225	\$200-250	\$150 – 175	\$175-250	\$150	\$200-250	\$200	\$200	\$140
	Ounce	\$1,000-1,200	\$750-1,000	\$1,000	\$900-1,100	\$800-1,000	\$1,000-1,300	\$1,400-1,800	\$700	\$700
	¼ Kilo	\$5,000-8,000	\$5,000-8,000	\$6,500	\$6,800-8,500	\$6,500	\$8,000	\$7,000-10,000	\$6,000	N/A
	Kilogram	\$30,000-34,000	\$25,000 - 30,000	\$28,000-36,000	\$28,000	\$27,000-30,000	\$30,000-34,000	\$30,000-34,000	\$30,000	N/A
Marijuana	Dime Bag	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
	20-Sack	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$20
	¼ Ounce	\$35	\$35-40	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$35-40	\$40	\$35	N/A
	Ounce	\$100	\$60-120	\$100-150	\$80-140	\$80	\$60-100	\$50-100	\$100	\$400 high \$250 med \$60 low
	¼ Pound	\$400	\$125-450	\$350	\$180-200	\$250-350	\$250	\$200-300	\$200	N/A
	½ Pound	\$800	\$220-800	\$600-700	\$250-300	\$500-600	\$450	\$250-450	\$450	N/A
	Pound	\$1,200	\$600-800	\$1,000-1,200	\$800-1,200	\$800-1,200	\$800-1,000	\$500-1,000	\$600	N/A
LSD	Dosage Unit	N/A	\$10	\$10-15	\$12	\$10-12	\$10	\$5-10	\$10	N/A
MDMA	Dosage Unit	N/A	\$2-3	\$25-40	\$25-40	\$25-35	\$1-2	\$1-2	\$12-15	N/A
Fentanyl	Gram	N/A	\$100-150	\$150-250	\$150-250	N/A	\$200	N/A	\$100-150	\$200
	Dosage Unit	N/A	\$15.25	\$2.00-35	\$2	\$5-30	N/A	\$12	\$10-25	N/A
	Ounce	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,700-2,300	N/A

Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics

Drug Type	Weight	Jackson	Greenwood	Oxford	Tupelo	Starkville	Meridian	Hattiesburg	Gulfport	McComb
Meth	Gram	\$10	\$20	\$50-75	\$20-25	\$10-20	\$20	\$20-40	\$10-20	\$20
	Eight-Ball	\$30	\$60-100	\$150-200	\$60-100	\$30-45	\$50-75	\$50-100	\$60-70	\$80
	Ounce	\$100	\$150-200	\$400-700	\$250-400	\$125-275	\$150-300	\$200-350	\$225	\$250
	Pound	\$1,000	\$1,200-2,000	N/A	\$2,000-5,000	\$1,600-2,300	\$1,750 2,200	\$1,700-3,000	\$2,000-3,500	\$2,000
Heroin	Gram	\$250	\$100 - 120	\$200-250	\$222-250	\$250	\$200-250	\$125-200	\$100-200	\$200
	Ounce	\$4,000	\$2,500	\$1,750-3,000	\$3,000	\$1,750-2,000	\$4,000	\$1,800	\$2,200	\$400-500
	¼ Kilo	N/A	\$15,000-18,000	\$15,000-18,000	\$15,000-18,000	\$15,7500	N/A	\$12,000-16,000	N/A	N/A
	1 Kilo	\$120,000	\$80,000-85,000	\$70,000-75,000	\$30,000-50,000	\$63,000	\$35,000-40,000	\$45,000-65,000	N/A	N/A