



Frequently Asked Questions for State Employees

What is Project SEC²?

Project SEC² is a state employee classification and compensation initiative led by the Mississippi State Personnel Board. Classification refers to a system that defines the duties, responsibilities, and authority level of positions and the knowledge and experience required to perform those duties. Positions with similar duties and responsibilities are grouped into a classification. For example, several employees may be in positions doing similar - but not exactly the same - accounting work, but they would all be in the same classification. Compensation is the monetary value of the work that an employee performs. Classification and compensation work together to create a system that provides consistent, fair, and equitable compensation for employees.

Why did MSPB initiate Project SEC²?

MSPB is legislatively required to maintain a fair and equitable compensation system for state agencies. Because the State of Mississippi has not updated its current classification and compensation system since 1981, it was time to update and modernize the system.

Who is involved in the project?

MSPB utilized the RFP process to hire Kenning Consulting to partner with the State to develop a new classification and compensation system. While the Kenning Consulting partnership ended unexpectedly this summer due to a terminal illness, MSPB's project team continues to spearhead the project. In addition, a project steering committee provides project oversight. The steering committee includes representatives from the Public Employees' Retirement System, the Division of Medicaid, the Department of Finance and Administration, the Legislative Budget Office, the Department of Mental Health, the Secretary of State's Office, the Department of Education, and the Mississippi State Personnel Board.

What is the goal of Project SEC²?

The goal of Project SEC² is to create a classification and compensation system that is fair and equitable and allows for recruitment, retention, and motivation of a qualified workforce.

How will Project SEC² benefit state employees?

The new system assigned employees to job classifications based on their current job duties. Accurate job classifications are easier to compare to the job market, so competitive salary ranges can be ensured. With competitive salary ranges, the State of Mississippi can better recruit and retain quality employees.

When will Project SEC² be implemented?

The new classification and compensation system will be effective January 1, 2022.

How do I find out what my new classification will be?

Your agency's HR department will be able to tell you about your new classification by mid-December 2021.

How was my classification determined?

In the spring of 2021, state employees were asked to complete a Position Description Questionnaire. The purpose of the PDQ was to understand the duties of each employee's position so that they would be accurately classified in the new system. Supervisors were given the opportunity to review all submissions for their employees to approve or reject a response. If there was a disagreement, supervisors and employees were given the opportunity to come to an agreement on the employee's duties on the final PDQ. MSPB analyzed each PDQ and classified each employee based on the job duties submitted and approved by the supervisor. Additionally, each HR department worked with MSPB to ensure final classifications were accurate.

Why did my job classification change?

Your job classification changed to better reflect your actual duties, based on the information provided by you and approved by your supervisor and HR department.

Can I submit a grievance to the Employee Appeals Board if I disagree with my new classification?

No, a change in employee classification as a result of this project is not grievable because employees will not receive a decrease in pay as a result of this project. However, in the future, we do envision a process where an employee can request to have their classification reviewed.

How does the new salary structure work?

The new salary structure will be based on salary ranges. The ranges are wide enough to account for varying experience and levels of performance.

Will I get a raise?

You may or may not receive an increase. Pay increases related to Project SEC² will be given at the discretion of each agency. **There is not an across-the-board pay increase as a result of this project.**

Will I receive a pay increase if I am still below the minimum salary of my new classification's range?

Employees' salaries will not automatically be increased to their new range's minimum. Any decisions about salary increases will be made at the agency level.

Will my salary decrease?

No employee will experience a salary decrease as a result of Project SEC² and the new system.

How will this affect me if I am an employee in a time-limited or X-16 position?

There will be no changes to an employee's time-limited or will-and-pleasure status with the implementation of this project.

Will there be a reduction-in-force as a result of this project?

No, the State of Mississippi will not be reducing the number of employees as a part of this project. This is a project focused on classification and compensation, not staffing or staff efficiency.

I have more questions. Who should I contact?

Please contact your agency's HR director with any questions you may have or visit our website at www.mspb.ms.gov.