



MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY NEWSLETTER

The current Board members are:

Kimberly Johnson Ragan, OD
President

Hilary Parrish, OD
Secretary

Lori Blackmer, OD
Anna Middleton, OD

Yvonne Laird
Executive Director

Leysen Hayes
*Special Assistant
Attorney General
Legal Counsel*

Cynthia Brown
Compliance Specialist

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Board Licensed Optometrists

The Board administers examinations on the second Saturdays of January and July as statutorily required. The following optometrists were newly licensed in January:

Duyen Le, OD

Sherrall Jenkins, OD

Kajal Patel, OD

The following optometrist was newly certified in PEP procedures:

Ted Harden II, OD



Board Contact Information

5 Old River Place, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Phone: (601) 919-1343

Fax: (601) 919-1432

www.msbo.ms.gov

info@msbo.ms.gov

Reminders

- It is the responsibility of each optometrist to notify the Board Office 14 days prior to any changes in business or personal mailing addresses and/or telephone numbers (refer to Rule 8.15 of the Mississippi State Board of Optometry Rules and Regulations).
- If you did not submit your YAG procedures outcomes form for 2024, please do so now. This is required under Rule 4.2. You must complete the form even if you did not perform any YAG procedures.

- Temporary Rules were filed on January 2, 2025. These rules are located on the MSBO website under the Rules and Regulations tab ... [here](#).
- Understanding your license status –
 - **Active** status indicates a license in good standing and requires annual renewal.
 - **Inactive** status indicates a license that has expired and requires completion of a reinstatement application for re-entry.
 - **Retired** status indicates that the licensee is no longer actively practicing. An Application for Retired Status must be completed before this status can be granted.
- There are updated documents available on the website (under the [Forms](#) tab):
 - Agenda Request
 - Application for Retired Status
 - Change Notification
 - Examination Handbook
 - Preceptor Application
 - Preceptor Reporting Document
 - Reinstatement Application
 - Request for Predetermination
 - Request for Public Records

Meet the STAFF

Yvonne Laird, Executive Director

Yvonne Laird assumed the role of Executive Director effective February 1, 2025. Yvonne comes to us with 25 years of experience in state government and 18 years of experience directly related to the management of regulatory agencies in Mississippi. She is a graduate of Belhaven College.

Yvonne is married to Jimmy Laird, a 41-year veteran with the Mississippi Army National Guard and retired after 35 years as a Mississippi law enforcement officer. She and Jimmy are the proud parents of five children and nine grandchildren.

Leyser Hayes, Esq., Legal Counsel

Leyser Q. Hayes, Esq., received a B.A. degree from Vanderbilt University and a J.D. from the Orin Wesley Coburn School of Law at Oral Roberts University [now Regent University]. Attorney Hayes worked in state government for over 30 years. Since her retirement from full-time employment at the MS Attorney General's Office on June 30, 2015, she works part time in the State Agency Division where she represents the following Boards and Commissions: the MS State Board of Massage, the MS State Board of Optometry, the MS State Board of Physical Therapy, and the MS Auctioneer Commission. She was the first African American female to serve as the Director of the state's Consumer Protection Division. She has served as Deputy City Attorney for the City of Jackson, Counsel for the Jackson Police Department, attorney for Ray Mabus, a former governor of Mississippi, and as an adjunct Professor at MS College School of Law.

Leyser has received numerous honors and awards. She was inducted into Who's Who in Mississippi and Who's Who in Law Enforcement. Leyser is a former Bar Commissioner, a past president of the MS Women Lawyers Association, former Board member of the Capitol City Bar Association and former President of the Board of Trustees for Leadership Jackson. She was named a Fellow to the MS Bar Foundation on April 13, 2006. In 2015 Leyser was recognized by the Legal Network as a "Top Lawyer" in Mississippi. On April 14, 2022, at the MS Annual Bar Foundation meeting, Leyser was installed as the Trustee At Large and this year was given a high rating in Martindale-Hubbell in both legal ability and ethical standards. Leyser is married to Ralph Hayes, has two daughters and one granddaughter. Leyser is a member of New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi pastored, by Dr. Jerry Young.

Cynthia Brown, Compliance Specialist

Cynthia Brown has 45 years of administrative support experience having worked for the US Navy, the US Marshals Service and in healthcare. Cynthia attended Dillard University in New Orleans and is a die-hard New Orleans Saints' fan. She is married to Phillip Brown, a Marine Corps veteran. They have two daughters and four of the best grandchildren in the world!

Congressional Districts of the Board Members

Kimberly Johnson Ragan, OD
Third Congressional District

Lori Blackmer, OD
Fifth Congressional District

Hilary Parrish, OD
Fourth Congressional District

Anna Middleton, OD
Second Congressional District