

What is the Mississippi Economic Policy Center?

The Mississippi Economic Policy Center (MEPC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan initiative that conducts independent research on public policy issues affecting working Mississippians. Through public outreach efforts, policy maker education and engaging the media, MEPC uses its analysis to ensure that the needs of low and moderate-income Mississippians, in particular, are considered in the development and implementation of public policy with the ultimate goal of improving access to economic opportunity.

MEPC is managed by the Hope Enterprise Corporation/Hope Federal Credit Union (HOPE), a regional financial institution and community development intermediary dedicated to strengthening communities, building assets and improving lives in economically distressed areas throughout the Mid South.

The Mississippi Economic Policy Center currently has three areas of emphasis. The following descriptions provide a brief overview of each area:

- **Mississippi Budget and Tax Policy** – State budget decisions directly influence the quality of education that children receive, the condition of roads, and the safety of Mississippi's communities. MEPC efforts in this area promote strong fiscal systems to ensure that funds are available – in a good economic times and in bad economic times – to cover the costs of state services that Mississippians depend on everyday.
- **Predatory Lending** – Predatory lending strips the assets and equity out of low-income communities and prevents families from moving up the economic ladder. MEPC analysis focuses on strategies to build wealth through homeownership and to protect the assets of low-income people who achieve that goal.
- **Income and Working Families** – While working hard, many of Mississippi's families fall short of economic security. According to an analysis of data from the U.S. Census 4 out of 10 Mississippi working families are low-income. MEPC examines ways to improve the economic opportunities for Mississippi's working families.

In addition to working with nonprofit organizations across the state, MEPC is a member of the State Fiscal Analysis Initiative managed by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Analysis Research Network managed by the Economic Policy Institute.

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