Index 1: Voter Registration - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi closes voter registration 30 days before Election Day. The state does not allow automated, same-day, nor online voter registration. Mississippi does not purge voters from lists for not voting. There was a very low number of purges conducted in 2020. Voting rights are restored automatically upon completion of a felony prison sentence, except for certain crimes. A high number of Mississippi voters contacted the 1-866-OUR-VOTE legal hotline in 2020 during the last week of the election with concerns about voter registration and the handling of provisional ballots. 2022 law now requires additional documentation confirming citizenship status for those registering to vote whose status is in question.

Index 2: Voter Identification - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi has a strict photo voter ID law. The state is NOT a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) which helps states improve accuracy of voter rolls. A high number of voters reported concerns about voter ID or not being on the voting list/database during the 2020 election. Stricter state legislation was pending in early 2022.

Index 3: Early Voting - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi has no early voting. Excuse-required absentee ballot voting is available.

Index 4: Safe Voting - Confidence level - LOW
Absentee ballots in Mississippi are excuse-only. Applications are only by request, there is no prepaid postage, and completed ballots are only submitted by mail - no drop-off boxes or hand delivery options. No other state law restrictions passed in 2021.
Index 5: Ballot Acceptance - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi had a high percentage of mail-in ballots returned in 2020, with a moderate rejection rate. There is no statutorily required online ballot tracking program, but voters may contact their local elections official for ballot tracking updates. The state does not allow election administrators to preprocess returned ballots. The state had no signature verification program, but there is a codified process for voters to correct for ballot discrepancies. Ballots must be received within 5 business days if postmarked on or before Election Day. Mississippi tied with Arkansas for the lowest rank of all states in this index.

Index 6: Logistical Barriers in Voting - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi law does not provide employees the right to take paid or unpaid leave to vote. Although it allows curbside voting, there are very few measures to assist voters including quality accessible voting machines options. There was a moderate ratio of poll workers to polling sites in 2020, but also a high number of reports from voters about long lines, mishandling of polling site ballots, and concerns about voting equipment. Mississippi ranks among the lowest of states in 2020 that made investments to improve election processes. Mississippi also ranked among the bottom three states in this index.

Index 7: Equipment, Security, and Auditing - Confidence level - LOW
Mississippi has a voter-verified paper audit trail for some counties. The state uses hand marked paper ballots and electronic voting machines, offering Ballot Marking Devices for voters with accessibility needs. It does not test the equipment according to federal standards or accreditation. Although Mississippi election security systems received good overall ratings in 2018, there are no audits conducted during any part of the election process to double-check for machine recording errors. Overall, Mississippi ranked among the bottom three states in this index. New law requires pre-certification risk-limiting audits for all statewide races beginning in 2026, with a pilot project for some counties for audits in some counties after 2022.
Index 8: Independent Election Administration - Confidence level - MEDIUM

Although Mississippi has established the constitutional right to a secret ballot, it does not prohibit election interference by the legislature. No laws were passed on this topic in 2021, but pending bills in early 2022 sought to penalize, usurp, or interfere with state or local election officials. 2022 law prohibits state and local election of officials from accepting private funding for election related-expenses, including voter outreach, voter registration, and voter education programs.

Index 9: External Interference in Voting - Confidence Level - LOW

Public opinion surveys showed that Mississippi voters had no trust in the 2020 election news coverage, while political scientists gave the state low media integrity ratings. There was a moderate number of reports from voters in 2020 about political intimidation and disinformation in-person and online, as well as concerns about police presence at polling sites. Although Mississippi bans weapons at polling sites and requires all poll workers to be trained, state law does not prohibit obstructing or hindering voters at polling sites or criminalize voter intimidation and false election speech. There is no state guidance on the role of law enforcement present at polling sites.

Index 10: The Role of Government and Politics – No rating given, information only

Mississippi is one of 19 states that has a Republican trifecta, as well as a triplex - the governor, attorney general, and secretary of state are from the same political party. Based on the last two presidential elections, Mississippi is a solidly Republican-leaning state, with an average GOP voting margin of 17.2% compared to the national average Democratic voting margin of 3%. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the state's population decreased by -0.2% (one of only three states with a negative population growth along with Illinois and West Virginia) compared to the national average of 7.4% growth. Mississippi is less racially diverse than the rest of the country. With the U.S. Census results, the state will neither gain nor lose any representatives in Congress.