

# Exploring Broadband Adoption in Mississippi

## Key Takeaways

1. Mississippi's broadband adoption rate is comparatively lower than other states. The fixed broadband adoption rate is significantly lower than broadband (any type) adoption rates statewide.
2. The Delta Region, which consists primarily of rural counties, has lower broadband adoption rates compared to other Mississippi regions.

## Introduction

Broadband internet facilitates modern daily activities such as online education, remote work, telehealth, e-commerce, and social media. Beyond these conveniences, broadband also plays a critical role in empowering communities, driving employment, creating business opportunities, enhancing civic engagement, facilitating political participation, and improving public education. Much attention has been given to developing broadband infrastructure to increase broadband availability. While ensuring broadband availability is a significant first step, it is not enough to fully realize the socioeconomic benefits associated with broadband. Beyond availability, broadband adoption—internet subscription and use by households and businesses—is equally critical. Adoption rates are influenced by various factors such as affordability, digital literacy, perceived relevance to daily life, and individual preferences. For example, even when broadband services are accessible, some households may decide not to subscribe due to concerns about costs or a lack of awareness about the potential advantages. Therefore, efforts should also emphasize strategies to increase adoption rates alongside expanding broadband infrastructure.

This publication analyzes broadband adoption rates in Mississippi and compares them with neighboring states (Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Louisiana), other southern states (excluding Mississippi),<sup>1</sup> and non-Mississippi states (all other U.S. states except Mississippi), providing a comprehensive regional perspective. In March 2024, the

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) changed the minimum broadband speed to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 20 Mbps upload. However, the data in this report are based on the earlier standard of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload due to data availability. We also consider two categories of broadband: 1) Broadband (any type), which includes broadband internet connection using fixed broadband (cable, fiber-optic, or digital subscriber line [DSL]), cellular data plans, and satellite internet services, and 2) Fixed broadband, which only includes high-speed broadband connection through cable, fiber-optic, or DSL. We use the data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

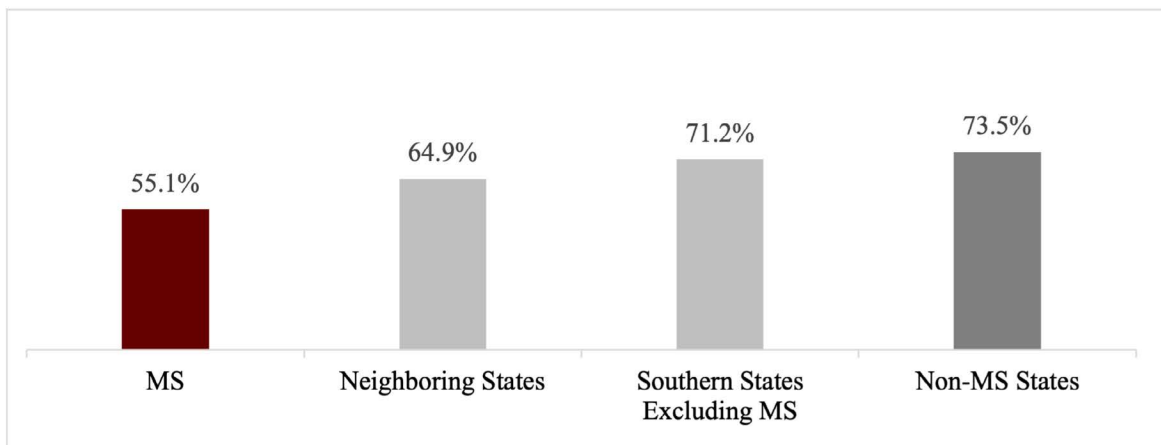
## Comparing Broadband Adoption in Mississippi with Other States

Mississippi has the lowest adoption rates for both any type of broadband and fixed broadband among all U.S. states. To better understand Mississippi's position, this section compares its broadband adoption rates with those of neighboring states, other southern states, and all other U.S. states. Figure 1 shows that the broadband (any type) subscription rate for Mississippi is 80 percent; neighboring states (Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana) report a slightly higher rate of 84.1 percent; southern states (excluding Mississippi) have a subscription rate of 87.3 percent; and non-Mississippi states have the highest subscription rate at 88.4 percent. These statistics highlight that Mississippi's adoption rate is lower than other states'. Mississippi lags by 4.1 percentage points compared to neighboring states, 7.3 percentage points behind southern states, and 8.4 percentage points behind all other states.

<sup>1</sup> The southern states are considered those in the [U.S. Census South Region](#): Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.



**Figure 1. Broadband (any type) subscription rates, 2022.**



**Figure 2. Fixed broadband subscription rates, 2022.**

Notes: 1) The definition of broadband in Figures 1 and 2 is high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 25/3 Mbps, as previously established by the FCC in 2015. 2) Broadband of any type includes fixed broadband (such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL), cellular data plan, and satellite internet services. 3) Neighboring states include Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas. 4) Non-Mississippi states include all other U.S. states except Mississippi. Data source: American Community Survey, 2022 (5-year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau.

When considering only fixed broadband, Mississippi's broadband adoption rate is significantly lower, and the regional gap is wider. Mississippi's fixed broadband adoption rate is 55.1 percent, which lags behind the subscription rate for neighboring states at 64.9 percent, southern states at 71.2 percent, and non-Mississippi states at 73.5 percent (Figure 2). The difference between Mississippi's high-speed fixed broadband subscription rate and its overall broadband (any type) subscription rate is nearly 25 percentage points. This statistic underscores that Mississippi's fixed broadband adoption rate lags significantly behind, falling 9.8 percentage points behind neighboring states, 16.5 percentage points behind other southern states, and 18.4 percentage points behind all other U.S. states. These gaps in fixed broadband adoption highlight Mississippi's primary challenge: the need for increasing the adoption of high-speed fixed broadband to ensure faster and more reliable internet connections.

Table 1 complements this comparison by detailing the types of internet subscriptions across Mississippi, neighboring

states, southern states (excluding Mississippi), and non-Mississippi states. About one out of five Mississippi households (19.8 percent) live without internet subscriptions. In comparison, neighboring states have a lower percentage at 15.71 percent, other southern states at 12.53 percent, and non-Mississippi states at 11.39 percent non-internet-subscribed households. The percentage of households with a cellular data plan with no other type of internet and satellite subscriptions in Mississippi is 18.36 percent and 10.82 percent, respectively, which is higher than in other states. These statistics do not distinguish between households in Mississippi that prefer cellular data plans and satellite services versus households that have cellular data plans or satellite services because these are their only options to connect to the internet. However, these comparisons underscore that a higher percentage of households lack faster, high-quality internet in Mississippi compared to other U.S. states.

**Table 1. Internet subscription rates by broadband types, 2022.**

	MS	Neighboring States <sup>5</sup>	Southern States (excluding MS)	Non-MS States
Internet subscribed	80.2%	84.3%	87.5%	88.6%
–Broadband of any type <sup>1</sup>	80%	84.1%	87.7%	88.4%
Fixed broadband <sup>2</sup>	55.1%	64.9%	71.6%	73.5%
Cellular data plan	73.58%	76.89%	80.2%	81.14%
(Only cellular data <sup>3</sup> )	18.36%	14.36%	12.10%	11.17%
Satellite internet service	10.82%	7.82%	7.22%	6.71%
–Dial-up <sup>4</sup>	0.16%	0.20%	0.16%	0.19%
Non-internet subscribed	19.81%	15.71%	12.53%	11.39%
Total households	1,121,269	7,583,743	46,823,082	124,615,084

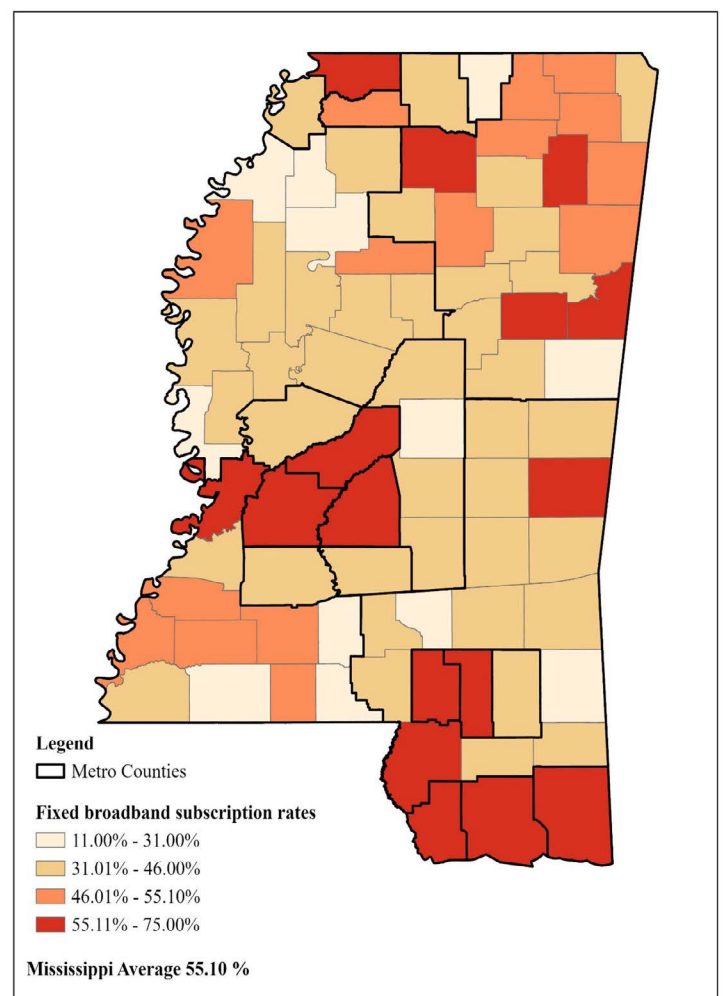
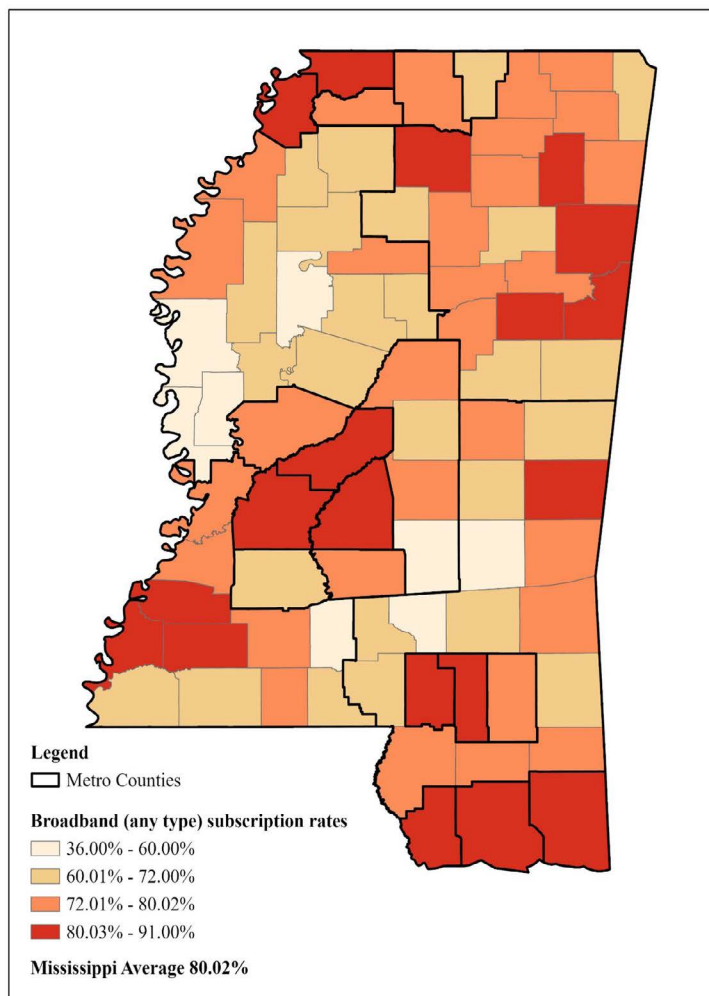
Notes: 1) The definition of broadband in this table is high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 25/3 Mbps, as previously established by the FCC in 2015. 2) Broadband of any type includes fixed broadband (such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL), cellular data plan, and satellite internet services. 3) Only cellular data plan with no other type of internet subscriptions. 4) Dial-up internet refers to a form of internet access using a modem and a standard telephone line. 5) Neighboring states include Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas. Data source: American Community Survey, 2022 (5-year estimates), U.S. Census Bureau.

## Broadband Adoption within Mississippi

Figure 3 presents maps of Mississippi with the percentage of households with broadband (any type) and fixed broadband subscriptions at the county level, with metropolitan counties defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Mississippi Extension regions (see Figures A1 and A2 in the Appendix for more detailed delineations of metropolitan areas and Mississippi Extension regions). A significant gap in broadband adoption rates between metro and non-metro counties is highlighted. Metro counties in Memphis, Jackson, Hattiesburg, and Gulfport-Biloxi metropolitan areas have comparatively higher broadband adoption rates in both broadband (any type) and fixed broadband. The four counties with the highest percentage of households having fixed broadband are Madison (75 percent), DeSoto (73 percent), Rankin (71 percent), and Lafayette (71 percent).

In the non-metro areas, the Delta Extension region, which is comprised of rural counties in northwest Mississippi—one of the most economically disadvantaged areas—has the lowest adoption rates for both types of broadband (Issaquena [11 percent], Tallahatchie [16 percent], and Quitman [22 percent] for fixed broadband adoption rate; Issaquena [36 percent], Leflore [55 percent], Washington [57 percent], and Sharkey [58 percent] for broadband of any type). Counties outside the Jackson metropolitan area in the Central Extension region and counties beyond the Gulfport-Biloxi metropolitan area in the Coastal Extension region have lower fixed broadband adoption rates. This pattern suggests that more research is needed to understand the differences in broadband adoption between urban and rural counties in Mississippi. Table A1 in the Appendix lists the county broadband adoption rates.

**Figure 3. Broadband (any type; left) and fixed broadband (right) subscription rates by Mississippi counties, 2022.**



Notes: 1) The definition of broadband in this figure is high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 25/3 Mbps, as previously established by the FCC in 2015. 2) Broadband of any type includes fixed broadband (such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL), cellular data plan, and satellite internet services. See more detailed delineations of metropolitan areas (Figure A1) and Mississippi Extension regions (Figure A2.) in the Appendix. Data Source: American Community Survey, 2022 (5-year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau.

## Conclusion

This publication explores the status of broadband adoption in Mississippi, including a comparative analysis with neighboring states, other southern states, and non-Mississippi states. Mississippi shows lower adoption rates for both broadband (any type) and fixed broadband compared to other states. While 80.02 percent of households in Mississippi have subscribed to broadband (any type), the subscription rate drops to 55.1 percent for fixed broadband. This finding indicates a significantly lower uptake of reliable high-speed internet services in Mississippi compared to other states. There is also a wide gap in adoption rates within the state—between metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties or across the Extension regions. Particularly, adoption rates are lower in the Delta Extension region, which is predominantly rural and one of the most economically disadvantaged areas in Mississippi. Addressing these disparities requires a comprehensive approach. It includes improving affordability, enhancing digital literacy, and developing targeted strategies considering sociodemographic factors such as age, income, race, and educational attainment. By doing so, policymakers can work toward closing these gaps and promoting digital inclusion across Mississippi.

## References

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# Appendix

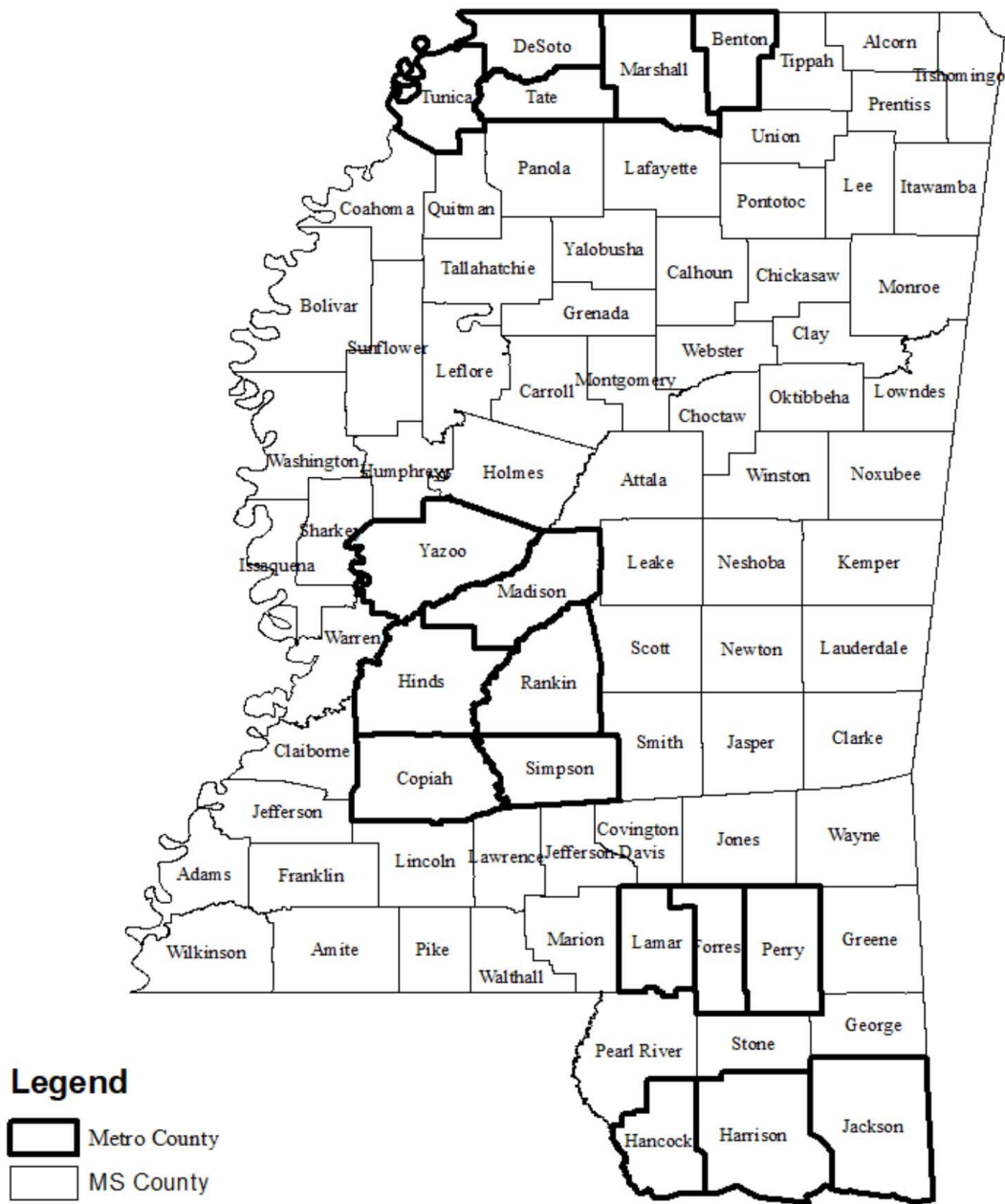


Figure A1. Map of metropolitan areas in Mississippi.

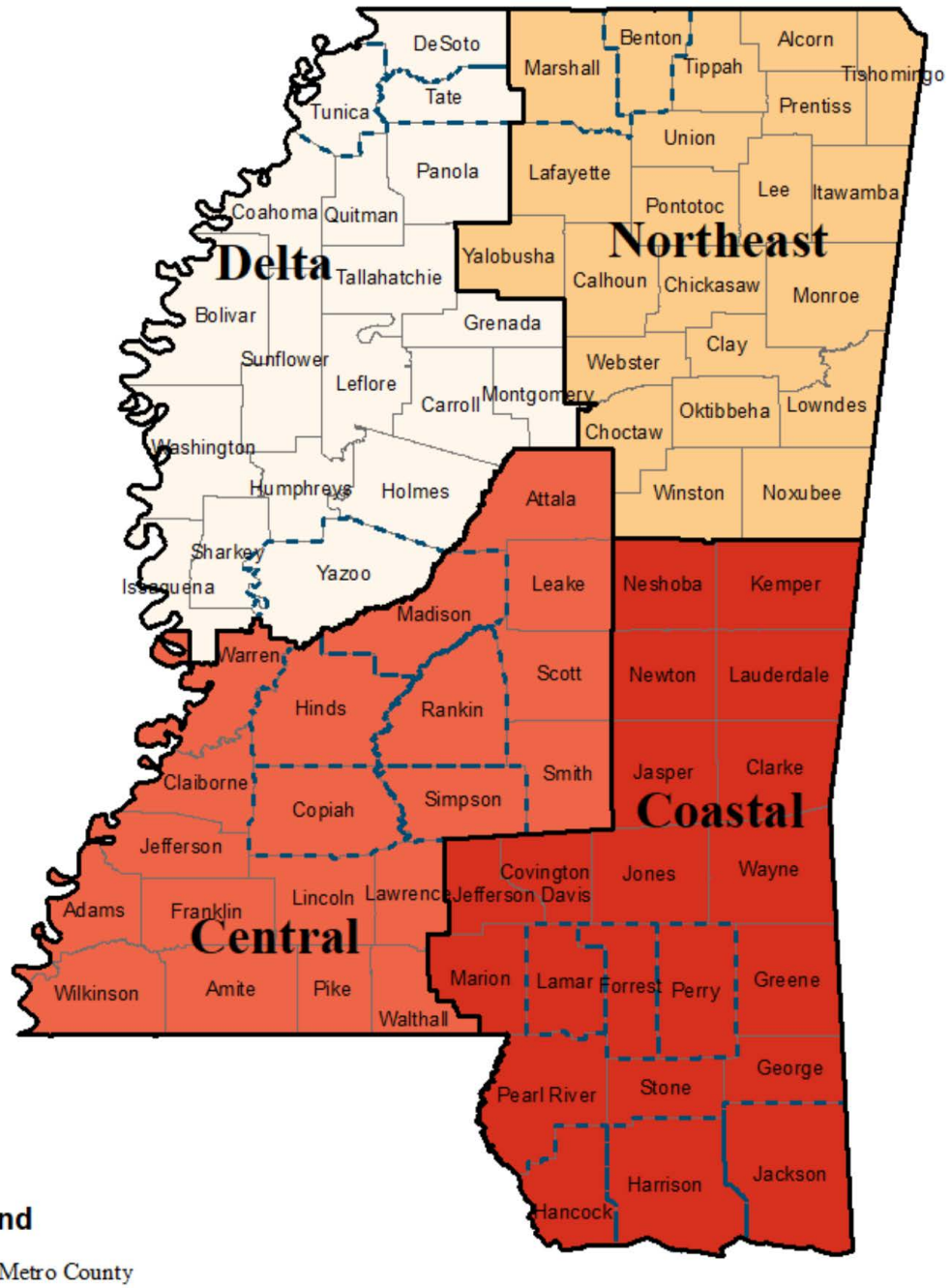


Figure A2. Map of Mississippi Extension regions.

**Table A1. Broadband subscription rates by Mississippi county.**

County	Metro/Non-metro	MS Extension Region	Total Households	Subscription Rates	
				Broadband (any type)	Fixed Broadband
Adams	Non-metro	Central	11,618	81.30%	52.76%
Alcorn	Non-metro	Northeast	13,975	73.19%	51.13%
Amite	Non-metro	Central	5,834	68.75%	30.67%
Attala	Non-metro	Central	6,311	77.12%	40.64%
Benton	Metro	Northeast	3,086	61.80%	26.51%
Bolivar	Non-metro	Delta	11,704	74.62%	51.75%
Calhoun	Non-metro	Northeast	5,641	76.07%	52.72%
Carroll	Non-metro	Delta	4,037	62.37%	39.58%
Chickasaw	Non-metro	Northeast	6,767	68.26%	42.69%
Choctaw	Non-metro	Northeast	3,532	79.59%	44.93%
Claiborne	Non-metro	Central	2,624	74.01%	44.70%
Clarke	Non-metro	Coastal	6,117	75.58%	44.37%
Clay	Non-metro	Northeast	7,582	79.36%	45.23%
Coahoma	Non-metro	Delta	8,387	73.92%	27.67%
Copiah	Metro	Central	9,841	70.81%	43.67%
Covington	Non-metro	Coastal	6,954	60.43%	28.27%
DeSoto	Metro	Delta	68,353	90.83%	73.02%
Forrest	Metro	Coastal	29,351	82.09%	57.00%
Franklin	Non-metro	Central	2,974	82.82%	50.77%
George	Non-metro	Coastal	8,978	75.51%	42.37%
Greene	Non-metro	Coastal	3,910	68.47%	30.18%
Grenada	Non-metro	Delta	8,434	76.11%	51.49%
Hancock	Metro	Coastal	19,386	84.45%	61.54%
Harrison	Metro	Coastal	80,191	85.94%	68.06%
Hinds	Metro	Central	89,585	86.70%	65.00%
Holmes	Non-metro	Delta	5,798	62.95%	35.44%
Humphreys	Non-metro	Delta	2,991	70.14%	38.65%
Issaquena	Non-metro	Delta	392	35.97%	11.48%
Itawamba	Non-metro	Northeast	8,976	78.41%	48.73%
Jackson	Metro	Coastal	55,373	86.39%	66.75%
Jasper	Non-metro	Coastal	6,447	55.25%	36.53%
Jefferson	Non-metro	Central	2,530	86.96%	49.37%
Jefferson Davis	Non-metro	Coastal	4,453	70.40%	39.43%
Jones	Non-metro	Coastal	24,323	67.33%	42.98%
Kemper	Non-metro	Coastal	3,143	70.35%	37.16%
Lafayette	Non-metro	Northeast	18,702	89.00%	70.56%
Lamar	Metro	Coastal	24,896	88.62%	59.60%
Lauderdale	Non-metro	Coastal	28,349	81.15%	58.60%
Lawrence	Non-metro	Central	4,473	59.33%	27.48%
Leake	Non-metro	Central	7,369	70.44%	31.21%
Lee	Non-metro	Northeast	32,001	81.04%	58.03%

County	Metro/Non-metro	MS Extension Region	Total Households	Subscription Rates	
				Broadband (any type)	Fixed Broadband
Leflore	Non-metro	Delta	9,656	54.70%	34.12%
Lincoln	Non-metro	Central	13,070	80.49%	46.60%
Lowndes	Non-metro	Northeast	22,651	84.84%	57.47%
Madison	Metro	Central	42,182	91.17%	75.44%
Marion	Non-metro	Coastal	9,102	72.36%	34.71%
Marshall	Metro	Northeast	12,797	77.93%	39.07%
Monroe	Non-metro	Northeast	13,410	83.41%	46.79%
Montgomery	Non-metro	Delta	3,830	71.93%	42.27%
Neshoba	Non-metro	Coastal	10,199	75.59%	41.56%
Newton	Non-metro	Coastal	7,706	69.11%	42.21%
Noxubee	Non-metro	Northeast	3,696	69.56%	23.05%
Oktober	Non-metro	Northeast	21,165	80.68%	60.67%
Panola	Non-metro	Delta	12,392	71.38%	35.92%
Pearl River	Non-metro	Coastal	21,188	80.32%	60.84%
Perry	Metro	Coastal	4,462	74.97%	41.33%
Pike	Non-metro	Central	14,745	76.93%	52.19%
Pontotoc	Non-metro	Northeast	11,630	72.52%	34.91%
Prentiss	Non-metro	Northeast	9,296	78.59%	53.94%
Quitman	Non-metro	Delta	2,656	63.29%	21.54%
Rankin	Metro	Central	58,982	89.27%	70.96%
Scott	Non-metro	Central	9,696	74.34%	41.00%
Sharkey	Non-metro	Delta	1,374	58.08%	35.66%
Simpson	Metro	Central	9,534	73.13%	40.34%
Smith	Non-metro	Central	5,450	54.48%	33.56%
Stone	Non-metro	Coastal	6,517	74.30%	45.90%
Sunflower	Non-metro	Delta	8,136	67.54%	32.73%
Tallahatchie	Non-metro	Delta	4,301	66.10%	16.25%
Tate	Metro	Delta	10,496	79.99%	53.80%
Tippah	Non-metro	Northeast	8,091	73.76%	52.94%
Tishomingo	Non-metro	Northeast	8,463	71.37%	40.16%
Tunica	Metro	Delta	3,595	83.98%	43.84%
Union	Non-metro	Northeast	10,227	74.66%	49.82%
Walthall	Non-metro	Central	5,290	71.23%	25.39%
Warren	Non-metro	Central	16,823	78.46%	57.76%
Washington	Non-metro	Delta	17,290	57.13%	36.63%
Wayne	Non-metro	Coastal	7,410	78.16%	35.71%
Webster	Non-metro	Northeast	4,065	76.36%	43.37%
Wilkinson	Non-metro	Central	3,264	70.77%	42.83%
Winston	Non-metro	Northeast	7,131	69.51%	33.09%
Yalobusha	Non-metro	Northeast	5,106	71.52%	36.39%
Yazoo	Metro	Delta	8,807	74.40%	41.80%

Data Source: American Community Survey, 2022 (5-year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau.

# Notes

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