# Mississippi Declares Public Health Emergency for Infant Mortality

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The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) declared a public health emergency (PHE) on August 21 in response to escalating infant mortality rates. Mississippi recorded 9.7 infant deaths per 1,000 births in 2024, the highest in over a decade. Declaring a PHE enables MSDH to mobilize resources more quickly and work with other agencies and organizations across the state to reverse the alarming trend. Efforts include eliminating “OB deserts” by increasing prenatal care opportunities utilizing targeted county health departments and expanding community health worker programs to connect mothers and babies with local care providers and other resources.