
Birds over Bigfoot: Overcoming the Challenges of Being a IV-D Director

9:30 to 10:30 AM | 60 minutes

Co-Curators: Ann Coffin (FL) and Denise Wesley Spivey (MS)

Panel Moderator: Nycole Morton (DC)

Panelists: Alana Tucker (VA), Jarnice Johnson (MD), Michele Schreifels (MN), Sophia Ticer (DC)

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National Council of Child Support Directors

2026 Conference

Growing Our Impact

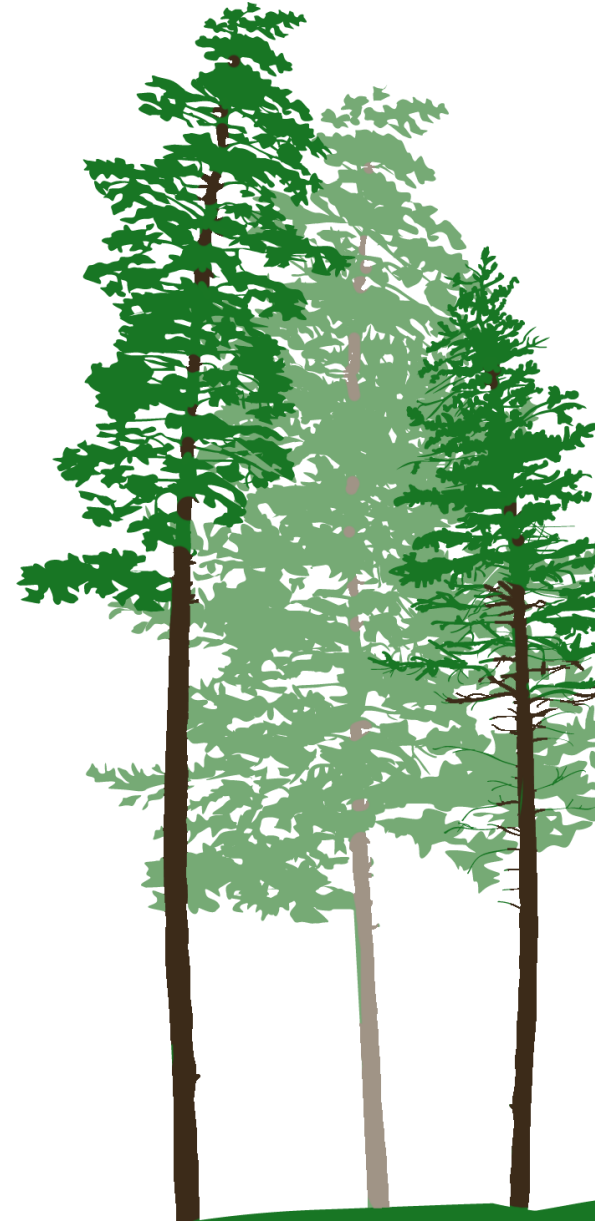
Who Is Bigfoot?

It depends on who you ask...

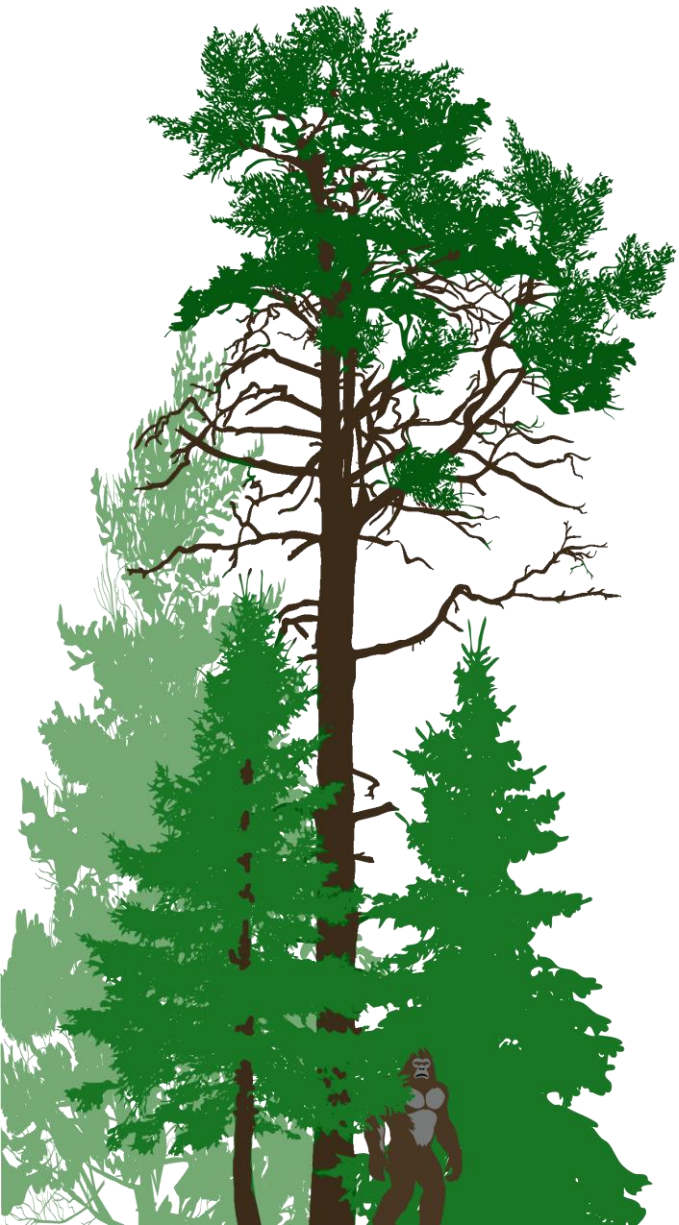
- Pacific Northwest U.S.-----Sasquatch
- Himalayas---Abominable Snowman or Yeti
- Siberia-----Almas
- Common name-----Bigfoot
- Scientists-----hoax

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sasquatch>

**-This session---Metaphor for Challenges
faced by IV-D Directors**



What Is Sankofa?



The Sankofa Bird

"A mythical bird depicted looking backward while holding an egg in its beak, symbolizing the act of reaching back to reclaim something valuable—knowledge, heritage, or lessons. The bird's posture illustrates the balance between looking back and moving forward."

Source: <https://www.adinkrasymbols.org/symbols/sankofa/>



Picture Source:
<https://www.bettykearse.com/sankofa-learn-from-the-past/> , where this picture is noted as being a product of "image by Damiyr Saleem Studios"



Birds Over Bigfoot

1. Table Activity
2. Resource Review
3. Selected Survey Results
4. Panel Discussion



Table Activity



Resource Review: Good Reads

Title	Author
<u>Child Support Resource Guide for State IV-D Directors</u>	OCSE
<u>Essentials for Attorneys in Child Support Enforcement</u>	OCSE
<u>Child Support Enforcement: Program Basics</u>	Congressional Research Service
<u>Preliminary Data Report and Tables</u>	OCSE
<u>Director's Guide to the DRA (with Appendix)</u>	NCCSD
<u>Employer Symposium Report</u>	NCCSD
<u>Child Support Learning Agenda: A Brief Synthesis of Select Child Support Literature</u>	ACF Evidence Capacity Support
<u>Automated Systems for Child Support Services: A Guide for States (2017)</u>	OCSE

Resource Review: Supportive Sites

Site	Highlights
<u>OCSE</u>	Intergovernmental Reference Guide (IRG); Child Support Portal; Certification Guidelines; Knowledge Works; SAVES; Child Support Awareness Month Toolkit; Child Support Annual Data Tables
<u>Collaboration Tool</u>	Contains Alfresco sites for "Data Analytics/Reporting for IV-D Directors," State Systems Information (non-confidential)", and "Digital Marketing"; for details, contact Cynthia Longest at 317-796-6238
<u>NCSEA</u>	Collection of child support research papers grouped by topic; policy statements; legislative updates; page of site links grouped into legal organizations, federal agencies, research organizations, and associations; Web-Talks; podcast; NCSEA Connects; conferences
<u>NTCSA</u>	National Tribal Child Support Association: links to tribal organizations, associations, and centers; conference
<u>ERICSA</u>	Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association: Pocket Learning free webinars; Board Approved Resolutions and Position Papers; site tip: American Payroll Association; conferences
<u>WICSEC</u>	Western Intergovernmental Child Support Engagement Council: IJ Fairs (Interjurisdictional), jointly with ERICSA and NTCSA; Microlearning Recordings; conferences
<u>NCSL</u>	National Conference of State Legislatures: Has a child support and family law legislation archived database: https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/child-support-and-family-law-legislation-archived-database
<u>ASPE</u>	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation: Child support research studies
<u>AFCC</u>	Association of Family and Conciliation Courts: family court and legal-oriented offerings; parenting plan information; reports and resources; family resources; trainings for purchase; conferences
<u>APHSA</u>	American Public Human Services Association: resource library; papers and reports; federal policy responses; Benefits Cliffs Resource Hub; webinars; technical assistance, training, and learning management services; conferences

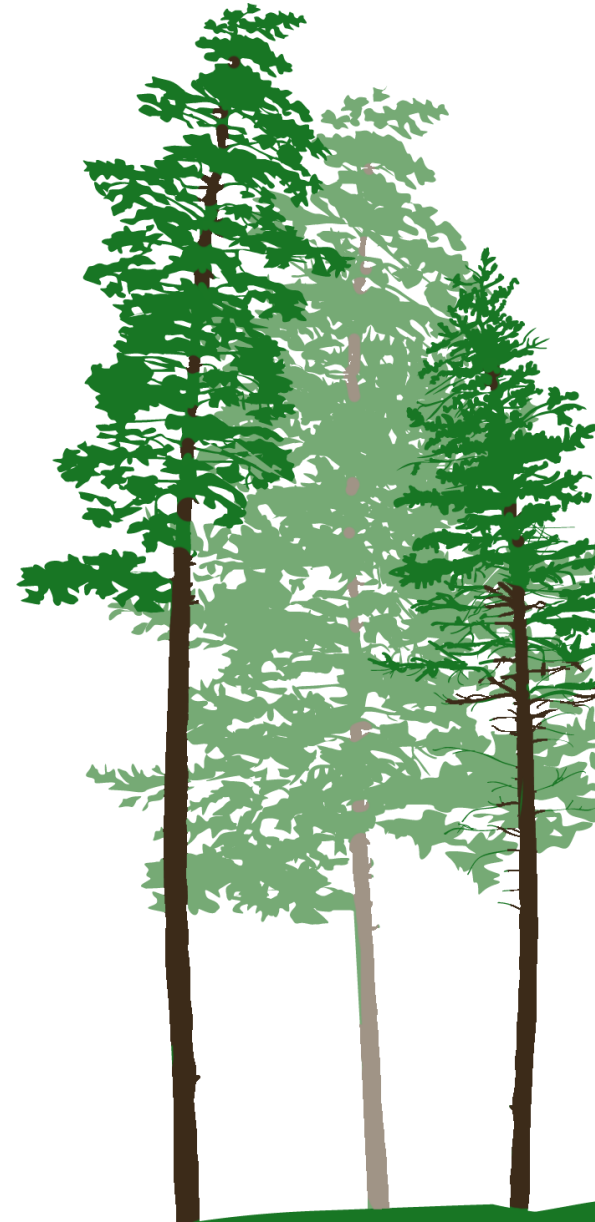
Selected Survey Results: HR Speed



"Ensuring that your organization has written guidelines (including timelines) for every step H.R. is involved with, and then holding them to it. And ensuring the Child Support Managers . . . adhere to their roles in the written guidelines. We meet with H.R. bi-weekly to review a Google doc of the status of positions that are in various stages of hiring."



"Look for opportunities to strengthen the partnership with HR teams. Offer solutions to streamline processes for HR..."



Selected Survey Results: Managing Remote Workers



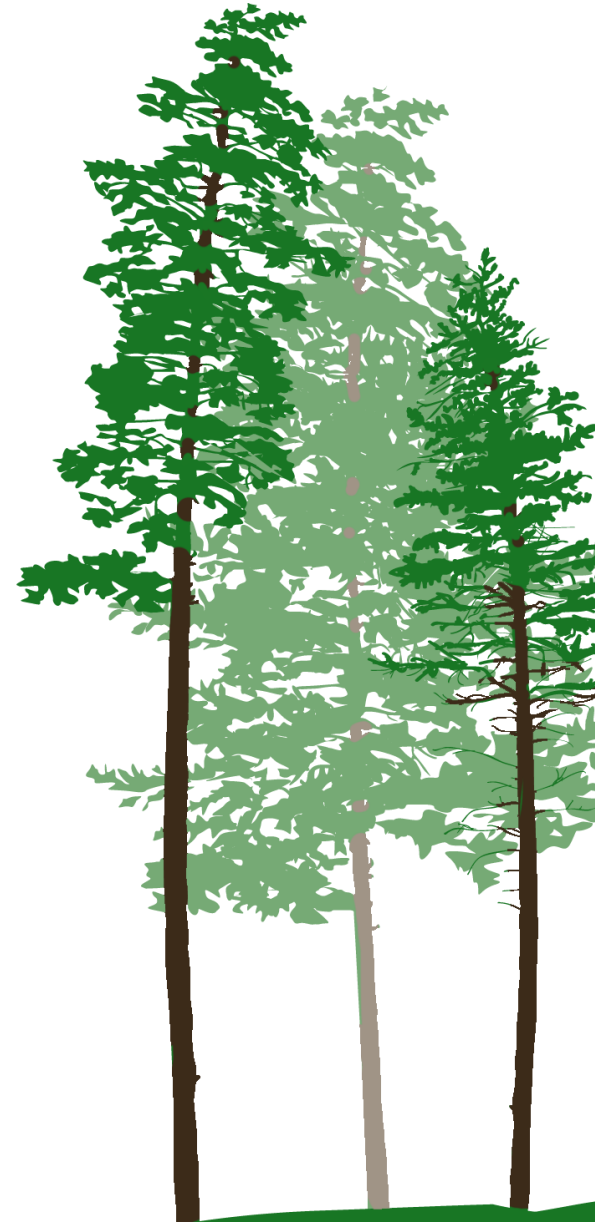
"...We try to create networking opportunities with ice breakers or other activities help as well as requesting people have their cameras on... We also have team days or retreats to have as many people in person once a month, quarterly, etc."



"Require some office time."



"...'Office hours' where supervisors have an open Teams channel with staff where they can connect, ask questions, staff cases, etc., just as though they were in-office..."



Panel Discussion

Moderator: Nycole Morton,

Deputy Director of the Washington, D.C., Attorney General's
Child Support Services Division



Panelist: Alana Tucker,
IV-D Director for Virginia



Panelist: Jarnice Johnson,
IV-D Director for Maryland



Panelist: Michele Schreifels,
IV-D Director for Minnesota



Panelist: Sophia Ticer,
IV-D Director for Washington, D.C.



Top 3 Challenges Facing IV-D Directors



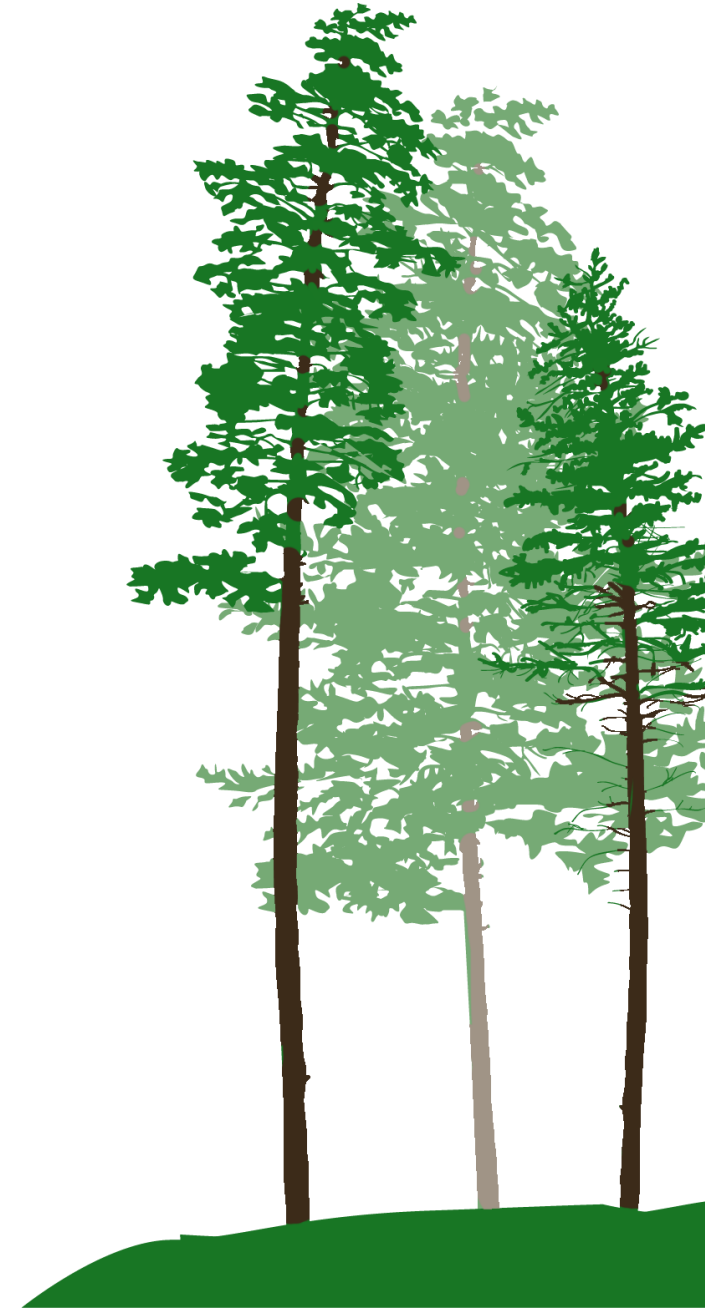
**Budgeting and
Budget Cuts**



**System Modernization
and System Limitations**



**Staff Care, Succession,
and Performance**



Top 3 Challenges Facing **NEW** IV-D Directors



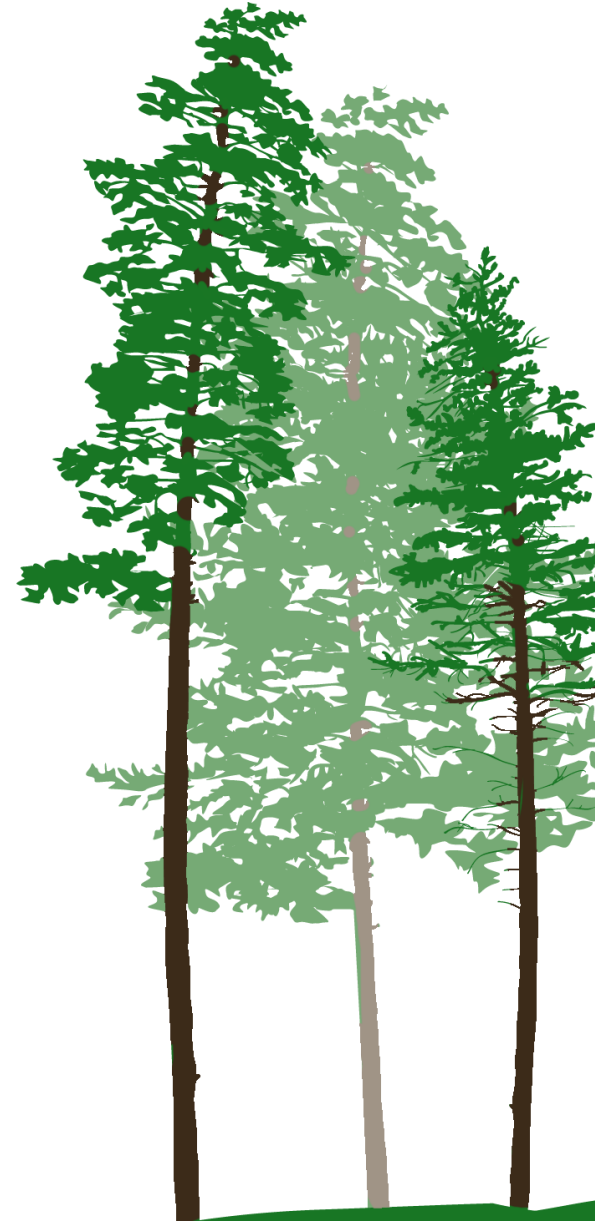
Legislative Process



**Understanding Required
Federal and State Audits**



**Workload Management and
Finding Time for Strategic,
Long-range Planning**



Be Advised



"1. Take things slow - Don't expect to learn everything in a couple months. 2. Lean on other directors. They have been my biggest mentors since typically state program leaders don't have the same understanding. 3. Take advantage of opportunities to learn from and engage with staff."



Problem Solved!

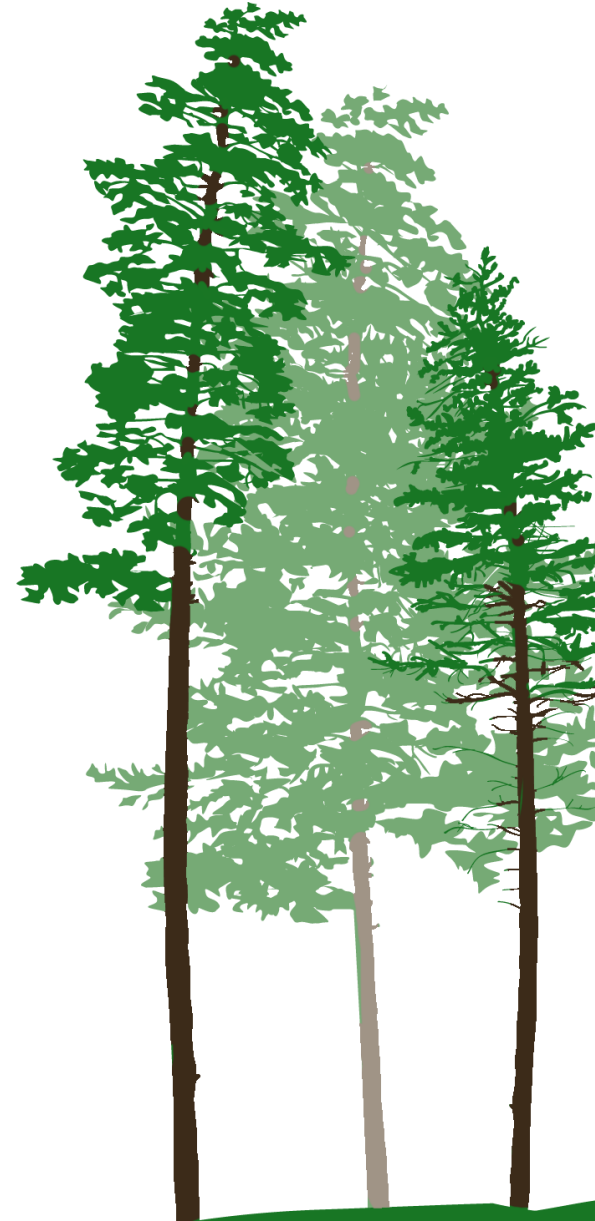
Scenario #1



Problem: Legislation was introduced that was contrary to federal statute and would have negatively impacted our Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity Program.



Solution: We had to coordinate with the Department of Health and testify in a House Committee to explain how the proposed legislation could compromise federal funding and reduce our PEP rate. We were able to successfully make our case and the bill failed to move out of committee.



Problem Solved!

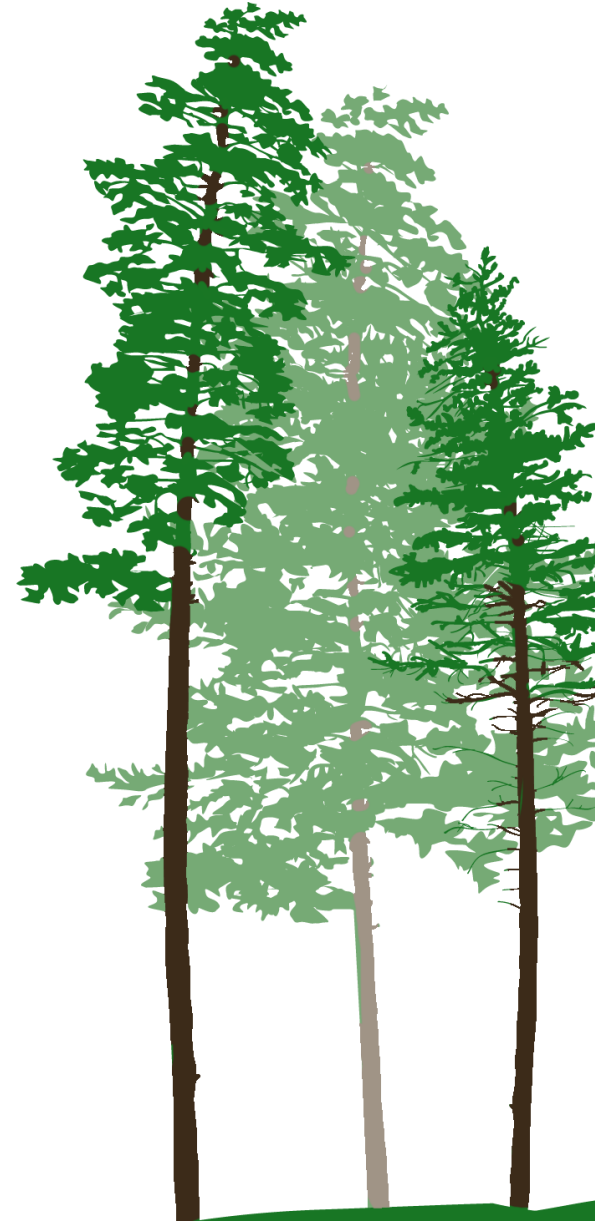
Scenario #2



Problem: We were faced with recruitment and retention challenges statewide, particularly in an area where private sector wages far surpassed what the state could offer.



Solution: In studying what led people to come to our offices, we learned nearly all of the customer contact could occur remotely. This led to an evolution from full-service free-standing offices to remote service delivery with appointments only to statewide specialization and nation-wide telework recruitment.



Problem Solved!

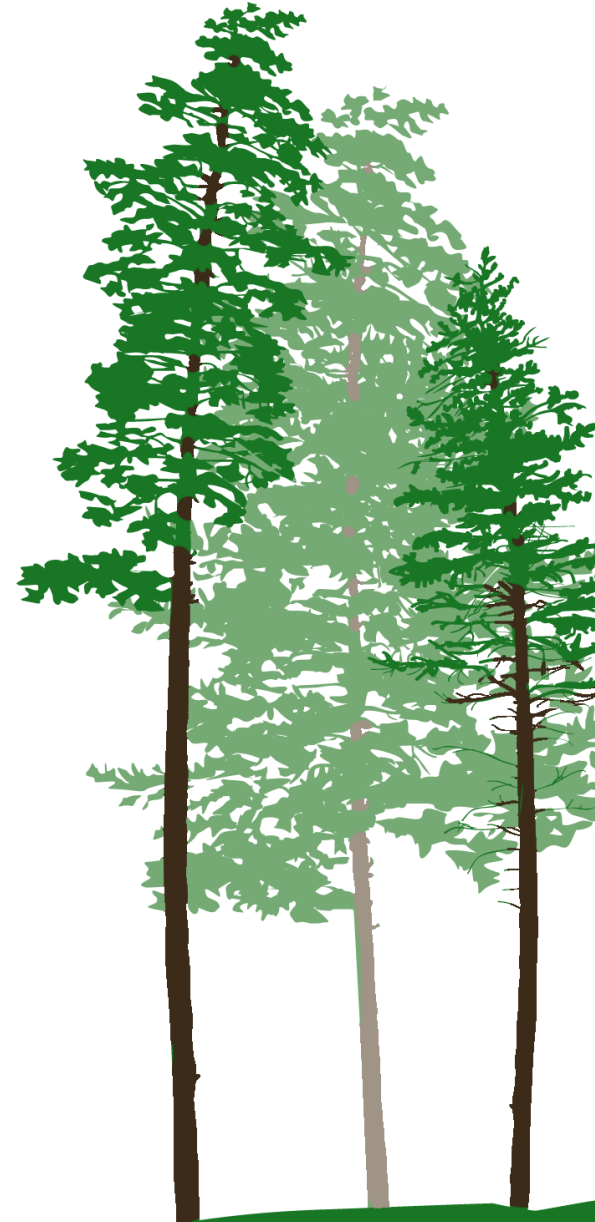
Scenario #3



Problem: Our program was asked by a stakeholder to sign off on multiple relocation/consolidation efforts to move into building with other partners within our agency; however, this relocation would have resulted in a significant increase in our lease amount (more than double what our current lease is). We were told this was based on a directive from agency leadership.



Solution: We pushed back on this and elevated it to our direct leadership who then had conversations with agency leadership. It turned out agency leadership was not aware of the significant cost increases that would be part of the relocation/consolidation efforts. We received their support and approval to decline any relocation/consolidation efforts which would not result in cost savings and/or which our budget cannot support.



Be Encouraged



“Being a IV-D Director is a challenging but a rewarding job. In the midst of the challenges, find those aspects of the job that you enjoy the most and incorporate those into your week/month. Whether you enjoy office visits, reading policy, strategizing with others, reviewing performance - don't just love the job, enjoy the job!”

