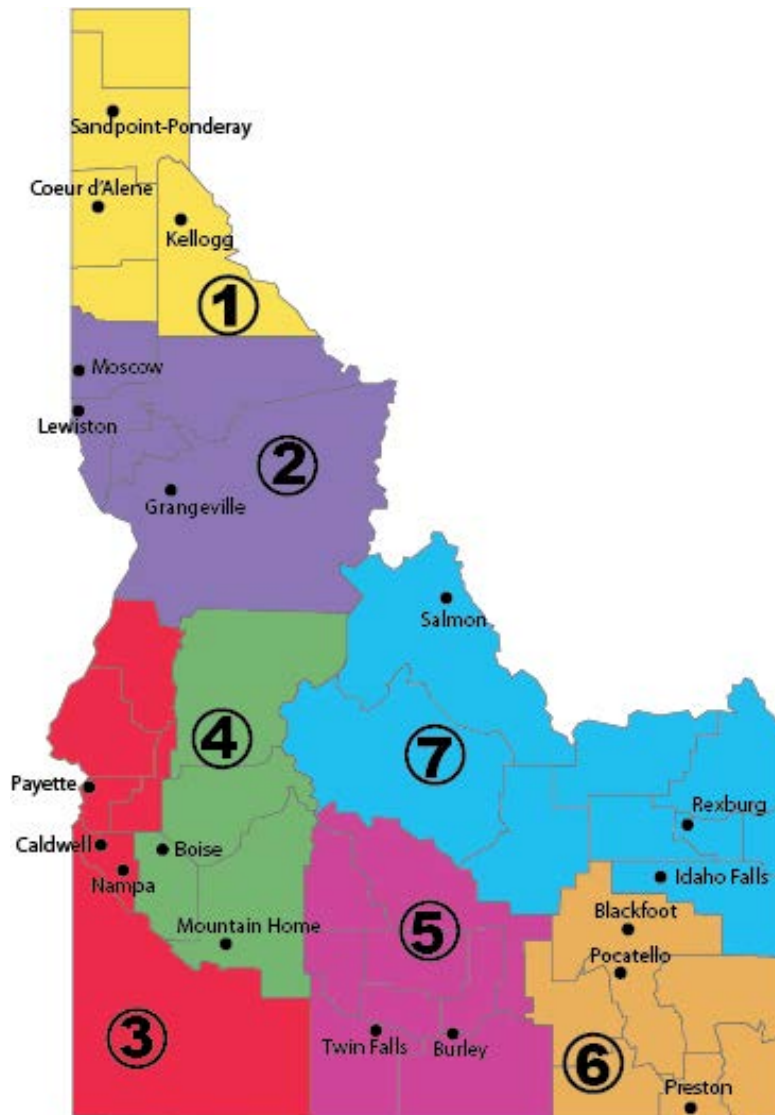


IDAHO DEPT. OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION PROFILE

- **Background**

- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) provides services to ensure the protection and welfare of children and families, administers economic assistance programs, oversees programs related to community health including mental health and substance abuse services, and ensures that Idaho residents have access to healthcare through their medical services programs.
- Idaho DHW operates under a state-administered system.
- Statewide administrative offices are located in Boise and provide oversight and support to Idaho's seven Regional Service Centers and satellite field offices. Regional Service Centers are typically located in larger communities but will coordinate with local field offices to provide programs and services to smaller, less populated communities.
- Each region serves several counties (5-9 counties per region), but Idaho residents can visit any DHW office across the state for services regardless of the county they live in.



- **Department Operation**

- Regional Service Centers used to coordinate and oversee the administration of services within the regional under the direction of central office staff. In this system, the relationship between the Regional Service Centers and the field offices closely resembled a supervisor/supervisee dynamic.
- Regional Directors and their staff operated out of the Regional Service Centers and had specific responsibilities and authority related to the supervision and administration of programs and services in that region.
- Personnel at the central offices started to identify inconsistencies in the way Regional Directors chose to administer programs, interpret policy, invest in technology/innovative solutions, and monitor/assess program outcomes. This resulted in less coordination and collaboration across regional lines. Regions became “fiefdoms” and central office personnel found it difficult to assess what programs and services were effective at the local level because there were no established, direct lines of communication between the field offices and the central office – all communication was filtered through Regional Directors and their staff.
- Idaho DHW opted to eliminate the Regional Director position and placed management from all Regional Service Centers and field offices in direct communication with the state personnel at the central office.
- Although Regional Service Centers and field offices differ greatly in their staff size and caseload, they now all have the capacity to provide DHW’s entire suite of services.
- DHW introduced the position of Hub Director. Hub Directors are not involved in the administration of programs and do not provide any supervision or oversight to direct services providers. They are responsible for helping to coordinate with stakeholders in each region and promote community awareness and engagement.

- **Transition Insights**

- Infrastructure must be in place at the central state office to ensure that adequate support and oversight can be provided directly to field offices without the coordination or advocacy typically provided by a Regional Director.
- Idaho DHW established additional positions/offices within the central office to assist in the supervision of Regional Service Centers and field offices following the elimination of Regional Directors:
 - Business Process Design and Training Unit provides training and guidance to field offices.
 - Communications Bureau ensures that lines of communication between central office staff and field offices are clear and responsive to shifting community needs.
 - Bureau Chief at the central office provides direct supervision to field office managers.
- It can be helpful to establish a regular schedule of communication between central office representatives and field office leadership.
 - Ensures that field office priorities and central office priorities align.
 - Idaho DHW connects with field office leadership on a weekly basis.
 - Remote meetings between Idaho DHW Bureau Chief and field office managers occur on a weekly basis.
 - Quarterly roll-outs of new policy or programs.
 - Affords field office staff and leadership the opportunity to provide feedback and advocate for additional support/resources when necessary.
- Field office locations should be based on customer accessibility, not necessarily county lines.