

ERICSA CONFERENCE

Workshop: State Roundtable – Southeast States + 2

Gail Saunders – Virginia DCSE Representative (NOTES for Q&A)

We will only do questions #5 and #6 if time allows, but you should certainly have responses ready for those. Each response should be limited to two minutes max.

1. What are some current issues affecting your state in the processing of intergovernmental cases? What's new & interesting in your state regarding interstate?

I am happy to say that we are not facing in current issues in processing intergovernmental cases. The new and interesting thing going in VA is we are currently doing a system cleanup special project, in preparation for our new child support system, that will be implemented in 2025-2026. This cleanup project has been great in cleaning up missing dependents that may not have been added to case when it was originally set up. It's helping us to update the correct emancipation dates of the children for out-of-state orders, where support is extended beyond our system default age of 18. We can clean up paternity issues and request missing documents, that may have not been originally sent from the other state. We have been able to reach out to states and clients where cases have not had very many actions for a while; to see if they still require services.

2. What are some of the changes implemented in your state because of the pandemic? (Include if they are permanent or temporary.) Changes to work environment? Changes to case processing?

Our agency went from providing nearly 95% in person customer service to 100% on-line customer service. We implemented and continue to use the "My Child Support Portal" where both custodial and non-custodial parents can communicate with us by email. They are now able to receive an immediate direct response from their case manager. We also started sending and receiving documents through our "My Child Support Portal" to our custodial and non-custodial parents. We have also started sending more documents to employers, other interstate workers, clients, and non-custodial parents through Outlook email. We continue to utilize Acrobat Adobe software by filling in and signing documents that we need to send out; ex: certified payment records and letters requesting registration.

Our state also participated in a Federal Grant and were a part of a “3-State-Project” with NC and MD. We were able to gain some great contacts and participate in trainings to see how each state processed their cases. The grant ended in December of 2021.

Our work environment immediately changed from 100% in-office to 100% mobile. Although our office has reopened now. We still work 80% of the time from home. We have also found that our clients do not come in person as much, since a lot of things are automated now.

Our case processing became more efficient and customer service improved tremendously.

3. What should other states know about your state that may be unique or different regarding how you process intergovernmental cases?

My district office, along with others throughout our agency, has its own intergovernmental unit for establishment and enforcement. We handle all our offices initiating and responding cases. We have found that by having a specialized team it helps in case processing.

4. In monitoring & managing cases, what has worked for you and what has not worked for you?

As previously stated having a specialized team who only handles intergovernmental cases has worked out great and makes case processing much easier and allows us to manage intergovernmental cases in a more timely manner. Our biggest draw back is not currently have a system that will allow us to chose whether to send something by CSNET only, or the ability to send a transmittal by EDE immediately. At this time we have to wait for the transmittal to show up in documents, download it, save it and then send it through EDE.

5. What is the top reason, in your opinion, that causes a breakdown in intergovernmental case activity? What is the biggest barrier in processing interstate cases?

I believe that people get frustrated and confused because they don't fully understand intergovernmental cases. If they will learn to treat the intergovernmental cases like the instate cases; there would be less frustration and less time to process cases. Some people get confused because their state may be able to take certain actions and another state cannot take those same actions.

I believe that the biggest barrier is a lack of communication and understanding. If we will all take the time to understand the other states processes, it would lead to less frustration and better case management.

6. How does your state "escalate" problem cases (administrative vs judicial)?

Cases are reviewed by the case manager to determine the appropriate actions and referral to the supervisor or manager. Some problem cases are escalated via an email that may be received from Central Registry to the district manager. The process is the same for administrative and judicial actions that may be needed.

7. Can you each offer one or two best practices or practical tips that your office has found for processing intergovernmental cases? Do you have any closing remarks?

One of the best practices is having the specialized Intergovernmental Team. Another best practice is to reach out to other states when we are confused about something. I have found by calling other IG workers it helps to clear things up and I have a greater understanding of what they can and cannot do.

It is wonderful to work in the intergovernmental unit because it's incredible to see the processes that some states must go through to try to enforce and collect support. I love reaching out to other intergovernmental workers and creating work relationships.