

# Indian Health Service (IHS) *Realignment*

*December 2025*

**Tribal Consultation/Urban Confer**



# Session Overview

## **PURPOSE:**

To provide the design for the realignment for review and comment.

- Why Is IHS Realigning?
- Our Design for Realignment
- Question and Answer Discussion

# Embracing Transformative Change at IHS



*IHS has not undergone a holistic reorganization in over 20 years. Significant changes and organic growth overtime require a realignment toward efficient, sustainable operations.*



**65%** of the IHS budget is transferred to tribes and tribal organizations through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.



This change will impact **16%** of the IHS workforce.

**84%** will not be impacted.

# Guiding Principles & Realignment Goals



*These principles serve as the foundation to guide our realignment efforts.*

**RESPONSIBILITY:** *Our duty to uphold the federal trust responsibility and ensure effective governance and oversight.*

- **Accountability:** Ensure clear roles, responsibilities, and transparent governance.
- **Efficiency:** Align systems and operations to support front-line services.
- **Insight:** Use data and proactive decision-making to drive improvement and accountability.
- **Relationships:** Our government-to-government partnership with Tribes and Urban Indian organizations.

**RELATIONSHIPS:** *Strengthen Tribal partnerships and honor self-determination through consultation and collaboration.*

- **Integration:** Operate as one IHS system with Tribes and Urban partners to promote unity and shared performance.

**RELATIVES:** *The Indian people and communities we serve — our relatives.*

- **Patient Care:** Provide safe, high-quality, and culturally responsive care.
- **Empowerment:** Empower local service units and communities to lead and innovate for better health outcomes.

# What we heard in 2025

*In the first round of engagement, 400+ participants from 40+ Tribes/UIOs provided 100+ comments on the proposed three-pillar model. Key themes include: Ensure equitable and flexible funding, preserve regional autonomy, and strengthen consultation*

## **Health equity:**

- Preserve culturally grounded programs and ensure reforms reflect community priorities

## **Operational needs:**

- Staffing shortages
- Inconsistent support
- Need for technical assistance & accountability

## **Governance concerns:**

- Need for clarity in roles and advisory structures
- Opposition to consolidation

## **Funding priorities:**

- Address chronic underfunding
- Outdated formulas
- Unstable grant structures

# IHS Workforce Feedback

- *1,600+ employees provided input across HQ, Areas, and Facilities; majority from Service Units.*
- *58.5% report current structure is not meeting needs; concerns strongest at Facilities and HQ.*

## Top Priorities:

- Communication
- Accountability
- Standard Processes & Tools

## Additional Needs:

- Clear Roles
- Knowledge Sharing
- Governance Consistency

## Challenges:

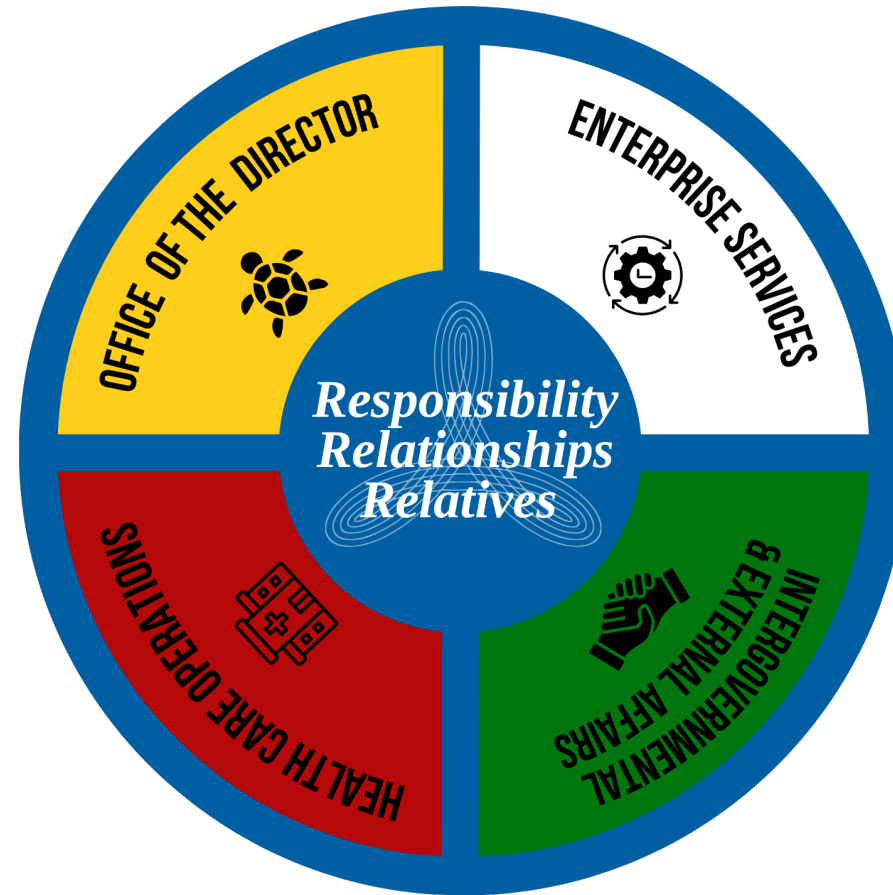
Strong mission commitment but fragmented, unclear decision-making, and gaps in workflow consistency.

## Recommendations:

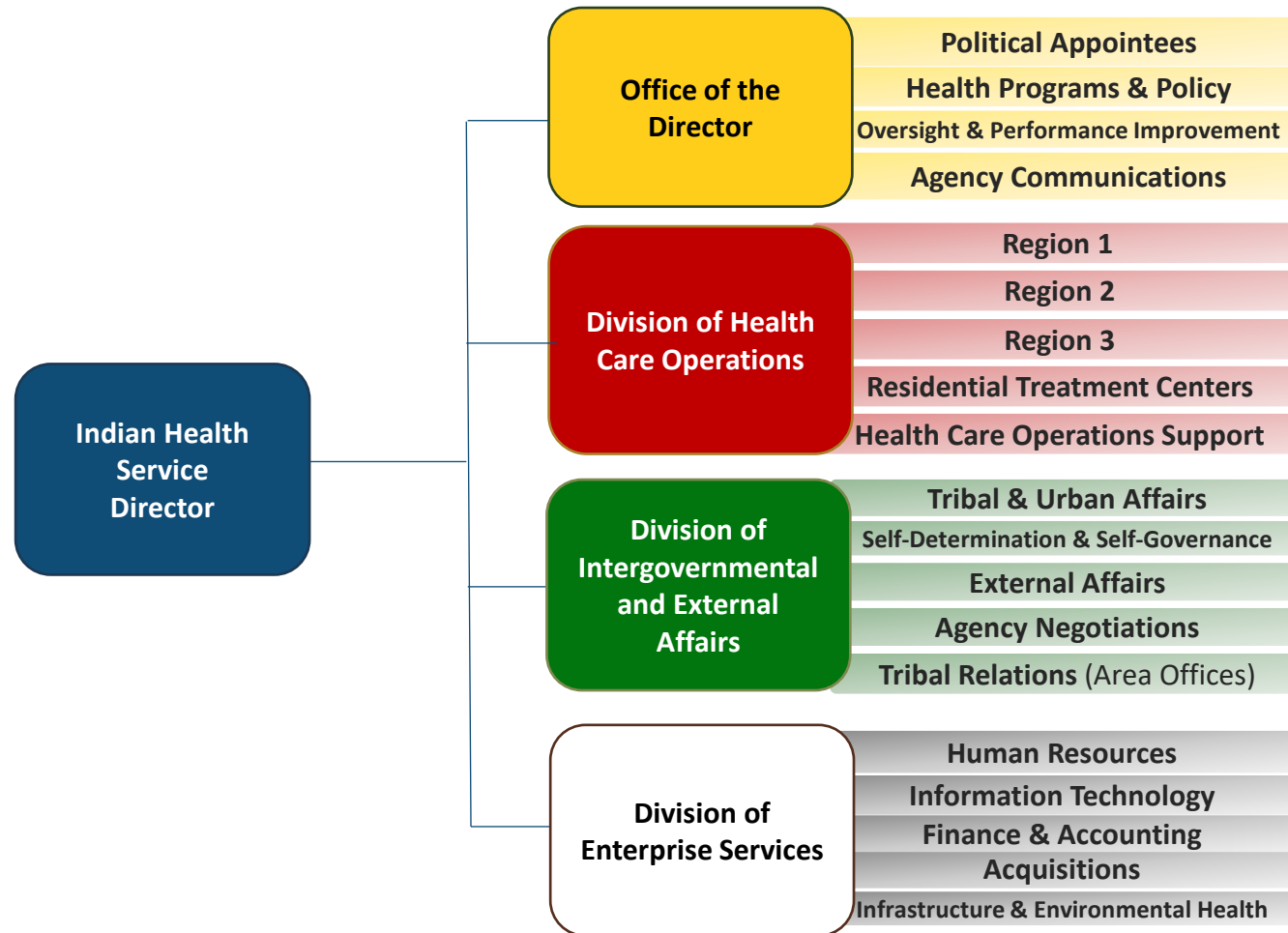
Clarified roles, standardized tools, stronger accountability, and enhanced knowledge-sharing mechanisms.

# Organizational Model

*To support changing priorities, strengthen oversight and accountability, and improve effectiveness and efficiency, the agency is organizing around critical operations for Healthcare Operations, Enterprise Services and Intergovernmental and External Affairs.*



# Indian Health Service Organizational Design

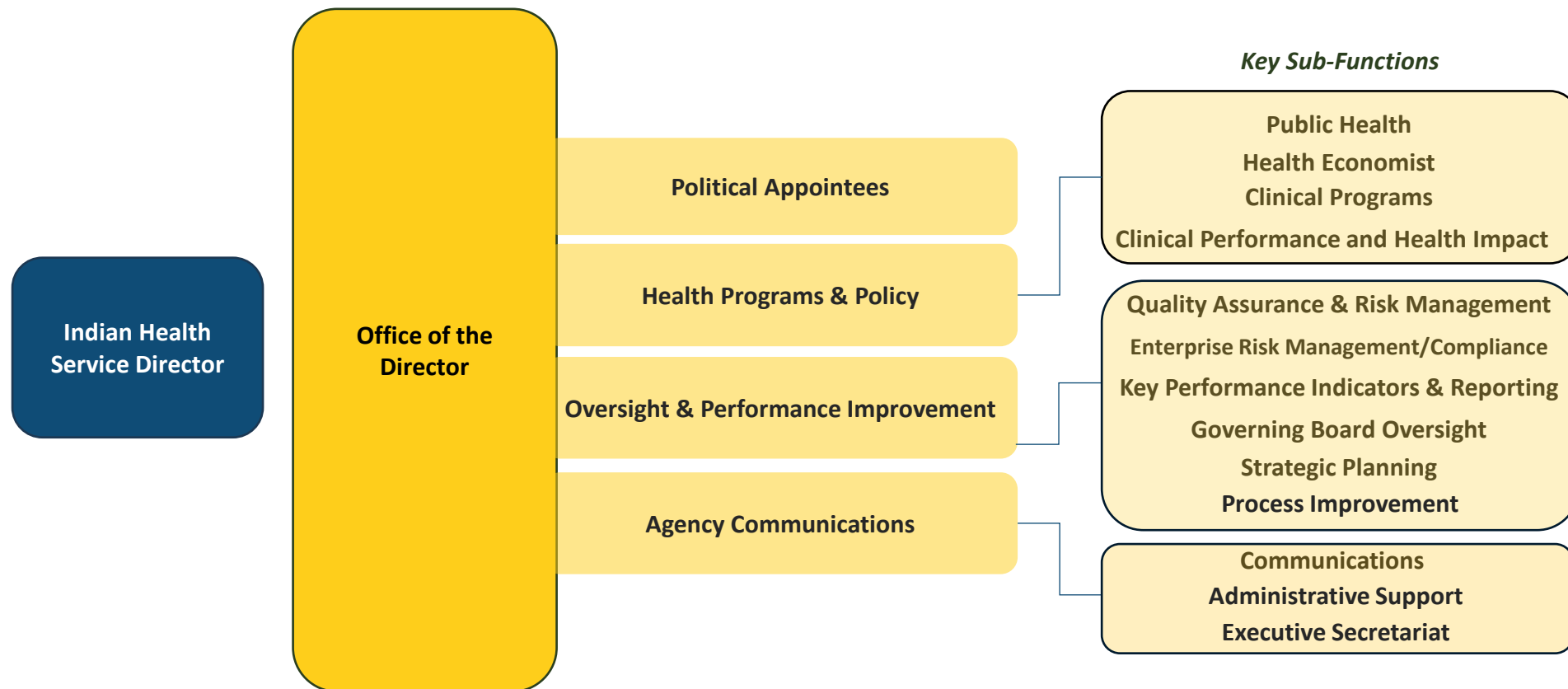




# Office of the Director

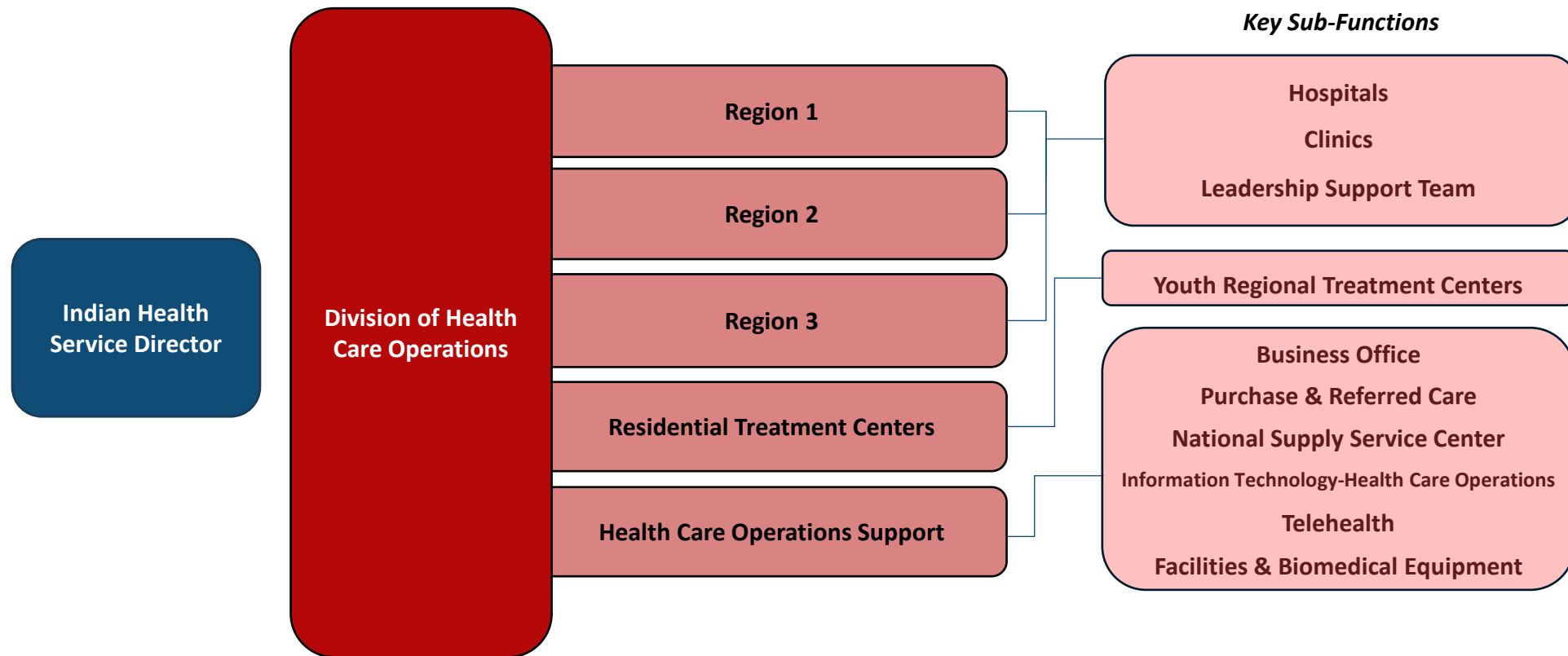


*Provides executive leadership and strategic direction to ensure accountability, and innovation across programs to advance health outcomes; Leads clinical policy development, medical education, telehealth, and public health initiatives, using data-driven approaches; and aligns agency operations and governance to align with agency goals, metrics, data analysis, and risk management for system improvements.*



# Division of Health Care Operations

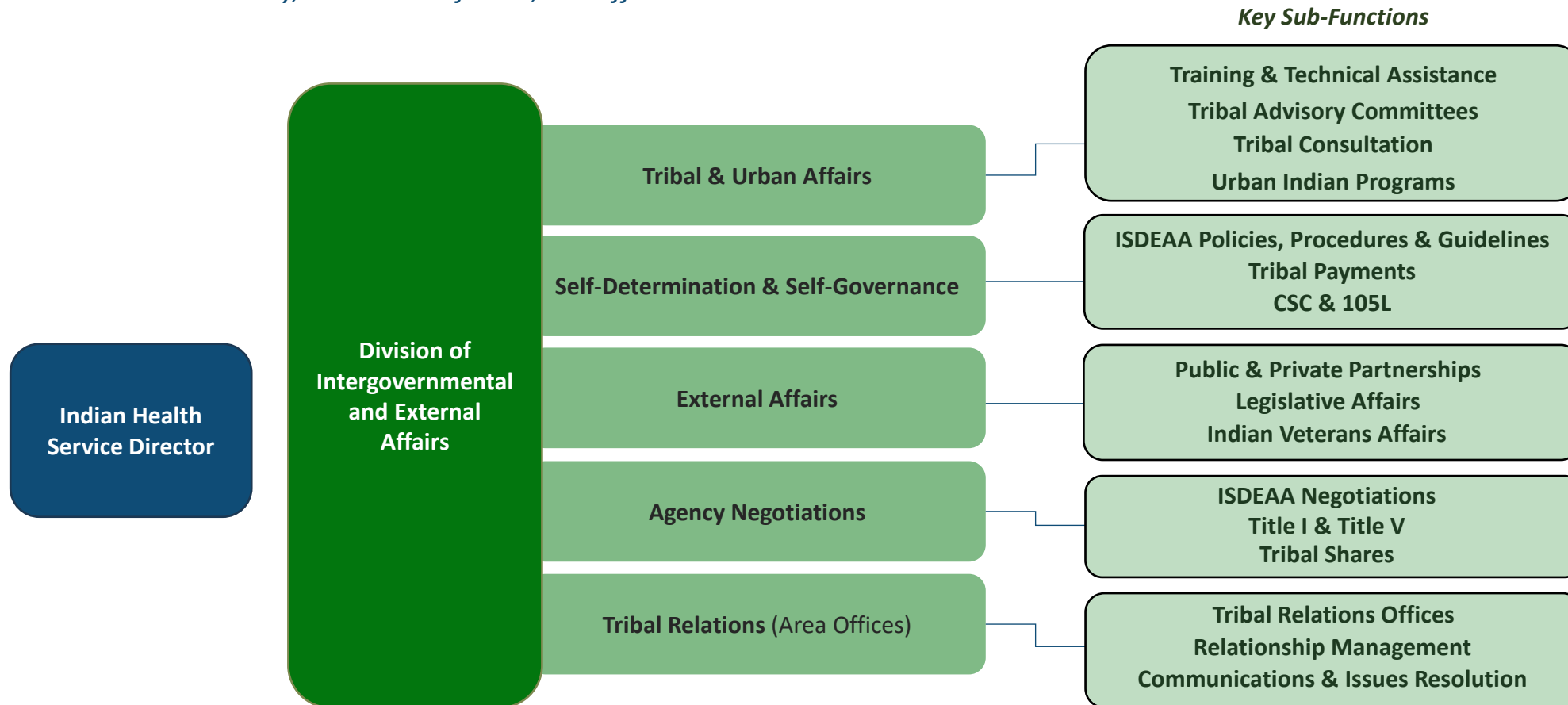
*Aligns healthcare operations under a function-based framework to improve efficiency, consistency, and scalability; Advances a system-wide approach that promotes quality care, clinical performance, and patient-focused results; And leads direct healthcare delivery at IHS-operated hospitals, clinics, residential behavioral health facilities to ensure a consistent, safe, and efficient patient experience.*



# Division of Intergovernmental & External Affairs

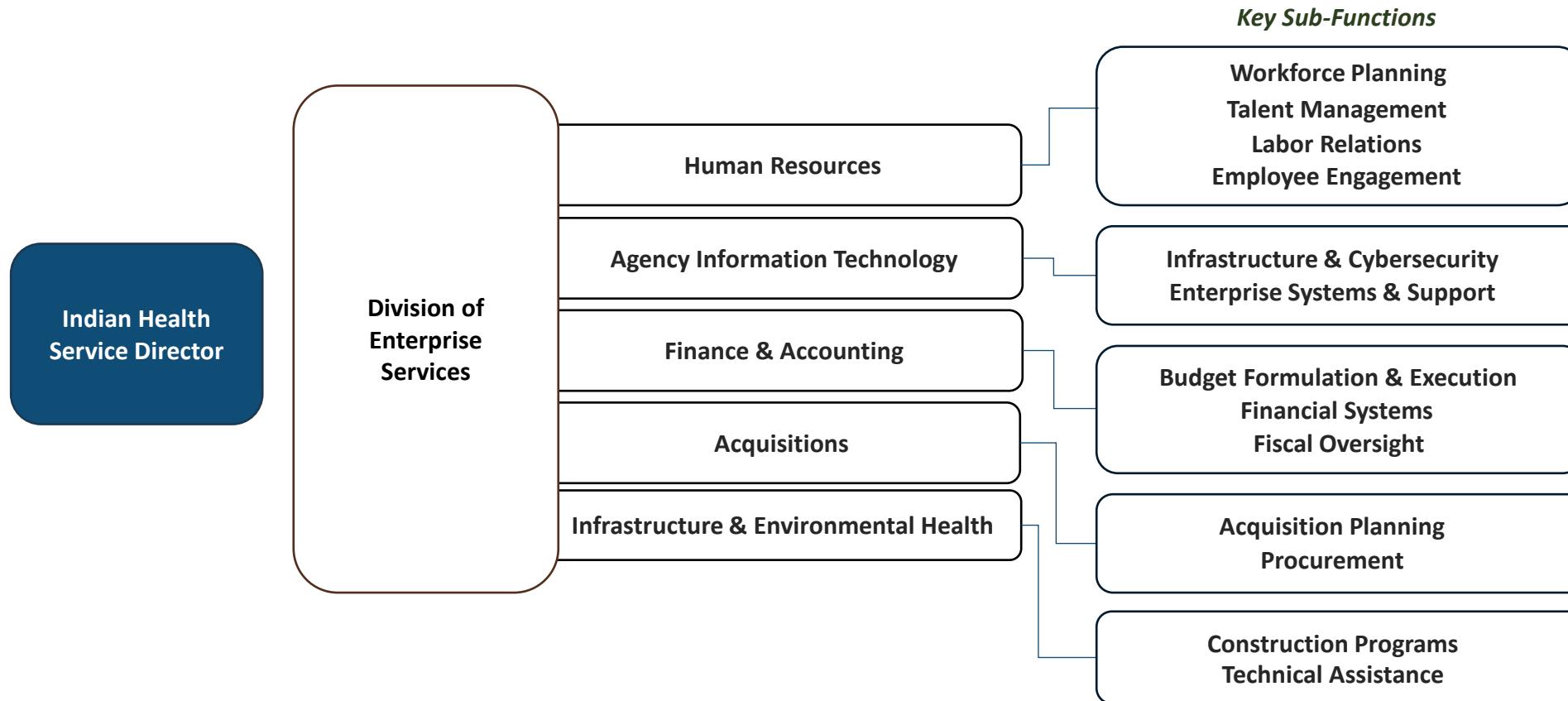


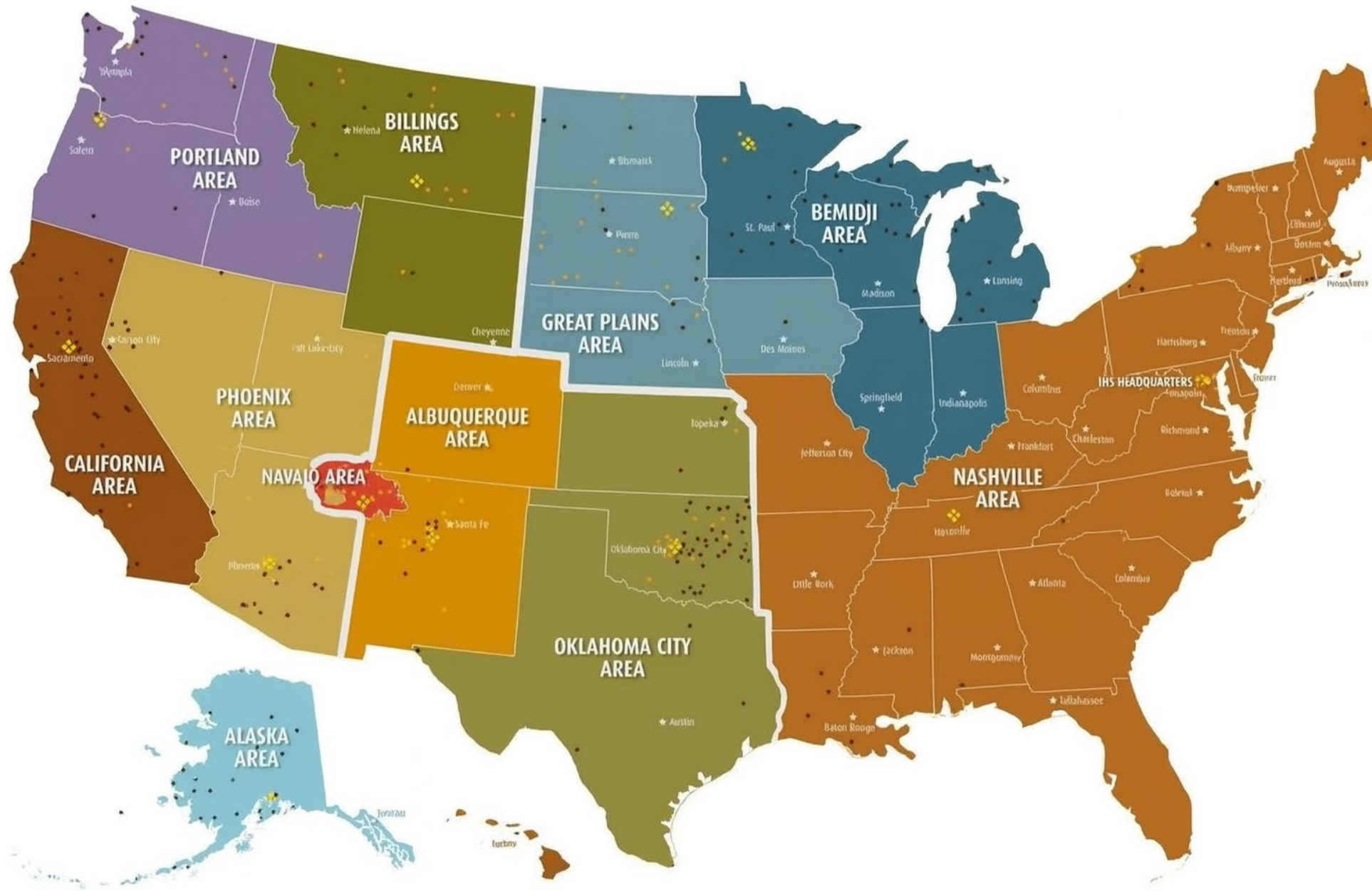
*Coordinates government-to-government relations to ensure Tribal priorities and perspectives shape IHS policy and operations; Balances specialized regional approaches with unified systems and standards across HIS; And centralizes oversight of negotiations and agreements to achieve consistency, economies of scale, and effective resource use.*



# Division of Enterprise Services


*Standardizes a shared services framework to deliver administrative support across all IHS divisions and clinical care sites; Includes human resources, finance, acquisitions, grants management, information technology and environmental health and engineering; And advances technology, interoperability, and facility design, construction, to strengthen care delivery support for long-term sustainability.*





# The Path Forward

*IHS finalizing the realignment plan*



<b>Mar-June</b>	Internal Analysis & Benchmarking
<b>Jul-Aug</b>	Tribal Consultations, Urban Confer, IHS Town Halls
<b>Sept-Oct</b>	Draft Realignment Design
<b>Nov-Jan</b>	Additional Tribal Consultations, Urban Confer, IHS Town Halls
<b>Feb-Mar</b>	Transition to Future State



# Share Your Feedback

*We want to hear from you!*



The comment submission deadline for both the Tribal Consultations and Urban Confer is **Monday, February 9, 2026**.

Email Tribal Consultation comments to: [consultation@ihs.gov](mailto:consultation@ihs.gov)

Email Urban Confer comments to: [urbanconfer@ihs.gov](mailto:urbanconfer@ihs.gov)

Please use the **SUBJECT LINE: IHS Proposed Realignment**

Questions may be submitted to [xavier.yazzie@ihs.gov](mailto:xavier.yazzie@ihs.gov) or call (301) 945-3755.

# Question and Answer Discussion







Thank You