

Some Possible Approaches to Addressing the Problem

1. Solo Practice Training (Solo Practice “Bootcamp”). Conduct solo training CLEs that focus on the nuts and bolts of establishing and running a practice. An effective approach might be a small workshop-type session, or series of sessions, with an emphasis on starting a business, forms that need to be filed, checklists, a primer on relevant ethics rules for name and advertising and sharing office space, and so forth. Perhaps attendees could even complete their business plans that same day with the help of experienced presenters. The cost of such a workshop/CLE/bootcamp should be kept very low, and it should be offered on a regular, recurring basis—preferably once a year or every other year. [Note: Maine Law has recently begun offering a semester-long course in solo practice.]

Questions: Who to organize and sponsor such training? The MSBA?

2. Regional Point Persons. Establish a point person in each county (or multi-county region), charged with giving new solo practitioners a rundown on helpful state and local organizations/groups, identifying people in the county/region (and elsewhere) whom they should meet—and those to call with questions, identifying regional geographic and practice areas in which legal services are in short supply, and other resources and information. The point person might compile a resource and information list over time to distribute to new solos. The point person would *not* function as an ongoing mentor for all new solos (too much to ask of anyone), but more as an initial stop for new solos when they’re first setting up practice.

Questions: Who to identify and line up these point persons? County bar associations?

3. Website for Rural Lawyers. The State Bar of South Dakota has a well-developed website devoted to their “Project Rural Practice.” The site has many resources for rural and solo practitioners, links to sites of potential interest to lawyers considering small town practice (including information technology services), success stories from newly-minted rural lawyers, tips for students and lawyers seeking rural opportunities, a blog, and much more. Consider starting a similar site for Maine’s rural attorneys.

Questions: Who to organize and administer the site? The MSBA?

4. Regional Solo/Small Firm Listservs. Set up a listserv that would enable solos and small law offices to readily communicate ideas, best practice suggestions, common concerns, and so forth.

Questions: Who to establish and monitor these listservs? County bar associations?

5. Technology grants. These would serve several goals, including easing some of the financial burdens on new rural practices, and facilitating lawyers’ ability to locate in rural areas while staying connected with their peers and other lawyers. Such grants might be extended (upon application) to lawyers interested in rural practice, and used to pay for a computer and a tablet, or part of the cost of a smartphone for the first year, etc.

Questions: Where would the funding come from? Who would administer the program?

6. Rural Attorney Recruitment Program. Put in place something similar to South Dakota’s much publicized Recruitment Assistance Pilot Program to provide financial incentives for younger lawyers to locate in rural areas.

Questions: Where would funding come from? Who would administer the program?

7. Law School Road Trips. Arrange for regular student visits to rural Maine counties to meet with practicing lawyers, singly or in groups. The “Downeast road trip” in which Rachel Reeves was involved in January 2013 with several Maine Law students is one model.

8. Educate Law Students About Small Town Life & Practice. Enlist the assistance and involvement of county bar associations and the judiciary in educating students about opportunities outside of the usual places, through frequent visits to the law school and by hosting the student "road trips" mentioned above.

9. Small Town Clerkship/Internship Project. Work with rural/small town attorneys to promote the hiring of students (with no strings attached) during the summer following 1L year, and foster a continuing relationship throughout law school. Follow the example of Iowa's State Bar Association's Rural Practice Committee, which is working with local law schools to place first year law students with small town lawyers in summer and school year positions in hopes of planting seeds that grow into permanent employment. This may have benefits for attorney succession planning as well.

Figure 1: Respondents By County

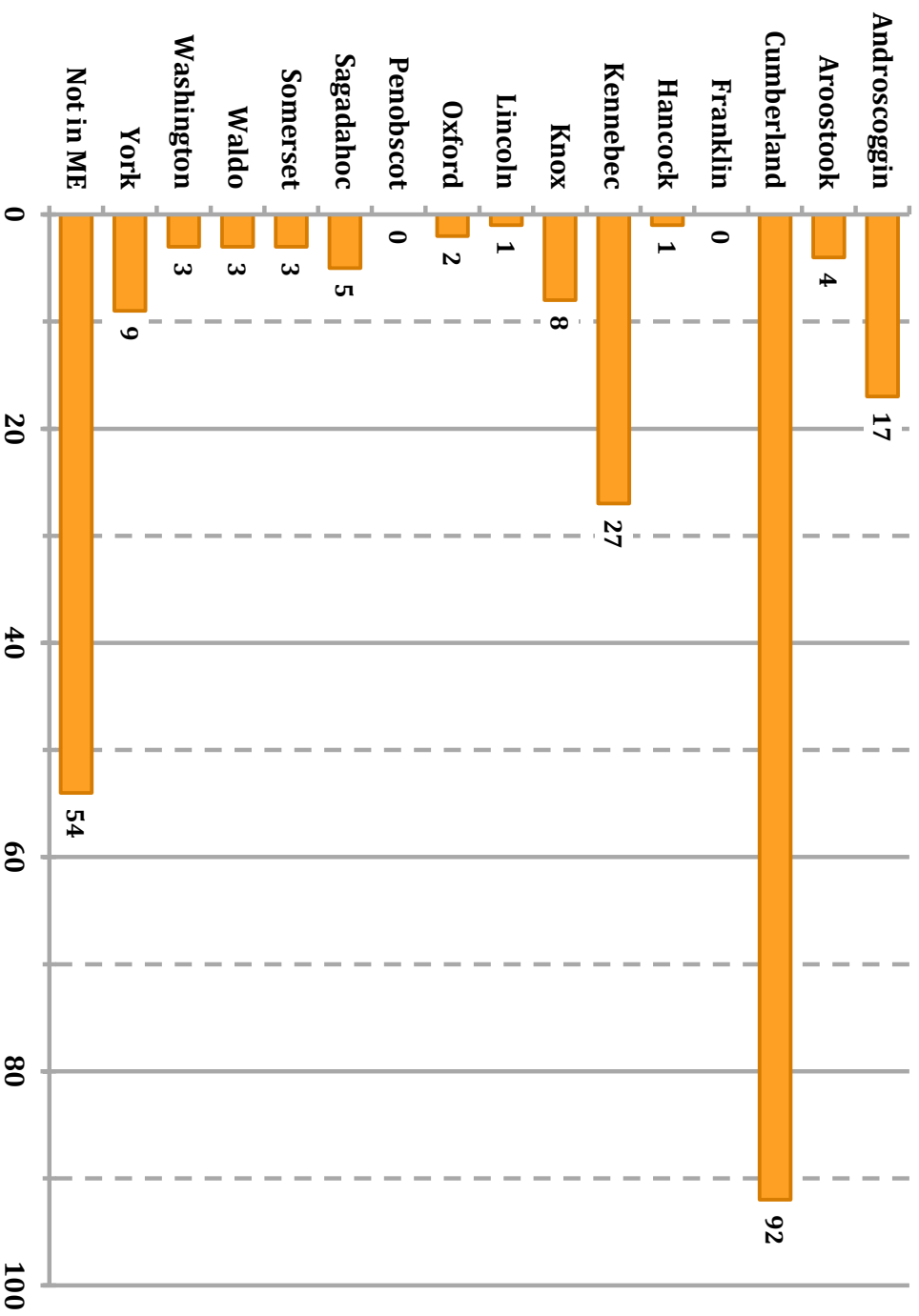


Figure 2: Respondents Practicing in Rural Maine or Have Considered Practicing in Rural Maine

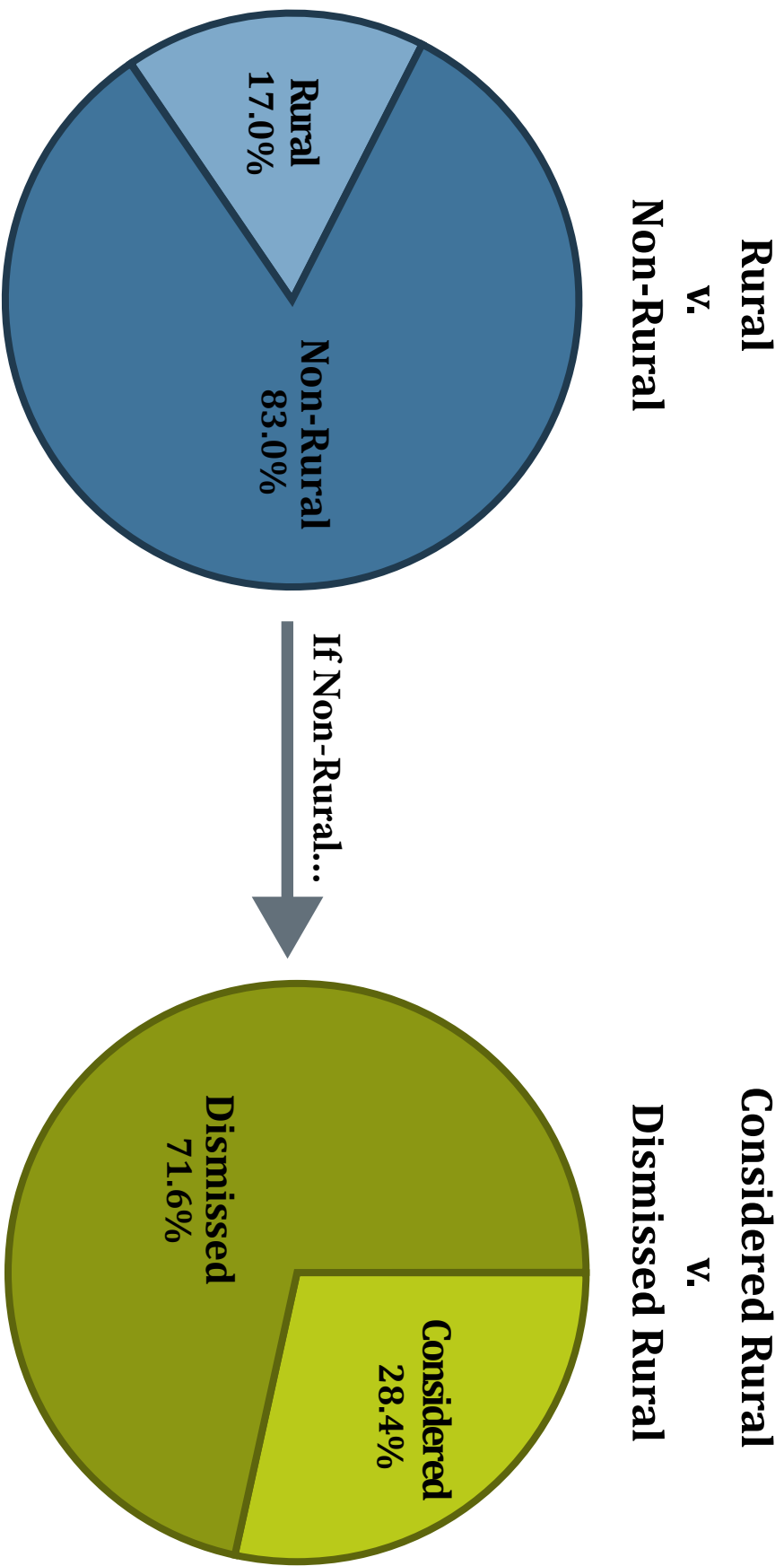


Figure 3: Influences for Not Considering a Rural Area Based on Respondents Selecting "Very Important"

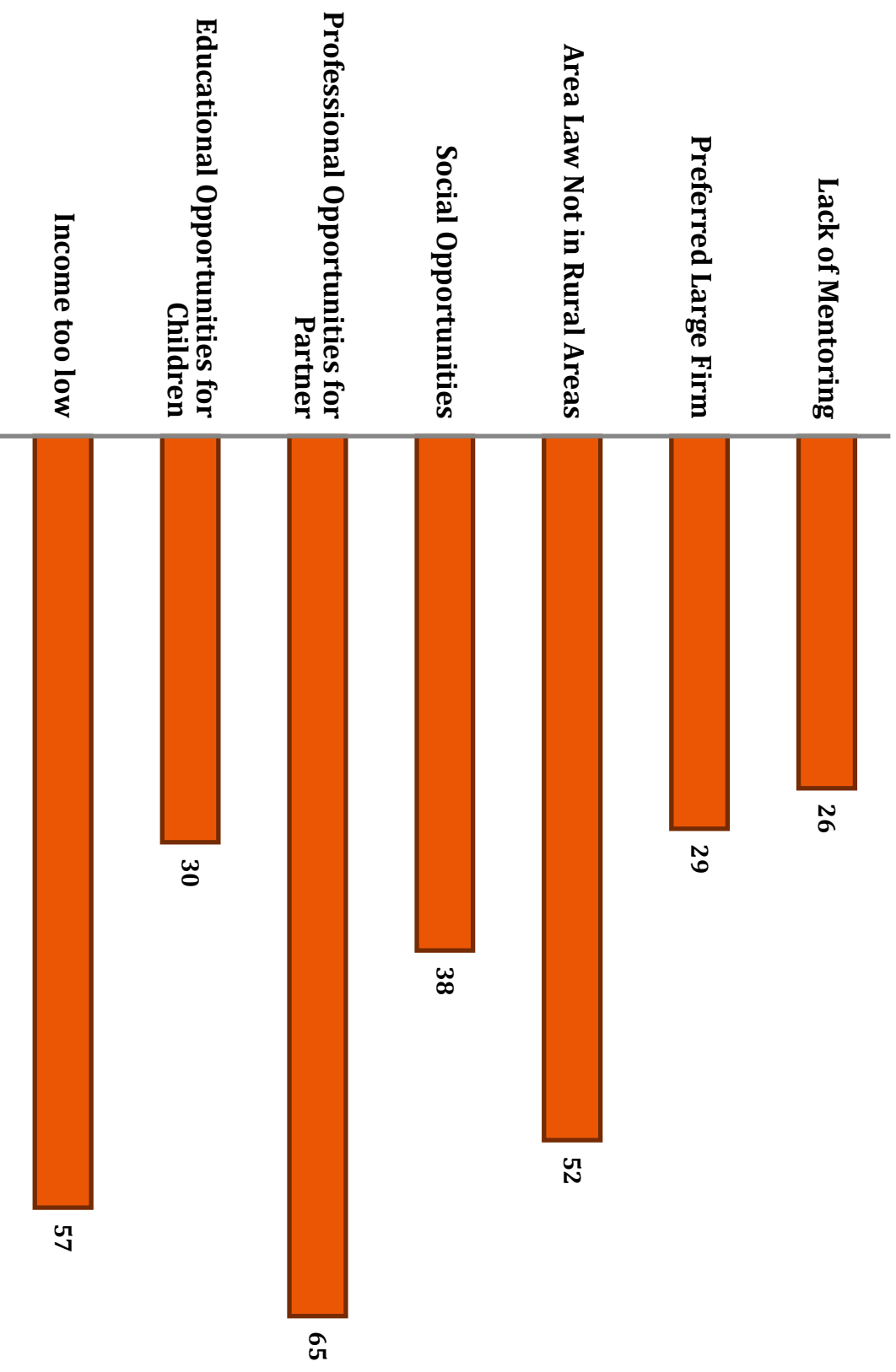
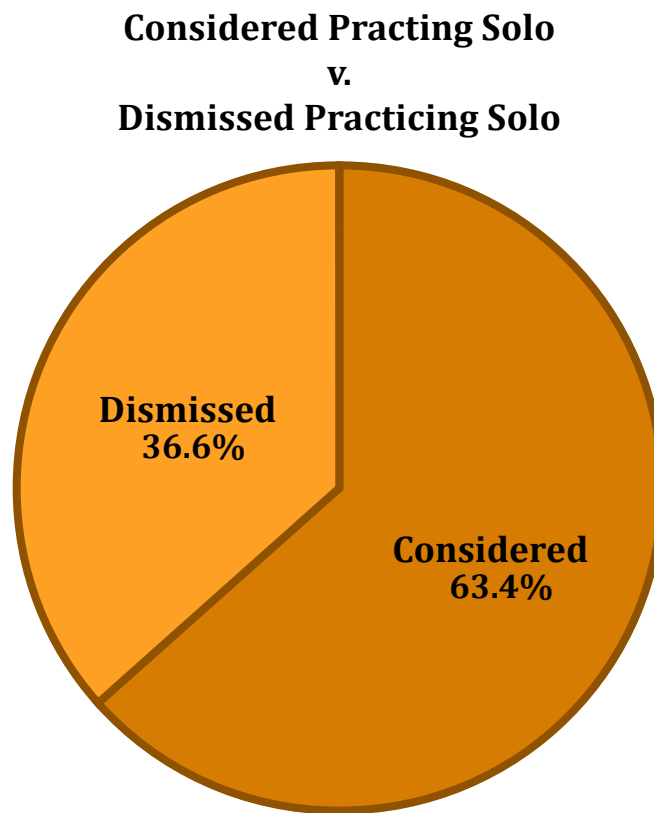
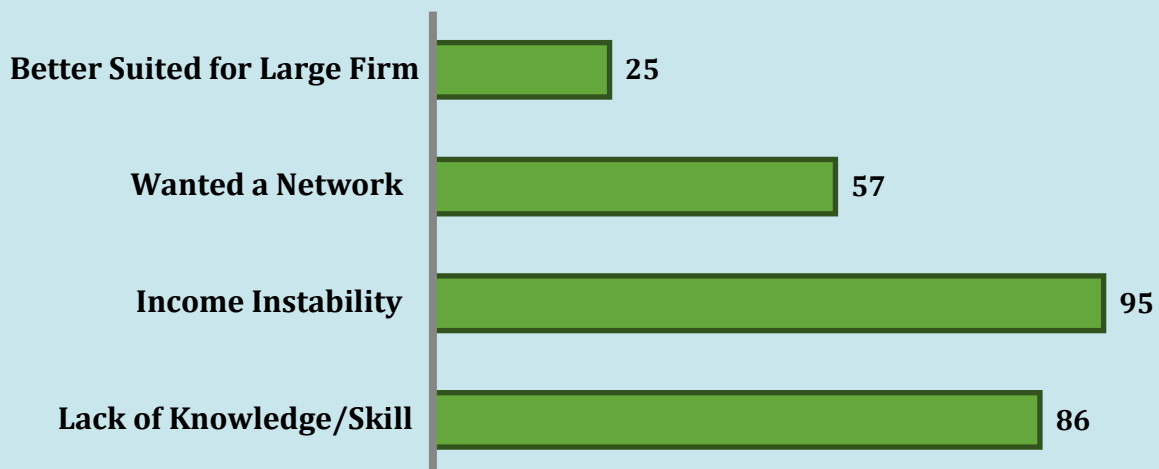


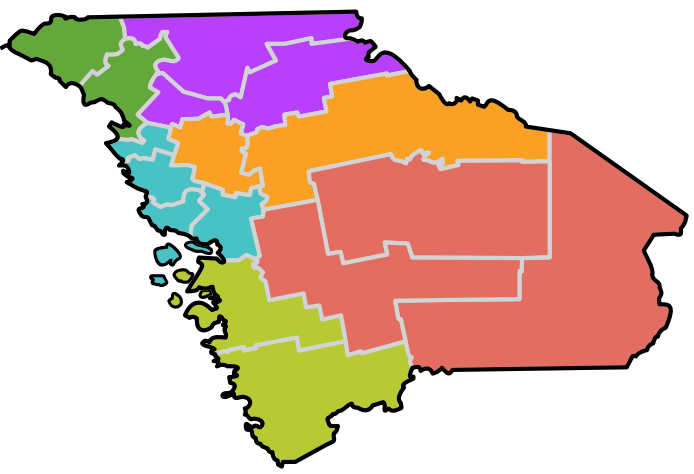
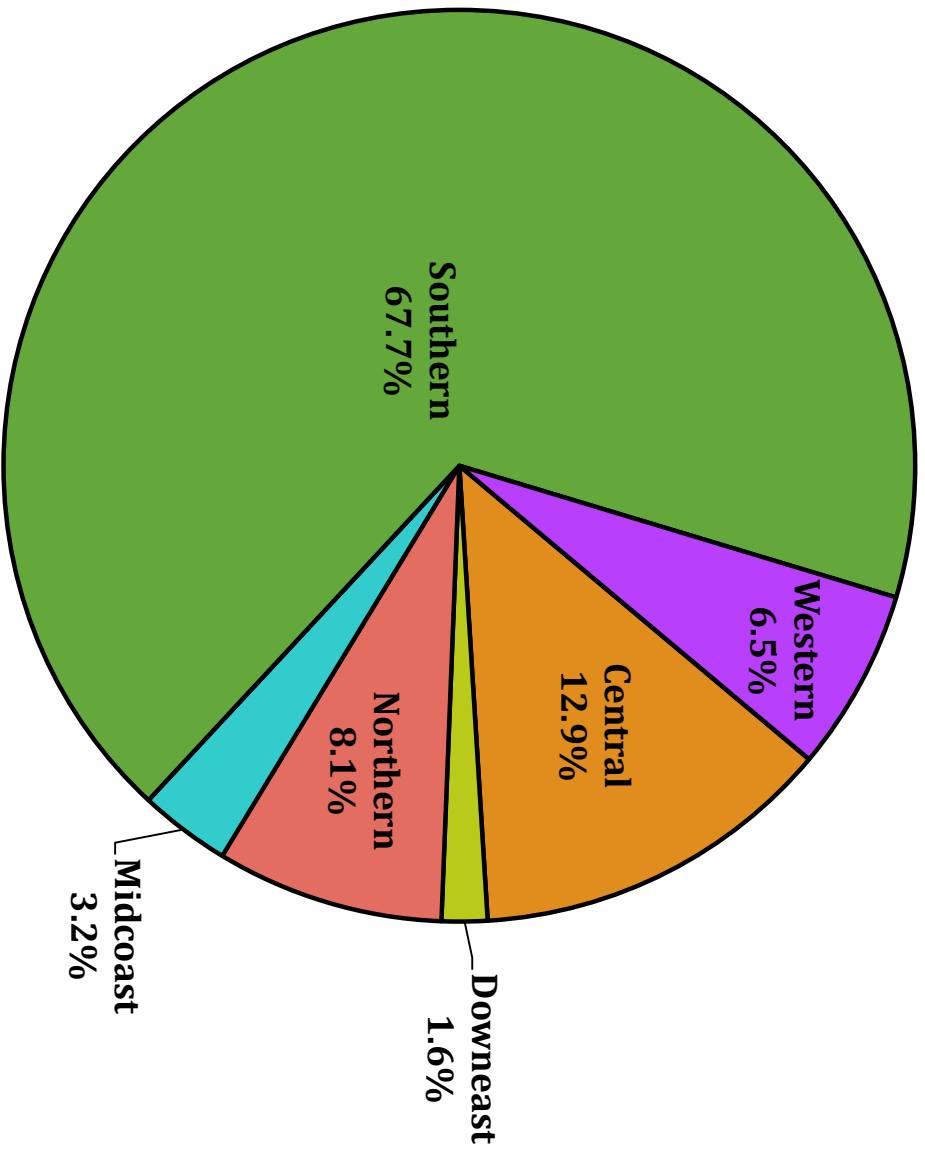
Figure 4: Whether Respondents Have Considered Solo Practice and Factors for Why They Dismissed Practicing Solo



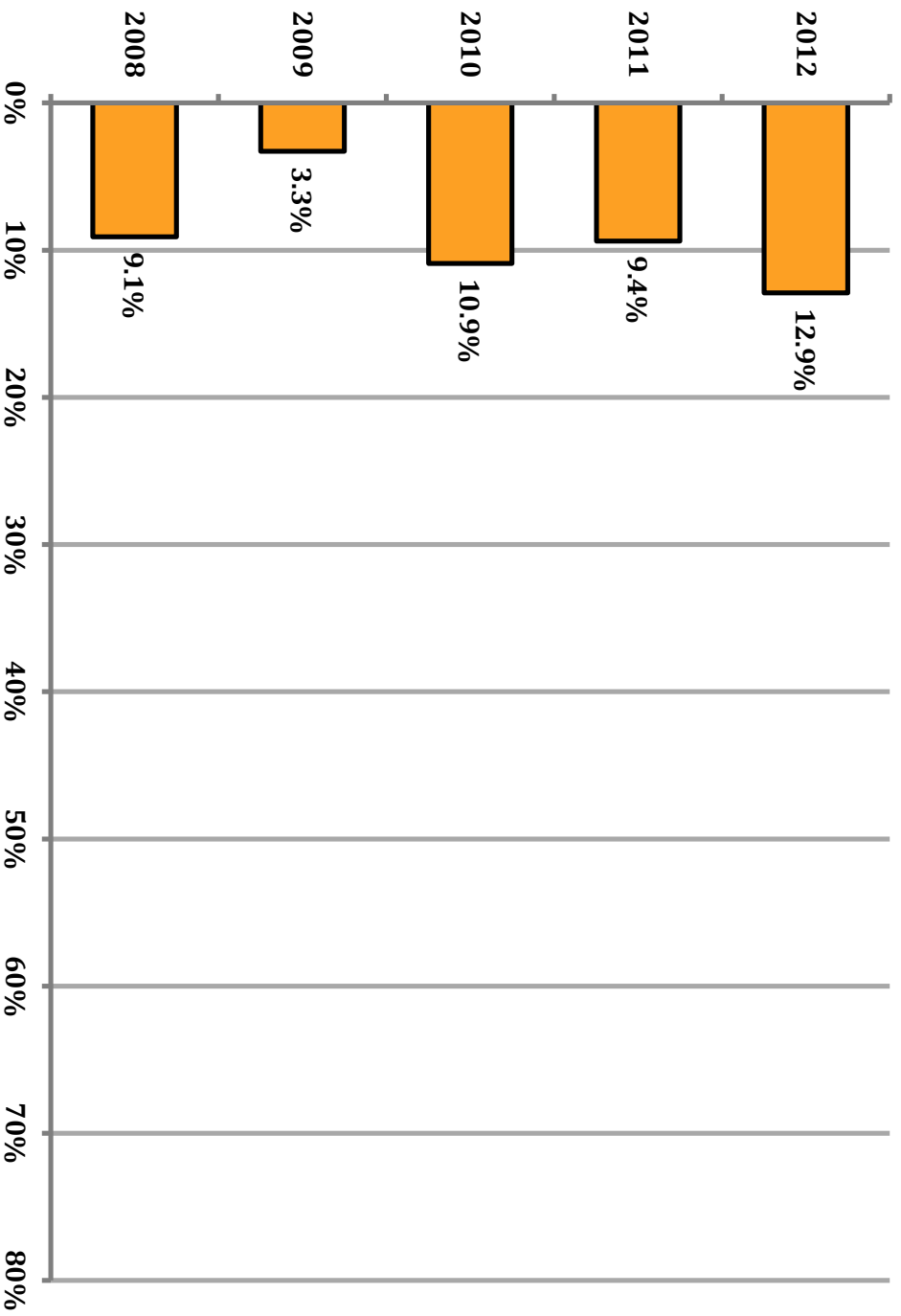
If Considered, Factoring Influences for Why Respondent Did Not Practice Solo:



Regional Distribution of Maine Law Graduates Residing in Maine 9 Months Following Graduation, 2012

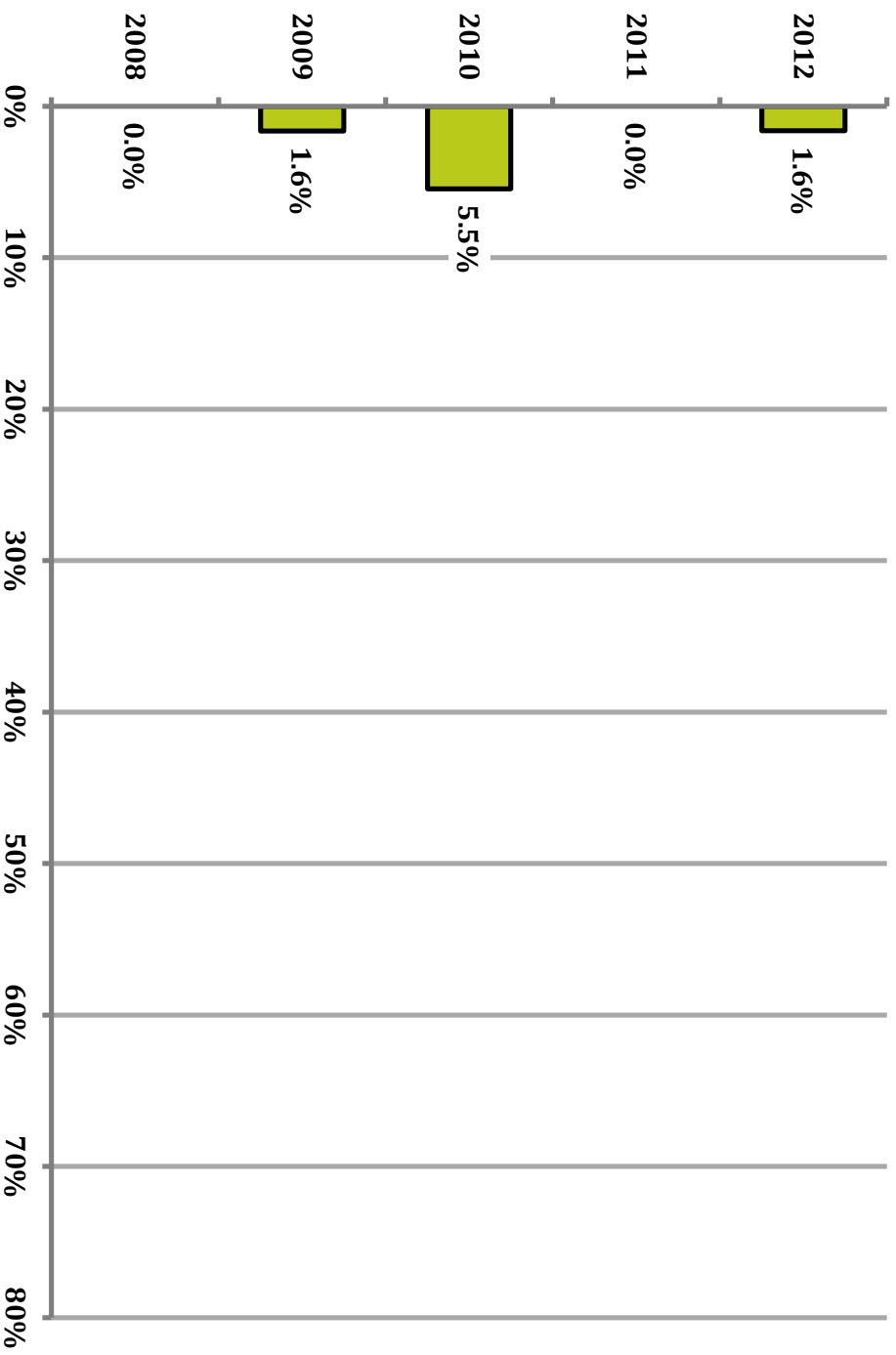


Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Central Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



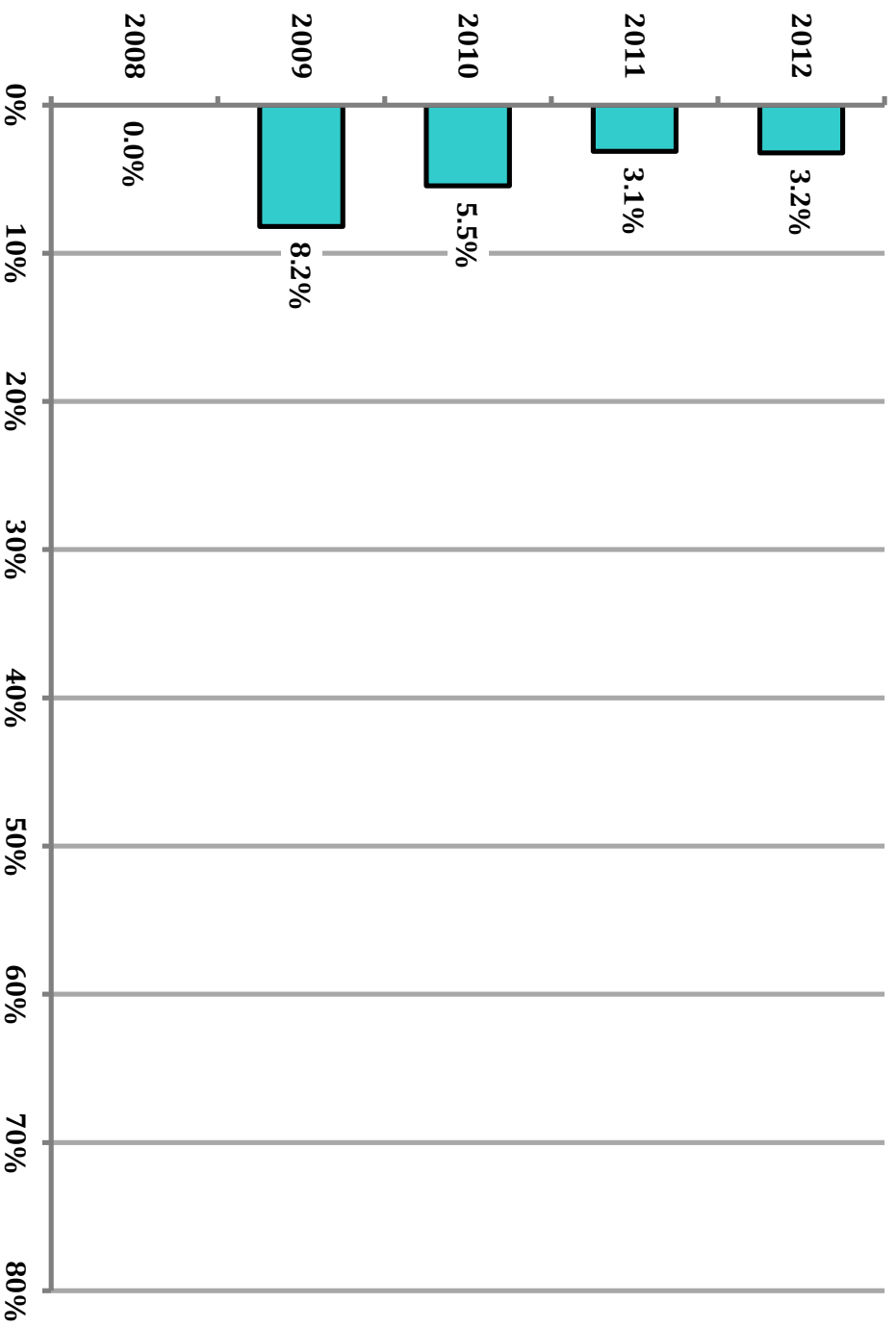
* Central Maine includes Kennebec and Somerset Counties

Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Downeast Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



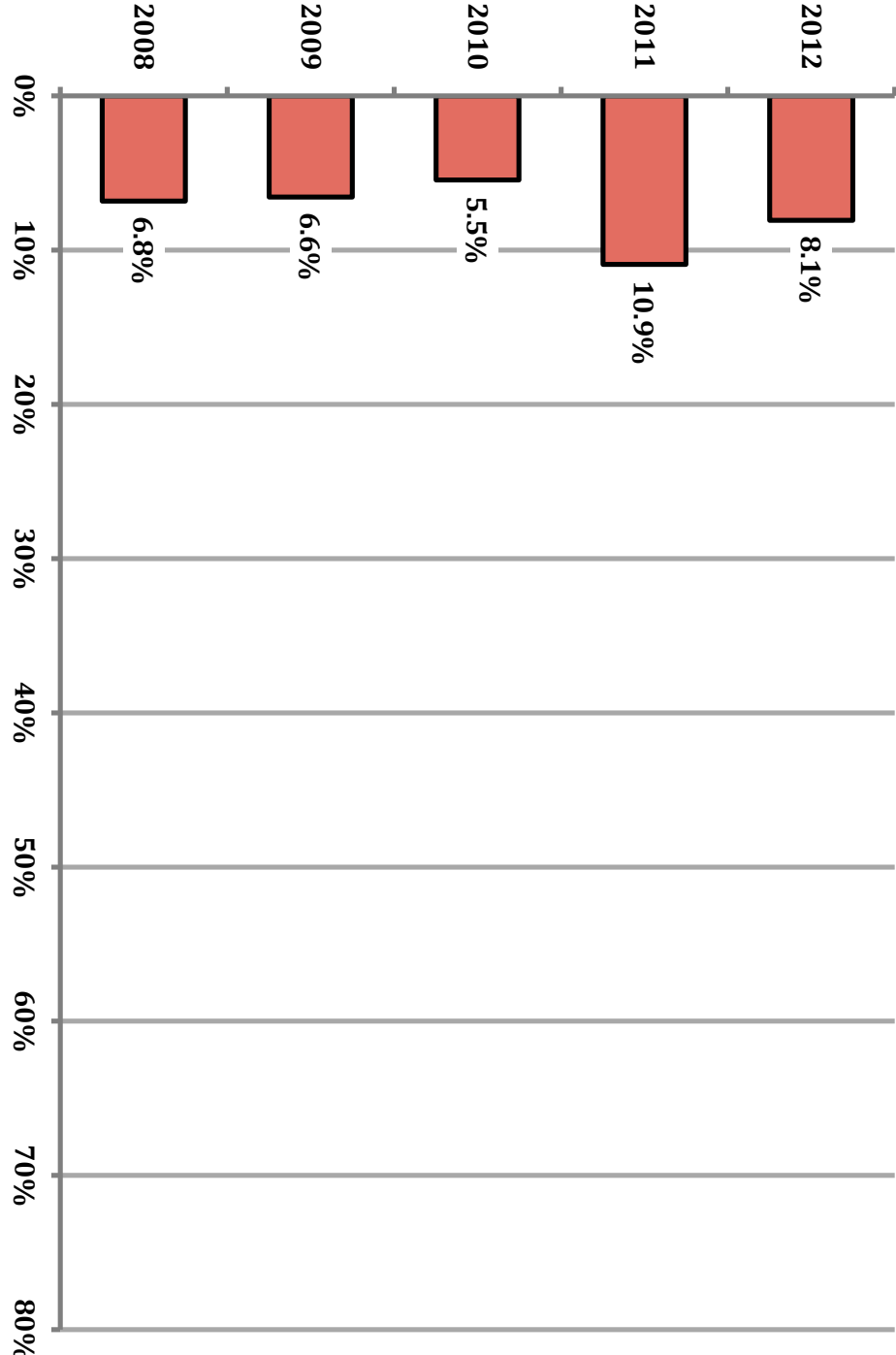
* Downeast Maine includes Washington and Hancock Counties

Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Midcoast Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



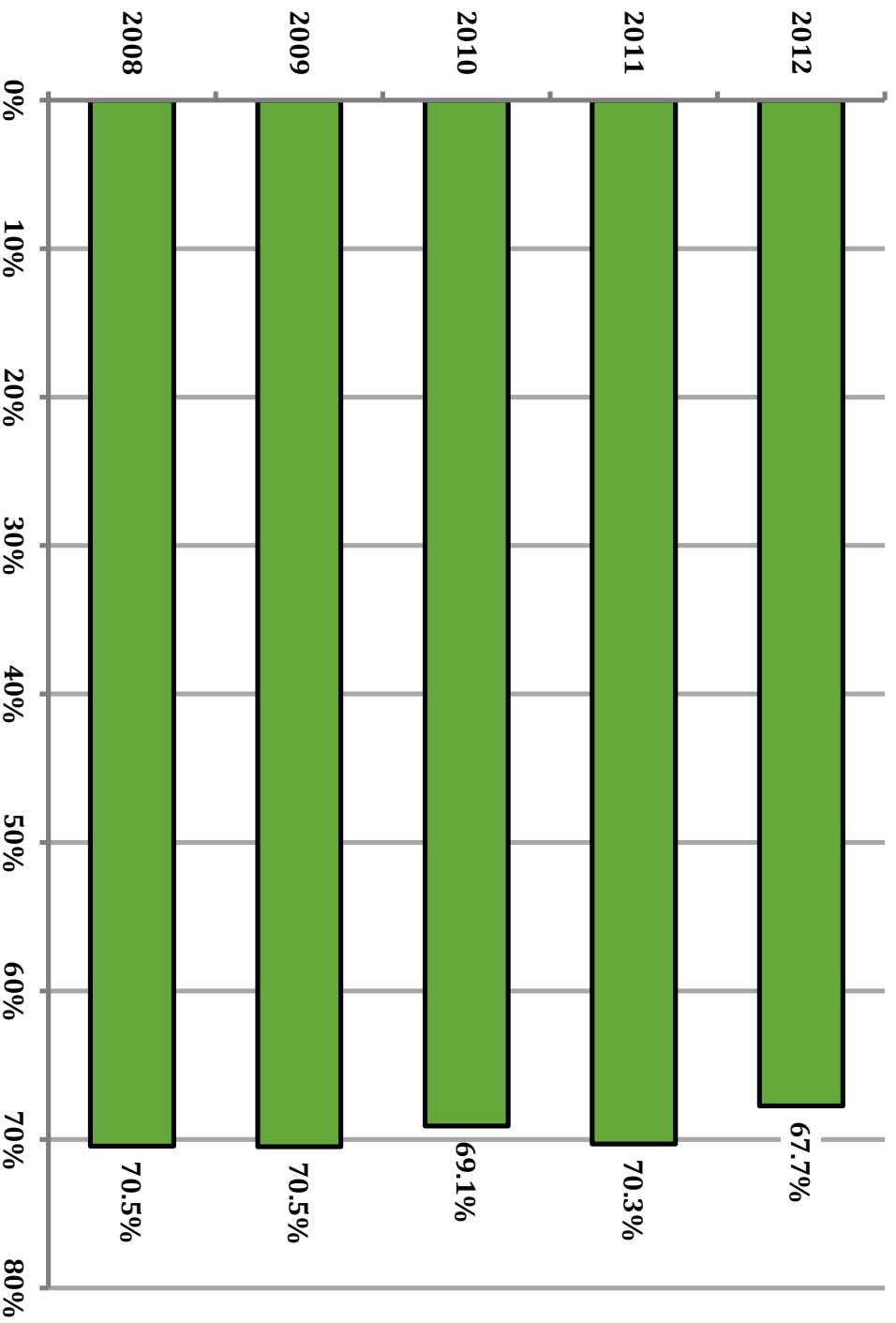
* Midcoast Maine includes Waldo, Knox, Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties

Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Northern Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



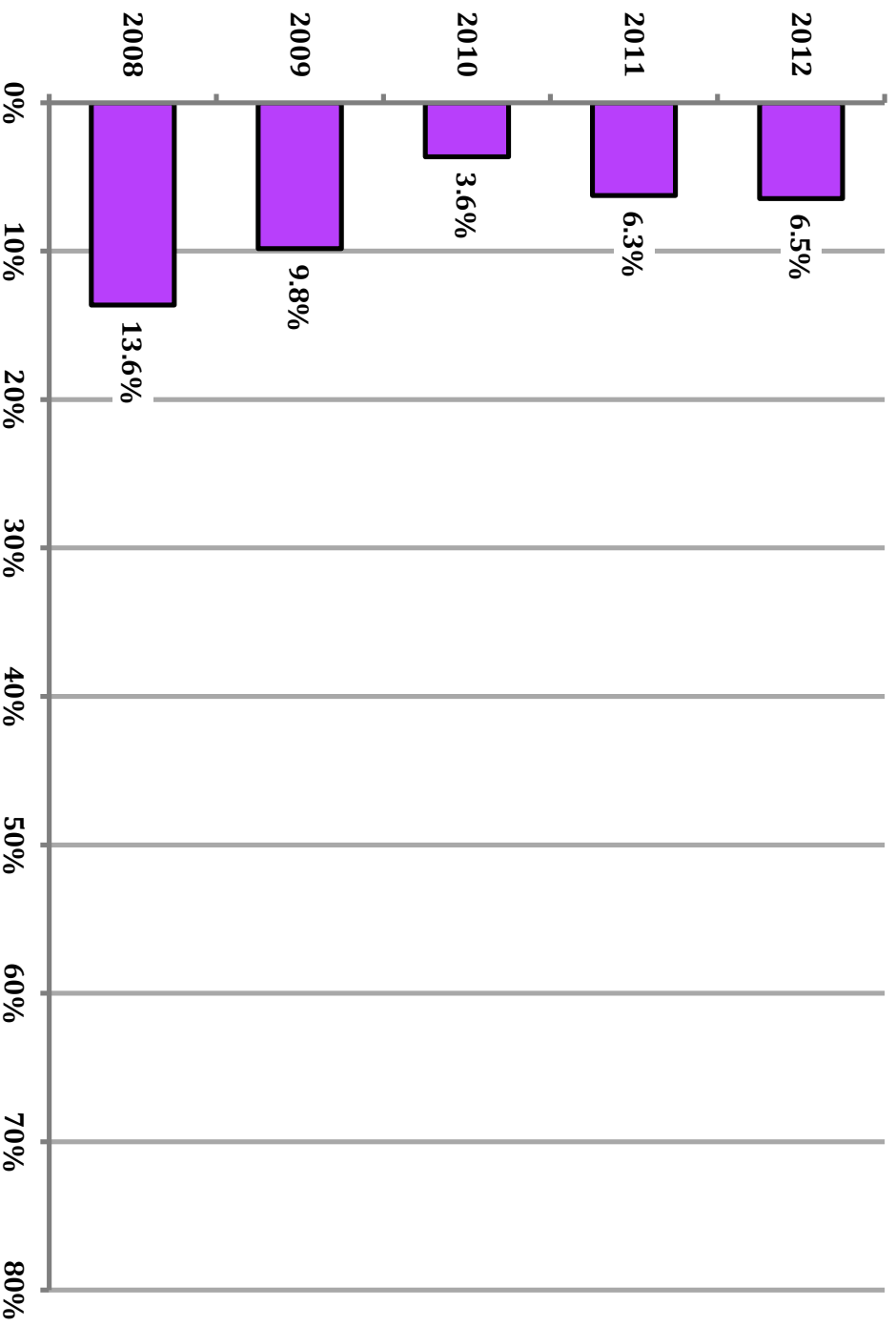
* Northern Maine includes Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties

Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Southern Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



* Southern Maine includes York and Cumberland Counties

Percent of Maine Law Graduates in Western Maine 9 Months After Graduation, 2008 - 2012



* Western Maine includes Oxford, Androscoggin and Franklin Counties

Narrative Responses to New Lawyer Questionnaire

5. If NO [i.e., you are not in a rural practice and *did not seriously consider a rural practice*], to what extent did the following factors influence your decision in considering a rural area?

COMMENTS:

1. Cannot move my family
2. Concerns regarding income relate to perceived inability to pay off large amount of student debt from law school. I understand that loan forgiveness after ten years is only available for those working in the public sector.
3. Considered it, but there aren't a lot of opportunities to meet other gay people in rural Maine.
4. Do not want to uproot family. Lack of advertising of rural jobs.
5. Fear of being a general practitioner -- seemed like an opportunity to make a lot of mistakes
6. Got a position in the city and had no reason to consider a position in the rural area.
7. I already have a large family--four kids--and our home town is Portland. Did not want to uproot.
8. I am house counsel for Hanover Insurance Company based out of Boston, not in private practice.
9. I am not interested in living in an area even more rural than York and Cumberland Counties.
10. I am worried that I would stand out and have awkward experiences because I am Black.
11. I came to Maine to take a government job that exists only in Portland.
12. I chose to locate in my hometown, which was not a rural area. I did not consider practicing in other areas in Maine.
13. I currently practice in Delaware and am relocating to Maine; I have not practiced in Maine.
14. I don't live in a rural area.
15. I hoped to practice in Belfast, but there are very very few jobs available in rural Maine, and it is difficult to start a practice straight from law school.
16. I live in a rural area and commute to Bangor for most of my work, but would be happy to shift to a more local practice in the future
17. I owned a home in the community where I work at the time I completed law school & did not want to move.
18. I wanted to stay near family and friends that are in the Greater Portland area.
19. I was seeking a judicial clerkship, which were only available in Portland, Augusta, and Bangor.
20. I worked as a Paralegal at the law firm in Portland and was going to work at the same firm after passing the bar exam and being admitted to the Bar.
21. I'm single and don't expect that to change if I'm living in the middle of nowhere.
22. Income instability during beginning stages of practice is incompatible with my significant student debt load.
23. Jobs in Rural Maine often involve opening your own practice and I was not ready to do that.
24. Lifestyle change, lack of services, lack of access to entertainment, restaurants, etc.
25. My firm practices statewide
26. My husband and I were already established in Bangor.
27. My husband works at UMO and we own a home in Bangor.
28. Never thought about it
29. No clue how to approach it.
30. Own home in Portland; needed and wanted to stay in Portland and with my home

31. Own property in Auburn and working out of the house for low overhead
32. pay off debt
33. Perceived lack of career growth opportunity.
34. Perceived lack of professional stability and work flow
35. Perception of greater homophobia and associated dangers in rural areas.
36. Received job in Boston
37. Rural, small practice would not offer the variety and volume of intellectually engaging, challenging work found in larger markets
38. Student loans.
39. Taking over a specialist practice from a family member,
40. This is probably the most important factor: I am very concerned that opening or joining a small generalist practice in a rural area will pigeon-hole me for the rest of my legal career. I want to practice in Portland, which is where I was born, where all my closest friends live and work, and where most of family lives. If I practice in Farmington/Calais/Skowhegan etc. for 5 years, how attractive a candidate will I be for a job opening in Portland . . . I would have no connections with clients in the area, will be disadvantaged in terms of frequency of interaction with Portland area attorneys, and will have not had the opportunity to specialize in a particular practice area. I have no desire to be a generalist if I can avoid it.
41. Upfront capital required

7. If YES [i.e., you have considered solo practice] and you are currently *not* practicing as a solo, why did you choose a different option?

COMMENTS:

1. Book of business too small; Insufficient starting capital
2. Currently w/out a job.
3. During 2011 and 2012, I was located in Maine and actively searching for work with a firm through employment, subcontract position, and even volunteer. At that time, I had eight years of experience with litigation defense, motion practice, tort claims in personal injury and malpractice, bankruptcy, tax resolution, family law, and criminal law. I interviewed at approximately 35 different firms and the common response was that the firms were not seeking candidates due to market conditions but were merely interviewing for informational purposes. I offered to take on work on a contract basis at a low rate to prove value and worth. I went to CLE's in Maine and commonly heard comments from the Board of Overseers and Judges that new attorneys to Maine should consider doing a start-up in rural locations. Such comments seemed frustrating to many new attorneys because start-ups have little return up front and provide little feedback. In my line of work as insurance defense counsel, in a large metropolitan area in Idaho, I deal with small practice or solo practice attorneys quite frequently. I frequently notice a difference in the polished practice style that comes from having worked in a firm where there is feedback from other attorneys, a database of forms and prior work to draw upon, legal staff such as secretaries and paralegals who can help guide a new attorney with practical matters of how to caption a document, or filing procedures, calendaring, case organization skills, document review skills, etc. that are hard learned from long hours of self-teaching. These skills can be learned easily when working with others; you can learn how to and how not to. Aside from the fact that solo practice start-ups have very little immediate return, high risk, the biggest downside is the lack of mentoring. Further, for highly educated individuals who have spent years going to school in metropolitan areas at large expense to themselves, it is a hard thing to

be told that your probable avenue of employment in Maine is to be a solo practice start-up in a rural community where you will have no salary, healthcare benefits, vacation time, etc. unless you can make yourself and your business successful from the ground up by yourself. Other attorneys are usually willing to help mentor on a minimal basis but, mentoring takes time and attorneys are busy people. It is the lack of mentoring and lack of support that swings against new attorneys having a desire to be rural solo practitioners. Further, it is hard to want to be a rural solo practice start-up without any support when you realize that you have to get malpractice insurance to cover yourself because at the time of start-up you don't have any support or mentoring when you need it the most to avoid possible malpractice, and such insurance is just an added cost. One thing that the bar could do is allow solo practitioners in rural areas to attend CLE classes at no cost or host workshops for CLE credit on the practical matters of starting up a small practice, ie. how to get an office space, a check list of supplies needed, how to advertise and find clients, how to create a core base of clientele in bread and butter areas of practice, how to keep finance books for tax purposes for the startup, how to navigate the court clerk's office; what software is available to small practice management, etc. A form database for standard templates of documents. How to be a small business owner.

4. Got a position with a larger law firm and have been happy with it.
5. Have not yet been admitted to the bar. Will likely hold off going solo for 3-5 years in order to gain experience first.
6. I am currently working as a law clerk.
7. I am working with an attorney who was a solo practitioner before I joined his office. I enjoy having someone to work with and look over my work as I start my career.
8. I associate with two other attorneys and receive much more referral work. I run a "solo" practice amidst this association.
9. I found a fantastic attorney to partner with (2 attorney firm)
10. I found a great job in an advocacy organization.
11. I got a job at an existing firm, the day after the bar exam.
12. I live in new Jersey and practice here- 53 years old
13. I love the small firm that I ended up with - Solo practitioner was only a backup plan if I had nothing else.
14. I needed public service loan forgiveness because of my large law school loans.
15. I started as a solo and then joined a small firm of two other attorneys. It's a better fit.
16. I wanted a mentor, to ask questions, learn from, and provide a practical and economic safety net
17. I wanted the experience, mentoring, and stability that comes with working at a firm
18. I wanted to gain experience first
19. I was offered a job at a non-profit and it was hard to turn down a paying gig
20. I'm not currently practicing at all.
21. In house counsel of one.
22. Mentoring!!!!
23. My current position has given me the opportunity to take over a pre-existing practice.
24. My practice area is business-specific, and this business is not generally done in rural areas.
25. My preference was to work as a state attorney, which is what I do now.
26. n/a
27. Not enough local connections
28. The thought terrified me.

29. There is simply no way to pay off law school loans with the opportunities in a rural location. It's a non-starter unless loans could be forgiven or paid off somehow.

8. If you currently practice in a rural part of Maine, what is the primary reason that you located your practice where you did, and what (from your perspective) are the plusses and minuses of that choice?

1. (+) Demand; Business Opportunity; Support from Local Attorneys. (-) Economy; Lack of Recreational Activities.
2. Chose current position due to lack of employment opportunities for inexperienced attorneys. The plus side to working in a rural area is getting a good amount of transactional work. The downside is that there is minimal litigation work.
3. Don't want to live in a rural area until I'm older and the commute is difficult. I have concerns that if I try to transfer into a more urban setting in the future, urban firms will not take my experience as seriously as that of someone who has been practicing in an urban area.
4. Family ties is why I located her. Pluses are having family support, not dealing with traffic, being closer to outdoor recreation opportunities, and feeling more connected to the community. The downside is low pay, but I am in government practice so that may not be a function of location.
5. Found employment in my hometown. Pluses are that I am familiar with and involved with the community and live close to my parents. The only minus at this point is the lack of diversity, which is very important to my family because my spouse is African American and we have a child who is not being exposed to other racial/cultural groups on a daily basis.
6. I already owned my home and my job is close to my home. I did not want to move. My kids love their school. Also, I don't have the stress that I perceive to go along with practicing in an urban area -- I think working in the rural area is more laid back, meaning that I have the freedom and flexibility to set my hours and attend my kids' events, while I perceive the quality of product my firm delivers to be equal or superior to what I see from firms in urban areas.
7. I am practicing where I want to live (which is a big plus) - possible downsides are the difficulty to find qualified help and the conflict of interest rules which make practicing law in small towns unnecessarily difficult.
8. I chose to practice in Washington County because I am from here, and this is where my family is. I was also fortunate that my husband, also an attorney, was able to find work here. The cost of housing (buying, not renting - renting is quite expensive here considering) is also more affordable than in Southern Maine. We own a home here that we could never have begun to acquire elsewhere. I also like being so close to Canada.
9. I didn't really have much of a choice. I was offered a job in a small practice that was in a less-populated area. When that attorney decided to change directions and had to let me go, I already had a home and a family in this region. The plus, which is a serious plus, is that most people in the region know me either personally or have heard of my reputation from others. I get many of my clients through personal relationships. Another plus is that the other attorney's office in this region is conflicted out of a lot of work because they have been here for so long. The minus is that, because I am regional, it's hard to get to me. I do a lot of traveling to get to my clients. It's hard to spread the word farther than my region. There really aren't many attorneys in the region willing to assist me because I am "competition". I am younger than most other attorneys in the region, so it is easy to be discounted or treated as inconsequential. I am found great assistance through attorneys in other regions - further south, but it is hard to find someone to assist me in this area. It is also really hard to find employees.
10. I do not practice in rural Maine.

11. I found a job in the area around where I had already established residence.
12. I got hired as an assistant district attorney in Machias after working for over a year at a private Brunswick firm. The primary reason I moved here was because my girlfriend, now wife, grew up here and wanted to end up here. I appreciate getting paid the same as my counterparts in other DA's offices across the state while enjoying a lower cost of living, I like being more closely tied to my community, and I like the work hours and lower stress. Sometimes I do miss "city" amenities but I can always shop online via Amazon or drive for a trip to Bangor. How often does one need to visit museums anyway? With the money I'm saving I could also afford more vacations by air. If you have further questions I'd be glad to help out. Chris Chu 255-4425.
13. I grew up in this area and wanted to return. My partner practices law in Portland, and we are looking to Brunswick as a good halfway point to live.
14. I had a hard time finding employment, and it just so happened that I found a job working for the State in Aroostook County. I like living in an area with a small population, but I feel that opportunity for advancement is not as good as a more urban area.
15. I moved from Portland to Belfast in August of 2013. I practice criminal defense almost entirely and rely upon court appointments to support myself. I was not receiving enough work from the courts in southern Maine, and I was told by several experienced attorneys that Belfast would be a good location because the bar is aging there and it is located within an hour of several court systems. I have received work at a higher rate since I've moved, but it is too soon to accurately assess the pros and cons. I have yet to open an office front and test the market for retained clients.
16. I practice in my hometown. I knew there was a need for attorneys in the area when I was deciding where to practice. I was living in Portland prior to relocating to Aroostook and saw the difficulty my peers had finding decent jobs. I also saw how tight the market was down there for solos. Lawyers fight to get cases that people take up here as a favor to the court or because we feel bad for the person. The plusses are that I get to live in my hometown and help folks who live there, as a solo, I make my own schedule. I don't have to deal with the billable hour nonsense that kept some of my friends up at night. I take the cases I want. I have a friendly relationship with the court, court staff, and other attorneys that comes from working together often. The disadvantages are that it is professionally isolating. I'm the only practicing lawyer who is not semi-retired for 40 miles. General practice can be overwhelming (and it's terribly annoying to have to listen to peers in Portland talk about my liability issues as they pertain to constantly having to educate myself in seemingly random areas of law). I would like to work with other attorneys, but I can't get anyone to join me. Folks seem happier underemployed or unemployed in Portland than working up here.
17. I prefer to live in a rural setting in Maine, regarding my own lifestyle preferences.
18. I returned home to practice law in Presque Isle, Maine because that is my home town and I wanted to live in my home town. I worked as the only attorney for a non-profit organization for the past five years. In July, I opened my own practice in Fort Fairfield because the attorney who had practiced in that town for over 40 years decided to retire. I felt that was a great opportunity for me to step into. Also, the organization I was working for was having difficulty acquiring funding and there was uncertainty with regard to my job stability. For me, financial growth and stability has been the biggest disadvantage to practicing in a rural area of Maine and especially as a solo practitioner.
19. I said "no" to the above, but I practice in three offices (Augusta, Waterville, and Skowhegan) and live in Augusta. I lived in Portland before I relocated and only relocated because of employment. The best part about practicing in a semi-rural area is that there is a very identifiable and relatively close bar. I only practice criminal law and communicate with the same group of attorneys on 75% of my cases. This can also be a con as there are some attorneys who I trust

and respect more than others. Those "others" I frequently work with on a consistent basis because of the number of court appointments they take and their proximity to the court houses in my area. Those who practice in a rural area typically find themselves before only one or two different judges. I find it helpful to practice in front of a larger spread of judges, especially as a new attorney, because I can watch and listen to how they handle their own court rooms and get a sense of how they respond to certain arguments. The last con (and I don't mean to stack the cons against the pros) is that I'm more easily recognized in a smaller community. Some attorneys may not mind that, but I'd prefer that when I'm out of the office that I'm seen as just another member of the community.

20. I started out practicing out of my family's house in Castine but moved two Ellsworth after two and a half years. Ellsworth is the fastest growing town in Maine and there has been plenty of work here. I love the freedom that comes with working for myself and am proud that I am building my own practice. The biggest minus has been having to figure out how to run a small business and practice law without the benefit of a more experienced attorney's oversight. I've found a lot of the local attorneys to be very helpful in this regard.
21. I was interested in serving tribal communities
22. If I did practice in Maine, it would be in the Deer Isle, Blue Hill, Ellsworth area. I have a house on Deer Isle.
23. Job opportunity. I really enjoy the small bar in this area. Attorneys are much more civil with each other and seem to be able to better work with each other to resolve conflict
24. joined a practice with a family member
25. Located my practice in the area I grew up in and also an area where there was no one specializing the way I do. Being from here has given me a lot of built in business. I could not have survived here if I didn't have that built in client base. The difficult part is that even though my specialty is in need - it is hard to specialize the way I want to. Also networking can be difficult.
26. More sense of community. Better relationships.
27. My children wanted to stay here. I have many friends here.
28. My parents live here and I have children. I knew an attorney who took me in, though I don't get paid much so I am considering moving to a more urban location to start my own practice and make more money eventually. People here don't have money for lawyers. I may end up staying here and taking over the practice if I get paid enough to stay here or start my own practice here if I feel I can make a decent living. I am making 1/3 of what I was making in Boston.
29. My practice is located close to where I live. I already owned a home prior to law school, my husband's job is in this community, so moving was not really an option for us. I consider myself lucky to have found a position with a firm as I was not confident in my ability to be a successful solo.
30. My primary reason for moving out of the Portland area was because I spend several month applying to firm with no luck. I more often than not found myself applying to the same positions as my friends and classmates. Finally I was so desperate that I sent a cold resume to one firm in a part of the state that I had never been to and got a call back the next day. The biggest drawback of working in a small firm in a rural part of the state is isolation from fellow young professions and the lesser pay.
31. My wife and I wanted to raise our children in a rural part of her home state. The pluses are the natural beauty and opportunity for the kids to spend time on their own outside, relative safety of a rural location vs. city with regard to certain risk factors and our ability to spend more time with the kids. The minuses are the difficulty of accessing cultural events available in NYC, Boston etc., lower wages for our professions.
32. pluses - live in the same town, very short commute minuses - very low income

33. Primary reason for location: family in the area. Pluses: closer community and network of attorneys; develop stronger collegial relationships with area attorneys, clerks, and judges; name recognition within the area and much easier to build a reputation and strong client base in a close community. Negatives: income; less prestige; smaller market for niche/specialization.
34. Primary reason- spouse relocated to this area. Also, I work for a company in a legal capacity- I do not work in a traditional law firm setting. Pluses- easy to know everyone fairly quickly. Generally found the bar members to be easily approachable. Minuses- not a large population and a generally low economic condition makes growing the attorney base difficult. Additionally, established attorneys are cornerstones of the market but do not have interest and/or resources to expand their practices- it's a solo type practice mentality. You can hardly make a decent earning practicing here- enough to cover the debt of law school and general living expenses- in this rural community as a new attorney. I was saddened when coming here to hear what a possible annual income would be- b/c I moved here from another state where I worked in a small firm in a more rural area.
35. Pro bono to assist with affordable housing.
36. The primary reason I chose to practice in Hancock County was family relationships within the Bar, as well as personal relationships with my family. The pluses are being known already as part of the Bar, respected as a member of my family practice in a way. The minuses are simply that I do not have the opportunity some have to gather clients.
37. The primary reason was a job opportunity. I have only ever wanted to be a prosecutor. I am from Lincoln County and therefore interned at that DA's Office for two summers. Apply for a position in District 6 seemed a natural progression.
38. There are tremendous opportunities for attorneys to practice in a rural area. I have family that is local. It's absolutely harder to break into a smaller, legal market due to the 'old guard.' I like having one on one contact with my clients and truly having the ability to assist them.
39. This is where I was able to find a job where I could get the support I need to learn how to develop a practice. (I'm practicing in Camden, so it is not as rural as many areas of Maine and there is a strong network of attorneys here.)
40. Too many lawyers in Portland and seemed the further east you went along the coast, the more opportunity there was.
41. We already lived there and owned a house.
42. Wife got a job here. Pluses of practicing here are: (1) low cost of living; (2) lots of court appointed work - easy to get; (3) great trial and other opportunities as a result of #2. Minuses of practicing here are: (1) no large firms or big business - no super complicated legal issues
43. Without question, the single biggest plus is practicing in an area not already awash with attorneys. It's also great to have just a 2 mile commute to my office.

9. If you currently practice in an urban or suburban area and are dissatisfied professionally with that choice, what would lead you to seriously consider moving to a rural practice?

1. A means of facilitating the resources necessary to start a practice.
2. A student loan reduction program that is used in other fields to entice professionals to practice in less populated areas.
3. Ability to co-locate; support for technology infrastructure to serve clients on-site and remotely; connection to peer networks, mentors; assurance of adequate income.
4. Access to at least a small firm/solo practice in which I could learn more about the practical and daily aspects of the practice of law. Mentoring itself does not seem specific enough, ideally I would work under a more experienced attorney, to learn with a bit of a safety net.

5. access to sufficient work (I am an IP attorney) and access to a professional network of peers and senior attorneys that I could look to for guidance/support
6. Accessibility to living in the greater Portland area.
7. Am in government work, no suitable opportunities in rural areas
8. An opportunity to assume ownership of an existing practice in a good community with abundant outdoor recreational opportunities.
9. At least five years of experience.
10. Availability of a suitable income and opportunities for my children.
11. Availability of legal aid jobs
12. Availability of mentor in desired practice area; social opportunities; complete and utter lack of opportunity in urban areas
13. Availability of work and contacts.
14. Availability of work. Most new law school graduates would pretty much go anywhere there is a job. The difficulty, however, is that law school does not prepare us very well for solo practice, and there are not too many firms of 2+ attorneys in rural areas.
15. Because I am married, the opportunity would have to be VERY lucrative and enticing in order to make it worth my husband needing to find a new job in a remote location. I imagine his options would be too limited to make it work.
16. Being able to afford start-up costs for a solo/small firm. Finding a firm/practice with adequate income potential.
17. Being able to maintain the same standard of living i.e. paying my loans. I expect cost of living would go down substantially once traveling beyond Cumberland county so that would balance out any decrease in salary.
18. Better job opportunities for spouse
19. Can't because of family.
20. Client List, Established Firm
21. currently in rural, seeking other employment opportunities outside of practicing law due to combination of lack of income and length or work week
22. Development of this State and getting the illicit and prescription drug problem in rural areas under control.
23. Excellent mentoring opportunities, experiences to allow me to improve as an attorney and an opportunity for my spouse to continue to earn at an equal income level.
24. Good financial opportunities
25. Honestly, it's just unlikely. I grew up in the suburbs of a major urban city outside of Maine. I have no connection to rural Maine and no connection to rural life, generally. I love Maine, but I wouldn't leave the urban areas for more than a vacation. I am much more likely to just leave the law entirely than to relocate.
26. I actually am currently employed by a Maine firm but am practicing in their Boston office. I am dissatisfied personally with the urban setting, but satisfied professionally. It would occur to me that Maine's competitive advantage going forward will be to find a way to deliver the benefit of a suburban or rural Maine lifestyle with the provision of sophisticated legal services. That will need to come from technological advances in how the law is practiced. If Maine is able to stay at the forefront of that movement (which is likely over the next decade), there could be a huge upside.
27. I am currently a law clerk in an urban area and am not dissatisfied with that choice. However, I will seriously consider a rural practice after my clerkship due to the difficult job market and because I am not opposed to living in rural Maine.

28. I am from a rural area, and often consider re-locating there as I get older.
29. I am not dissatisfied with my choice to practice in an urban or suburban area.
30. I am not dissatisfied working in an urban area. At some point I may consider a rural practice, but I have concerns over the ability to earn a good wage and being too far away from metro areas.
31. I am not dissatisfied.
32. I am not sure. I think if my personal life was more stable and I was with a partner who would want to move with me further from the city, I would like that very much. The professional opportunities and connections in the city are quite extensive. I miss the rural area from which I came, so my family there is also a consideration.
33. I am practicing in a rural place. It would be helpful if a student loan forgiveness program existed for attorneys who practice in rural areas, similar to programs that exist for doctors and dentists practicing in rural communities. As a new attorney, just starting out, my student loan payments are my biggest expense and a program of some sort would be helpful.
34. I am professionally satisfied with practicing in an urban area, and I would not want to move due to the disruption to my spouse and social life, and the lack of cultural activities in a rural area (chamber music, plays, symphony, etc.)
35. I am satisfied with my choice. I practice administrative law and government relations, areas necessitate that I practice in Augusta. I would consider moving to a rural practice if I could continue that work.
36. I can't picture it. I practice in an area not suited for rural practice.
37. I currently practice in an urban area (Portland) but I am not dissatisfied professionally with that choice. To the extent it is useful, however, I am a relatively junior attorney (2 years of practice) who knew that I wanted to move back to Maine after law school. I can tell you that the idea of hanging my own shingle in a rural area, or joining a small firm in a rural area, was a non-starter. The reason for this is two-fold. First, my understanding is that, generally, a rural practice is more of a general practice. With the ever-growing complexity and breadth of the law, it was daunting, to say the least, to think of starting practicing without a larger support network behind me. Second, and more important, the possible income of practicing in a rural area presents serious difficulties for newer lawyers. The amount of money it takes to attend law school is amazing. The debt service on law school loans is significant. You don't necessarily have to work at one of the top-tier firms in Portland to pay down those loans, but you do need both a somewhat substantial income stream and a steady income stream. In my experience, it is simply a financial impossibility for many recent law school graduates to hang their own shingle or even to join smaller (2-5 person) firms in rural Maine. As an example, a colleague of mine in law school received an offer to work for a smaller Maine firm (in Portland no less) but had to decline it because it was not sufficient to allow him to pay down his student debt. For us newer lawyers, this is a significant issue.
38. I currently practice in Delaware and have not yet practiced in Maine.
39. I do not practice in such an area.
40. I have a mountain of student loan debt. I also had to live off credit cards for 11 months while looking for work after law school. To move to rural practice, I would need to earn enough money to cover the expense of relocating and of paying off my soul-crushing debt.
41. I just do not think that I could do it because of my husband's job and because of my children's education.
42. I live in rural maine, and commute 1 hour to an urban setting for work. If I had a job possibility in a rural setting, I would no longer commute to an urban setting from the rural setting I live in.

43. I will likely begin practicing in an urban/suburban area because I currently live in Portland, ME. My goal is to move back to the Belfast area on the midcoast to practice.
44. I would consider a rural practice if the right opportunity presented itself but I would not actively seek it out.
45. I would consider moving back to Maine from D.C. later in life provided there were more opportunities in public policy with higher salaries. The low cost of living is attractive, but I do miss my hometown of Camden.
46. I would consider moving to a rural practice if there were a firm that I wanted to work for.
47. I would consider moving to rural practice if there were more opportunities for my spouse.
48. If I felt confident I would make enough money to pay back my student loans and live at least a middle class lifestyle.
49. If professional opportunities appeared for both myself and my spouse, I would seriously consider moving to a rural practice.
50. If there was a job available for myself and spouse.
51. I'm not dissatisfied as I can and extend my practice into Franklin County.
52. I'm not sure there is anything that could lure me into a rural practice to be honest. I grew up in Maine, have family that live in rural areas, and have spent time in rural areas and I'm not at a point in life where that is at all a desirable place to live and work.
53. Income
54. income stability
55. Income stability
56. Income stability and sufficient resident knowledge/expertise in the rural practice.
57. income stability...would love to move rural,
58. Income stability; appropriate professional guidance and support system.
59. It would need to be close to home. I would need to work with other attorneys and the salary would have to be good.
60. Job opportunities for my husband in the biotech sector (really difficult to find in Maine right now, other than Jackson labs).
61. Just need more experience, the legal education system is poorly equipping new lawyers with the necessary knowledge. Law school and the bar exam have nothing to do with practicing law.
62. Knowing I would have support in the community and regular work.
63. Less corporate work, more personal connections. Want to feel like I am helping people.
64. Maybe
65. More options for practice area and income.
66. My area of practice likely will never result in rural practice.
67. My kids are now in college- desire to retire to Maine and start a practice there.
68. Not dissatisfied however will cover some rural areas and will always keep the options open if there is a solo/small firm looking to connect.
69. Not dissatisfied where I am (Augusta). I practiced in Millinocket for most of 2011 and was concerned about my ability to start a family and lack of arts/culture/entertainment opportunities, but ultimately it was my interest in a particular type of practice (government) that led me back south.
70. Not dissatisfied.

71. Nothing would cause me to consider movement to rural practice; lack of proximity to airports, larger stores, and other necessary locations are an issue, in addition to not being able to make a living practicing one primary area of law without driving between multiple counties.
72. Opportunity for my family
73. Quality of life/work life and opportunities for social/cultural activities
74. Radical change in personal desire to live in urban setting
75. Salary competitive enough so that I could make a monthly loan payment sufficient to repay my loans in a reasonable timeframe.
76. Significant income improvement, income stability, access to larger city when needed, employment opportunities for my spouse
77. Significant loan repayment programs.
78. Stable income. We desperately want to come back to Maine (husband and I are both originally from there) but are having a very hard time finding legal jobs in Maine. We would LOVE to work in a rural area.
79. stable position, mentoring, reputation of the potential mentor among the local bar, involvement of the potential mentor in professional organizations (e.g. CLE provision, MSBA, county bar, etc.), online presence (firm site, LinkedIn, etc.), educational background of attorney/attorneys in firm
80. Structured networking opportunities with an existing solo who plans to retire, and in the interim could offer a salary, with an agreement about transferring the practice according to a specified timeframe. The rural area would also have to offer quality educational opportunities for my children.
81. Student loan forgiveness, primarily. Also the option would be more attractive to me if I was married with kids.
82. Support from local attorney bar for client development
83. This survey does not really apply to new admittees in Maine who, like myself, have practiced for many years in another jurisdiction (in my case, New Jersey). I am planning to transition and move to Maine, and I would definitely consider rural practice (if the area within 50 miles of Boothbay Harbor is considered rural)
84. While not dissatisfied, I would love to move my focus to Belfast/Ellsworth over time if I felt I could make a living there, without doing types of law I dislike.

10. If you are not yet settled in a practice, have you explored the possibility of practicing in a rural area in a business relationship with an existing small or solo firm? If not, why? If you have, what has been your experience when approaching those firms?

1. Currently clerking, would absolutely consider a more rural practice if I find the right small firm to join. Some firms have been receptive, few are hiring, and others are a very long way from family in Southern Maine (Gorham).
2. Have not explored, am interested.
3. I am a practicing attorney in Massachusetts, admitted in 1975, and since 2006 I have practiced essentially as a solo. I have had strong ties to Maine, graduated Bowdoin 1971, summer clerked for Judge Thomas Delehanty, and twice sought to locate in Portland. Since 2007 we have owned a home in Edgcomb and I have an interest in splitting my time between Boston and Maine. I will have a home office in Edgcomb and will explore a possible affiliation in the area.
4. I am a younger solo practitioner. Many of the attorneys in the area are closing in on retirement. I have tried approaching many of them about the possibility of working together when retirement becomes more than a thought. The local bar association has started thinking about the need for

- succession planning, but I get the impression that most of the attorneys think they will be able to hire someone to take over for them, rather than joining with another solo practice.
5. I am comfortable in my urban setting at the moment; however, it may be something that I would consider in the future.
 6. I am not yet settled in a practice (I am clerking). I would consider seeking a business relationship with an existing small or solo firm in the future, but probably not until I had 5 to 10 years of experience. I would like to work in a firm environment to have the opportunity to learn from more seasoned lawyers.
 7. I am settled in a practice.
 8. I am settled in a practice.
 9. I am settled in a practice.
 10. I am settled in practice.
 11. I do not have sufficient funds to even start a solo practice. I am single and without another source of income it is prohibitively expensive to start your own firm. I am actually currently not even employed as an attorney as I have been unable to find work in the field in the four years since graduation and passing the bar.
 12. I enjoy living in the Greater Portland area a great deal and my spouse has a job in South Portland, I am willing to commute, but to commute more than an hour would be too difficult. I am also not always aware when smaller, more rural firms are hiring.
 13. I found the smaller and rural firms more approachable and willing to provide guidance when I moved to Maine to practice.
 14. I had thought about that but I am not sure if I would like to practice in a rural area and I am not sure how to approach those firms.
 15. I have considered this possibility, and have been in contact with an attorney who has been practicing in Searsport for approximately 8 years. I was put in contact with him by a member of the career development office at Maine Law School, where my girlfriend is a student. He is considering buying a larger office space and leasing part of it to someone in my position, and we have kept in touch through email after meeting in person a few times. My strategy will be to build up enough work throughout the winter so that I can be in a position to invest in an office front next spring or summer.
 16. I have had a negative experience in approaching existing small or solo firms in my area. I did not have much experience in working in the law when I left law school and passed the bar, so no lawyer in the area was interested in mentoring me or working with me due to my lack of experience.
 17. I have not explored because I am currently content with my job in an urban setting. That said, I would consider approaching a rural firm in the future.
 18. I have not explored that option because I am in a small to medium size firm, making a decent salary, and I have a fair amount of flexibility how much I work and in what areas
 19. I have not explored that option. My concern with practicing in a rural area is that I want to have a social life and I need to earn a lot of money to pay off the debts I incurred during and after law school. I don't anticipate either of those opportunities arising in most rural areas. Frankly, I don't like practicing law. Going to law school is a major regret. I am now drowning in debt and slaving away at a job that I hate in order to pay it off. When I'm 40, I'll be in the same financial situation that I was in at 25. My goal is to escape the legal profession and do something else if the economy ever recovers.
 20. I have not explored the possibility, largely because I am so new to the Maine Bar, with my pre-existing practice based in Massachusetts, that I have not yet had an opportunity to

- comprehensively evaluate what local (rural and non-rural) options for engaging in practice in Maine may be.
21. I have not explored this possibility yet because it didn't occur to me and because my spouse is not ready to leave her current position, but I may pursue this avenue in the future.
 22. I have not met attorneys in rural settings who are looking for an associate.
 23. I have not yet approached small rural practices, but I am considering doing so as I seek post-clerkship employment.
 24. I have not, primarily due to the economics of paying back student loan debt.
 25. I have not. If one of the two of us gets an offer that will provide financial stability, then the other will certainly start talking to rural and solo/small firms.
 26. I have thought about it but have not actively pursued it. Solo practitioners and small firms are difficult to identify and cold call - it would be helpful if solo practitioners or small firms interested in acquiring or mentoring new attorneys could sign up in a database that is accessible to interested attorneys.
 27. I looked into taking over retiring solo...problem with income stability.
 28. I would be open to developing a relationship if it didn't pose too much of a strain on me geographically (commuting multiple days a week far from home).
 29. I would have explored a small firm in a rural area if I'd found any that were hiring in early 2012.
 30. I'm settled in my practice.
 31. It has been difficult to find an opportunity with a small or solo firm as a new attorney because of income instability at the time of entry. Entering into such a business relationship, however, would be my ideal, and I will continue to look until I find the right fit in a rural area.
 32. It is of interest in the future.
 33. Listen, the greatest difficulty is identifying firms and who might like to be approached. There needs to be some central database either of rural firms/solos or a résumé database of new attorneys potentially interested in rural practice. Feel free to contact me regarding this survey: danieljndube@gmail.com, (207) 577-8534 (cell).
 34. Most small or solo firms don't have the capital on hand to offer a salary to a new attorney. As it is, practicing in Bangor, I cannot pay my student loans. After bills for a very reasonable lifestyle, and before car expenses including gas, I live on \$180 a week and have no health insurance.
 35. No, because without a way to get practical experience with in the liability shield of an established practice, the risks of malpractice and discipline are too great.
 36. No, I have not.
 37. no, more opportunity and better pay in the Portland area
 38. No. I am not a point in life where I would consider living by myself that many hours away from my family and friends. I think the loneliness would be depressing.
 39. No. It would be very difficult to practice my area of law in a rural area. The professional opportunities in Maine are already bad enough for a dual-career, ambitious couple, even in the Greater Portland area.
 40. No. My student loans are so high I need a steady income to pay them.
 41. No. See the reasons above.
 42. No; does not seem practical given student loan obligations. Also, I do not want to be "boxed-in" into a rural, generalist practice and lose connections with the Portland market
 43. Not applicable.
 44. Not yet, but may do so

45. NOTE: Not sure where else to put this, but while I office in Augusta, my practice is statewide. Within the last 6 months, I have represented clients from Biddeford to Dyer Brook and from Farmington to Calais.
46. Positive. I am employed by a small firm.
47. Prior to my current employment I reached out to several existing small or solo firms in rural areas, to no avail.
48. See answer to number 9
49. Some exploration. Most do not seem to have the structure or are too recent in considering an associate that they do not have a plan to offer.
50. Though I am not yet settled in a practice, I have not explored the possibility of practicing in a rural area in such an arrangement for the reasons listed above. That is, I am interested in a public interest-oriented practice for which there are few (if any) opportunities in rural areas. I am also interested in working with, and learning from, experienced attorney mentors, and believe my skills and knowledge-base would benefit greatly from working with a number of experienced attorneys with different strengths and styles. Additionally, I simply prefer a more urban or suburban living environment.
51. Yes I have. Have had difficulty locating opportunities.
52. Yes, few jobs in Maine for new attorneys
53. Yes, I have had some conversations.
54. Yes, I have thought about joining an existing small firm in a rural area. I have not yet approached any firms because I don't have any personal networks that would help me know who to meet, etc.
55. Yes.
56. Yes. In Knox County.