



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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January 21, 2020

Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight
101 State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on the RIBridges system, which covers the reporting period December 16, 2019 – January 15, 2020. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/DHS Call Center summaries;
- CCAP off-cycle payments;
- LTSS interim payments and;
- Correspondence with federal partners (if any)

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve, your interest in the health of the RIBridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHAWKINS", written in a cursive style.

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



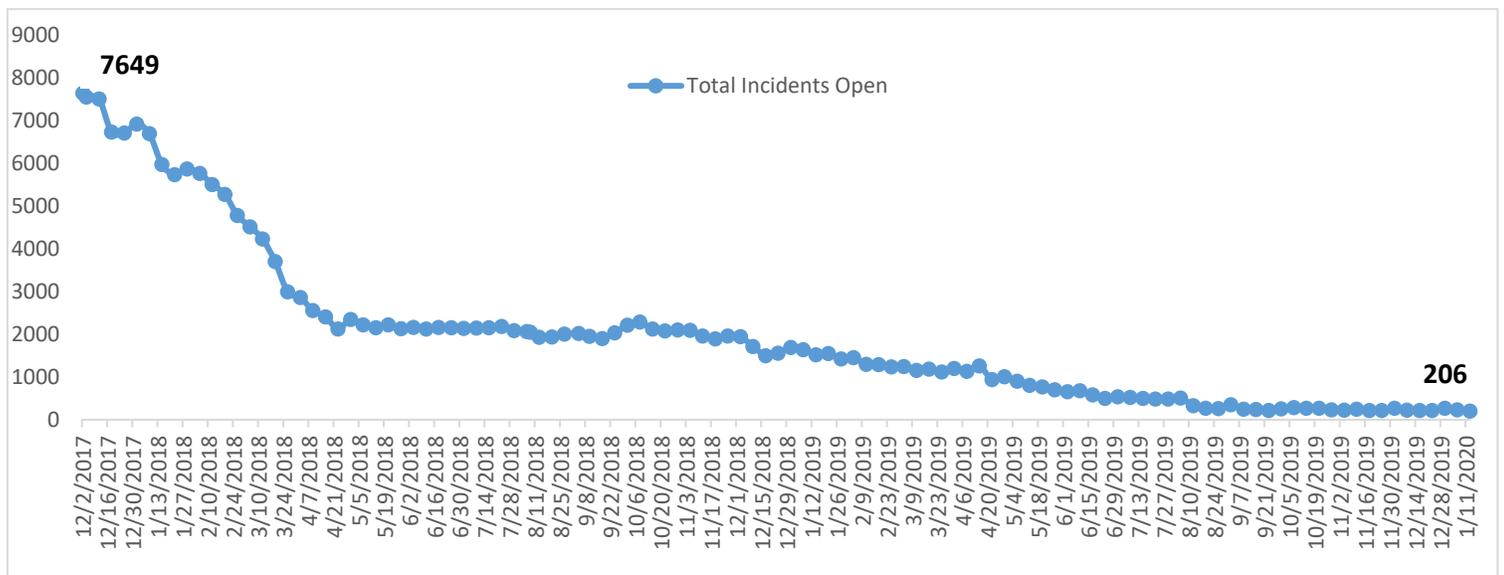
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

January 2020

Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life, and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of work on RIBridges is an important part of the equation. With significant improvements to system stabilization under our belt, we are looking ahead to refocus our efforts on ensuring full compliance of the system. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

Due to a focused effort on consistent and stable system operations, the number of new and existing incidents (when the system does not operate as expected for a DHS client, worker or provider) has decreased by 7,443 incidents. As of January 11, 2020, open incidents totaled 206 – a 97 percent drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since December 2019, DHS hired nine employees.

- 2 Customer Service Aides
- 1 Chief Clerk dedicated to the Long Term Services and Supports Unit
- 1 Senior Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist
- 2 Principal Human Services Business Officers
- 1 Implementation Aide dedicated to the Office of Child Care
- 1 Productivity Project Director
- 1 Senior Casework supervisor dedicated to the Claims, Collections, and Recoveries Unit

Training Overview

Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
End of Year Training	12-16 2019 through 12-20-2020	30	0	66
Customer Service Aid Knowledge Transfer	12-16-2019 12-17-2019	6	0	20
DOA – Performance Development Training	12-18-2019	6	0	25
New Hire Orientation	1-6-2020 Through 1-8-2020	18	6	0
Totals		60	6	111

**current number of staff trained is a duplicate number*

New Hire Orientation

This period we held a New Hire Orientation training and an Introduction to RIBridges, Basic Navigation training.

Current Staff Overview

During the last reporting period, CSDL offered training to existing staff members in the areas of SNAP, changes to functionality in RIBridges, and new performance development for supervisors.

Workshop Descriptions

New Hire Orientation: The New Employee Orientation (NEO) Program is the first step in welcoming new hires to RIDHS. Its main objective is to familiarize new employees with the organization, its organizational structure, and its policies and procedures.

Basic Navigation: This is a one-day course that introduces a new DHS employee to basic navigation.

End of Year Training: The goal of the training is for participants to understand the correct procedures for processing cases, related to the five most error-prone areas in 2019 for SNAP cases. We are committed to implement consistent practices across all DHS offices.

The participants will learn the SNAP policy and proper procedures for completing the following categories of work:

- Voter registration
- Earned income
- Student status
- Household information
- Standard Utility Allowance

Knowledge Transfer Training: DHS field staff members will be provided training on changes within RIBridges that will be deployed on December 14, 2019.

Performance Development Training: This was a training provided by DOA designed to promote better communication among managers, supervisors and employees, as well as make it easier for you and your colleagues to set and realize professional development goals.

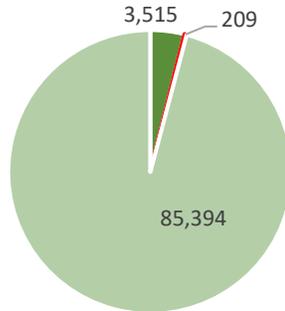
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of January 14, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,548. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting State action is 1,911.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	10	40	50	2	9	11	61
SNAP Non	324	226	550	61	40	101	651
CCAP	9	72	81	0	7	7	88
GPA Burial	0	1	1	1	5	6	7
SSP	0	11	11	0	7	7	18
GPA	24	34	58	58	20	78	136
RIW	82	66	148	17	74	91	239
Undetermined Medical	23	324	347	75	732	807	1,154
MAGI	25	24	49	60	68	128	177
MPP	6	27	33	1	8	9	42
Complex Medicaid	11	18	29	32	103	135	164
LTSS	179	620	799	174	838	1,012	1,811
Totals	693	1,463	2,156	481	1,911	2,392	4,548

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 96.9 percent for expedited and 96.6 percent for non-expedited for December 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

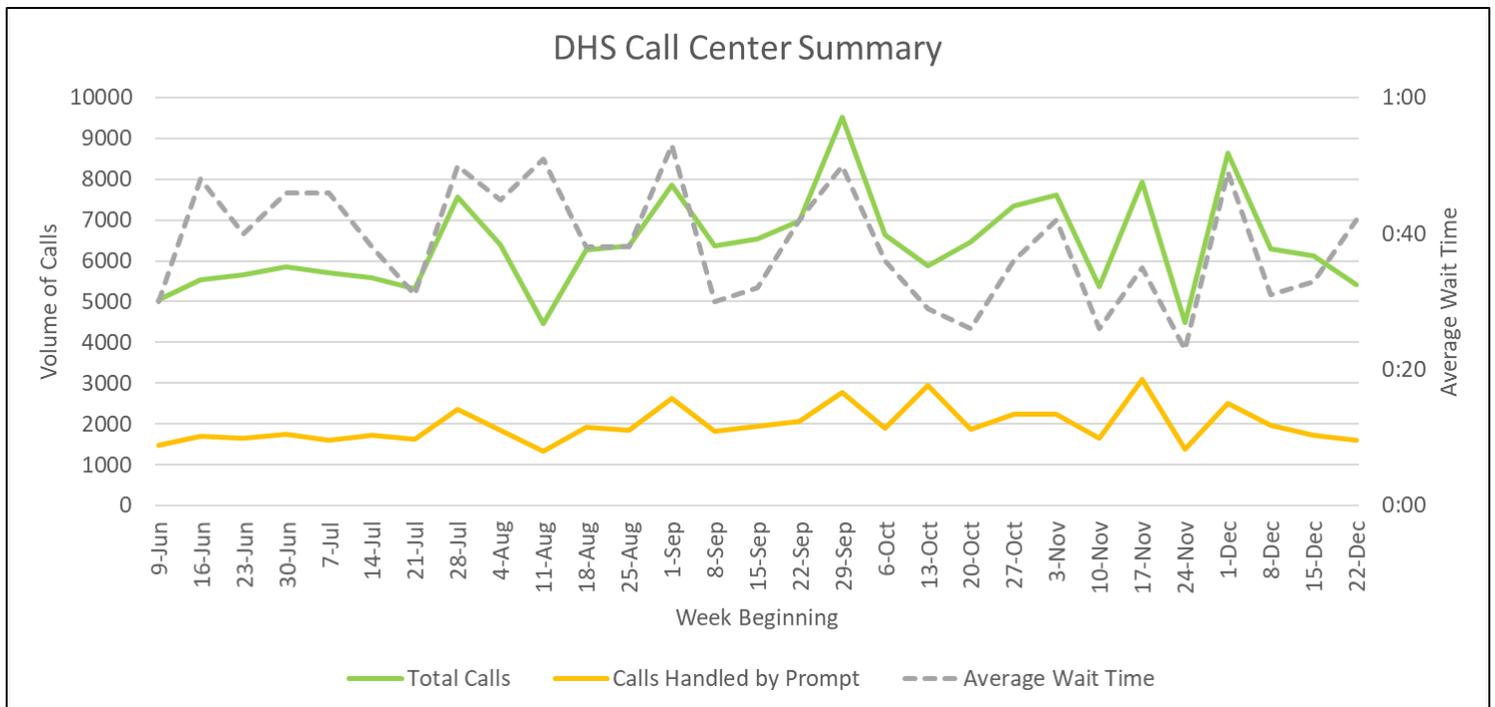


In December 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 85,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population.

Untimely November Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

With nearly 5,500 calls during the last week December 2019, the average wait time 41 minutes, 51 seconds. The six-week average is 35 minutes, 18 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between 12/17/2019 – 1/09/2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
14	12/17/2019	668	\$2,678,82
14A	12/19/2019	21	\$32,790
14B	None	-	-
15	01/02/2020	666	\$2,740,396
15A	None	-	-
15B	01/09/2020	62	\$64,009

*Due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays there were no off-cycle payrolls for 14B & 15A.

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (14 & 14A)	689	\$2,711,613.27
Off-cycle (14A)	21	\$32,790
Provider off-cycle/total	3.05%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	1.21%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (15 & 15B)	728	\$2,804,405
Off-cycle (15B)	62	\$64,009
Providers off-cycle/total	8.52%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.28%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 838 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Through the contingency process, which ensures nursing and assisted living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, Rhode Island has paid out approximately \$7.7 million dollars in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2020 so far (please refer to attached Medicaid Expenditures Report). We are in the process of identifying specific payments from various facilities to submit a schedule illustrating the dollar amount by facility. We are aiming to submit that attachment to the Honorable Oversight Committee within the next 2 days.

Our payment reconciliation process remains ongoing as we continue to meet with long term care facilities across the state. In total, the state has paid approximately \$142,589,247 we have collected about \$72,589,247 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents almost 51% of the total amount of contingency payments made.

UPDATE ON RECERTIFICATIONS PROCESS

The State has verified that Medicaid renewals were appropriately initiated by the RI Bridges System in compliance with the CMS approved renewal plan.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are important partners to the State. We continue to meet regularly to review progress on RIBridges. There wasn't any UHIP-related correspondence during this reporting period of December 16, 2019 through January 15, 2020.