



**Rhode Island Department of Human Services**

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January 18, 2019

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 15, 2018 – January 15, 2019. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement
- DHS staffing and employee training
- Pending applications
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/Call Center summary
- CCAP off-cycle payments
- LTSS interim payments.

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve and 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



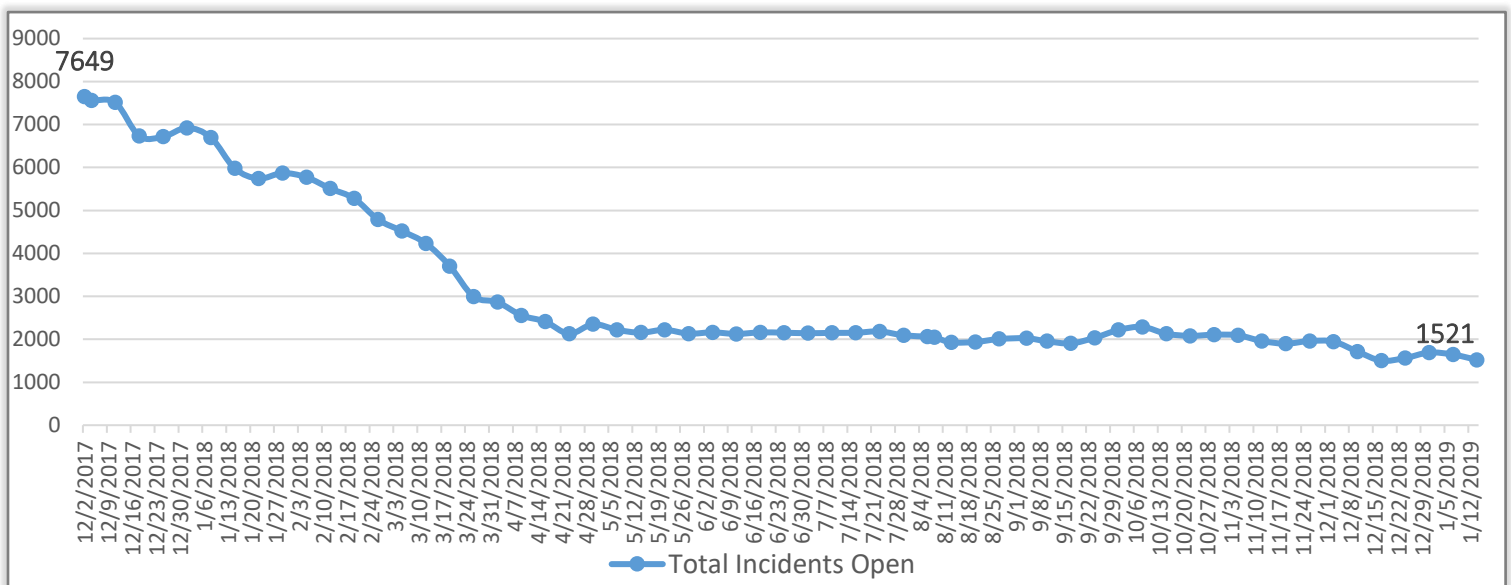
# RI Bridges: Monthly Update

## January 2019

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 6,128 incidents. As of January 14, 2019, open incidents totaled 1,521 – an 80% drop since December 2017.



### DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

#### Hiring Update

- DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since December 15, 2018, DHS hired 7 employees. All have started in their new roles. This includes:
  - 3 Employment and Career Advisors
  - 4 Quality Control Reviewers
- We continue to make progress with additional positions for Supervising Eligibility Technician, Employment and Career Advisor and Quality Control Reviewer. In addition, we are making progress on positions supporting our Child Care and Policy units.

## Training Overview:

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Knowledge Transfer	12/19/2018	6	0	9
New Hire Orientation	1/7/2019 through 1/10/2019	18	2	0
<b>Totals</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>

During the month of January, the Center for Staff Development and Learning (CSDL) will be working to update training curriculums. Due to releases and changes made to RIBridges, curriculums need to be reviewed and refreshed to ensure that staff is being taught the most current version of the system and policy. The training programs that will be updated are:

- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Rhode Island Works (RIW)
- Medical
- Long Term Care Support Services (LTSS)
- Customer Service Aid (CSA)
- New Hire Orientation (NHO)

In addition, the CSDL is planning the training programs for the next six months.

### **New Hire Orientation**

- This period we held one New Hire Orientation. A total of two new staff members attended the training. In addition, the two new staff members participated in Basic Navigation training; an introduction to the RIBridges system.

### **Current Staff Overview**

- This period the staff development unit, helpline and policy staff were provided an in-depth training on how to create job aid materials using a new computer software.

## 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.

**Knowledge Transfer Training:** The learning objectives for the training are as follows:

- Screen capture using Region, Scrolling and Panoramic
- Use captured screens in materials generation
- Understand and explain the Communication Decision Process
- Create Flashes
- Revise/Create Quick Reference Guides (QRG)
- Revise/Create Instructor Led Training (ILTs)

## PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

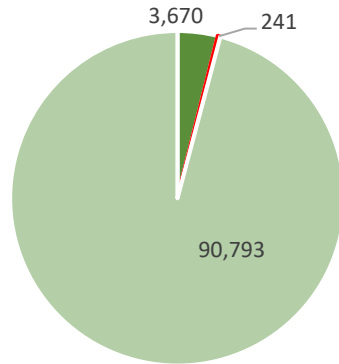
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. The number of pending new applications across all programs is 5,633. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total 2,403.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	6	33	39	3	10	13	52
SNAP Non	370	138	508	11	5	16	524
CCAP	37	60	97	7	17	24	121
GPA Burial	0	4	4	0	29	29	33
SSP	0	54	54	0	18	18	72
GPA	61	18	79	96	26	122	201
RIW	159	109	268	26	54	80	348
*Undet. Cash	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Undet. Med	21	654	675	51	737	788	1,463
MAGI	44	48	92	93	113	206	298
MPP	5	30	35	11	36	47	82
Complex Med.	37	92	129	37	326	363	492
LTSS	55	739	794	121	1,032	1,153	1,947
<b>Totals</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>2,774</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>2,403</b>	<b>2,859</b>	<b>5,633</b>

\*Undetermined Cash no longer needs to be tracked. Those numbers are now included in other program numbers.

## SNAP TIMELINESS

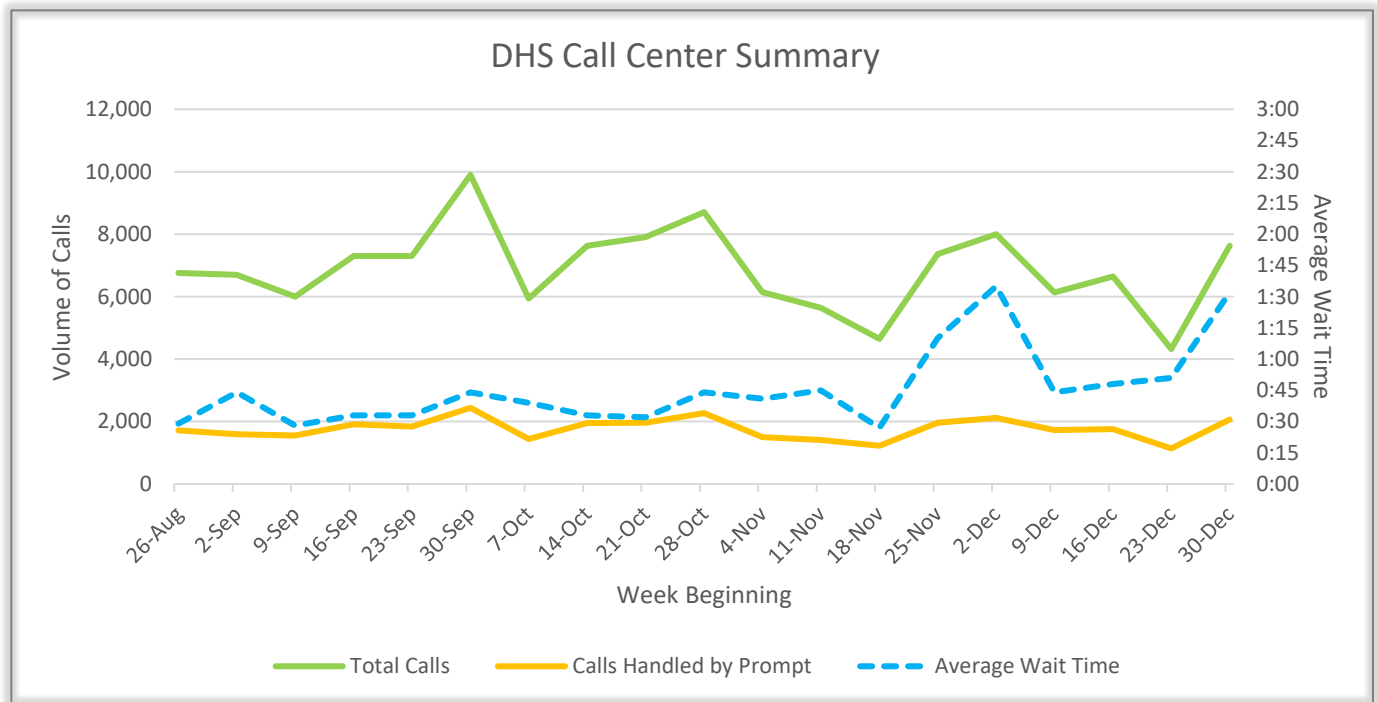
DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The combined timeliness for SNAP applications was 96.55 percent (96.4 for expedited and 96.7 percent for non-expedited) for December 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.



In December 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 90,000 households. While the number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of the total SNAP population, the State remains focused on ensuring all customers receive timely access to benefits.

Untimely November Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

Wait times have increased in the past quarter, which is due in part to the transition from the departure of Conduent (contractor). Yet taking the work in house has lasting benefits, including that our staff can give more specific case information to customers who call. It is our hope additional triage workers will improve wait times.



## CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers since the week of December 15, 2018.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
14	12/18/2018	694	\$2,768,221
14A	12/21/2018	19	\$12,558
14B	N/A	-	-
15	1/2/2019	683	\$2,649,392
15A	1/3/2019	10	\$107,586
15B	1/10/2019	65	\$367,446
15B1	1/10/2019	1	\$9,260

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (14 & 14A)	713	\$2,780,779
Off-cycle (14A)	19	\$12,558
Provider off-cycle/total	2.66%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.45%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (15, 15A, 15B & 15B1)	759	\$3,133,685
Off-cycle (15A, 15B & 15B1)	76	\$484,293
Providers off-cycle/total	10.01%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	15.45%	-

- There wasn't a Batch 14B due to the short Christmas week.
- Nine of the 10 providers in Batch 15A were from one parent site. Their attendance was processed late because it was submitted to a secondary email address.
- 15B payments were all reconciliation phase two payments.
- 15B1 was a missed payment, kept separate from the reconciliation payments for ease of auditing purposes.

## LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 1,032 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

This month, through the contingency payment process, which ensures nursing and assisted-living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, the State paid out \$14,779,261 in interim payments to facilities (schedule is attached). 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 \$126,470,079.71. Of that dollar amount, we have collected \$12,931,330.64 in reconciliation payments so far. Please see related attachment labeled "NH Sheet," which contains a summary of escalation applications reviewed during this submission's reporting period. Also, in that schedule, we have provided a calendar of meetings planned for the next month. Please note these meetings may be subject to change.

## 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 this month.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS AND SPECIAL MASTER

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. Below is a list of federal correspondence during this reporting period:

- October 20, 2018: State Waiver Request regarding Certification Periods (supplied again for context)
  - December 20, 2018: Letter to DHS regarding RI DHS' request to extend certification periods
  - January 14, 2019: Letter to USDA regarding SNAP-reconsideration of Rhode Island request to extend certification periods
- December 14, 2018: Letter to FNS regarding amended RI Management Evaluation (ME) Plan for FY 2019
  - December 14, 2018: SNAP Release Highlights that compliments amended RI ME plan for FY 2019
- December 20, 2018: Letter to DHS from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approving the State's Medicaid demonstration project extension request
- December 21, 2018: Letter to DHS regarding RI's UHIP October 31, 2018 Implementation Advance Planning Document Update (IAPDU)
- December 31, 2018: Letter to FNS submitted in accordance with conditions 2 and 3 of the FNS letter ADP approval of December 21, 2018
- January 2, 2019: Special Master's 14<sup>th</sup> report to the courts
- January 9, 2019: Summary of 1115 waiver as approved by CMS.
- January 15, 2019: December 2018 SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement CMS letter