



Rhode Island Department of Human Services
25 Howard Avenue, Building 57
Cranston, RI 02920
Phone: (401) 462-2121 Fax: (401) 462-6594

February 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 January 16, 2018 – February 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; and
- 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".

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



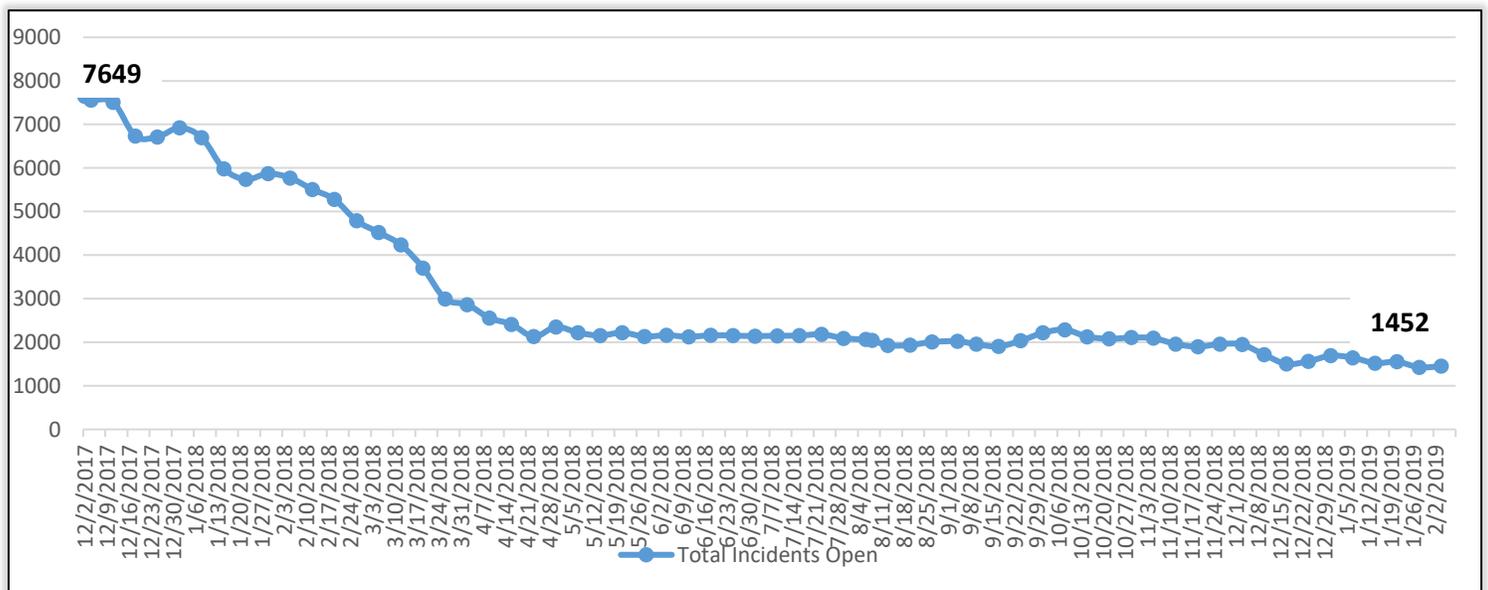
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

February 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 6,197 incidents. As of February 2, 2019, open incidents totaled 1,452 – an 81% drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since mid-January, DHS filled nine positions. All have started in their new roles. These include:

- 5 Eligibility Technicians in various field offices. They are all existing employees.
- 1 Quality Control Reviewer
- 1 Supervising Eligibility Technician in Pawtucket
- 1 Social Case Worker in our Long-Term Services and Support Unit
- 1 Customer Service Aide

Training Overview:

RI Bridges Monthly Report



Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
New Hire Orientation	01/07 – 01/10 02/04	24	3	0
Basic Navigation	02/05	3	1	0
Professional Development Trainings	01/15 01/18 01/25 02/01	21	0	8
Asset Verification System Training	01/24	6	0	20
Word Training	02/06 02/13	6	0	7
LTSS – Care Type Training	02/07	3	0	8
SNAP Training	02/11-02/15	30	0	6
Totals		93	4	49

New Hire Orientation

- This period we held one New Hire Orientation. A total of three new staff members attended the training.

Current Staff Overview

- This period the staff development unit, helpline and policy staff continued to be trained on the development of training and release materials. In addition, staff members were provided a refresher on the asset verification system. The LTSS staff will receive an in-depth training on care type training, and the quality assurance team will be attending a SNAP training.

Workshop Descriptions:

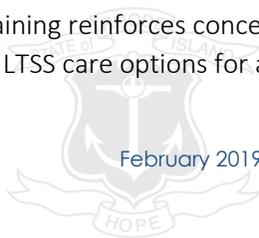
New Hire Orientation: The New Employee Orientation (NEO) Program is the first step in welcoming new hires to RIDHS. Its main objective is to familiarize new employees with the organization, its organizational structure, and its policies and procedures.

Professional Development/ 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)

Asset Verification System Training: This training was set up by EOHHS for DHS staff members who will be working with a new system that will be used to check asset verification tasks.

Care Type (LTSS Training): LTSS caseworkers and ETs receive a three-hour, case based scenario training on the use of the LTSS Care Type Flowchart. The flowchart that the CSDL trainer has developed is a tool that helps workers make appropriate referrals based on customer input. This training reinforces concepts learned in basic LTSS training and provides the trainees with guidance on how to identify potential LTSS care options for applicants. This training also provides referral resources for DHS LTSS staff.



SNAP: The SNAP Workshop is designed to introduce New Eligibility Technicians to SNAP program policy and RIBridges. The workshop approach combines instructor led portions, demonstrations, and hands on exercises to provide a complete integrated policy and system learning experience.

Basic Navigation: The Basic Navigation workshop provides the participants an introductions and system overview of RIBridges. The workshop will be instructor led and have a hands-on practice portion focusing on searching, application registration, data collection, and wrap-up.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

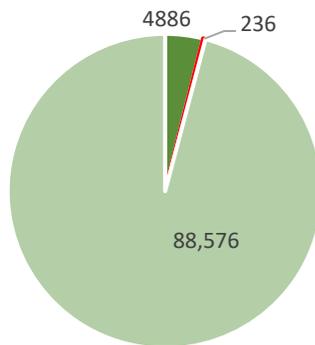
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of February 14, 2019, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,966. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total 2,220.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	3	6	9	1	7	8	17
SNAP Non	283	93	376	15	3	18	394
CCAP	27	51	78	7	15	22	100
GPA Burial	0	4	4	0	30	30	34
SSP	0	26	26	0	16	16	42
GPA	71	19	90	94	34	128	218
RIW	98	49	147	35	73	108	255
Undet. Med	17	335	352	68	644	712	1,064
MAGI	55	31	86	111	118	229	315
MPP	7	23	30	7	41	48	78
Complex Med.	32	52	84	38	323	361	445
LTSS	53	916	969	119	916	1,035	2,004
Totals	646	1,605	2,251	495	2,220	2,715	4,966

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

SNAP TIMELINESS

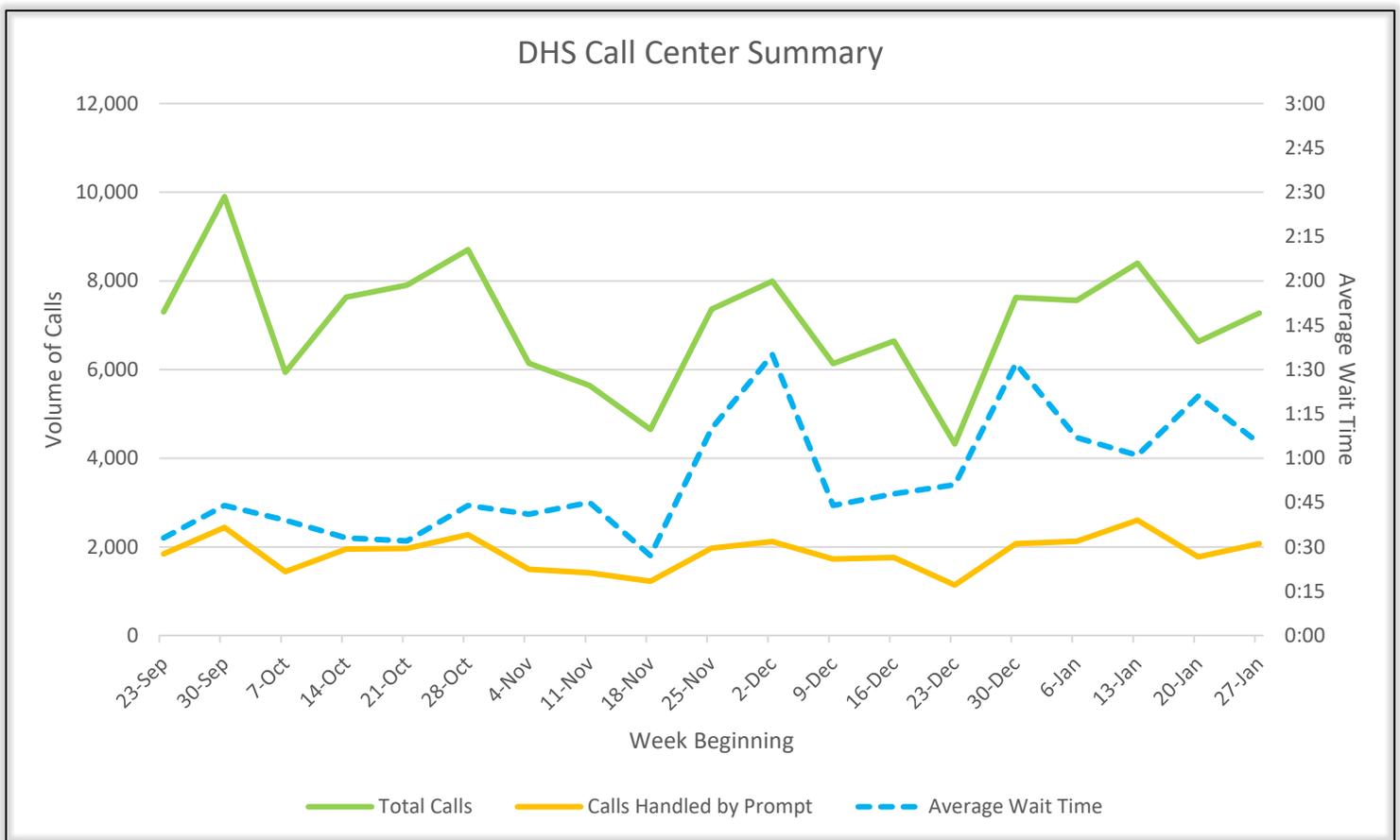
DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The combined timeliness for SNAP applications was 97.4 percent (96.5 percent for expedited and 98.3 percent for non-expedited) for January 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.



In January 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 88,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population.

Untimely December 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 November 15, 2018.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
16	1/15/2019	695	\$2,579,837
16A	1/17/2019	39	\$70,093
16B	1/24/2019	65	\$62,301
17	1/29/2019	700	\$2,720,243
17A	1/31/2019	39	\$23,865
17B	2/7/2019	65	\$49,515

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (16, 16A, 16B)	799	\$2,712,232
Off-cycle (16A & 16B)	104	\$132,394
Provider off-cycle/total	13.02%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.88%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (17, 17A, 17B)	804	\$2,793,622
Off-cycle (17A, 17B)	104	\$73,379
Providers off-cycle/total	12.94%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.63%	-

- Both of the “B” batches were for reconciliation payments.

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 916 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Through the contingency payment process, which ensures nursing and assisted-living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, the State has paid out \$16,315,493 in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2019 (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 \$130,001,000. Of that dollar amount, we have collected \$15,619,794 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.

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 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:

- February 4, 2019: Special Master's 15th report to the courts
- February 15, 2019: January 2019 SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement

