



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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February 19, 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 January 16, 2020 – February 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



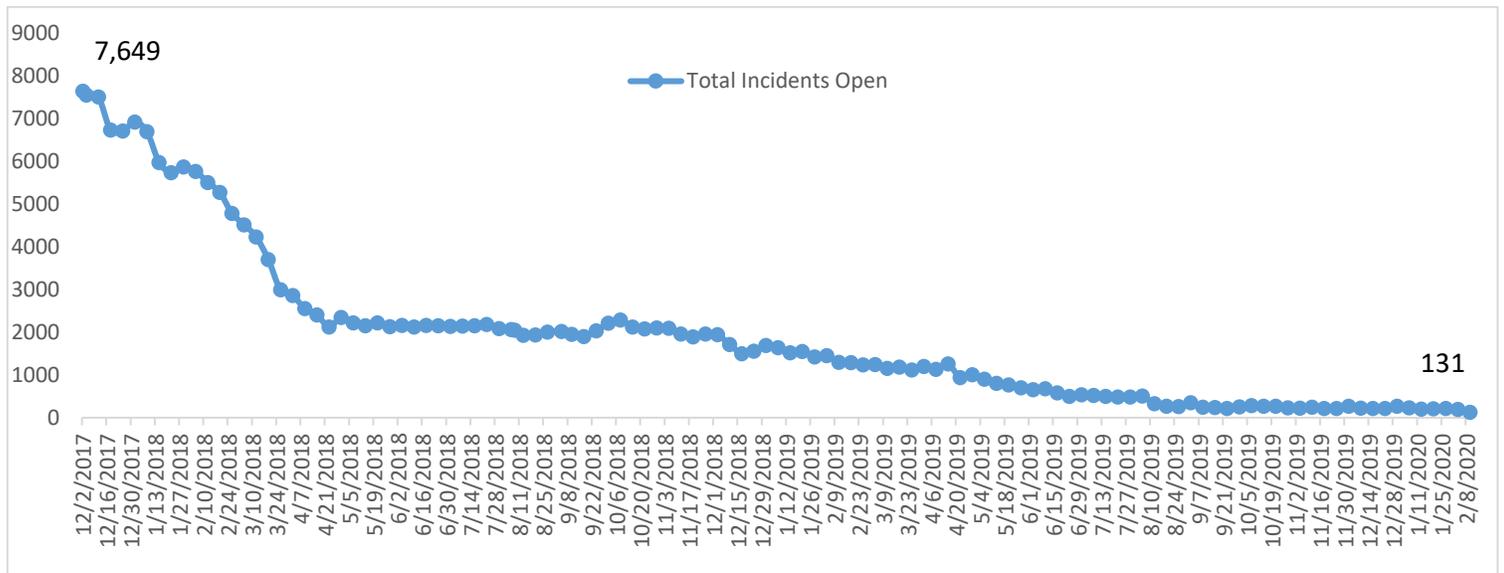
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

February 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 RI Bridges 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 7,518 incidents. As of February 8, 2020, open incidents totaled 131 – a 98 percent drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since January 2020, DHS hired twelve employees. They are:

- 2 Customer Service Aides
- 1 Customer Support Specialist dedicated to the Call Center
- 1 Principal Clerk
- 2 Eligibility Technicians
- 2 Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist dedicated to Child Care Licensing
- 1 Human Services Business Officer
- 1 Productivity Project Director
- 1 Interdepartmental Project Manager
- 1 Deputy Chief of Legal Services

Training Overview

Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Rhode Island Works Training	1/21/2020 -1/23/2020 1/27/2020 - 1/29/2020	36	0	18
Customer Service Aide	1/23/2020 -1/24/2020	12	3	2
New Hire Orientation	2/3/2020-2/4/2020	14	11	0
Claims, Collection, Recovery Unit Training	2/6/2020 (2 half day sessions) 2/13/2020 (2 half day sessions)	12	0	93
Long Term Services Supports Training	2/10/2020 – 2/14/2020	30	0	9
SNAP	2/10/2020 – 2/12/2020	18	0	24
Knowledge Transfer	2/10/2020 2/11/2020 2/12/2020	8	0	30
Totals		130	14	167

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

New Hire Orientation

This period we held one New Hire Orientation with a total of 11 participants.

Current Staff Overview

During the last reporting period, the Center for Staff Development and Learning (CSDL) offered training to existing staff members in functionality changes in the RIBridges system and foundational programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Rhode Island Works (RIW).

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 purpose of these sessions is to communicate the system updates/changes to the attendees. The learning goals are:

- Explain new knowledge transfer process for releases
- Review each new/updated QRG, flash, etc. related to the upcoming release in the month of January.
- Recognize the end user impact of the system updates

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP): The SNAP Training is designed to introduce 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.

Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit (CCRU) Training: The goal of this training is to increase DHS Staff capacity on general and complex operational procedures for the referral of an overpayment within RIBridges. The learning objectives:

- Increase job knowledge regarding CCRU processes
- Increase ability to utilize RIBridges system to make a referral to the CCRU
- Understand what constitutes an overpayment

Rhode Island Works Training: This course is designed to reinforce concepts within the RIBridges system and provide system-based training for processing RIW and CCAP specific tasks. After this classroom training series, participants will have learned the basics of:

- Overview of application and data collection for RIW and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Understanding RIW and CCAP eligibility
- Understand how to read the Time Clock
- Understand how to read the Work Employment & Training (E & T) Module
- Differences between the ET and Employment and Career Advisor (ECA) roles for RIW
- Understand how to enter and lift a sanction
- Financial requirements for RIW and CCAP
- Interviewing for RIW

Customer Service Aid: Upon completion of this course, participants will have a working knowledge of the CSA processes (Visit Record, scanning, indexing, application, case and individual search, appointment scheduling, application registration) used in RIBridges. Participants will also gain an understanding of lobby and non-lobby processes. The learning outcomes are as follows:

- Identify client needs.
- Recognize and understand the relationship between the DHS-2 and RIBridges integrated eligibility system.
- Be able to search for customers as individuals and in cases.
- Accurately register application in RIBridges.
- Demonstrate the ability to accurately scan and index documents.
- Display an interest in learning about DHS and the customers we serve.
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate with customers and colleagues.
- Be client-oriented and provide a warm welcome to visitors.

Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS): The purpose of this course is to provide training to LTSS Eligibility Technicians on LTSS policy, business process and RIBridges system functionality for the most common LTSS scenarios.

- Correctly process DHS-2 LTSS Application from initiate intake task through Level of Care
- Demonstrate an understanding of the LTSS-specific system pages
- Demonstrate an understanding of the transfer of information and responsibilities through the DHS, OMR and CSM systems
- Accurately process slips in CSM and enter into RIBridges
- Accurately verify medical documentation completion
- Demonstrate an understanding of Resources, Income, Expenses and the Post Eligibility Treatment of Income

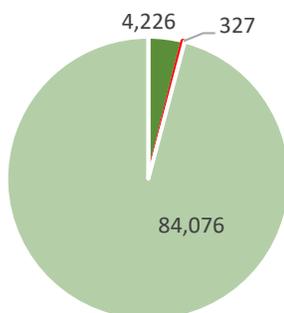
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of February 14, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,608. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting State action is 1,855.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	4	34	38	1	9	10	48
SNAP Non	339	224	563	73	30	103	666
CCAP	9	96	105	2	7	9	114
GPA Burial	0	2	2	1	4	5	7
SSP	0	32	32	0	5	5	37
GPA	27	51	78	49	32	81	159
RIW	81	80	161	26	41	67	228
Undetermined Medical	36	262	298	69	770	839	1,137
MAGI	37	25	62	53	64	117	179
MPP	7	37	44	2	7	9	53
Complex Medicaid	16	15	31	28	105	133	164
LTSS	192	654	846	189	781	970	1,816
Totals	748	1,512	2,260	493	1,855	2,348	4,608

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 95 percent for expedited and 96 percent for non-expedited for January 2020. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

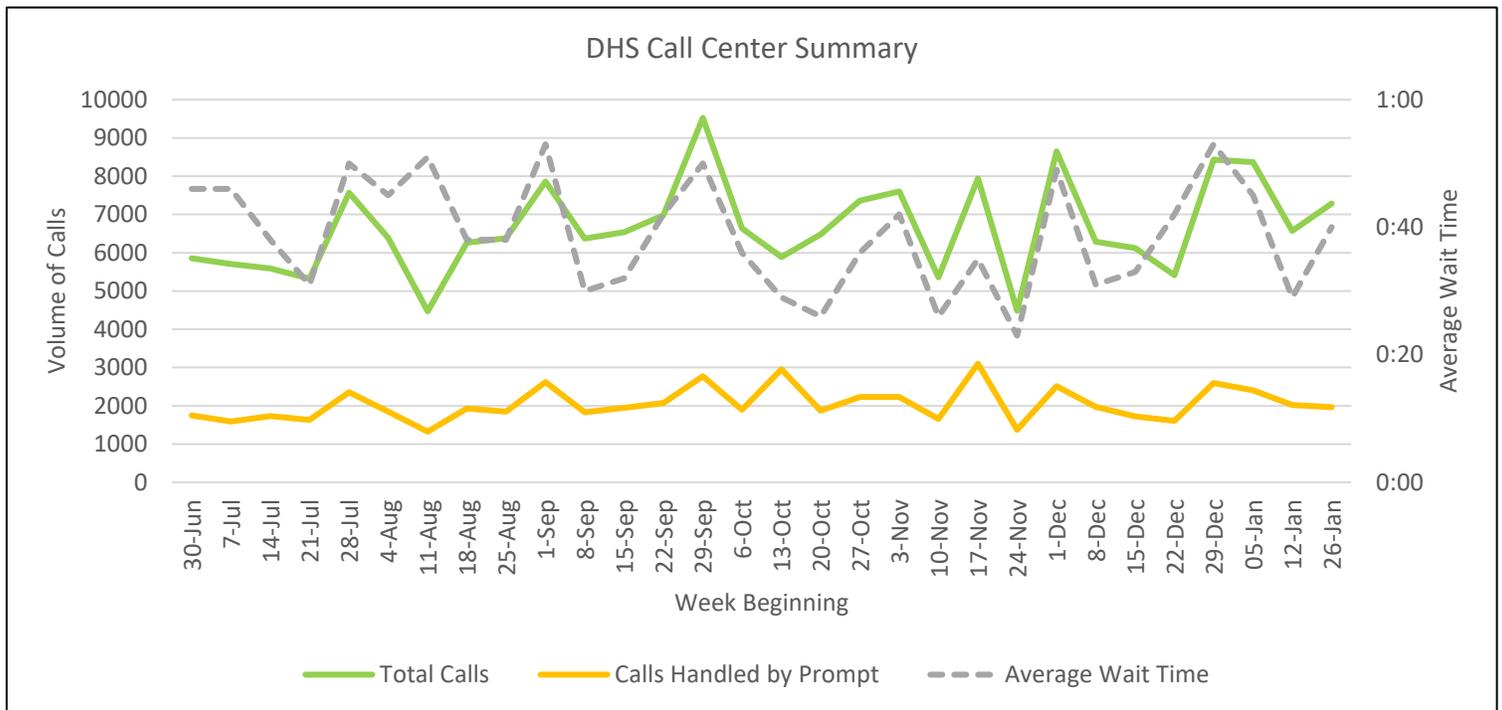


In January 2020, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 84,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population receiving benefits.

Untimely January Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

With 7,285 calls during the last week of January 2020, the average wait time 32 minutes, 15 seconds. The six-week average is 41 minutes, 7 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between 1/14/2020 – 2/13/2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
16	01/14/2020	666	\$2,556,301
16A	01/16/2020	16	\$19,283
16B	01/23/2020	23	\$88,761
17	01/28/2020	674	\$2,603,627
17A	01/30/2020	20	\$51,899
17B	02/06/2020	40	\$51,439
18	02/11/2020	654	\$2,892,705
18A	02/13/2020	27	\$51,439
18B			

*Batch 18B is in progress. It will be available on 2/20/2020.

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (16, 16A, 16B)	705	\$2,664,346
Off-cycle (16A & 16B)	39	\$108,045
Provider off-cycle/total	5.53%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.06%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (17, 17A & 17B)	734	\$2,727,388
Off-cycle (17A & 17B)	60	\$123,761
Providers off-cycle/total	8.17%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.54%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (18 & 18A)	681	\$2,944,145
Off-cycle (18A)	27	\$51,439
Provider off-cycle/total	3.97%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	1.75%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 781 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 8.5 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.

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 \$143 million we have collected about \$77,684,940 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents approximately 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. Below is a list of federal correspondence during this reporting period:

- February 3, 2020: Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) response to Rhode Island Formal Warning update