



Rhode Island Department of Human Services
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April 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 March 16, 2019- April 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



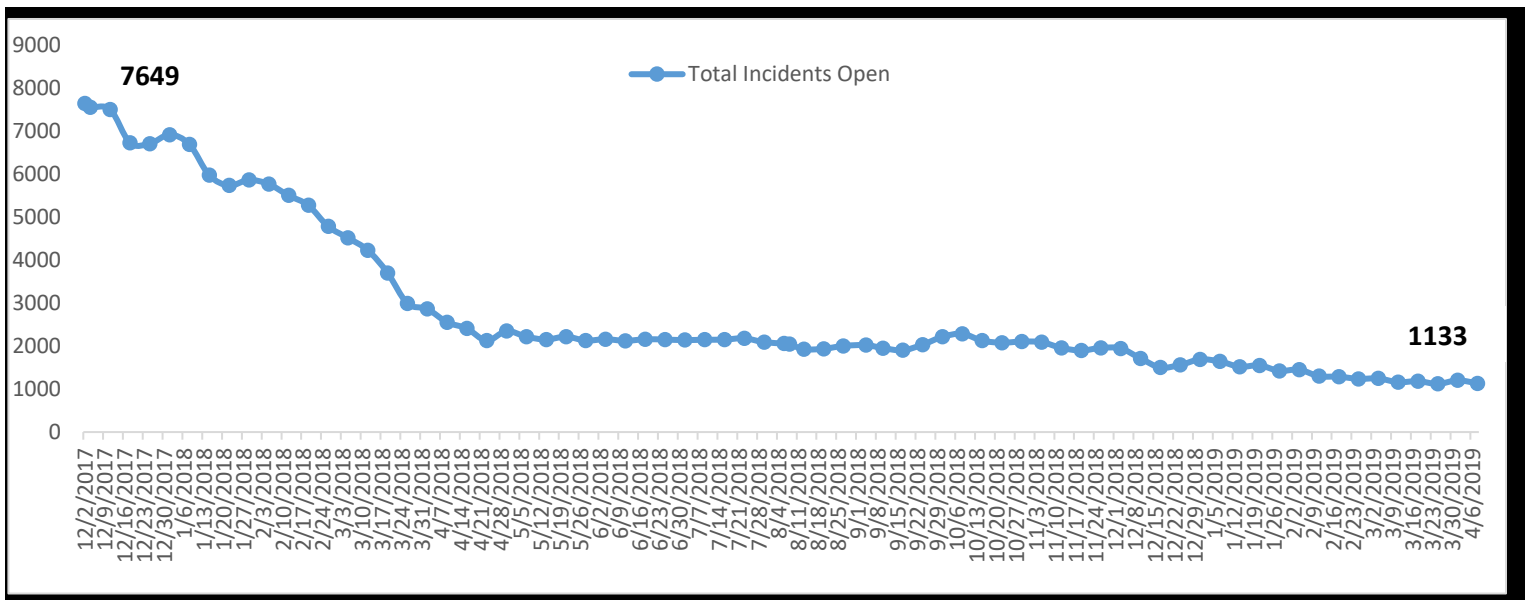
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

April 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 6,507 incidents. As of April 6, 2019, open incidents totaled 1,133 – an 85% 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:

- Six Eligibility Technicians
- Three Supervising Eligibility Technicians
- One Senior Resource Specialist dedicated to LIHEAP
- One Programming Services Officer dedicate to Child Care
- Two Social Caseworkers dedicated to LTSS
- Five Customer Support Specialist dedicated to the Call Center
- One Chief Clerk

Training Overview:

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Customer Service Training	3/18/2019	6	0	6
Quarterly Meeting (SNAP, RIW, Random Moment Time Study, Sexual Harassment)	3/19/2019 3/20/2019 3/21/2019	18	0	309
Train the Trainer for Employment and Career Advisors	3/22/2019	6	0	16
SNAP Training	3/11/2019 - 3/22/2019	56.5	6	0
	4/08/2019 – 04/15/2019	36	7	0
New Hire Orientation	04/01/2019-04/05/2019	24		0
Totals		146.5	13	325

New Hire Orientation

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

Current Staff Overview

Over the last month, staff members were offered training in several program areas SNAP, RIW, a brief overview on Random Moment Time Study, and Sexual Harassment policy. In addition, specialized training was conducted for Employment and Career Advisors were trained to facilitate customer orientations relating to the Abled Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD).

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.

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.

Quarterly Meetings: This meeting consisted of brief trainings on issues related to SNAP, RIW and Random Moment Time Study. In addition, HR presented information on how to report Sexual Harassment.

Train the Trainer for ECAs: This purpose of this training was to teach ECA’s facilitation skills which they will be using when presenting ABAWD information to customers.

Customer Service Aide Training: The CSA training focuses on RIBridges processes. The training approach combines instructor led portions, demonstrations, and hands on exercises to provide a complete integrated policy and system learning experience.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

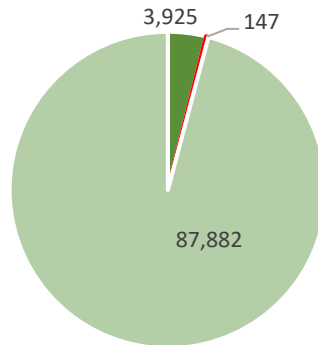
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of April 14, 2019, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,880. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total 2,066.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	2	6	8	1	6	7	15
SNAP Non	320	119	439	6	5	11	450
CCAP	40	74	114	4	9	13	127
GPA Burial	0	2	2	0	11	11	13
SSP	0	58	58	0	25	25	83
GPA	55	22	77	73	32	105	182
RIW	128	77	205	20	60	80	285
Undet. Med	34	335	369	59	442	501	870
MAGI	43	31	74	38	60	98	172
MPP	3	23	26	0	15	15	41
Complex Med.	52	64	116	37	317	354	470
LTSS	60	912	972	116	1,084	1,200	2,172
Totals	737	1,723	2,460	354	2,066	2,420	4,800

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

SNAP TIMELINESS

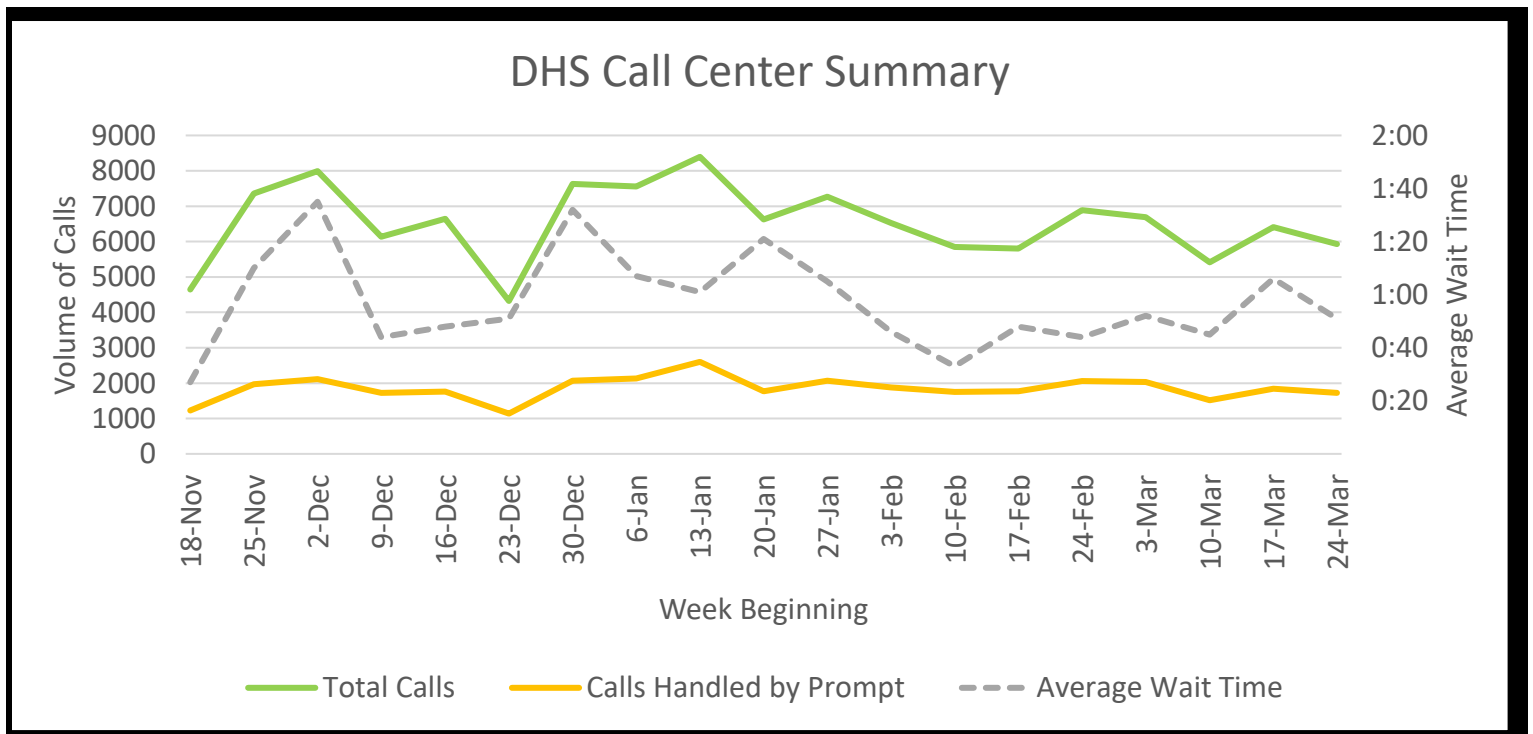
DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The combined timeliness for SNAP applications was 97.9 percent for expedited and 98.3 percent for non-expedited) for March 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.



In March 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 87,000 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

With nearly 6,000 calls during the last week in March, average wait times were just under 51 minutes. The six-week average is 51 minutes, 3 seconds.



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
20	3/12/2019	702	2,824,755.61
20A	3/14/2019	31	18,448.15
20B	3/21/2019	53	106,326.72
21	3/26/2019	681	2,595,040.08
21A	3/28/2019	36	152,531.14
21B	4/4/2019	38	94,692.68

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (20, 20A & 20B)	786	2,949,530.48
Off-cycle (20A & 20B)	84	124,774.87
Provider off-cycle/total	10.69%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.23%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (21, 21A, 21B)	755	2,842,263.90
Off-cycle (21A, 21B)	74	247,223.82
Providers off-cycle/total	9.80%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	8.70%	-

- 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 1084 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 \$19,270,807 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 \$134,033,955 Of that dollar amount, we have collected \$22,021,387 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:

- April 1, 2019: FNS correspondence about its Financial Management Review of the State's FFY 2017 SNAP program
- April 4, 2019: FNS' response to the State's November 2018 semi-annual Corrective Action Plan
- April 9, 2019: Special Master's 17th report to the courts
- April 15, 2019: March 2019 SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement