



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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May 18, 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 April 16, 2020 – May 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



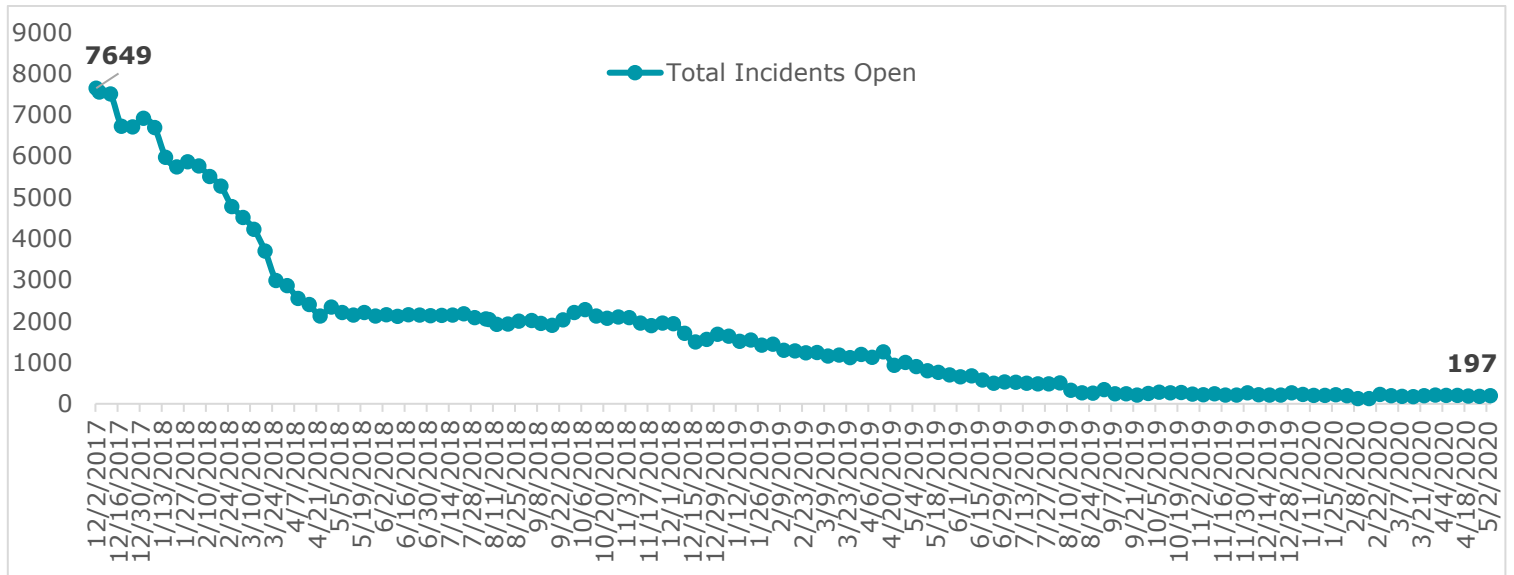
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

May 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 7,452 incidents. As of May 4, 2020, open incidents totaled 197 – a 97% drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

No data available at this time.

Training Overview

Overview

During the last reporting period, DHS staff members received training via the virtual training tool Zoom. Our Center for Staff Development and Learning (CSDL) team quickly provided multiple trainings to staff. In addition, the training team received training themselves on how to facilitate and manage virtual meetings.

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Basic Navigation (3- two-hour sessions)	4/17/2020 4/27/2020 4/30/2020	6	1	17
Intro to Zoom (2 sessions)	4/20/2020 4/23/2020	1.5	0	10
How to Facilitate and Manage Virtual Meetings	4/16/2020 4/23/2020 4/30/2020	9	0	8
Case Maintenance (5 – half hour sessions)	4/20/2020 4/27/2020 4/30/2020 5/11/2020 5/12/2020	2.5	0	68
Claims, Collection, and Recovery Unit Training (3- 45-minute sessions)	4/20/2020 4/23/2020	2.25	0	6
RIW – Adding a Pregnancy (4- half hour sessions)	4/27/2020 4/30/2020 5/12/2020 5/14/2020	2	0	22
Knowledge Transfers (3 – half sessions)	4/27/2020 5/14/2020	1	0	49
Medical Premium Payment	5/14/2020	3	0	29
Spousal Allowance	5/14/2020	1	0	28
Customer Service Aide: Medical Documents (2 half hour sessions)	5/11/2020 5/14/2020	1	0	15
RIW: Relationship Requirement (2 half hour trainings)	5/12/2020 5/14/2020	1	0	19
Totals		30.25	1	271*

*current number of staff trained is a duplicate number

Workshop Descriptions

Zoom Meeting Training Topics: CSDL is building their capacity to deliver trainings virtually to DHS staff members. The trainings have introduced them to the Zoom Meetings tool, a practice session on delivering training via Zoom, and how to manage and facilitate meetings.

Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit 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

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

Basic Navigation: The Basic Navigation workshop provides the participants an introduction 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.

Medical Documents for CSAs: The goal of the training is to instruct CSAs on the on the various LTSS medical documents and their use with Smart Separators. By the end of the training CSAs will:

- Recognize the many medical documents used for LTSS applications.
- Understand how these medical documents work with corresponding Smart Separator

Case Maintenance: This training focuses on standardizing processes associated with working cases in RI Bridges. It is a remote training delivered via Zoom. The learning outcomes for the training are as follows:

- Understand the Case Maintenance Checklist
- Learn where to find helpful documents (QRGs, Transmittals, etc.)
- Understand proper case maintenance practices

RIW Mini Trainings:

- **Adding a Pregnancy:** Learn about 3rd trimester pregnancy as a special circumstance and how this is a gateway for eligibility for moms with no children in the home.
- **Relationship Requirements:** Hear how relationship impacts eligibility for RIW and what the term Loco Parentis means. When the relative with whom the child lives is not the biological or adoptive parent, the term in loco parentis (in place of the parent) is used.

Medical Trainings: These trainings helped staff to better understand Medical Premium Payments and spousal allowance.

How to Facilitate and Manage Virtual Meetings: This is a class that was facilitated for CSDL staff via URI. The class was 5 sessions long and held virtually. It provided the trainers the information and skills needed to provide trainings virtually.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

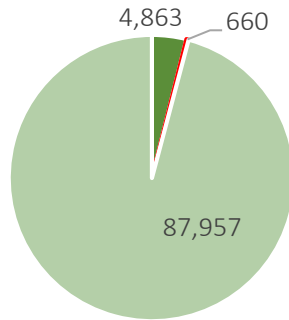
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of May 14, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,735. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting State action is 1,891.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Expedited	5	41	46	7	23	30	76
SNAP Non-Expedited	550	326	876	167	61	228	1,104
CCAP	2	27	29	0	6	6	35
GPA Burial	0	1	1	0	2	2	3
SSP	0	45	45	0	4	4	49
GPA	17	21	38	26	32	58	96
RIW	85	50	135	32	20	52	187
Undetermined Medical	8	160	168	87	787	874	1,042
Medicaid-MAGI	11	4	15	90	65	155	170
MPP	2	18	20	1	7	8	28
Complex Medicaid	15	24	39	30	130	160	199
LTSS*	0	992	992	0	754	754	1,746
Totals	695	1,709	2,404	440	1,891	2,331	4,735

*LTSS backlog data is temporarily coming from a separate source from RIBridges while the primary dashboard that collects data is currently undergoing improvements.

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 86.1 percent for expedited and 95.3 percent for non-expedited for April 2020. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

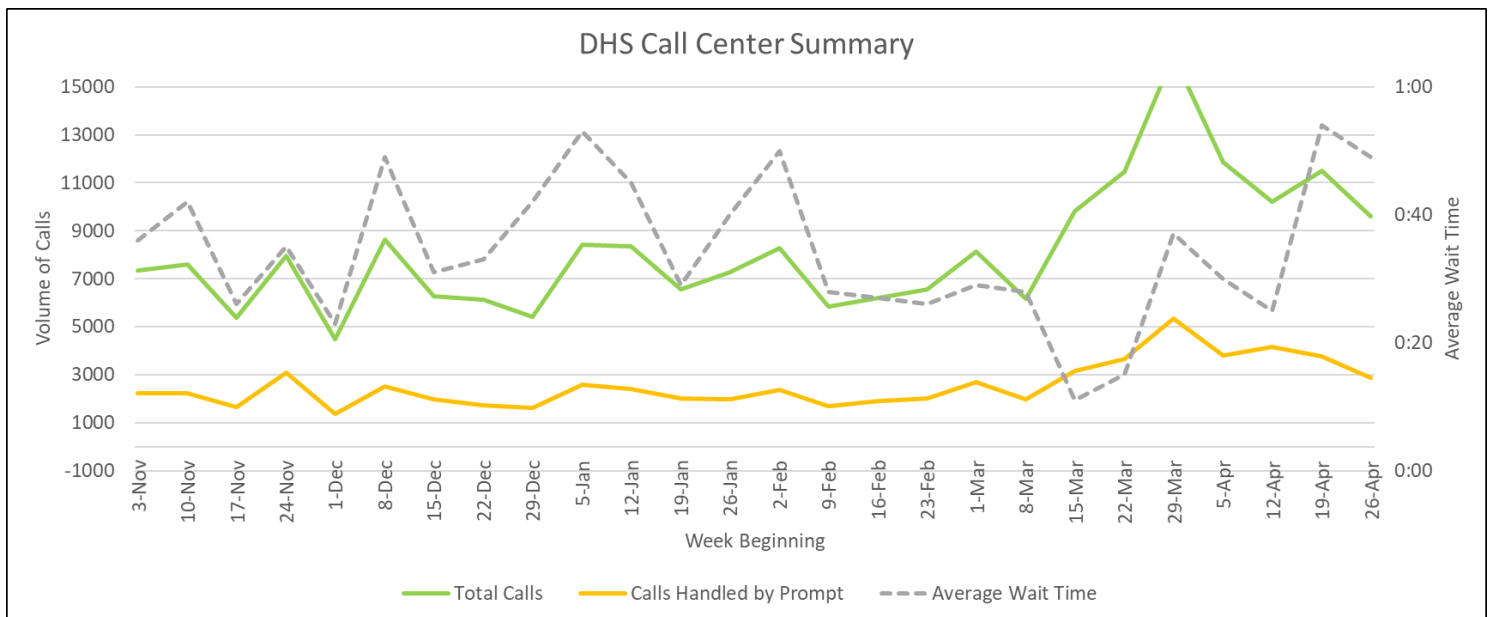


In April 2020, SNAP benefits were issued timely to nearly 88,000 households. Despite the impact of COVID-19, 91 percent of new SNAP Applications were processed timely. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population receiving benefits.

Untimely April Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

Even with 11,875 calls during the first week of April 2020, the average wait time was 30 minutes. With the close of lobby facing operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the DHS Call Center capacity was increased by 60 percent to accommodate the interviews and questions for public benefits. The six-week average is 34 minutes, 6 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between April 10 – May 14, 2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
23	04/21/2020	695	\$2,970,762
23A	04/23/2020	1	\$2,717
23B	04/30/2020	4	\$2,980.09
24	05/05/2020	684	\$2,821,891
24A	05/07/2020	1	\$332
24B	05/14/2020	16	\$14,499

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (23, 23A & 23B)	700	\$2,976,459
Off-cycle (23A & 23B)	5	\$5,697
Provider off-cycle/total	0.72%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.19%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (24, 24A & 24B)	684	\$2,821,891
Off-cycle (24A & 24B)	17	\$14,830
Providers off-cycle/total	2.43%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.52%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 754 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 11.75 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 \$147 million we have collected about \$84,607,846 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents approximately 57% 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 communicate regularly to review progress with the RIBridges system. There is no federal correspondence for this reporting period.