



**Rhode Island Department of Human Services**

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July 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 May 16, 2019 – June 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/DHS Call Center summaries;
- CCAP off-cycle payments;
- LTSS interim payments and;
- Correspondence with federal partners and Special Court Master

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



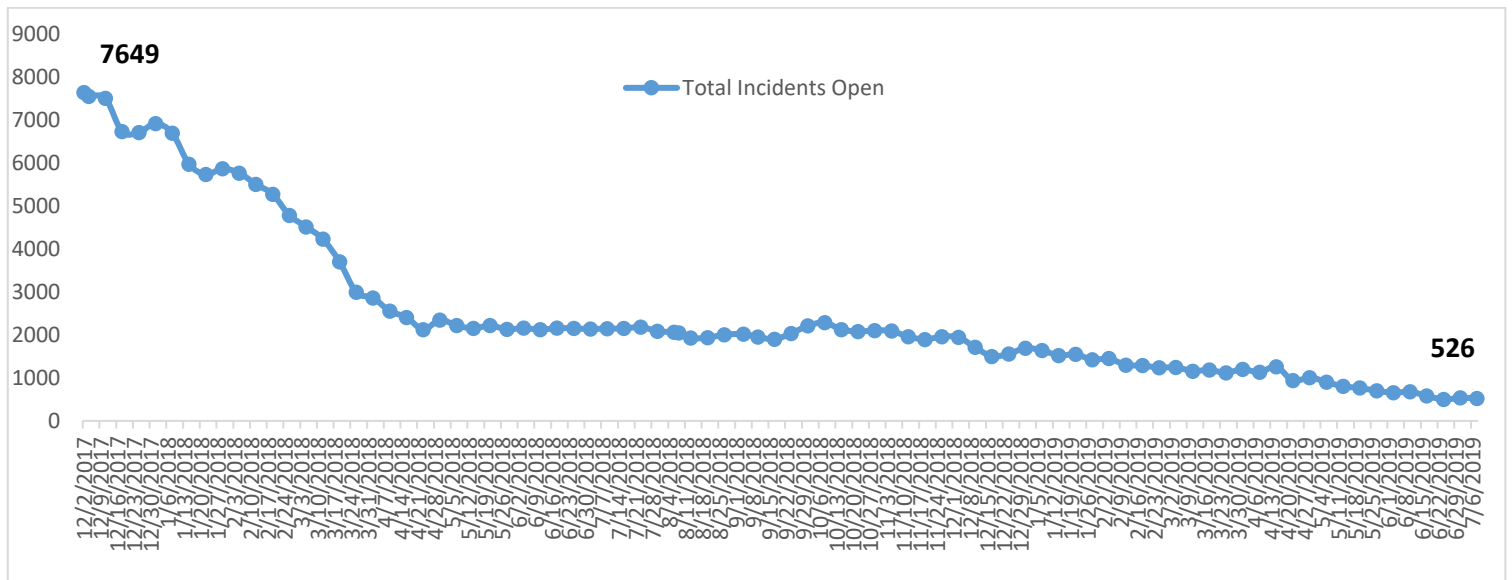
# RI Bridges: Monthly Update

## July 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 7,123 incidents. As of July 8, 2019, open incidents totaled 526 – a 93% drop since December 2017.



### DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

#### Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since this June, DHS hired five employees who have all started in their new roles. These include:

- 1 Senior Casework Supervisor
- 1 Chief Human Services Business Officer dedicated to Financial Management
- 1 Employment and Career Advisor
- 2 Eligibility Technicians

## Training Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Quarterly Meetings (Customer Portal, SNAP topics, and EBT Fraud)	6/18/19 thru 6/21/2019	24 (8 three-hour sessions)	0	314
Lobby Release Trainings	6/25/19 thru 7/3/19 7/9/19	48 (8 six-hour sessions)	0	183
Rhode Island Works (RIW) Program Training	7/10 thru 7/15	48 (8 six-hour sessions)	0	16
Civil Rights/ Voter Registration	7/15/19	4 (2 two-hour sessions)	0	35
<b>Totals</b>		<b>124</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>548*</b>

*\*Current number of staff trained is a duplicate number*

### Current Staff Overview

Over the last month, staff members were offered training in several areas. The Quarterly Meetings provided topics in areas of the customer portal, SNAP topics and EBT fraud. In addition, in July RIBridges will change from using a reception log to a Visit Record. The Visit Record functionality in RIBridges is designed to capture accurate journey of our customers. The RIW training will be offered to staff who may not have attended it before. Annual Civil Rights/Voter Registration training is required for all DHS employees.

### Workshop Descriptions

**Quarterly Meetings:** DHS holds quarterly meetings with staff members to inform staff about upcoming changes, provide program updates, celebrate accomplishments, and show appreciation for our staff members.

**RIW Training:** This training follows a “tell me, show me, let me try” design that allows lessons to be reinforced through a combination of auditory, visual and hands-on experiences. This means participants will have multiple opportunities to engage with key points of learning. The scenarios the participants will learn will increase in complexity to reflect common activities.

#### Learning objectives:

- 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
- Understand how to process an application for a Hardship

**Civil Rights/Voter Registration Training:** This training provides all DHS staff with a refresher on the processes for customers to file discrimination complaints as well as how to process voter registration information.

**Lobby Readiness:** This is an instructor led training to increase the knowledge of the Visit Record function in RIBridges that is being included in all regional family centers. The function enhances consistency in our processes and will help us improve the customer experience. The best practices training approach will include Tell Me (lecture), Show Me (demonstration) and Let Me Try (hands on practice). The learning objectives are as follows:

- Create a visit record in RIBridges
- Understand and describe the business process/flow customers' journey
- Claim visit record, as needed, throughout the customer's visit
- Demonstrate customer management techniques (soft skills)
- Close the customer from the visit record when a visit is completed

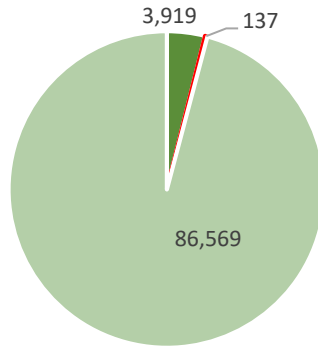
## PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of July 12, 2019, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 5,227. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total is 2,215.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	6	28	34	4	6	10	44
SNAP Non	387	218	605	15	12	27	632
CCAP	21	194	215	6	29	35	250
GPA Burial	1	3	4	0	3	3	7
SSP	0	79	79	0	42	42	121
GPA	32	34	66	75	30	105	171
RIW	103	91	194	26	74	100	294
Undetermined Medical	23	240	263	53	586	639	902
MAGI	25	20	45	25	67	92	137
MPP	4	20	24	0	3	3	27
Complex Med.	13	24	37	46	152	198	235
LTSS	107	986	1093	103	1211	1314	2407
Totals	722	1937	2659	353	2215	2568	5227

## SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 97.9 percent for expedited and 98.5 percent for non-expedited for June 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.



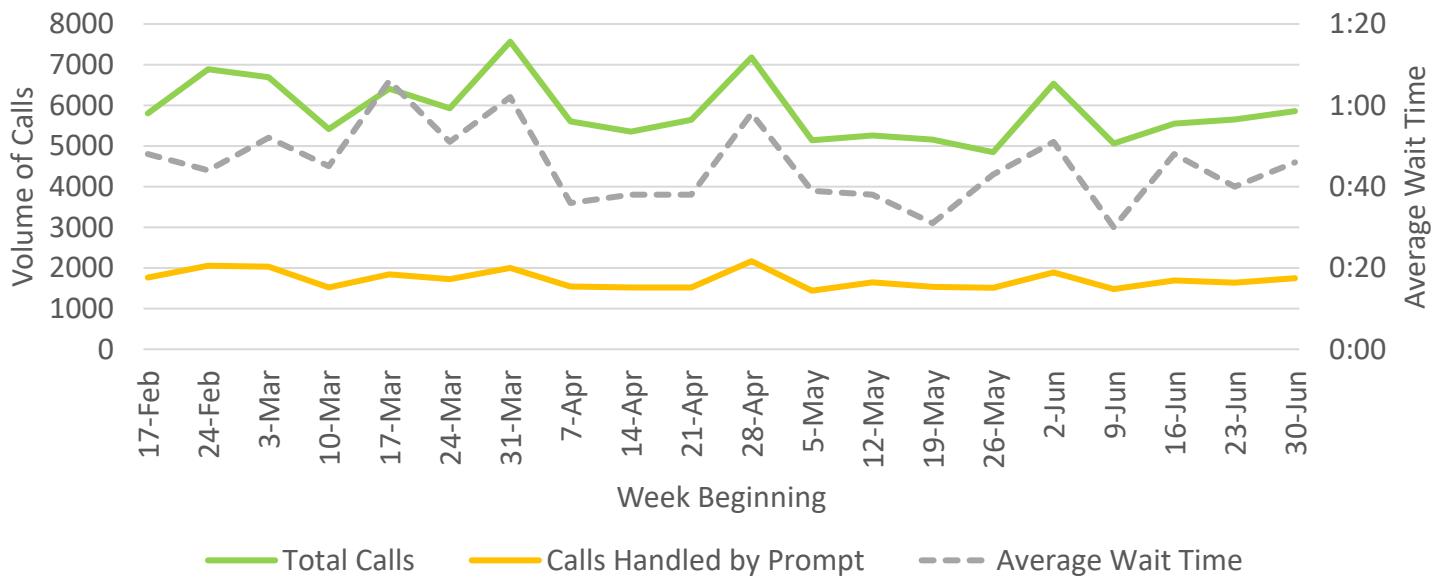
In June 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 86,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population.

Untimely June Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

## CALL CENTER

With just shy of 5,900 calls during the last week in June, the average wait time was just over 45 minutes. The six-week average is 42 minutes, 6 seconds.

### DHS Call Center Summary



## CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between June 16 – July 11, 2019.

\*Please note there was not a batch 28A (2A) due to July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
27 (1)	06/18/2019	692	\$2,773,378
27A (1A)	06/20/2019	15	\$12,473
27B (1B)	06/27/2019	25	\$46,489
28 (2)	07/02/2019	682	\$2,740,030
28A (2A)	-	0	\$0.00
28B (2B)	07/11/2019	41	\$11,354

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (27, 27A & 27B)	732	\$2,832,339
Off-cycle (27A & 27B)	40	\$58,962
Provider off-cycle/total	5.46%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.08%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (28 & 28B)	723	\$2,850,383
Off-cycle (28B)	41	\$110,354
Providers off-cycle/total	5.67%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	3.87%	-

## LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 1211 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 \$20,965,995 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 \$136,383,923. Of that dollar amount, we have collected \$35,220,382 in reconciliation payments so far.

## 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:

- June 17, 2019: Rhode Island legal fees FNS response letter
- July 2, 2019: Special Master's 20<sup>th</sup> report to the courts
- July 3, 2019: DHS Formal Warning Update Response
- July 3, 2017: RI Assigned PER Notice
- July 15, 2019: SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement