



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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July 17, 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 June 16, 2020 – July 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



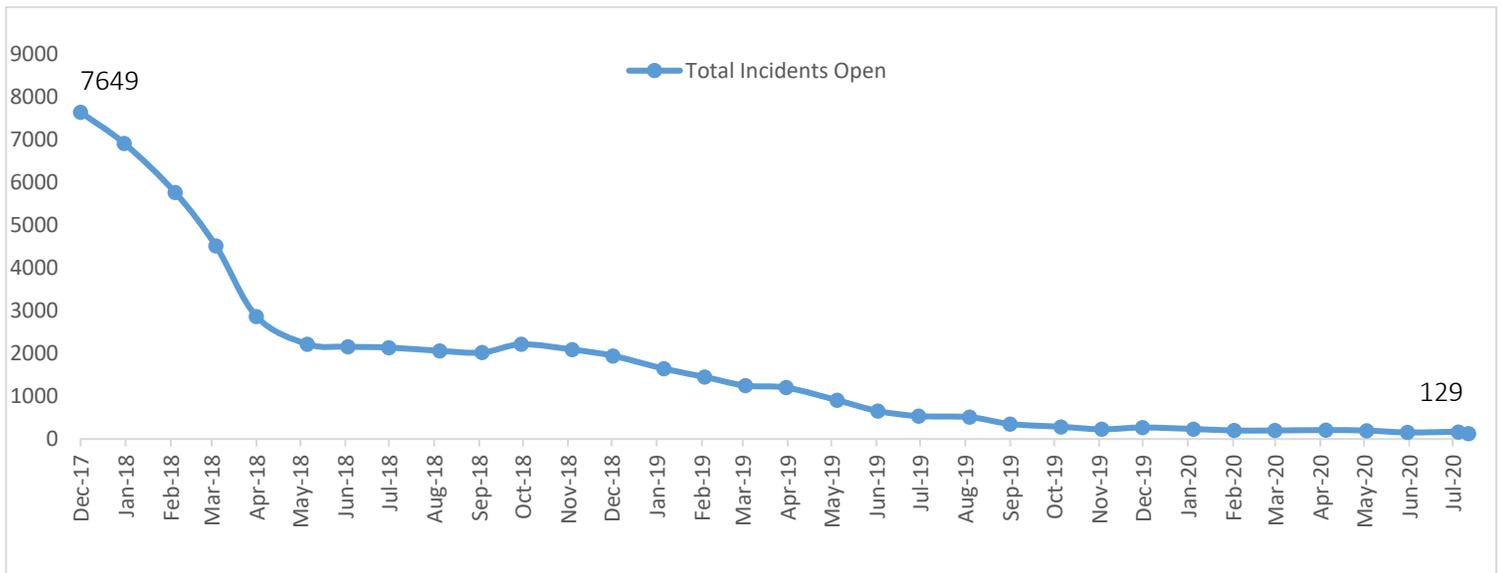
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

July 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 system stabilization under our belt, we continue to focus 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 more than 98 percent since December 2017. As of July 11, 2020, open incidents totaled just 129.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in hiring candidates for critical positions identified. Since June, DHS hired seven employees. This includes:

- 1 Employment and Career Advisor dedicated to the Providence Field Office
- 1 Eligibility Technician dedicated to the Long Term Services and Supports Unit
- 5 Social Caseworkers dedicated to the Long Term Services and Supports Unit

Training Overview

Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
<i>SNAP Training (3 – 1-hour sessions)</i>	6-17-2020 6-19-2020	3	12	0
<i>Case Maintenance (4 – 30 – minutes sessions)</i>	6-22-2020 07-07-2020	2	0	9
<i>Katie Beckett (2 – 3-hour sessions)</i>	06-16-2020 06-18-2020	6	0	43
<i>RIW: Adding a Pregnancy (1-45-minute sessions)</i>	6-23-2020	.75	0	4
<i>Quarterly Meetings (4 – 2-hour sessions)</i>	06-23-2020 06-24-2020 06-25-2020 06-26-2020	8	0	268
<i>RIW: Adding a Newborn (2-45-minute sessions)</i>	06-18-2020	1.5	0	7
<i>GPA Burial (2) (4-30-minutes sessions)</i>	06-16-2020	1	0	17
<i>Bits and Pieces (4-30 minutes sessions)</i>	06-17-2020 06-29-2020 07-07-2020 07-08-2020	2	0	43
<i>Medical Premium Payment (1 – 3-hour session)</i>	07-07-2020	3	0	12
<i>Assisted Living (1-1- hour session)</i>	07-14-2020	1	0	17
<i>Knowledge Transfers (1-15-minutes sessions)</i>	07-14-2020	.5	0	15
Totals		28.75	1	435*

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

Workshop Descriptions

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

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

RI Works (RIW) Mini Trainings: The RI Works Mini-Series is a four-part series designed to provide participants with snapshots of information for RIW non-financial eligibility factors. This E-learning experience will take participants through Key Concepts, RIBridges screens and Demos as they relate to each topic.

- Adding a Pregnancy – participants will learn about 3rd trimester pregnancy as a special circumstance and how this a gateway for eligibility for moms with no children in the home.
- Relationship Requirements – participants will hear how relationship impacts eligibility for RIW and what the term Loco Parentis means. When the relative with whom the child lives with is not the biological or adoptive parent, the term in loco parentis (in place of the parent) is used.
- Adding a Newborn – participants will gain an understanding of what information is collected at the time of birth and why it matters.
- Non-Custodial Parent Information – participants will Learn why collecting NCP data matters and the role of the Office of Child Support Services when collecting NCP information.

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP): The SNAP Training is designed to introduce Eligibility Technicians to SNAP program policy and RIBridges. The virtual sessions are focused on SNAP policy.

Procedures for Assistant Living: This training will inform participants on the process flow for Assisted Living applications, including the role of community and agency partners such as Office of Healthy Aging and Community Action Program (CAP) agencies. Participants will understand the eligibility criteria for Assisted Living and be able to calculate Beneficiary Liability for program participants.

GPA Burial (2): This training focuses on introducing ESSU staff to GPA Burial, including a program overview, a description of the GPA Burial application requirements, and a demo of processing the application in RIBridges. It is the second part of a four-part series.

Quarterly Meetings: The meetings were held virtually by using Skype and Conference Call. The topics covered in the meetings were as follows:

- Operational Changes with COVID-19
- Policy Guidance
- Review of the Family Violence Option Advocacy Program (FVOAP)
- A training provided from the State’s Employee Assistance Program on how to cope with traumatic events.

Bits and Pieces: It is a training for Eligibility Technicians and Supervising Eligibility Technicians. It reviews the concepts across programs on entering income, removing a member, adding a member and customer portal. This shows participants how to enter the information in RIBridges on the listed topics.

Katie Becket: Participants will understand the link between Medicare and Social Security Benefits Participants, and understand payments made for these benefits generally from Social Security. Participants will understand the differences between Medicare A, B, C, D – Supplemental coverage and managed care. Participants will demonstrate an ability to process MPP applications. Participants will understand the eligibility criteria for MPP and verification for eligibility. Participants will understand the FPL categories for each MPP program and eligibility factors.

Medical Premium Payment: Participants will understand the history of the Katie Beckett Program and its impact on disabled children under the Medicaid State plan. Participants will understand the process flow for a Katie Beckett application and the

policy surrounding this program. Participants will view Katie Beckett cases in the Integrated Eligibility System to understand what a Pending and an approved Katie Beckett case will look like when entered.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

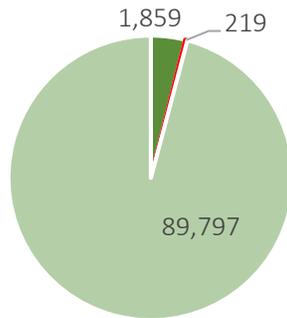
The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of July 14, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 3,154. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting State action is 1,377.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Expedited	15	30	45	2	11	13	58
SNAP Non-Expedited	228	201	429	95	32	127	556
CCAP	11	65	76	0	3	3	79
GPA Burial	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
SSP	0	8	8	0	3	3	11
GPA	5	14	19	11	22	33	52
RIW	54	43	97	14	8	22	119
Undetermined Medical	14	140	154	20	681	701	855
Medicaid-MAGI	1	1	2	37	40	77	79
MPP	7	19	26	2	3	5	31
Complex Medicaid	11	25	36	10	89	99	135
LTSS	40	639	679	15	484	499	1,178
Totals	386	1,185	1,571	206	1,377	1,583	3,154

**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 91.7 percent for expedited and 94 percent for non-expedited for June 2020. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness from April 2018 through June 2020. A rapid response team immediately works to resolve any issues blocking application processing / timeliness to continuously drive improvement to this metric.

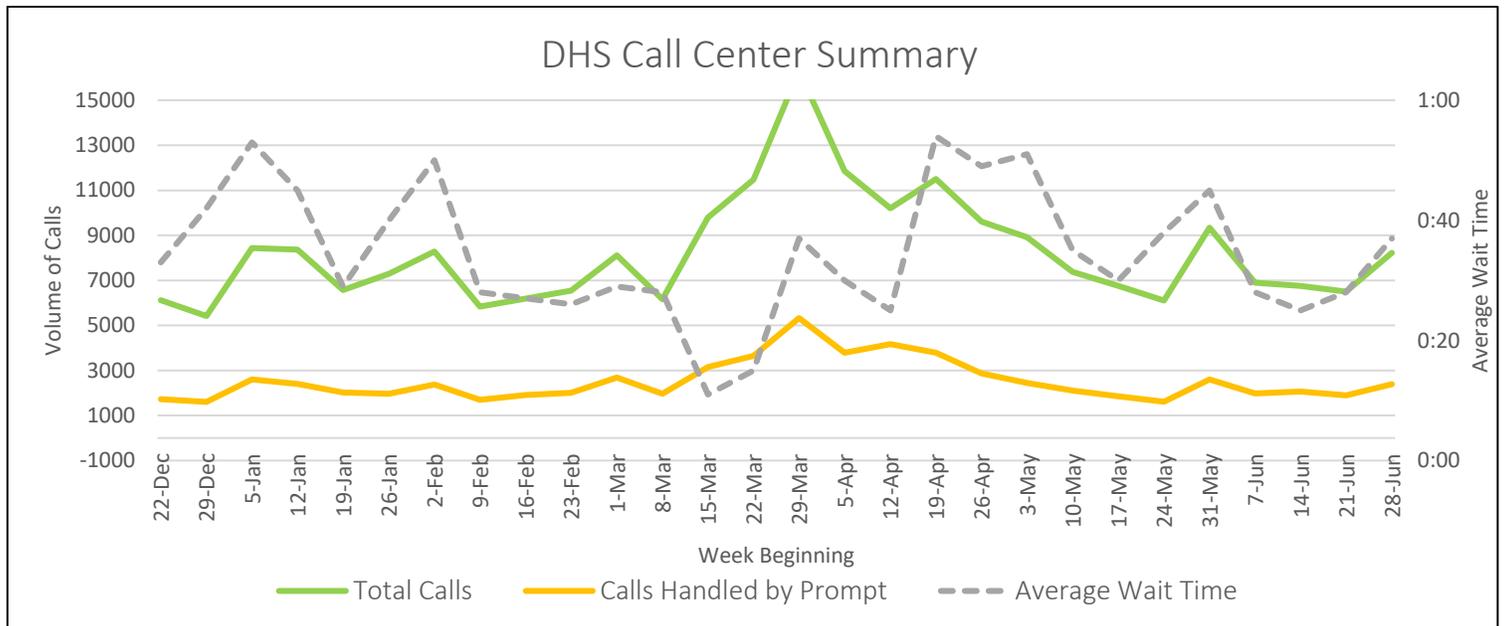


In June 2020, SNAP benefits were issued timely to nearly 89,800 households. Despite the impact of COVID-19, nearly 90 percent of new SNAP Applications were processed timely. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population receiving benefits.

Untimely June Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

In June 2020, the average wait time was 29 minutes, 35 seconds. With the close of lobby facing operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the DHS Call Center capacity was increased to accommodate the interviews and questions for public benefits.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between May 19, 2020 and June 12, 2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
27	06/16/2020	669	\$2,554,828
27A (1A)	06/18/2020	2	\$3,241
27B (1B)	06/25/2020	6	\$6,455
28	06/30/2020	504	\$2,489,031
28A (2A)	07/02/2020	1	\$332
28B (2B)	07/09/2020	1	\$41,340
29	07/14/2020	515	\$2,566,177

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (27, 27A, 27B)	677	\$2,564,524
Off-cycle (27A & 27B)	8	\$9,696
Provider off-cycle/total	1.18%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.38%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (28, 28A, 28B)	506	\$2,530,703
Off-cycle	2	\$41,672
Providers off-cycle/total	.40%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	1.65%	-

- *Batch 27 is for services provided for the weeks of 5/17/20 & 5/24/20, and we paid all providers by enrollments.*
- *Batch 28 is for services provided for the weeks of 5/31/20 & 6/7/20, and we paid re-opened providers by enrollment with enhanced rates.*
- *Batch 29 was just paid. So far, there have been no off-cycle payrolls for this batch.*

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 484 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 \$14.05 million dollars in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2020 so far (Medicaid Expenditures Report will be forthcoming at a later date due to the end of the fiscal year).

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 \$148.9 million we have collected about \$85,430,942 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents approximately 57 percent 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.

- July 6, 2020: Error Rate Penalty Letter