



Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
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July 18, 2018

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 RI Bridges system, which covers the reporting period June 16, 2018 – July 15, 2018. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness;
- 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 RI Bridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Eric J. Beane, Secretary



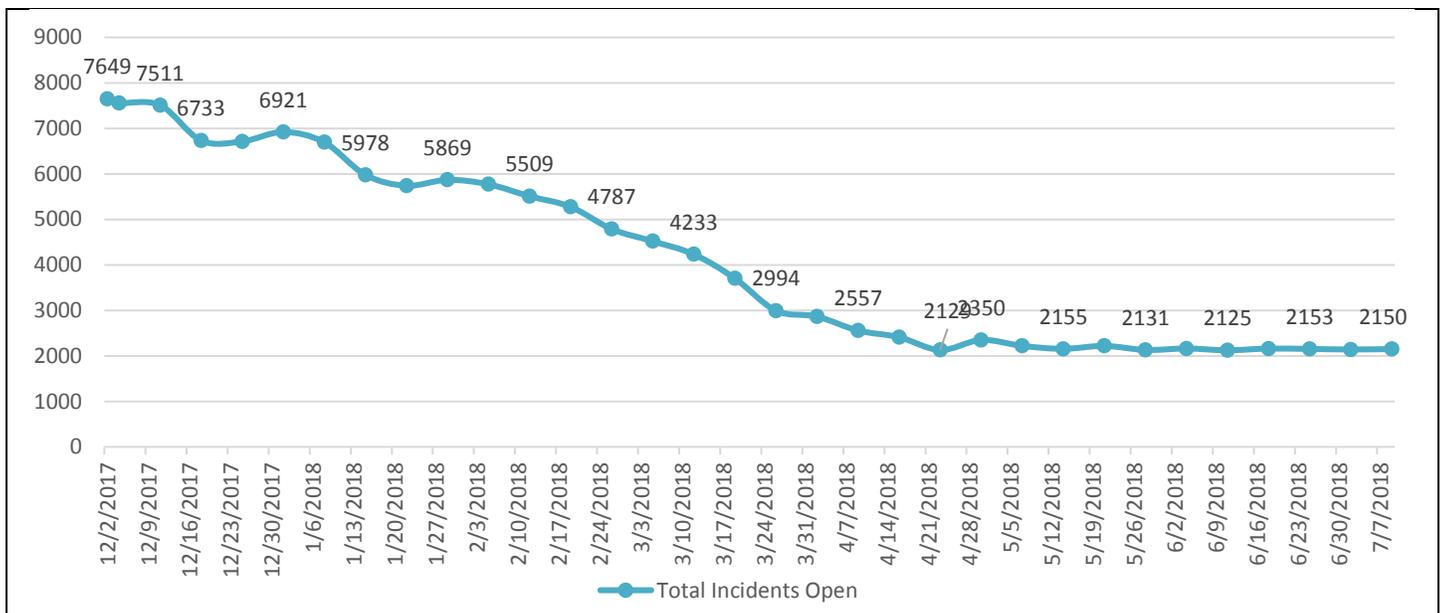
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

JULY 2018

The Executive Office of Health & Human Services coordinates and supports the delivery of programs and services across Rhode Island's health and human service agencies. 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. Progress continues to be made on this system. As we move along, we will continue to put the pieces in place to ensure access to benefits for Rhode Islanders. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

An important measure of system health and stability is the total number of incidents logged related to the RI Bridges system. An incident accounts for any concern experienced in the system that needs to be investigated and, as needed, resolved. IT systems generally require updates and enhancements during their useful life, so an incident number will never hit zero. However, the incident count in RI Bridges should gradually decline over time as the system is stabilized. The number of new and existing incidents logged into RI Bridges continues to decline steadily. As of the end of June, open incidents totaled 2,150 - holding steady since last month.



On July 7, we completed a successful system upgrade that introduced several security and performance improvements. This upgrade will ensure the operating system is fully supported and in compliance with the most up-to-date version recommended by the manufacturer.

DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since May, 19 CSA and four social caseworker positions were filled – as well as a policy and system specialist role. The majority of new CSA and social caseworkers began employment in June. The Department is in the process of hiring an additional 13 CSAs – as well as filling eligibility technician vacancies.

During this reporting period, 18 CSAs completed required training. And all employees were offered a suite of training opportunities, including a nine-day Long-Term Services & Supports course. As a matter of course, new employees participate in a robust orientation program, which includes instruction on RI Bridges.



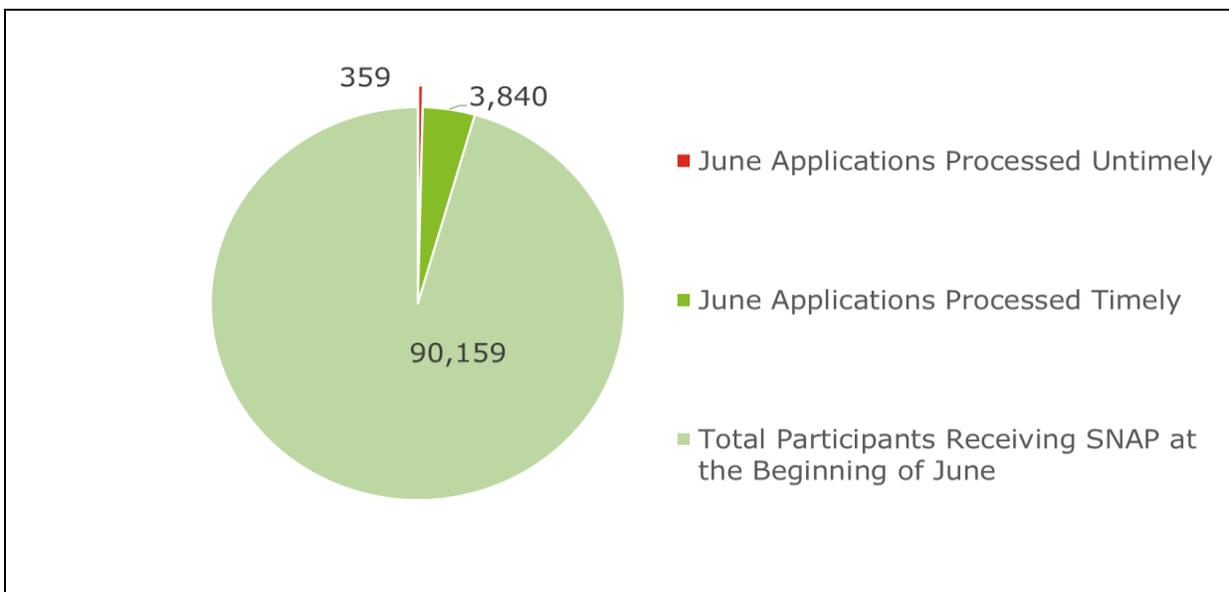
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The number of pending new applications across all programs remains under 5,000 – the result of the priority the State continues to place on ensuring access to benefits. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total 1,392 – an eight percent decrease month-over-month.

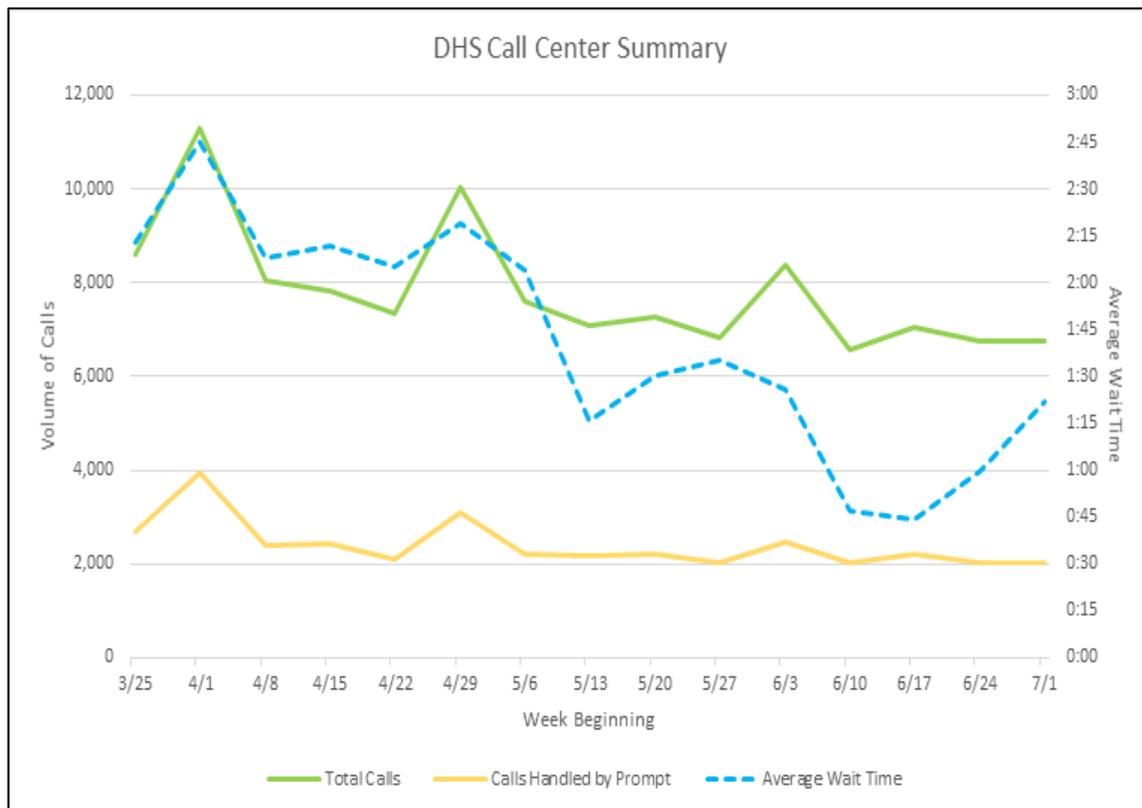
Program Name	Not Overdue			Overdue			Grand Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Expedited	35	8	43	28	8	36	79
SNAP Non-Expedited	367	23	390	29	27	56	446
CCAP	52	29	81	25	5	30	111
GPA - Burial	0	2	2	0	11	11	13
SSP	0	13	13	0	14	14	27
GPA	55	28	83	130	38	168	251
RIW	126	74	200	24	20	44	244
Undetermined Cash	3	1	4	51	12	63	67
Undetermined Medical	5	179	184	51	288	339	523
MAGI	56	48	104	222	138	360	464
MPP	6	124	130	61	77	138	268
Complex Medicaid	27	41	68	110	337	447	515
LTSS	82	710	792	165	417	582	1,374
Grand Total	814	1,280	2,094	896	1,392	2,288	4,382

SNAP TIMELINESS + CALL CENTER SUMMARY

For the month of June, combined timeliness for SNAP applications was 91.5 percent (expedited, 92 and non-expedited, 90.9). This is the third consecutive month of timeliness over 90 percent.



During the last week of June, the DHS Call Center fielded approximately 6,700 calls – down from 7,200 the month prior. Average wait times dropped slightly in June as well.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

See below for the total number of batch payments made to our child care providers.

Batch	Date Issue	# of Providers	Payments
1	6/21/2018	681	\$2,525,692.59
1A	6/22/2018	19	\$25,722.85
1B	6/29/2018	39	\$187,123.43
2	7/5/2018	697	\$2,619,843.80
2A	None Issued	N/A	N/A
2B	7/12/2018	30	\$46,621.89
3	7/17/2018	688	\$2,715,086.15

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 417 overdue LTSS applications pending State action. The State conducted a successful escalation pilot with three LTSS providers to better understand and resolve the issues experienced with payments and eligibility. We are now preparing to expand these escalation meetings to all LTSS providers in Rhode Island.

This month, through the contingency payment process, which ensures nursing and assisted-living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, the State paid out \$4,093,524 (schedule attached). Our payment reconciliation process is ongoing.



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 the RI Bridges system and to secure federal funding through the standard Advanced Planning Document (APD) process. Below is a list of federal correspondence during this reporting period, some of which are part of routine performance audits.

- A RI Semi-Annual Corrective Action plan was sent during this reporting period – in response to an April 16, 2018 FNS letter.
- On June 22, 2018, Director Hawkins responded to Director Contreras at FNS in reference to his letter, dated May 23, 2018. The latter was included in the June 2018 RI Bridges Monthly Update.
- On June 28, 2018, Secretary Beane received a letter from CMS, extending funding through the remainder of federal FY18.
- On June 28, 2018, Director Hawkins received a letter from FNS regarding payment error rates for SNAP.
- On June 29, 2018, Director Hawkins submitted a response on the Electronic Benefits Transfer Corrective Action letter dated May 25, 2018. The latter was submitted as part of the June 2018 RI Bridges Monthly Update.
- On June 29, 2018, Director Hawkins received a letter from FNS, approving Rhode Island's IAPDU-As Needed.
- On July 2, 2018, DHS received authority from FNS to waive the SNAP time limit for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) in 26 Rhode Island communities.
- On July 3, 2018, the Court accepted the Special Master's 7th report.
- On July 13, 2018, Director Hawkins submitted the 2018 SNAP Application Timeliness Report and related attachments.

