



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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December 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 November 16, 2019 – December 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

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



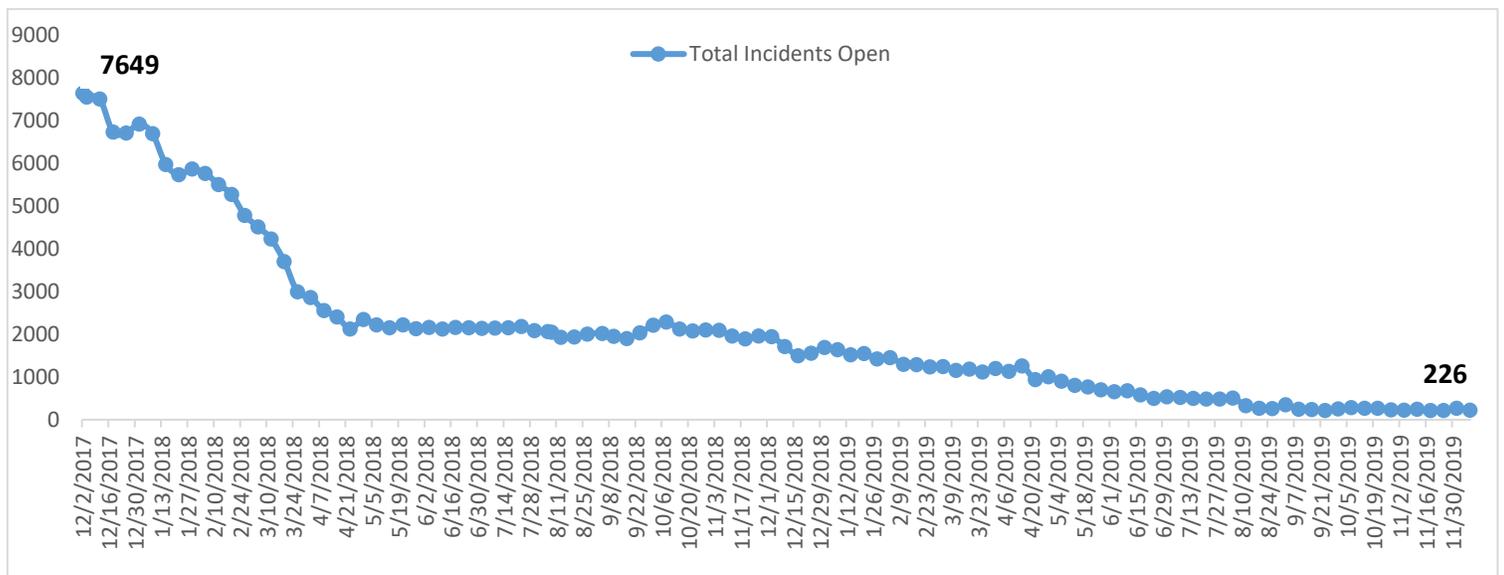
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

December 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 7,423 incidents. As of November 30, 2019, open incidents totaled 226 – a 97 percent drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since November, DHS hired nine employees. They are:

- 3 Eligibility Technicians
- 2 Supervising Eligibility Technicians
- 1 Customer Service Aide
- 1 Customer Support Specialist
- 1 Assistant Administrator dedicated to Child Care Licensing
- 1 Implementation Aide dedicated to Child Care Licensing

Training Overview

Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
New Hire Orientation	12-2-2019	12	2	0
	12-4-2019			
Basic Navigation	12-5-2019	6	1	0
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Training	11-21-2019	30	0	6
	11-22-2019			
	11-25-2019			
	12-3-2019			
Collections, Claims, and Recovery Unit (CCRU) Pilot Training	12-6-2019	3	0	23
	12-9-2019			
Quarterly Meetings	12-11-2019	12	0	315
	12-12-2019			
	12-13-2019			
STAR Supervisor Training	11-20-2019	12	0	18
	12-6-2019			
Knowledge Transfer Training (ETs and CSA)	12-5-2019	12	0	62
	12-6-2019			
	12-9-2019			
	12-10-2019			
Totals		69	3	424

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

New Hire Orientation

This period we held one New Hire Orientation and an introduction to RIBridges - Basic Navigation.

Current Staff Overview

Over the last month, staff members were offered training in several areas. New and current staff were offered training on Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and updates to the functionality to RIBridges. The newly developed Collections, Claims, and Recovery Unit (CCRU) training was piloted for feedback before rolling out next month, and the quarterly meetings covered several important topics, including Mandatory Reporting, Safe Sleep and SNAP Education.

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.

Basic Navigation: This is a one-day course which presents basic navigation skills to new DHS employees with the goal of helping workers through their early familiarization process with the RIBridges system.

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP): The SNAP Workshop is designed to introduce Eligibility Technicians to SNAP program policies and their interaction with RIBridges. The workshop approach combines instructor led trainings, demonstrations, and hands-on exercises to provide a complete and integrated learning experience.

Quarterly Meetings: DHS holds quarterly meetings with staff members to:

- Inform staff about upcoming changes
- Provide program updates
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Show appreciation for our staff members

CCRU Training: General and complex operational and policy procedures as it pertains to CCRU eligibility staff and their daily operations. Description of how the unit functions independently and how it connects to the field offices and to DOA's Fraud Unit.

STAR Supervisor Training: This training was designed by supervisor for supervisors. The goals of the trainings are as follows:

- Instill the DHS Guiding Principles in everyday work
- Support supervisors by enhancing leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills
- Build professional capacity through the DHS workforce
- Create tools that encourage and support a culture of continuous improvement
- Understand what constitutes good supervision
- Incorporate the DHS guiding principles in everyday work and decision making
- Resetting from past experiences and looking to the future of DHS
- Identifying behavioral styles

Knowledge Transfer Training: DHS field staff members will be provided training on changes within RIBridges that will be deployed on December 14, 2019.

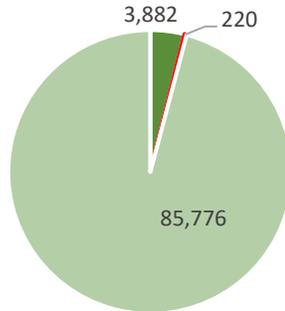
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of December 11, 2019, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,702. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total is 1,909.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	6	23	29	0	6	6	35
SNAP Non	353	249	602	36	22	58	660
CCAP	5	55	60	0	2	2	62
GPA Burial	0	1	1	1	5	6	7
SSP	0	49	49	0	36	36	85
GPA	34	35	69	49	23	72	141
RIW	84	66	150	13	67	80	230
Undetermined Medical	40	347	387	72	688	760	1,147
MAGI	40	34	74	44	60	104	178
MPP	7	37	44	0	4	4	48
Complex Medicaid	12	19	31	31	114	145	176
LTSS	230	668	898	153	882	1,035	1,933
Totals	811	1,583	2,394	399	1,909	2,308	4,702

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 96.6 percent for expedited and 97.1 percent for non-expedited for November 2019. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

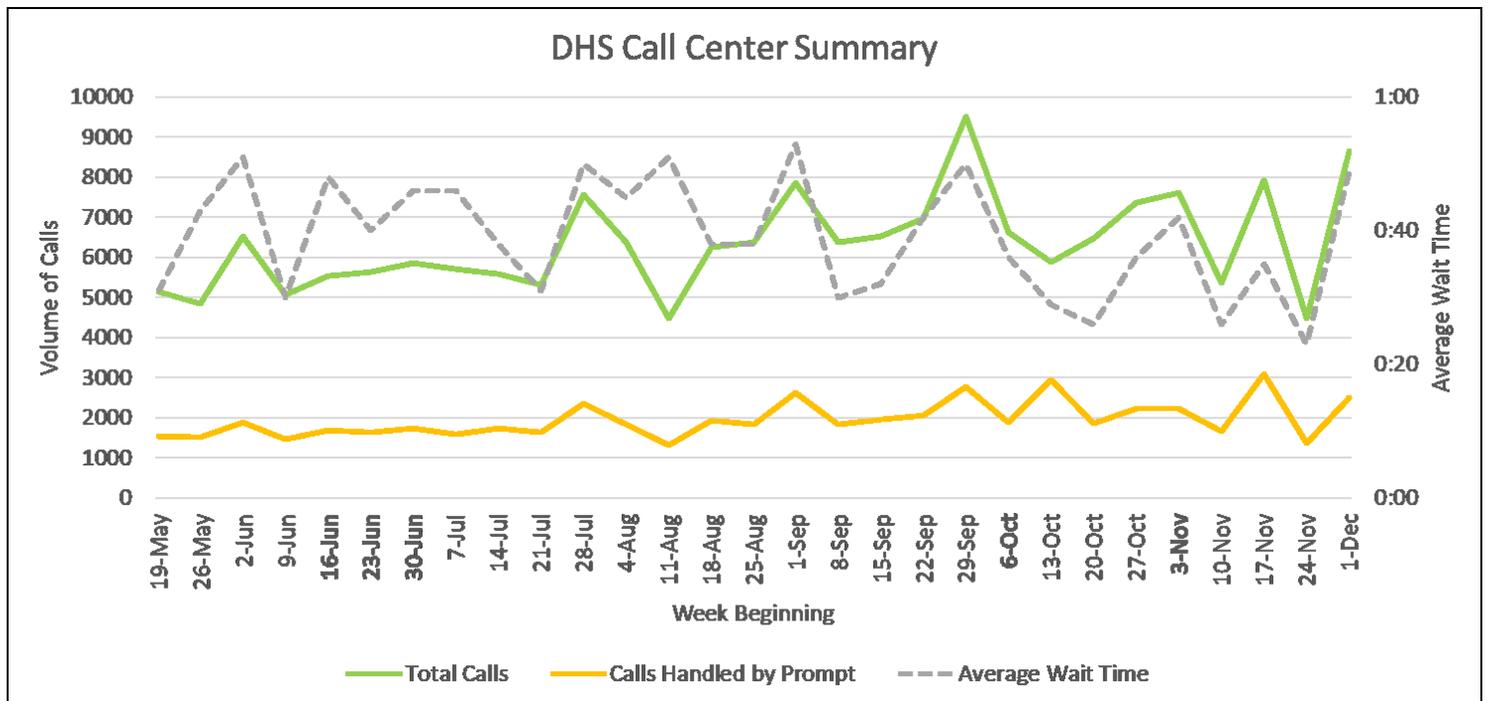


In November 2019, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 85,000 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population.

Untimely November Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

With more than 8,651 calls during the first week of December 2019, a first of the month week that followed Thanksgiving, the average wait time was 49 minutes, 36 seconds. The six-week average is 35 minutes, 13 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between 11/19/2019 – 12/12/2019.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
12	11/19/2019	670	\$2,662,351
12A	11/21/2019	16	\$9,406
12B			\$0.00
13	12/03/2019	658	\$2,719,487
13A	12/05/2019	17	\$52,257
13B	12/12/2019	36	\$89,531

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (12 & 12A)	686	\$2,671,756
Off-cycle (12A)	16	\$9,406
Provider off-cycle/total	2.33%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	0.35%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (13, 13A)	711	\$2,861,276
Off-cycle (13A & 13B)	53	\$141,789
Providers off-cycle/total	7.45%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	7.96%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 882 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Our payment reconciliation process remains ongoing as we continue to meet with long term care facilities across the state. In total, we have collected about \$67,882,136.41 billion in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities.

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 meet regularly to review progress on RIBridges. There wasn't any federal correspondence during this reporting period.