



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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June 29, 2022

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, 2022 – June 15, 2022. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement
- RI Department of Human Services (DHS) Employee Training
- Pending Applications
- SNAP Timeliness and Lobby/DHS Call Center Summaries
- CCAP Off-Cycle Payments
- 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. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yvette Mendez".

Yvette M. Mendez, Acting Director
RI Department of Human Services



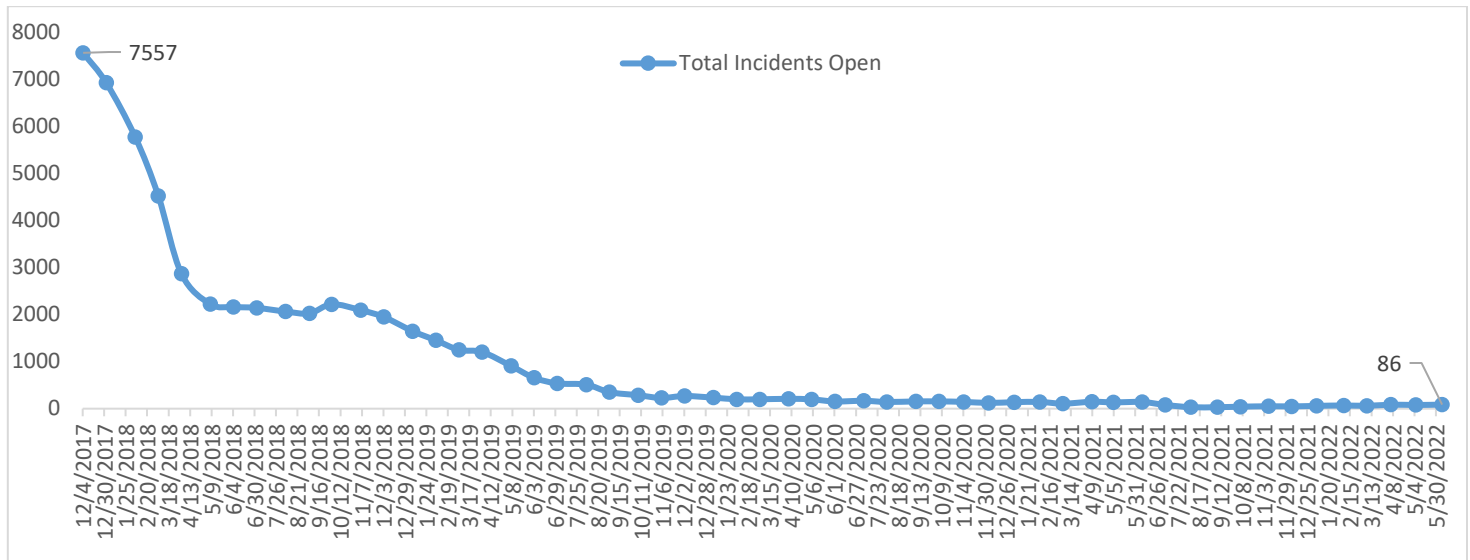
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

June 2022

Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of the work on the RI Bridges system 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 customer, worker or provider) has **decreased by 99 percent** since December 2017. As of June 6, 2022, there were **86** open incidents.



DHS STAFFING

DHS continues to make progress in hiring candidates for critical positions identified. Since May, DHS hired 9 employees. This includes:

- 1 Assistant Administrator, Community and Planning Service
- 2 Principal Clerk
- 2 Eligibility Technician
- 1 Customer Service Aide
- 2 Employment and Career Advice
- 1 Senior Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist

DHS TRAINING

Training Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
Office Hours: Medicaid	5-17-2022 5-18-2022	2	0	14
Interface Walkthrough: SOLQ (One one-hour session)	6-9-2022	1	0	15
New Hire Orientation (Three full day trainings)	6-7-2022 6-8-2022 6-9-2022	11.5	5	0
LTSS Mini ET Training (Two full days)	6-9-2022 6-10-2022	12	0	16
Medicaid Renewal Knowledge Transfer (Two one-hour sessions)	6-14-2022 6-15-2022	2	0	36
Multicultural Competency Training Series: Module One (One -one and a half-hour session)	6-7-2022	1.5	0	6
ORR Knowledge Transfer (One one-hour session)	6-14-2022	1	0	17
May Quarterly Meeting (Four two-hour sessions)	5-17-2022 5-19-2022 5-24-2022 5-26-2022	8	0	182
	Totals	39	5	286*
Rhode Island Learning Center Trainings (These trainings are self-directed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “DHS FTI, HIPAA, and Confidentiality” -- 674 staff enrolled • “Telephonic Signature” -- 119 staff enrolled • “Telephonic Signature -Elderly and Disabled Adults (EAD)” -- 40 staff enrolled • “Asset Verification System (AVS)” -- 119 staff enrolled • “Customer Portal” -- 420 enrolled • SNAP Reinvestment Updates -- 417 enrolled • “Visit Record” -- 419 enrolled • “RIW Mini-Series Completed” -- 99 enrolled • “Scheduling Refresher” -- 335 enrolled 	Combined total of 1,563* staff trained on LMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 508 Completed ‘FTI’ • 40 Completed ‘Telephonic Signature’ • 21 Completed ‘Telephonic Signature EAD’ • 86 Completed AVS • 294 Completed ‘Customer Portal’ • 185 Completed ‘SNAP Reinvestment Training’ • 232 Completed ‘Visit Record Training’ • 57 Completed the ‘RIW Mini-Series’ • 204 Completed ‘Scheduling Refresher’ 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Medicaid Renewal Refresher” -- 279 enrolled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 153 completed ‘Medicaid Renewal refresher’
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* This number is duplicate and based on number of staff enrolled to attend training.

Workshop Descriptions

Interface Walkthrough: State On-Line Query System (SOLQ): This session provides a breakdown of how to understand data from the SOLQ interface and how the interface can be used to verify information in RIBridges. This walkthrough will include a general overview of where to enter the information into the RIBridges Unearned Income Screen.

New Hire Orientation: The goal of the session is to provide new employees with all the pertinent information they need to begin working at DHS and to familiarize them with organizational policies and procedures. Besides introducing employees to the RIBridges system, participants learn:

- The organizational hierarchy
- DHS’ mission and vision
- A broader understanding of DHS programs and services
- Policies and procedures regarding payroll, dress code, and other practices
- the LEAN initiative
- Rules, regulations and laws surrounding Federal Tax Information (FTI), Civil Rights, Voter Registration, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Basic navigation and data collection methods in RIBridges

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.

Medicaid Office Hours - Medicaid Office Hours are designed to be an open forum to ask system and policy questions related to actual medical cases you are processing. We invite you to bring specific cases and/or questions for discussion with a Clinical Training Specialist.

Knowledge Transfer Training: This workshop provides an overview of the Interface Review QRG associated with the upgrades.

Multicultural Competency Training Series: The Multicultural Competence Modules offer contextualized, scaffolded anti-oppression educational workshops for RIDHS employees. There are four foundational modules that introduce participants to frameworks, concepts, and strategies so DHS personnel are better equipped to advance its diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic goals individually and collectively. The workshops are offered virtually. Each session meets for 1.5-2 hours. The format for the sessions includes facilitated dialogue with individual and group activities.

Medicaid Renewals Knowledge Transfer: This workshop will provide a refresher of the policy and procedures surrounding the following Medicaid renewal categories: Community Medicaid, LTSS (Long Term Services and Supports) and MAGI (Modified Adjusted Gross Income). The focus is to ensure that the field offices are prepared for the reinstatement of Medicaid Renewals post PHE (Public Health Emergency). Each document is reviewed, user impact is identified, and participants are given the opportunity to ask questions. A copy of each document will be emailed to participants prior to the Knowledge Transfer.

LTSS Mini Eligibility Technician Training: In this in-person two-day training session, participants will expand their knowledge to include processing LTSS applications. The training will provide an overview of nursing home, assisted living, and home-based community services. The overview is in addition to hands on exercises in the training environment to simulate application processing in RIBridges.

Rhode Island Learning Center Trainings: These trainings are self-directed. Staff are enrolled through the Learning Management System.

- **FTI/HIPAA:** This is a required training for all DHS employees. This refresher training covers the federal regulations and internal procedures that staff need to follow in protecting customer information.
- **Telephonic Signature/Telephonic Signature - EAD:** To work new documents such as applications, recerts, interims (with a change) and employment plans over the phone, it is imperative that either a signed document is present in the case file OR the worker records a telephonic signature while the customer is on the phone.
- **Asset Verification Training System:** This training provides guidance to staff processing EAD and LTSS requests for Medicaid determinations at the time of application and renewals.
- **SNAP Reinvestment:** This course is designed as a refresher for operations staff on SNAP six-month interim processing. The intent of this course is to review best practices for interim processing.
- **Customer Portal:** This training provides a walk-through of the front and back end of the Customer Portal.
- **Visit Record Refresher:** This course will provide an overview of the Visit Record functionality in RIBridges. The purpose of the training is to increase knowledge on the Visit Record function in RIBridges that will be included in all field offices, enhancing consistency in our processes by appreciating the customer journey.
- **Scheduling Refresher:** This course provides a review of how to use the scheduling functionality in RIBridges.
- **Medicaid Renewal Refresher:** This training provides an overview on how to process Medicaid enrollment.

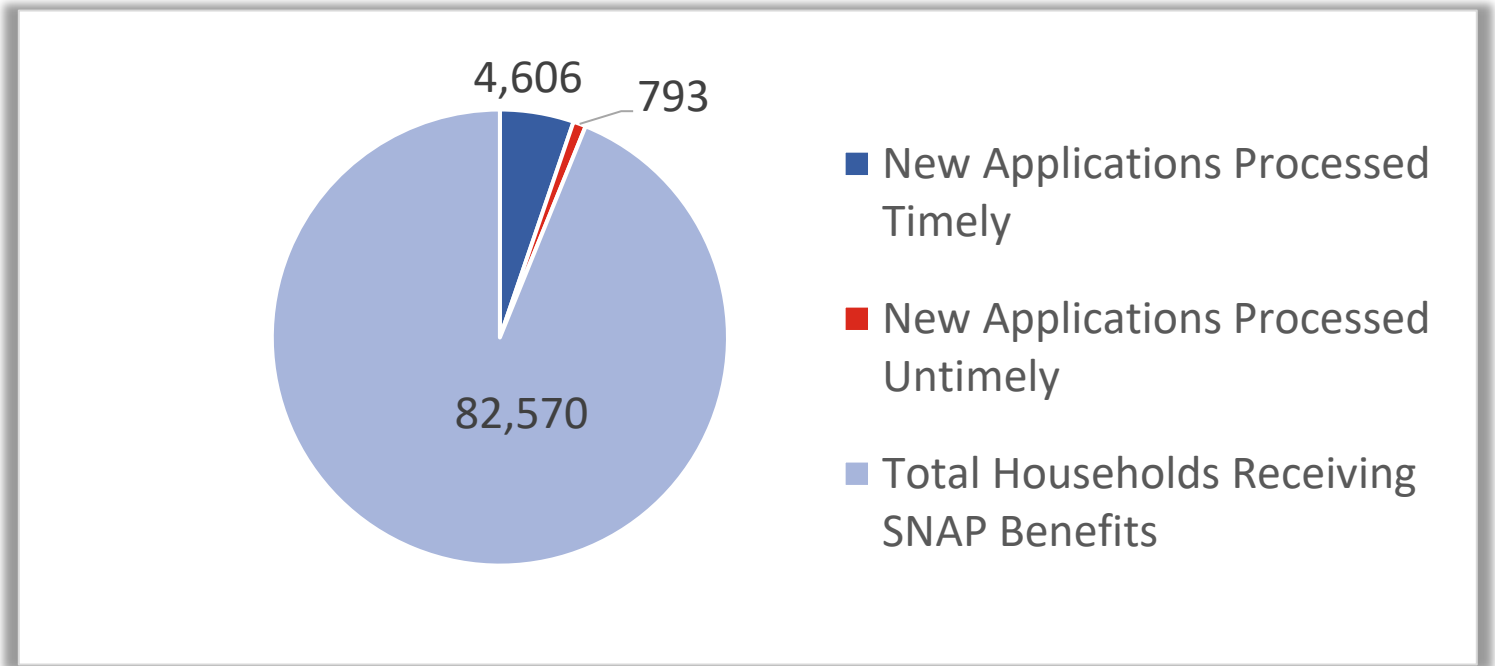
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of **June 8, 2022**, the number of pending new applications across all programs was **6,091**. The total of overdue, pending applications awaiting State action was **2,268**.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Expedited	82	345	427	9	43	52	479
SNAP Non-Expedited	460	657	1117	31	23	54	1171
CCAP	16	295	311	5	20	25	336
GPA Burial	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
SSP	0	47	47	0	3	3	50
GPA	14	44	58	4	10	14	72
RIW	108	237	345	12	6	18	363
Undetermined Medical	30	444	474	123	1597	1720	2194
Medicaid-MAGI	27	39	66	95	103	198	264
Medicare Premium Payments	9	309	318	38	185	223	541
Medicaid Complex	8	27	35	27	241	268	303
LTSS	14	263	277	3	37	40	317
Grand Total	768	2708	3476	347	2268	2615	6091

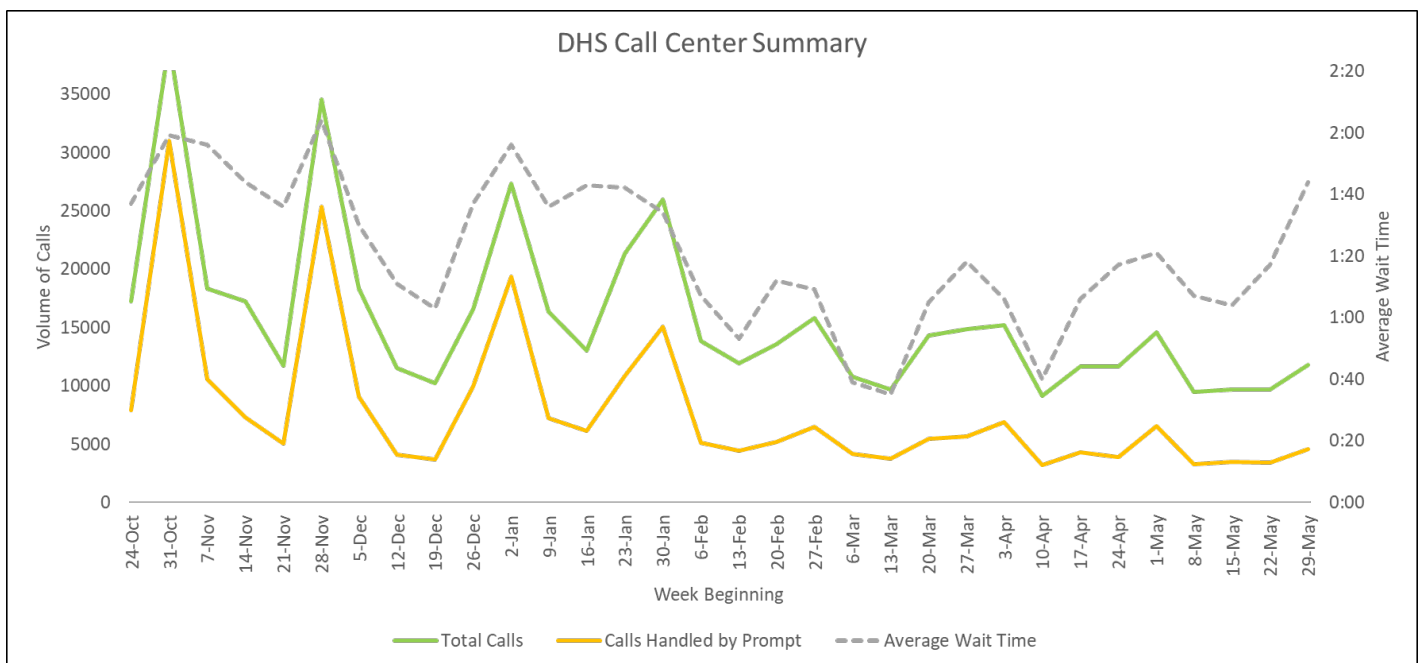
SNAP TIMELINESS

Despite the impact of COVID-19, **82,570** households received benefits in May 2022. About **85** percent of new SNAP applications were timely processed. About 15 percent of applications were processed untimely.



CALL CENTER

For the period between **April 24, 2022, through the week that started on May 29, 2022**, the average wait time to DHS staff was about **1 hour and 18 minutes**. DHS recognizes this average wait time is longer than it should be due to pressure points DHS is experiencing referenced in recent testimonies. The busiest week at the Call Center was the week beginning May 1, 2022, and there were **14,566** calls then.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between May 16, 2022 through June 15, 2022.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
24	5/5/2022	546	\$2,232,962.12
24A	5/6/2022	12	\$17,969.82
24B	5/13/2022	26	\$75,527.29
25	5/19/2022	541	\$2,210,333.36
25A	5/20/2022	15	\$36,189.88
25B	5/27/2022	28	\$85,466.83
26	6/2/2022	526	\$2,111,445.59
26A	6/3/2022	23	\$70,072.90
26B	6/10/2022	29	\$72,081.84

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (24, 24A & 24B)	584	\$2,326,459.23
Off-cycle (24A & 24B)	38	\$93,497.11
Provider off-cycle/total	6.96%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.19%	-
	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (25, 25A & 25B)	584	\$2,331,990.07
Off-cycle (25A & 25B)	43	\$121,656.71
Provider off-cycle/total	7.95%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	5.50%	-
	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (26, 26A & 26B)	578	\$2,253,600.33
Off-cycle (26A & 26B)	52	\$142,154.74
Provider off-cycle/total	9.89%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	6.73%	-

UPDATE ON RECERTIFICATIONS PROCESS

The State has verified that Medicaid renewals were appropriately initiated by the RIBridges 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 wasn't any communication during this reporting period.