February 18, 2026

The Honorable Patricia A. Serpa
Chair, House Committee on Oversight
State House, Room 101
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the state's most recent update on the RIBridges system. Beginning February 2026, this report will cover the reporting period of the prior month it is due. This change will help ensure the agency is providing the most relevant operational updates with a focus on transparency and efficiency as the agency aims to share important updates related to the Payment Error Rate Improvement Plan.

This document contains monthly updates for the period between January 1 through January 31 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
- SNAP Overpayment Recovery and PER Status
- CCAP Batch 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 should you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Kimberly Merolla-Brito
Director
RI Department of Human Services

RIBridges: Monthly Update
February 2026

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 RIBridges system is an important part of the equation. System stabilization and efficiency remains a priority for DHS, and we continue our focus on ensuring full system compliance. This report provides an update based on currently available data detailing our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

At this time, there are currently 331 open incidents reported. These incidents refer to technical bugs when the system does not operate as expected for the DHS customer, staff member, or provider. While the agency will continue to closely monitor open incidents, it is important to note that there are open incidents throughout the year even when the system is operating as normal. Any change to program policies–that in turn affect eligibility processes–must be incorporated into the system which will typically show temporary increases in open incidents. These incidences give personnel an insight into where fixes can be made to improve the customer experience as cases cycle through their redeterminations. While there is currently a sustained, higher than usual number of open incidents due to H.R. 1 related changes, the current number of open incidents still represents a steep decline from December 2017, when the RIBridges system first launched.
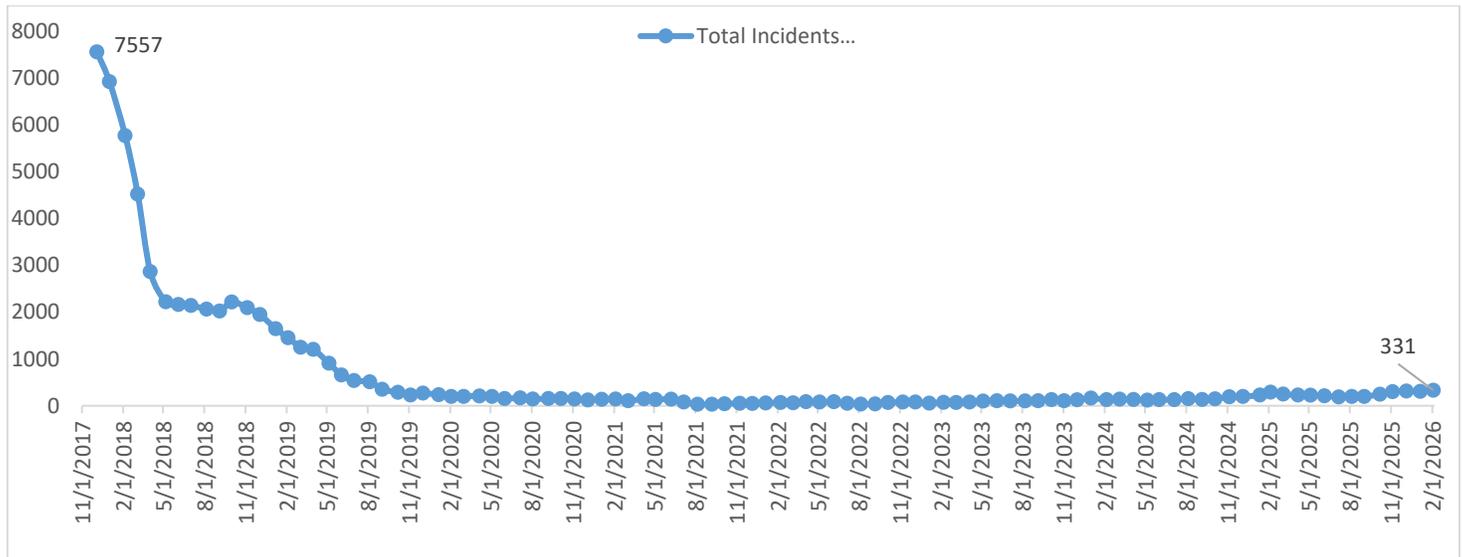
DHS STAFFING

DHS continues to progress in hiring candidates for identified critical positions. Since the last report in January, DHS has hired 5 employees who have started in their new roles. These include:

- 1 Eligibility Technician I
- 1 Eligibility Technician II (Call Center)
- 1 Customer Support Specialist
- 1 Customer Service Aide
- 1 Supervising Eligibility Technician

DHS Training

Training Topic	Training Date	# Of Training Hours	# Of New Staff	# Of Current Staff
SNAP Accuracy: Standard Utility Allowance Skills Lab (One full-day session)	1-16-2026	5	0	13
SNAP Learning Series (9 five full-day session)	1-20-2026 thru 2-2-2026	45	0	19
Rhode Island Works Office Hours (One one-hour session)	1-21/2026	1	0	18
Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Office Hours (One one-hour session)	1-21-2026	1	0	1
Medicaid Office Hours (One one-hour session)	1-21-2026	1	0	21
Pre-Authorization Coaching for Eligibility Technician (One two-hour session)	1-21-2026	2	0	18
Community Medicaid Learning Series (Five (full-day sessions)	1-26-2026 thru 2-2-2026	25	0	13
DHS Program Quarterly Meetings (Nine three-hour sessions)	1-27-2026 thru 2-2-2026	27	0	368
Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Learning Series (Two full-day sessions)	2-3-2026 thru 2-5-2026	10	0	16
SNAP Policy Office Hours (Three one-hour sessions)	2-4-2026; 2-9-2026; and 2-12-2026	3	0	35
Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Medicaid Learning Series (Five full day sessions)	2-6-2026 thru 2-13-2026	25	0	14
Interface Walkthrough: New Hire (One two-hour session)	2-6-2026	2	0	11
Interface Walkthrough: SOLQ (One two-hour session)	2-13-2026	2	0	10
	Totals	**149**	**0***	**557***
Note: the asterisk number includes projected attendance to trainings that have been scheduled, and staff are registered to attend				

Self-Directed Learning: Learning Management System: Active		
Course Title	# of staff Enrolled	# of staff Completed
Civil Rights Annual Training 2025	481	344
EBT Card Security Procedure 2025	457	319
D-SNAP: Disaster SNAP 2025	460	334
FTI-2025	545	483
HIPAA, and Confidentiality 2025	546	475
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	443	271
On Demand Interpreting for ASL	434	260
Voter Registration 2025	494	394
CCAP Program Policy Refresher	355	302
Clerical SNAP Connect Knowledge Transfer	146	82
Community Medicaid: Supplemental AVS Video	354	247
Customer Relationship Management	160	99
CSA Role Update Knowledge Transfer	151	108
ERP Knowledge Transfer	1041	486
Domestic Violence 101	411	307
Customer Portal Refresher – Part 1	450	327
Customer Portal Refresher – Part 2	447	298
Healthy Rhode Mobile App – Part 1	450	330
Healthy Rhode Mobile App – Part 2	447	316
Asset Verification System	333	209
Interfaces: The Work Number Knowledge Transfer	367	240
Medicaid Refresher: MEQC CAP_2025	258	189
Medicaid Renewal Refresher_2022	239	157
OCSS: Child Support Refresher Process	357	268
Knowledge Transfer: March 2025 – Release 7.49	395	299
Knowledge Transfer: April 2025 – Release 7.49.1	394	279
Knowledge Transfer: June 2025 - Release 7.79.2 & 7.50	391	252
Knowledge Transfer: July & August 2025 - Release 7.50.1 & 7.50.2	386	241
Knowledge Transfer: September 2025 – Release 7.51	381	229
Knowledge Transfer: October 2025 – Release 7.51.1	381	233
Knowledge Transfer: December 2025 – Release 7.52	380	213
RIBridges: Case Maintenance	450	318
RIBridges: Case Notes Refresher	459	303
RIBridges: Pre-Authorization Case Review - ET	273	236
RIBridges: Pre-Authorization Case Review - Sup	78	62
RIBridges: Scheduling Refresher	477	345
RIBridges: Visit Record	527	335
SNAP Accuracy: Shelter & Utility Policy Refresher	321	221
SNAP Accuracy: Shelter & Utility RI Bridges Refresher	321	177
SNAP: Waivers & SNAP Interview Requirements	332	283
SNAP Accuracy: Income Accuracy – Part 1: Prospective Budgeting	341	234

Rhode Island Learning Center Trainings (These trainings are self-directed)

* This number is duplicated. Our participants are enrolled in various trainings.

	SNAP: Eligibility Determination	232	175
	SNAP: ABAWD Knowledge Transfer	382	251
	SNAP: ABAWD Refresher	372	286
	SNAP: ESAP	446	320
	Customer Relations	54	36
	Performance Feedback for Supervisors	82	51
	Time Management	67	44
	VCC: Knowledge Transfer	335	265
	VCC: LTSS Telephonic Signature	98	61
	VCC: Telephonic Signature	362	262
	VCC: Call Back Functionality	157	126
	VCC: SNAP Connect	341	244
	Totals	**19,041***	**13,226***

Self-Directed Learning: Learning Management System: Active			
	Sept. 22 Knowledge Transfer 7.40 (retired)	471	226
	Sept. 22 Knowledge Transfer 7.41 (retired)	460	222
	Nov. 22 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	391	185
	Dec. 22 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	387	204
	March 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	389	208
	April 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	402	202
	June 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	407	153
	July 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	398	137
	August 2023 Knowledge Transfer(retired)	398	136
	Sept. 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	395	248
	Dec. 2023 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	361	247
	Jan. 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	340	242
Inactive/retired courses *** This number is duplicated. Our participants are enrolled in various trainings.**	February 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	348	254
	March 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	333	247
	April 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	352	263
	May 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	349	274
	June 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	345	271
	July 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	349	288
	August 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	348	265
	September 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	347	276
	October 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	346	273
	December 2024 Knowledge Transfer (retired)	342	246
	Medical Renewal Refresher (inactive for updates)	277	185
	RIW Miniseries (inactive for updates)	205	145
	VCC: EAD Telephonic Signature (inactive for updates)	237	33
	SNAP: Reinvestment Updates (retired)	348	171
	Active Shooter, Run, Hide and Fight 2024 (retired)	972	584
	Civil Rights Annual Training 2024 (retired)	972	643
	Emergency Action Plan 2024 (retired)	972	635
	D-SNAP: Disaster SNAP 2024 (retired)	416	231

	FTI-2024 (retired)	887	679
	HIPAA, and Confidentiality 2024 (retired)	856	490
	Claims Collection Recovery Unit (retired)	343	211
	Totals	**14,743***	**9,074***

Training Descriptions

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Accuracy: Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) Skills Lab for Eligibility Technicians: This skills lab focuses on the federal Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) changes, offering participants simulated cases that progress in complexity and allow them to apply the recent policy updates. Through these case simulations, attendees will learn to apply the updated SUA standards, troubleshoot common issues, and ensure compliance with federal guidelines.

SNAP Learning Series: The SNAP Training Series is designed to introduce new eligibility technicians to SNAP program policies and the RIBridges system. Through this series, participants learn about the application process, navigating the menus in RIBridges, reviewing eligibility results, updating cases, interviewing customers and more.

Rhode Island Works (RIW) Office Hours: This open hour session provides staff with an open forum to ask general system, policy, or case specific questions related to RI Works cases they are processing.

Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Office Hours: LTSS office hours are led by Rose Leandre, LTSS Administrator. LTSS social case worker supervisors, eligibility technicians, and supervisors who are processing LTSS applications are encouraged to attend. Participants are encouraged to bring questions related to LTSS case processing.

Medicaid Office Hours: Medicaid Office Hours are designed to be an open forum to ask system and policy questions related to non-LTSS Medicaid cases being processed. Participants are invited to bring specific cases and/or questions for discussion with a clinical training specialist.

Pre-Authorization Coaching for Eligibility Technicians: This session provides staff with a walk through of the pre-authorization process and case processing expectations while also identifying error prone cases. An open discussion follows the training to identify eligibility technician feedback that may be considered for future enhancements related to pre-authorization reviews.

Community Medicaid Learning Series: The Community Medicaid Learning Series provides participants with an overview of the Medicaid hierarchy, an introduction to Community Medicaid policy and process, a working knowledge of RIBridges screens relating to Community Medicaid, and insight into related inter-agency units. This learning series includes Community Medicaid Processing Lab time where participants apply learning concepts in the RIBridges Production environment with support from a cross–agency team made up of staff development (trainer) and operations (supervisor) with the goal of providing trainees real hands-on processing experience. Participants must attend all sessions to get the full training scope of the knowledge and skills offered. This learning series is offered in-person via full-day sessions. This learning series is targeted to new eligibility technicians and employees who have not attended Community Medicaid Training since the RIBridges roll-out in 2016.

DHS Program Quarterly Meeting: The January DHS Program Quarterly Meeting led by Associate Director of Policy & Programs, Kimberly Rauch, provides a comprehensive overview and strategic discussion on various aspects of the organization's programs and services.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Office Hours: CCAP Office Hours provide staff with an open forum for staff to ask general system, policy or case-specific questions related to CCAP cases.

Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) Policy Office Hours: This session provides participants with information about upcoming SNAP changes. The session also provides an open forum for staff to discuss general policy questions related to SNAP case processing.

Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Learning Series: The MAGI training series provides participants with an introduction to MAGI policy and RIBridges screens relating to MAGI. This training is composed of four sessions, and participants must attend all sessions to get the full training scope of the knowledge and skills offered. This training is offered in-person via six-hour sessions. This training is targeted at new eligibility technicians and employees who have not attended MAGI training since the RIBridges roll-out in 2016.

Interface Walkthrough: New Hire: This virtual session provides an overview of the data found in the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). The session covers when this information is used to verify data in RIBridges, and which programs allow use of this interface.

Interface Walkthrough: SOLQ: This virtual session provides a breakdown of the data from the SOLQ interface and how the interface can be used to verify information in RIBridges. This walkthrough includes a general overview of where to enter the information into the RIBridges.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

DHS continues to prioritize the efficient processing of applications through improvements to technology, processes, and communications, with the goal of reducing any application backlog across all programs.

Currently, the number of <u>overdue applications awaiting state action</u> is 1,470 (see table below) reflecting a decrease from the prior month. However, while the total pending caseload has increased, the chart below highlights that many applications still require customer action before DHS can process their application within federal timeliness standards, which differs by program.

It is important to know that most of the increase in total pending caseload is attributable only to new applications, specifically for undetermined medical and non-expedited SNAP. To provide a more accurate picture of overdue applications, DHS is currently tracking pending customer cases versus those pending state action to identify impacts from process changes. The volume of cases fluctuates from month-to-month, and implementation of new federal SNAP changes may partially contribute to an overall increase in pending caseload as the same staff are trained to determine eligibility for all programs. Please know the pending caseload figures in the chart are snapshots in time that also currently aligns with DHS applying new eligibility rules related to SNAP, consistent with H.R. 1 changes to able-bodied adults, work requirements, and immigration rules.

DHS has notified families impacted by H.R. 1 changes and has shared information about the federal changes through the website, social media, phone and other avenues. DHS will continue to leverage staycovered.ri.gov/snap-updates as a one-stop resource to keep customers and the general public apprised of timely updates and other available resources.

Through all of these major changes, DHS has demonstrated its operational resilience through initiatives such as **SNAP Connect** and Technology Adoption Day, which collectively help minimize administrative disruptions as much as possible. In addition, as staff continue to learn and apply new federal policy to eligibility, they will become more efficient and move the state overdue applications downward that will be viewable in time series data that is not yet available.
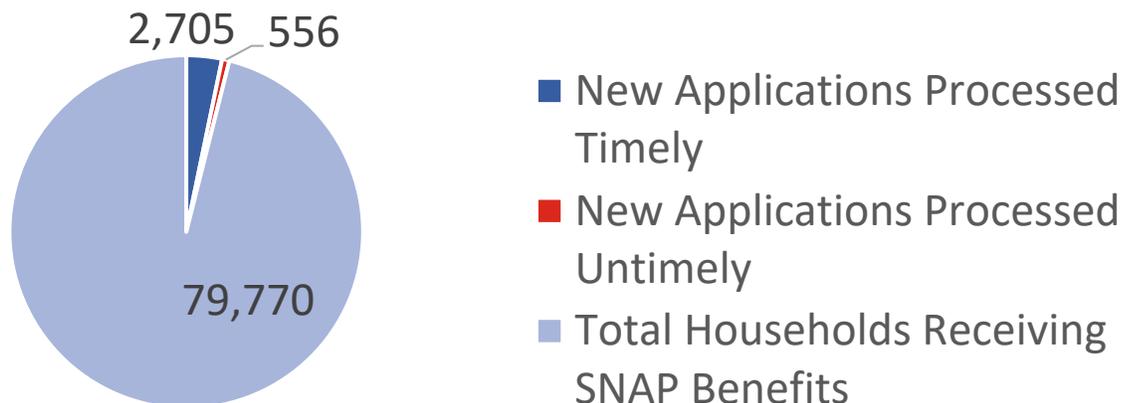
Operational and digital tools such as SNAP Connect and Tech Adoption increasingly support customers' needs by providing flexible interview scheduling, education around resources, and other support to help ensure uninterrupted access to benefits.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	Grand Total
SNAP Expedited	149	174	323	27	71	98	421
SNAP Non-Expedited	556	750	1306	116	72	188	1,494
CCAP	72	106	178	19	76	95	273
GPA - Burial	0	23	23	0	1	1	24
SSP	13	15	28	1	0	1	29
GPA	58	26	84	2	2	4	88
*RIW	203	59	262	25	25	50	312
Undetermined Medical	482	201	683	276	424	700	1,383
Medicaid - MAGI	18	17	35	37	61	98	133
Medicare Premium Payments	90	183	273	56	193	249	522
Medicaid Complex	23	121	144	49	404	453	597
LTSS	43	329	372	13	141	154	526
Grand Total	1,707	2,004	3711	621	1,470	2,091	5,802

This is an estimate of pending applications for RI Works and is subject to change.

SNAP TIMELINESS

In **January 2026**, there were 79,770 households that received benefits. For new SNAP applications in January, approximately 83% (2,705) were processed timely. Approximately 17% (556) of new SNAP applications were processed untimely. Importantly, cases needing to be processed that are awaiting customer or state action (such as completion of interviews or receipt of requested documents) may become overdue, leading to the untimely authorization of benefits that is not reflective of the overall customer experience.

2,705   556

- New Applications Processed Timely
- New Applications Processed Untimely
- Total Households Receiving SNAP Benefits

79,770

-see next page-

SNAP OVERPAYMENT RECOVERY

DHS has resumed the collection of SNAP overpayments due to Inadvertent Household Error (IHE), Agency Error (AE), and Intentional Program Violations (IPV). While collections are part of a process that had been paused since 2017, DHS has been directed by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to resume collections in instances of overpayments that would, if left unaddressed, lead to higher payment error rates for the agency. While initial notices have been issued to households, most collections date back to September 2023. Data regarding overpayments is available below:

		Agency Error (AC)		Household Error (CE)		Grand Total
		SNAP	TANF	SNAP	TANF	
Jan-25	No. of Claims	35	0	50	2	87
	Transaction Amount	$923.00		$1,882.00	$70.00	$2,875.00
Feb-25	No. of Claims	35	1	52	2	90
	Transaction Amount	$945.00	$41.00	$1,936.00	$70.00	$2,992.00
Mar-25	No. of Claims	34	2	45	4	85
	Transaction Amount	$997.00	$82.00	$1,443.00	$140.00	$2,662.00
Apr-25	No. of Claims	31	2	43	4	80
	Transaction Amount	$840.00	$82.00	$1,317.00	$140.00	$2,379.00
May-25	No. of Claims	28	2	43	6	79
	Transaction Amount	$745.00	$85.00	$1,492.00	$182.00	$2,504.00
Jun-25	No. of Claims	27	4	53	4	88
	Transaction Amount	$731.00	$145.00	$1,980.00	$132.00	$2,988.00
Jul-25	No. of Claims	27	4	53	4	88
	Transaction Amount	$714.00	$146.00	$1,783.00	$132.00	$2,775.00
Aug-25	No. of Claims	24	3	55	4	86
	Transaction Amount	$600.00	$117.00	$1,845.00	$132.00	$2,694.00
Sep-25	No. of Claims	25	4	72	8	109
	Transaction Amount	$647.00	$146.00	$2,023.00	$268.00	$3,084.00
Oct-25	No. of Claims	29	3	67	5	104
	Transaction Amount	$743.00	$117.00	$2,680.37	$151.00	$3,691.37
Nov-25	No. of Claims	30	2	63	4	99
	Transaction Amount	$780.00	$88.00	$2,050.00	$120.00	$3,038.00
Dec-25	No. of Claims	25	3	76	4	108
	Transaction Amount	$594.00	$150.00	$2,676.00	$155.00	$3,575.00
Jan-26	No. Of Claims	35	0	48	2	85
	Transaction Amount	$923	0	$1,779	$70	$2,772
Grand Total	No. of Claims	385	30	720	53	1,188
	Transaction Amount	$10,182.00	$1,199.00	$24,286.37	$1,762.00	$38,029.37

The chart above represents the amount in collections for SNAP and RIW due to household and agency error, respectively. These collections are required per federal guidance and is in alignment with the goal to reduce payment error rates as mandated in H.R. 1. All data included is preliminary and subject to change. The causes for errors vary, including reasons relating to court orders, provider errors, fraud, etc. As the agency begins gathering more information, DHS will update this section to provide greater clarity as needed.

SNAP Payment Error Rate (PER) Improvement Plan

This section provides a monthly update on implementation progress and performance related to PER, as required in the Enacted FY 2026 Budget. This section includes key indicators on:

- Payment timeliness and accuracy;
- The status of PER-related technology modernization and system improvements;
- Staff training, readiness, and change management activities; and,
- Customer service enhancements; and any correspondence with federal partners related to SNAP PER.

Collectively, these updates are intended to promote transparency, minimize administrative burden, and align PER oversight with the State's fiscal, operational, and policy planning cycles.

Accuracy and Timeliness

DHS continues to advance its SNAP PER Improvement Plan with a focus on both payment accuracy and timely case processing. DHS monitors QC monthly payment accuracy data alongside historical trends to identify error drivers and prioritize corrective actions. DHS uses case error rate breakdowns and historical monthly trend analysis to inform policy clarification, training needs, and system enhancements.

Operational timeliness remains strong across SNAP application and recertification workflows. Average processing times for expedited and non-expedited SNAP applications continue to meet federal timeliness standards, supporting both program integrity and customer access to benefits. DHS monitors overdue cases closely and differentiates delays attributable to customer action versus agency processing to ensure accurate interpretation of timeliness metrics.

Technology Modernization Efforts

Technology modernization remains a core component of the PER reduction strategy. DHS continues implementation planning tied to the SNAP PER Improvement Plan, including development of a Performance Monitoring Framework, Business Process Redesign (BPR) readiness activities, and governance structures to oversee system-related improvements.

During this reporting period, DHS leadership formally approved several system enhancement initiatives to enter the 2026 system runway for scoping, design, development, and phased implementation. These initiatives are intended to strengthen decision support, reduce data entry and budgeting errors, and address QC error drivers at the point of entry and action. Approved initiatives include:

- Enhanced contextual help text within the Customer Portal and Worker Portal to clarify verification requirements, reporting expectations, and key eligibility definitions;
- Development of a Navigator Tool to guide eligibility staff through high-risk policy areas (e.g., household composition, earned income, shelter deductions) with structured prompts and embedded policy references; and
- Expanded BOT integration within RIBridges to automate routine inquiries, support discrepancy identification, and reduce unnecessary task generation associated with common customer-reported changes.

These initiatives will be scoped in alignment with PER priorities and incorporated into the 2026 technology roadmap. Implementation sequencing will be informed by QC findings, operational risk areas, and system capacity planning.

In parallel, DHS is operating during the statewide Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP/Workday) transition led by the Department of Administration (DOA). While ERP reporting refinements are ongoing, this transition has not

disrupted core eligibility operations, caseload processing, or call center performance. DHS is coordinating closely with DOA to ensure continuity of data reporting and anticipates improved efficiency and visibility while system refinements are being completed.

Staff Training and Readiness

Staff readiness and training remain central to PER reduction. DHS continues to invest in workforce onboarding, coaching, and skill development for eligibility staff. Newly hired Eligibility Technician Supervisory Approvals have completed required new-hire training and are actively contributing to case processing, with productivity increasing month over month as staff progress through structured training and assessment milestones.

In addition, DHS is reinforcing performance quality through a targeted blended training approach designed to build staff confidence and competence. This approach ensures staff not only understand policy requirements but can consistently apply them in complex, real-world scenarios-strengthening accuracy, consistency, and long-term program integrity.

The model includes structured huddles (awareness), self-directed learning management system courses focused on policy and eligibility systems (knowledge), and focused skills labs (practice) that emphasize accurate eligibility determination, customer engagement, and proper documentation and verification.

To date, 99 huddles have been delivered on Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), with 148 staff completing the associated knowledge check and achieving an average passing score of 78%. Additionally, 195 staff have completed the SUA policy refresher, 152 have completed the system refresher, and 86 have completed the skills lab. DHS formally adopted its SNAP PER Change Management Plan during this reporting period. The plan establishes a structured implementation framework grounded in:

- Clear governance and defined decision rights across policy, operations, QA, training, and technology teams;
- Structured communication cadence to ensure consistent messaging to supervisors and frontline staff;
- Early stakeholder engagement and listening sessions;
- Integration of QC findings into training and policy clarification;
- Defined feedback loops between QA, operations, and system design; and
- Ongoing performance monitoring tied to measurable outcomes.

DHS also launched a formal Quality Assurance (QA) meeting structure to operationalize these principles. QA meetings serve as a cross-functional review forum to analyze QC findings, tag root causes, assign corrective actions, and monitor implementation progress. This structure strengthens accountability and ensures that identified error trends are directly connected to policy clarification, training reinforcement, and upcoming system enhancements. As 2026 system initiatives move into design and development, training and change management activities will be sequenced in advance of deployment to ensure staff readiness and consistent application at rollout.

Customer Service Enhancements

Customer service enhancements continue to support PER reduction by improving access, reducing churn, and minimizing avoidable errors. The statewide expansion of SNAP Connect allows customers to complete interviews at times convenient to them, contributing to reduced call wait times and improved compliance with verification requirements.

Additionally, DHS has initiated modernization efforts in partnership with DOA to procure and deploy call center technologies to enhance service delivery, operational efficiency, and overall customer experience. The agency is exploring solutions such as Natural Language Understanding (NLU), chatbots, agent assist tools, and comprehensive call analytics. By integrating these tools, DHS aims to improve the accuracy and consistency of responses to customer inquiries, while also empowering customers to use self-service options to access case information whenever they need to update their case.

Federal Correspondence

During this reporting period, DHS continues routine engagement with federal partners regarding SNAP administration and payment accuracy. There is no federal correspondence related to SNAP PER penalties to report for January 2026. DHS remains committed to transparency and will promptly report any future federal communications related to PER as part of this monthly oversight framework.

Ongoing PER Governance and Next Steps

DHS, in partnership with Human Services Group, continues implementation of the SNAP PER Improvement Plan, including completion of the governance charter, implementation plan, change management plan, and performance monitoring framework. These deliverables establish the foundation for sustained PER reduction, monthly performance tracking, and clear accountability across policy, operations, training, and technology functions. Near-term priorities include:

- Formal scoping of approved 2026 system enhancement initiatives;
- Establishment of project timelines and governance checkpoints;
- Continued QA meeting reviews tied to measurable corrective action tracking; and
- Ongoing monitoring of timeliness and accuracy indicators to inform sequencing of technology development efforts.

CALL CENTER

The volume and duration of calls for the month of January 2026 resulted in an approximate wait time of **24 minutes**.

The overall Call Center wait time remains below 30 minutes due to the implementation of the SNAP Connect initiative, which allows customers to complete interviews at a time that is most convenient for them. As of this report, the SNAP Connect pilot has been implemented across all cities and towns. This initiative as well as other enhancements have aided DHS in maintaining stable operations when presented with challenges at the federal level. Collectively, SNAP Connect, Technology Adoption Days, and IVR enhancements have improved customer service by reducing abandonment rates, promoting one-touch processing, and keeping wait times low across all queues. DHS hopes to continue building on optimized processes, workforce training, and innovative technological solutions that allow DHS to remain flexible, ensuring excellence in service delivery.

As part of our efforts to improve efficiency – in alignment with federal payment error rate requirements – the agency is prioritizing call center modernization efforts that will also improve service delivery for customers. DHS has established a cross-agency Call Center and Policy Engine Modernization Working Group to plan for, identify and procure the technology enhancements needed to boost worker accuracy, improve customer service, and lower the PER. These modernization efforts seek to create more efficient and customer-centric services while ensuring responsible stewardship of public funds.

The busiest week at the Call Center is the **week beginning February 1, 2026, with over 31,000 calls** to DHS. While this is a higher than usual volume for calls, it aligns with increased call volume typically seen near the beginning or end of a month. Additionally, this month's report coincides with the implementation of federal SNAP eligibility changes due to H.R. 1. Changes to federal SNAP eligibility have been communicated to customers by direct mail, shared on staycovered.ri.gov/SNAP-updates, and posted on DHS's social media channels. DHS continually monitors and reviews Call Center data to effectuate appropriate operational changes.
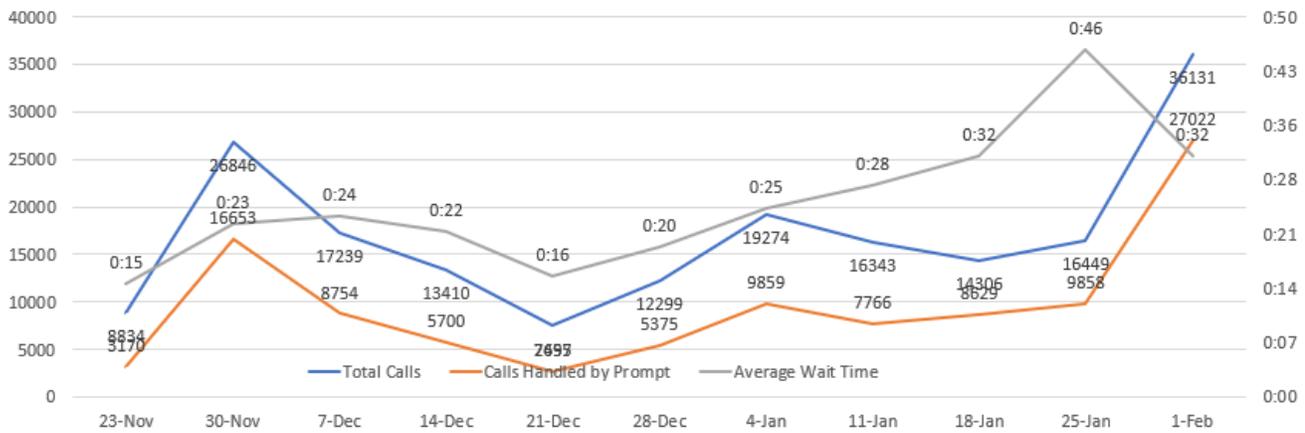
CCAP BATCH PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers for the current reporting period through January 30, 2026.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Total Amount
16	1/8/2026	532	$2,462,459.41
16A	1/9/2026	35	$80,966.11
16B	1/16/2026	60	$356,659.12
17	1/22/2026	504	$2,250,458.02
17A	1/23/2026	12	$26,945.76
17B	1/30/2026	41	$113,707.91

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (16, 16A &16B)	627	$2,900,084.64
Off-Cycle (16A &16B)	95	$437,625.23
Providers off-cycle/total	17.86%	
Payments off-cycle/total	17.77%	

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (17, 17A, & 17B)	557	$2,391,111.69
Off-Cycle (17A & 17B)	53	$140,653.67
Providers off-cycle/total	10.52%	
Payments off-cycle/total	6.25%	

CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service are important partners to the state. DHS continues to communicate regularly during the monthly touchpoints to review progress made.

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