



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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Office of the Director

Kimberly Merolla-Brito

February 18, 2025

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, which covers the reporting period January 16, 2025 – February 15, 2025. In light of the RIBridges data breach, this document contains monthly updates accessible to us as of February 12 and focuses 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 Batch Payments
- Correspondence with Federal Partners (if any)

We greatly value your advocacy on behalf of the communities we serve and your ongoing interest in the RIBridges system's performance and progress. Should you have any questions or require additional clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Important Note on the Cybersecurity Incident

As of this writing, it is important to note new applicants and current customers can access RIBridges. The worker portal remains online and efforts are ongoing in bringing full system functionality to RIBridges as part of the phased restoration of the system.

As previously shared, the RIBridges system managed by Deloitte experienced a significant cybersecurity breach in December 2024, leading to an offline status approximately one month. This incident remains under active investigation by the State Police and FBI. The CyberAlert.RI.gov website and the RIBridges Data Breach Hotline (1-833-918-6603) continue to be available as resources to keep the public informed with the latest updates, community resources, and guidance related to the breach.

To ensure continuity of operations and service delivery, DHS promptly transitioned to paper-based processing for all benefit programs when the system was taken offline. This measure ensured applications continued to be processed in compliance with federal requirements. To support that approach, DHS made critical benefit forms available online for download to help customers complete and submit necessary documents. Importantly, through the proactive measures taken by the State, the following actions were completed:

- Benefits for SNAP and RI Works beneficiaries were issued successfully February 1, 2025
- Disbursements occurred for other programs following their usual schedule.
- There were over 87,000 SNAP households that received benefits timely.

While the teams continue to work towards full system functionality, it should be noted there was a decrease in new pending applications, reduced overall wait times for the call center, and extended hours offered for the Call Center since the last report. Please note that caseload and other operational data in this report is preliminary and may be subject to change because the phased recovery process is complex. Additional updates will be shared as the system restoration progresses.

We appreciate your partnership and commitment during this challenging time. Your support is critical as we continue to prioritize the security and well-being of our community.

Respectfully,



Kimberly Merolla-Brito
Director
RI Department of Human Services



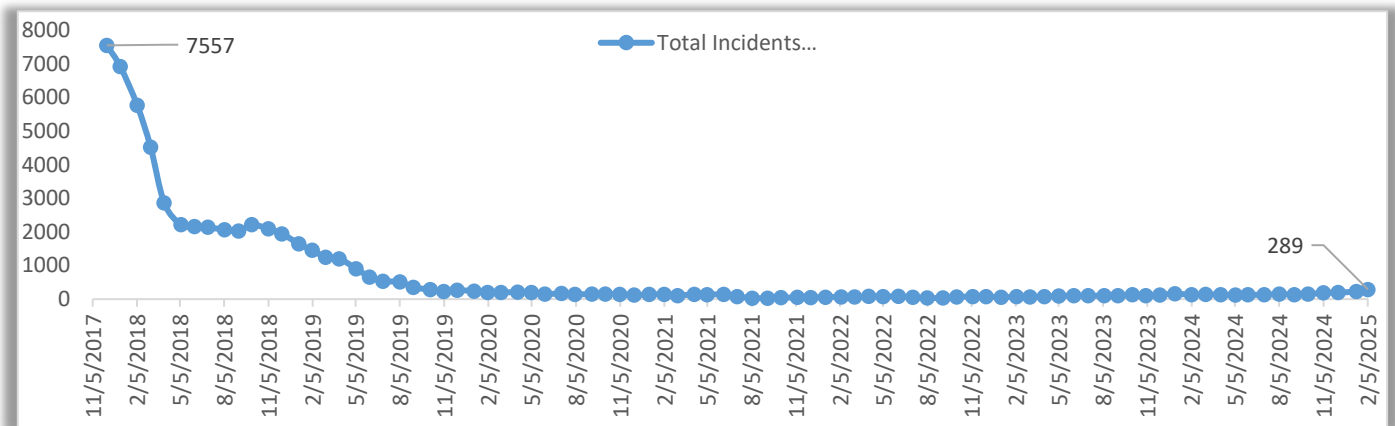
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

February 2025

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 in light of the RIBridges data breach in December 2025. This report provides an update based on currently available data detailing our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

At this time, the number of new and existing incidents is elevated due to the phased approach to bring the RIBridges system back online. There are currently 289 open incidents, which refers to technical bugs when the system does not operate as expected for the DHS customer, staff member, or provider. These incidents are used to make improvements and fixes to the system. While the agency will continue to closely monitor open incidents, it is important to note that even when the system is functioning as intended there are still open incidents that occur from system updates and other enhancements. The current number of open incidents also still represents a steep decline from December 2017, when the RIBridges system first launched. As progress is made in the phased restoration of RIBridges, the agency anticipates technical discrepancies to be discovered and addressed that will help bring the system back to normalcy.



DHS STAFFING

DHS continues to progress in hiring candidates for identified critical positions. From January 2024 through December 2024, DHS filled 199 positions through a combination of promotional opportunities, lateral transfers, and new hires. Since the last report in January, DHS has hired 19 employees who have started in their new roles. These include:

- 9 Eligibility Technician I
- 1 Principal Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist
- 1 Employment and Career Advisor
- 3 Social Caseworker
- 3 Eligibility Technician III
- 1 Supervising Eligibility Technician
- 1 Customer Support Specialist

DHS TRAINING

Training Topic	Training Date	# Of Training Hours	# Of New Staff	# Of Current Staff
<i>Rhode Island Works (RIW) Learning Series (Four full day sessions)</i>	1-16-25 thru 1-23-25	20	6	7
<i>Policy Date Breach Walkthrough (Two two-hour sessions)</i>	1-17-25	4	8	82
<i>Medicaid Office Hours (One one-hour session)</i>	1-22-25	1	5	11
<i>Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Office Hours (One one-hour session)</i>	1-22-25	1	0	8
<i>Rhode Island Works (RIW) Office Hours (One one-hour session)</i>	1-22-25	1	1	11
<i>Long Term Services Support (LTSS) Social Caseworker (SCW) Learning Series (Four full day sessions)</i>	1-23-25 thru 1-28-25	20	0	2
<i>Prisoner Match Interface Walkthrough (One two-hour session)</i>	1-24-25	2	4	4
<i>Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Learning Series (Five full day sessions)</i>	1-24-25 thru 1-31-25	25	6	8
<i>Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Office Hours (One one-hour session)</i>	1-29-25	1	0	2
<i>New Hire Orientation (Three full day sessions)</i>	2-3-25 thru 2-6-25	15	10	0
<i>Customer Relations Management System (CRM) Office Hours (One one-hour session)</i>	2-5-25	1	0	7
<i>Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Eligibility Technician (ET) Learning Series (Five full day sessions)</i>	2-6-25 thru 2-13-25	25	3	8
<i>Psychological Safety for Supervisors (One three-hour session)</i>	2-7-25	3	0	6
<i>RI Bridges Basics Learning Series (Three full day sessions)</i>	2-10-25 thru 2-12-25	15	3	16
<i>Income Accuracy: Prospective Budgeting (One one-hour session)</i>	2-12-25	1	5	20
<i>STAR Supervisor Learning Series: Session One (One three-hour session)</i>	2-13-25	3	0	11
<i>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Learning Series: Session 1 & 2 (Two full day sessions)</i>	2-13-25 & 2-14-25	10	7	3
	Totals	148	58*	206*

Note: the asterisk number included projected attendance to trainings that have been scheduled and staff are registered to attend

Data below is preliminary and subject to change due to the data breach.

	Self-Directed Learning: Learning Management System		
	Course Title	Number of staff Enrolled	Number of Staff Completed
Rhode Island Learning Center Trainings (These trainings are self-directed)	Active Shooter, Run, Hide and Fight 2024	972	584
	Civil Rights Annual Training 2024	972	643
	Emergency Action Plan 2024	972	635
	FTI-2024	991	668
	HIPAA, and Confidentiality 2024	991	674
	Limited English Proficiency (LEP)2024	972	634
	Voter Registration 2024	972	643
	CCAP Program Policy Refresher	319	290
	Claims Collection Recovery Unit	308	232
	Community Medicaid: Supplemental AVS Video	316	233
	Customer Relationship Management	132	79
	CSA Role Update Knowledge Transfer	128	92
	Domestic Violence 101	365	275
	Customer Portal Refresher – Part 1	393	273
	Customer Portal Refresher – Part 2	389	253
	Healthy Rhode Mobile App – Part 1	393	271
	Healthy Rhode Mobile App – Part 2	389	243
	Asset Verification System	295	196
	OCSS: Child Support Refresher Process	325	234
	September 2024 Knowledge Transfer	348	269
	October 2024 Knowledge Transfer	347	266
	December 2024 Knowledge Transfer	342	226
	RIBridges: Case Maintenance	411	299
	RIBridges: Case Notes Refresher	416	290
	RIBridges: Pre-Authorization Case Review - ET	242	228
	RIBridges: Pre-Authorization Case Review - Sup	70	57
	RIBridges: Scheduling Refresher	436	307
	RIBridges: Visit Record	487	317
	SNAP: Waivers & SNAP Interview Requirements	297	268
	SNAP: Income Accuracy – Part 1; Prospective Budgeting	297	199
	SNAP: Eligibility Determination	238	180
	SNAP: ABAWD Knowledge Transfer	352	247
	SNAP: ABAWD Refresher	338	277
	SNAP: ESAP	407	306
	Customer Relations	45	29
	Performance Feedback for Supervisors	62	39
	Time Management	52	35
	VCC: Knowledge Transfer	303	237
	VCC: LTSS Telephonic Signature	76	42
	VCC: Telephonic Signature	336	245
	VCC: Call Back Functionality	146	96
	Totals	16,642*	11,611*
Inactive/retired courses * This number is duplicated. Our participants are enrolled in various trainings.	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
	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
	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
	Totals	8,290*	4,806*

Training Descriptions

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

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.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Office Hours: CRM Office Hours provide an open forum for staff to ask general system questions or case specific questions related to the new HealthTrack 2.0 CRM. New and experienced staff are encouraged to bring questions to this forum.

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

RI Works Office Hours: RI Works Office Hours provide staff with an open forum to ask general system, policy, or case specific questions related to RI Works cases they are processing.

RIW/CCAP for Eligibility Technicians Learning Series: This learning series provides participants with important program policy and system knowledge related to RI Works. Additionally, it offers lessons related to the Office of Child Support Services (OCSS), motivational interviewing, and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).

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.

RIBridges Basics Learning Series: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) utilizes an Integrated Eligibility System (IES) – RI Bridges – to determine eligibility for health and human service benefit programs. This course covers the functionality and business processes of the RIBridges system. Importantly, this training session navigates users through various features of the system including, but not limited to the home screen; the visit record; application registration; scheduling; data collection; eligibility determination; search inquiries; and case notes.

Policy for Data Breach Walkthrough: This walkthrough was adapted from a recurring All Program Quarterly and changed to a virtual training to cover program policies in response to the data breach of RIBridges. This hour and fifteen-minute session covers updated waivers; emergency policy related to the breach; and presumption of eligibility for medical benefits. A Q&A for staff immediately follows.

Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Learning Series: The MAGI learning series provides participants with an introduction to MAGI policy as well as RIBridges screens related to MAGI. This a four session training series, where 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.

Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Eligibility Technician Learning Series: The LTSS Learning Series provides participants with an introduction and breakdown of the LTSS program. Through the five-day training series, participants are also introduced to the RIBridges screens related to LTSS. This training is designed for eligibility technicians and supervisors who process LTSS applications.

LTSS Office Hours: LTSS Office Hours, led by LTSS Administrator Rose Leandre, provide a forum for LTSS social case workers to ask case specific questions, review special circumstance cases, and understand the different levels of care. Participants, including eligibility technicians and supervisors, are encouraged to bring questions.

LTSS – Social Caseworker Learning Series: The purpose of this course is to provide foundational learning to LTSS social caseworkers on relevant LTSS policy and initiatives, DHS business processes, RIBridges system functionality for common LTSS scenarios, as well as various competencies needed to be an effective social case worker.

STAR Supervisor Learning Series: The STAR Supervisor Training Series is designed for supervisors to enhance their leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills. In addition, the learning series introduces new tools to help supervisors identify behavioral styles while also supporting a culture of continuous improvement.

Prisoner Match Interface Walkthrough: This session provides an overview of the Prisoner Match interfaces that provide incarceration data from both the Social Security Administration and external sources. The walkthrough covers individual program policies and how they are connected to the match as well as the actions required for workers to take depending on the variables of the match.

Income Accuracy-Prospective Budgeting Office Hours: This office hours session is an open forum for staff to ask general system questions or case specific questions related to the new SNAP Income Accuracy - Prospective Budgeting LMS Course. Participants are encouraged to bring questions.

Psychological Safety for Supervisors: This training provides supervisors with guidance that helps them remain agile while supporting their mental health. It is intended to give staff the resources they need to feel confident about their contributions in a way that also emphasizes honesty and transparency.

PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The RIBridges system managed by Deloitte has been brought back online for new and current customers. While the system was offline, DHS prioritized access to benefits and worked with federal partners to implement waivers that helped provide uninterrupted access to services and benefits.

The current total number of pending applications (inclusive of all applications) is 4,126. The total number of overdue applications awaiting state action that are representative of the actual cases DHS has to prioritize processing is 1,977. While these totals represent a decline in overall pending applications, the work to restore RIBridges to full functionality continues and may directly influence the pending application figures. Additionally, DHS was granted approval for waivers from our federal partners that could be applied to SNAP and medical on a case-by-case basis. This helped ensure continuity of coverage, however, it may also impact redetermination caseloads and timeliness at a later time.

The agency continues to work closely with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, HealthSource RI, the Department of Administration and the Governor's Office to bring back all functionality back into the system, such as the different sub-portals within RIBridges that serve different purposes.

New applicants and current customers have been receiving benefit decision notices, as federally required, since the worker portal has been available in early in January. DHS is no longer solely processing paper applications, which had ensured timely benefit issuances on January 1, 2025. To support this process, DHS made the most common forms readily available for download so the public can more easily find the documents, fill them out, and submit them to the agency. DHS also continued to process applications received through the secure drop boxes, the regional offices, through our Call Center, and mail. Additionally, DHS continuously extended Call Center hours throughout January and into February on various days from 4-7 p.m. to ensure customers would have an opportunity to have their case specific questions addressed. These extended hours were posted consistently on the DHS website as well as on social media.

It is important to know DHS has 30 days to process most applications, with the exception of medical and expedited SNAP. This is the normal, federally required timeframe to process applications. DHS anticipates completing reviews of applications within state and federal requirements during this time – both standard and expedited (seven days).

With the system open to new applications and current customers, the State is seeing more activity within the RIBridges system. System stability is being closely monitored as teams work to bring the system back to full functionality since it was essentially rebuilt from the point of vulnerability identified by Deloitte. Beyond the integration of various sub-portals, the teams are also working to reconnect the HealthyRhode Mobile App and the Call Center Self Service Options, which require a connection to the system and currently remain unavailable. During this time, customers with questions about the data breach should continue to be directed to cyberalert.ri.gov and the RIBridges Data Breach hotline at 833-918-6603, with agency lines being reserved for questions specific to customer cases.

Below, you will also find data for Processing Wednesdays that has been instrumental in giving staff the needed time to process applications, forms, and documents during this time.

TASKS COMPLETED ON WEDNESDAYS

Beginning Week	Tasks Per Worker	# of Staff	Total Tasks Completed
January 5	11.5	22	254
January 12	11.3	22	249
January 19	13.4	24	321
January 26	12.7	23	291
February 2	17.4	28	488

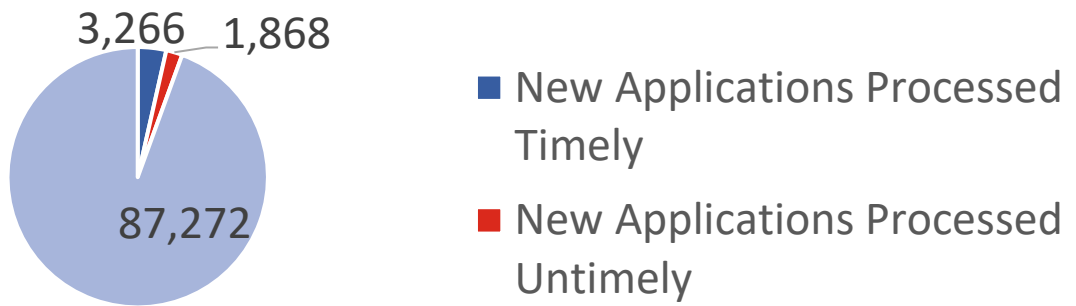
	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	Grand Total
SNAP Expedited	97	88	185	84	104	188	373
SNAP Non-Expedited	326	208	534	141	87	228	762
CCAP	22	104	126	14	78	92	218
GPA Burial	1	24	25	0	6	6	31
SSP	0	52	52	0	2	2	54
GPA	34	108	142	5	4	9	151
*RIW	93	63	156	25	25	50	206
Undetermined Medical	34	339	373	129	419	548	921
Medicaid-MAGI	5	10	15	71	47	118	133
Medicare Premium Payments	21	149	170	37	90	127	297
Medicaid Complex	15	165	180	28	433	461	641
LTSS	11	180	191	6	142	148	339
Grand Total	659	1,490	2,149	540	1,437	1,977	4,126

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

SNAP TIMELINESS

In January 2025, there were 87,272 households that received benefits timely. It is important to note the data generated below is preliminary and subject to change as efforts to return full functionality to RIBridges is ongoing. This information cannot be compared with other data referenced because data pulls occurred at different points in time – and may not account for operational prioritizations that were made to ensure uninterrupted access to benefits. For new SNAP applications in January, approximately 64% (3,266) were processed timely. Approximately 36% (1,868) 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 – the 87,000 households who continued to receive benefits due to operational adjustments and efforts of DHS staff.

Anyone who has applied for benefits when the system was offline received notices in the mail – including denials and terminations – as part of the application process. Customers have the right to appeal decisions they do not agree with. Additional information on the appeal process can be found here: <https://eohhs.ri.gov/reference-center/eohhs-appeals-office>

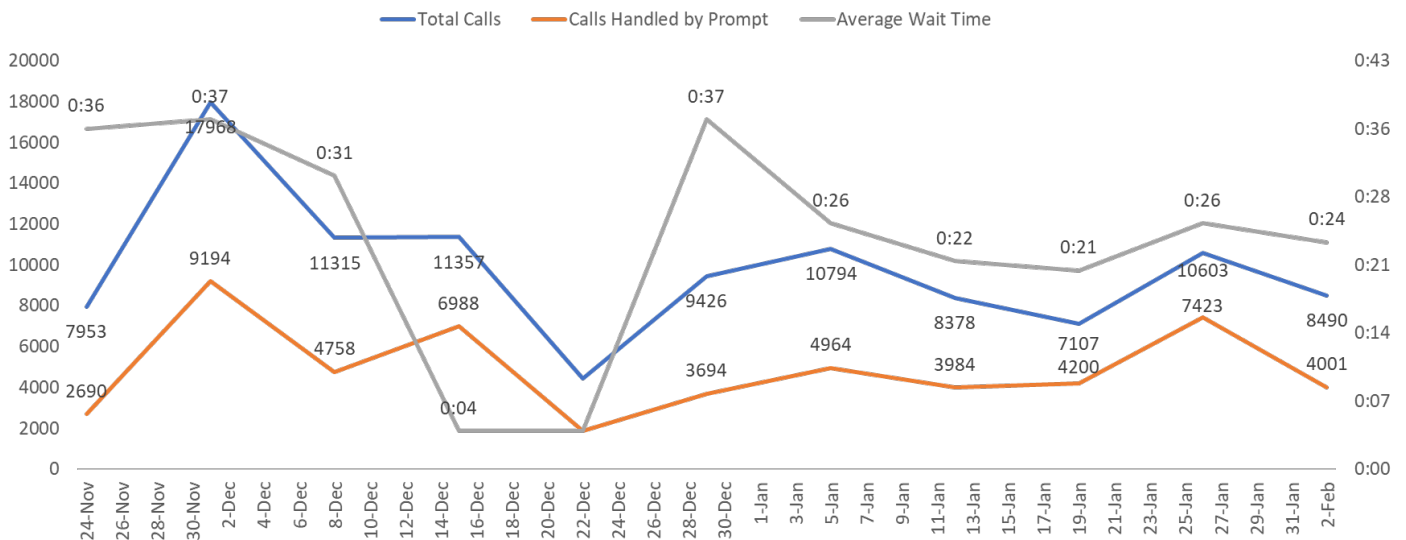


CALL CENTER

Call Center data in this report will be irregular due to the RIBridges system being taken offline in response to the December 2024 data breach. The volume and duration of calls for the weeks of December 29 through February 2, 2025, resulted in an average wait time of **26 minutes**.

Importantly, Call Center staff were shifted to take calls in the triage queue during this time. This was done to respond to calls as quickly as possible, reduce instances of call transfers, and maintain a high level of customer service. Staff on the triage queues answered non-case specific questions and completed data entry forms for customers who requested to submit applications, recertifications and changes since DHS continued to process paper applications as required by the federal government.

Additionally, while DHS made operational adjustments and additional resources available with extended hours, it is important to note some self-service options were reliant on data from RIBridges – and in its absence self-service options for customers remains unavailable at this time. Until the system is functioning as intended, DHS will continue to remain flexible and adjust as needed to meet customer needs.



-see next page-

CCAP BATCH PAYMENTS

Please note the Office of Child Care has continued to process payments for providers according to the regular schedule. When the RIBridges system was taken offline December 13, 2024, the Office of Child Care communicated with providers its intention to pay providers based on enrollment and not attendance.

This change in policy helped ensure providers would continue to receive payments timely based on the last known data. While the system remained offline, the Office of Child Care maintained continuous communication with providers to provide key updates including but not limited to pay dates, changes in payment processes, and guidance on any special circumstances. While the office relied on a sundry process and enrollment data for making payments on time through January, February 6 marks the first time since the system was taken offline that providers received payment via direct deposit.

Additionally, the RIBridges system became open for providers to use on Monday, Feb. 10, to enter their own enrollments, dis-enrollments and schedule changes. Simultaneously, the Office of Child Care is working through any back-billing requests that we provided during the time the system was down. While there are no large-scale payment issues currently being reported at this time, the Office of Child Care remains accessible to any provider who encounters an issue and is handling all discrepancies on a case-by-case basis.

The priority for CCAP and DHS is for providers to receive timely and accurate payments and the teams are working diligently to fully restore the provider portal within RIBridges used to track child attendance and process payments, among other key actions. Providers who have a general inquiry, or who need to report an issue, are being asked to contact dhs.ccapbilling@dhs.ri.gov; or call DHS CCAP billing at 401.462.6800.

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers for the current reporting period:

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
15	12/23/2024	594	\$2,813,427.87
16	1/3/2025	592	\$2,644,722.79
16A	1/10/2025	231	\$63,639.45
17	1/17/2025	594	\$2,872,771.16

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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