Rhode Island Department of Human Services
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May 28, 2023

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairman, House Committee on Finance
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Staffing and Operations Report for May 28, 2023

Dear Chairman Abney:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on staffing and operations for the reporting period of March 18, 2023, to May 17, 2023, as formally requested in Article 1 of the enacted SFY23 budget to show progress in recruiting and retaining staff at the RI Department of Human Services (DHS). As detailed in the budget, this report will provide an update every 60 days beginning August 1, 2022, and will cover the following topics:

- Newly filled and vacant positions by title, including lateral transfers
- Civil service information including number of eligible and available candidates as well as plans for future testing and the anticipated number of eligible and available candidates from future testing
- Current average caseload backlog
- Call Center average wait time
- Other Call Center statistics and insights

We appreciate your patience as we continue to make adjustments to this report in an effort to provide a thorough overview of the staffing and operations outlook at this agency. In following the same methodology as previous staffing and operations reports, we are continuing to use payroll data as the basis of FTE counts to provide a more accurate, consistent, and reliable measure of staffing levels.

Thank you for your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve, your interest in DHS staffing improvements, and the progress made to address outstanding issues. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Merolla-Brito, Acting Director
RI Department of Human Services

CC: Sharon Reynolds Ferland, House Fiscal Advisor
Christopher O'Brien, Committee Clerk, House Committee on Finance

Staffing and Operations Report
May 28, 2023

The DHS team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life and providing stability to Rhode Island residents in need. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS
FOR DATA FROM March 18 THROUGH May 17

This section reflects progress made in hiring and retaining staff at DHS, which filled a cumulative total of 225 positions between January 2022 – May 17, 2023. Reporting data reflects a 60-day window, with subsequent reports capturing data where the previous report concludes. Highlights for the Staffing and Operations Report dated May 28, 2023, include:

Total vacancies cited in 'DOA Leave Report' between March 18-May 17, 2023----------------------- 6*

Total NET difference of filled positions for March 18-May 17, 2023----------------------------------- +12 †

Total HIRING ACTIVITY for March 18-May 17, 2023--36††

Total REMAINING POSITIONS to be FILLED at DHS --- 105 ‡

Total POSITIONS IN RECRUITMENT PROCESS (defined in report) at DHS --------------------- 97

Total PHE Positions FILLED ---51 of 60

*The Leave Report refers to a report from the DOA that lists all employees who left DHS (includes staff from OCSS, OHA, ORS and VETS; DHS uses filters to remove VETS and OHA departures) during the reporting period. It is not intended to be compared with other stats/data points DHS uses in this report
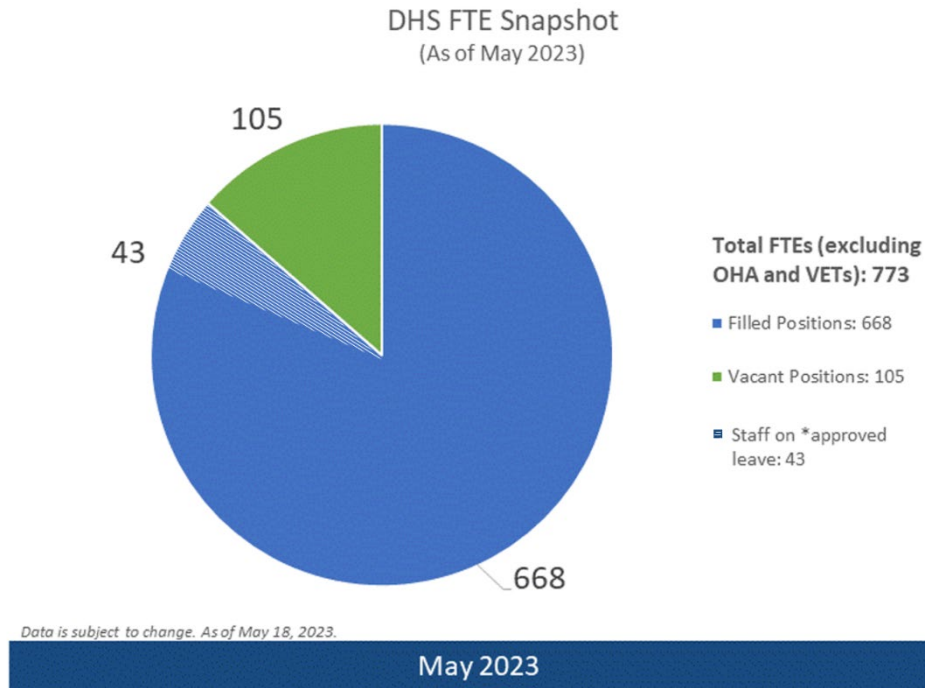
† Initial August 2022 reports used a hybrid tracker that introduced irreconcilable data from payroll and HR.

††Total hiring activity includes all lateral, promotional, and new hires at DHS (includes OCSS and ORS) for the reporting period.

‡The FY23 Budget included funding for 20 additional positions that increased the FTE count for DHS from 753 to 773. This figure uses payroll data as the basis for the FTE count and should only be compared with figures using the same methodology.

Newly Filled and Vacant Positions

DHS continues to prioritize the hiring of critical customer facing positions. ***From January 2022 through December 2022, DHS filled 196 positions through a combination of promotional opportunities, lateral transfers, and new hires***. Since January 1, 2023, the cumulative hiring activity at DHS for this year is 66 positions and this includes all promotional opportunities, lateral transfers and new hires.
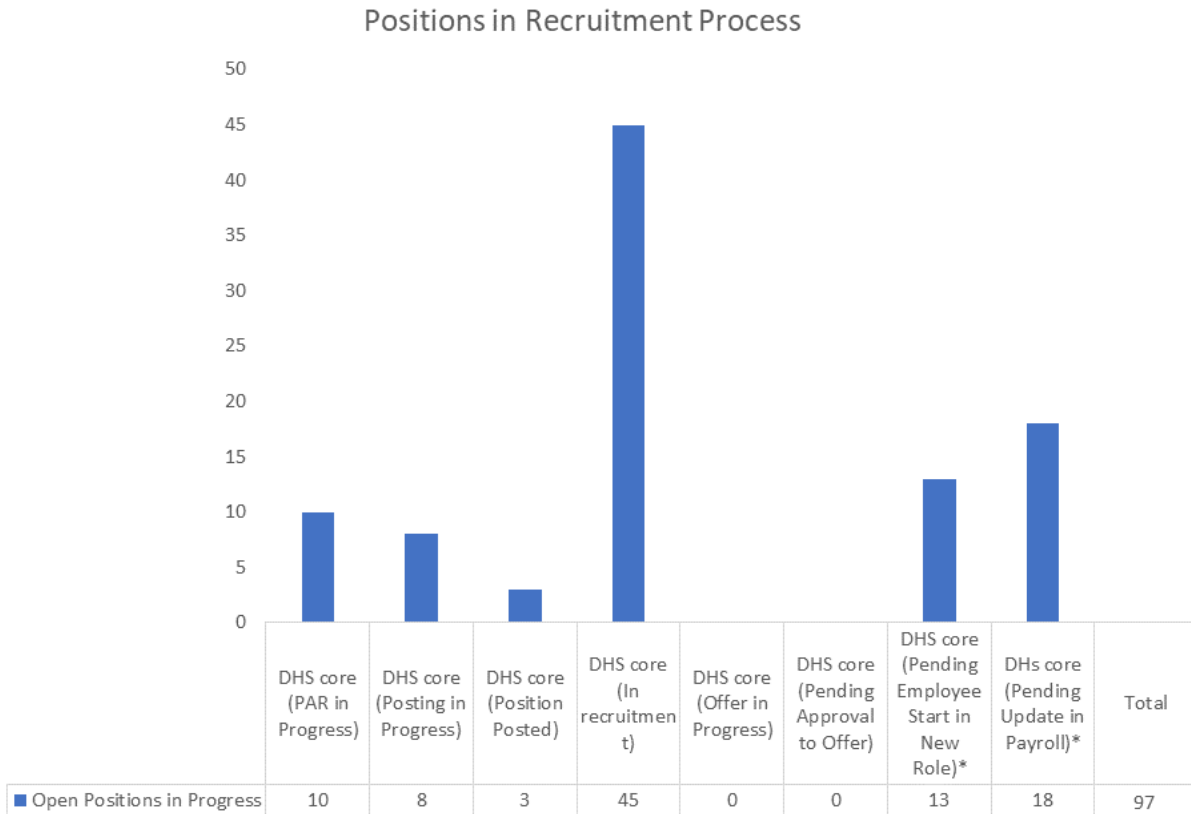
DHS FTE Snapshot
(As of May 2023)

105

43

668

Total FTEs (excluding OHA and VETs): 773

- Filled Positions: 668

- Vacant Positions: 105

- Staff on *approved leave: 43

Data is subject to change. As of May 18, 2023.

May 2023

Additional information regarding staff on leave is available on page 7.

Between March 18, 2023, and May 17, 2023, **DHS** filled **36 positions**. **Using the payroll data closest to the reporting period for this report, you can find a snapshot of the FTE count at DHS, which will fluctuate from each payroll period as new staff join; are promoted; retire from state service; accept opportunities elsewhere or otherwise leave state service.** *Payroll data only counts individuals who have received a paycheck and/or are on leave.*

Using payroll data as the basis of FTE counts at DHS, the bullet points below show the progress made on filling positions:
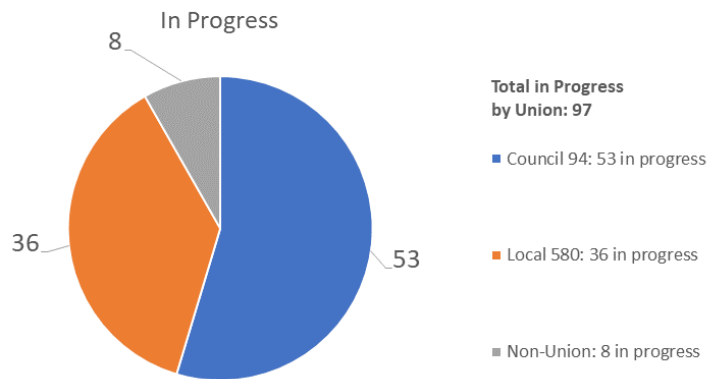- Amended FTE count for August 1, 2022 report: 635
- Amended FTE count for September 30, 2022 report: 639
- FTE count for November 29, 2022 report: 656
- FTE count for January 28, 2023 report: 659
- FTE count for March 29, 2023 report: 656
- FTE count for May 28, 2023 report: 668

Of the total 773 DHS FTEs (only includes DHS core, OCSS, and ORS), **97 of 105** vacant positions -- or approximately 92 percent – of those positions are in the process of being filled as of **May 17, 2023** (payroll issued on 05/12/23). Please refer to the chart below to see the status of these positions in the recruitment process.

Positions in Recruitment Process

	DHS core (PAR in Progress)	DHS core (Posting in Progress)	DHS core (Position Posted)	DHS core (In recruitment)	DHS core (Offer in Progress)	DHS core (Pending Approval to Offer)	DHS core (Pending Employee Start in New Role)*	DHs core (Pending Update in Payroll)*	Total
Open Positions in Progress	10	8	3	45	0	0	13	18	97

*Recruitment and hiring activities change daily. Data is subject to change and may not reflect the latest status. *Additional categories are further explained in Appendix A.*

Positions in Recruitment by Union Affiliation

In Progress

Total in Progress by Union: 97

- Council 94: 53 in progress
- Local 580: 36 in progress
- Non-Union: 8 in progress

8
36
53

The recruitment process is multifaceted for both union and non-union positions. It is intended to help ensure qualified candidates are hired to perform critical functions for DHS. It can take several weeks to several months

until a position is filled and a pending start date is confirmed by a candidate. The remaining vacant positions—not currently in the recruitment process—will be reflected in subsequent reports in tandem with payroll reporting.

For consistency, please refer to the appendix section at the bottom of the report for definitions on terms from DHS and DOA.

Hiring Activity
(March 18-May 17)

New hiring activity for the reporting period between March 18, 2023, and May 17, 2023, is comprised of back-office and customer-facing positions. For this reporting period, DHS hired 36 employees through a combination of net new, lateral, and promotional opportunities.

Please note DHS and DOA will continue to work together to align hiring/staffing discrepancies reported. Position titles and the types of hire are outlined below:

	Lateral Hires	Promotional Hires	New Hires
Assistant Administrator, Financial Management	0	1	0
Associate Director, Division of Community Services	0	1	0
Casework Supervisor	0	1	0
Customer Service Aide	0	1	2
Customer Support Specialist	0	1	1
Eligibility Technician I	0	1	12
Eligibility Technician II Lobby	0	2	0
Eligibility Technician III	0	3	0
Human Services Business Officer	0	0	1
Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist	0	1	0
Interdepartmental Project Manager	0	1	0
Programming Services Officer	0	0	2
Social Caseworker, LTSS	0	1	0
Supervising Eligibility Technician	1	3	0
Total*	**1**	**17**	**18**

*Positions listed in 'Hiring Activity' are filled but may not be reflected in the FTE count above since not all have received their first paycheck at time of reporting. Additionally, since this chart also includes those with only start dates, these positions will be reflected in the 'FTE impact' chart for subsequent staffing reports after a first paycheck is received.

FTE Impact from Hiring Activity

Hiring at DHS fluctuates on a daily basis as employees join DHS, receive promotions, are transferred, or otherwise leave state service. The chart below focuses on the status of job classifications impacted by ongoing hiring activity, between March 18, 2023-May 17, 2023, using payroll as a basis with changes from previous reports noted.

Title	March 29, 2023 Report	May 28, 2023 Report	Change +/-
Assistant Administrator, Financial Management	2	1	-1
Casework Supervisor	4	5	1
Child Support Enforcement Agent I	11	13	2
Customer Service Aide (DHS)	33	35	2
Customer Support Specialist I (DHS)	8	9	1
Data Analyst I	2	3	1
Data Control Clerk	5	6	1
Economic And Policy Analyst I	0	1	1
Eligibility Technician	153	156	3
Eligibility Technician II (DHS - Lobby)	28	29	1
Eligibility Technician III (DHS)	12	14	2
Human Services Policy And Systems Specialist	8	9	1
Information Services Technician I	1	0	-1
Interdepartmental Project Manager	4	5	1
Office Manager	2	1	-1
Principal Human Services Business Officer	3	4	1
Productivity Project Director	3	2	-1
Programming Services Officer	4	5	1
Quality Control Reviewer	12	11	-1
Rehabilitation Counselor	32	31	-1
Senior Case Work Supervisor	12	13	1
Senior Human Services Policy And Systems Specialist	11	10	-1
Senior Rehabilitation Counselor	7	8	1
Social Case Worker	23	22	-1
Special Assistant	0	1	1
Supervising Eligibility Technician	23	22	-1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor I	20	19	-1
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor II	16	17	1
Word Processing Typist	1	0	-1
	Total filled FTEs: 656	**Total filled FTEs: 668**	**+12**

All data is preliminary and subject to change. The total accounts for new staff (marked as +) in direct relation to new departures (-) resulting in an aggregate tabulation of new hires at DHS – not to be compared with 'hiring activity' since those include employees with start dates not yet on payroll.

Recent Departures/New Vacancies Resulting

From March 18, 2023, through May 17, 2023, the Department of Administration's Leave Report indicated there were six departures and/or vacancies at DHS core (includes ORS and OCSS, excludes RIVETS and OHA). As the keeper of record for hiring across state agencies, DOA records show departures and new vacancies for the following positions:

- **1 Assistant Administrator Community and Planning Services**
- **1 Information Services Technician**
- **1 Supervising Eligibility Technician**
- **2 Eligibility Technicians**
- **1 Customer Support Specialist**

Please note the Leave Report provided by DOA may not align with other data points in this report because it is not connected to payroll, which serves as a basis of the DHS Staffing and Operations Report. Additionally, the different HR/payroll systems used by the state have delays due to legacy tracking methods that have not been updated. Please note certain positions, such as Eligibility Technician II and Eligibility Technician III, are only available as promotional opportunities that also create a new vacancy and the hiring process it entails.

Staff on Leave
Snapshot

For the current report dated May 28, 2023, DHS has 668 employees on payroll, of which approximately 43 staff members are currently on leave based on data provided by DOA.

These positions are filled and active on the payroll but represent a portion of the workforce who are out of the office and not currently contributing to the day-to-day operations of the agency. While it is important to recognize that these employees are acting within their employment rights and that these rights will continue to be honored across state government, approved staff leaves reduce the agency's actual workforce since there are fewer employees performing duties than the FTE count may suggest. All cases of positions filled and on leave are managed by DOA's Disability Management Unit. DHS, in coordination with labor leadership and DOA, will be exploring voluntary options for staff on extended leave to join the Call Center team as a form of 'light duty' as functions can be performed remotely.

Below, please find a snapshot of current staff on leave based on the closest payroll period. Please note these numbers fluctuate every pay period as staff return and other leaves are pending approval.

Staff on Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA/PIL Leave)	14
Staff on Intermittent FMLA Leave	17
Staff on Maternity/Paternity Leave	3
Staff on Worker's Compensation Leave	3
Staff on Military Leave	1
Light Duty	0
Pending Cases/Under Review*	5
Total	43

Cases pending or under review refers to staff whose cases and related medical documentation are under review by DOA's Disability Management Unit.

PHE Staffing

As of May 18, 2023, **we have filled 51 of 60 PHE Eligibility Technician positions**. DHS initially posted 14 Eligibility Technician II (Call Center) positions and received applications and interest to recruit and hire four of those FTEs. Due to the candidate pool for Eligibility Technician II (Call Center) positions since November 2022, DHS shifted 10 of those positions to Eligibility Technician I (Call Center) positions to expedite the hiring, onboarding, and training of PHE staff who will help ensure Medicaid customers keep and/or maintain access to health coverage now that renewals started April 1, 2023. DHS worked in partnership with labor leadership and HR to offer a voluntary bid day for several open positions prior to securing a six-month extension to the Special Purpose Agreement (SPA) lateral freeze. The bid days took place on February 15 and 16. Remaining positions after voluntary bid day would be pulled from the new Civil Service List activated in May 2023.

Please note DHS Eligibility Technician II (Call Center) positions are promotional opportunities for existing DHS staff who have 12 months or more experience and time in service as an Eligibility Technician I. While DHS has repurposed some FTE positions to ensure adequate staffing is available to assist with redeterminations, the chart below highlights the PHE positions filled to date. These PHE positions are included within the Hiring Activity figures.

Independent of PHE staffing at DHS, and as recommended in the enacted SFY 2023 Governor's Budget, DOA awarded a tentative contract to Deloitte on May 12, 2023, for data processing support so that DHS eligibility technicians can focus on Medicaid redeterminations over the next 10-12 months. At the date of the signed contract, the vendor has 4-6 weeks to expedite the recruitment and onboarding of temporary support staff.

Position Titles	Status
Eligibility Technician Is	41 of 49 filled
ET II Call Center	4 of 4 filled
ET III (DHS)	1 of 1 filled
Supervising Eligibility Technician	5 of 6
*TOTAL	**51 of 60 filled**

Civil Service Information

The Civil Service Exam is hosted by the DOA. DHS works closely with DOA to fill critical positions as each agency performs a crucial function in moving qualified candidates through the completion of the onboarding process.

DHS leadership requested that the DOA HR switch from certifying candidates for interview from the current Eligibility Technician I (ET-I) Civil Service list (created in 2019 and expiring in August) to the newly created Reserve ET-I list consisting of 45 candidates that passed the examination earlier this year:

- Approximately 15 candidates from this new promotional list have been certified for interview and 13 candidates have been certified from the Open Competitive list.

Following the February 15 and 16 internal Eligibility Technician bid days, DOA and DHS worked together to close the existing Eligibility Technician Civil Service List through a series of final offers/follow-up with existing

candidates, and other various administrative tasks required by statute to complete. The new Eligibility Technician Civil Service list was activated following closure of the previous list, with the first batch of names provided to DHS on May 3, 2023. To date, the agency has received 28 names, all of whom DHS attempted to contact. The breakdown is as follows:

- Eight individuals have accepted an offer for the Eligibility Technician position with start dates to be determined
- Three candidates are pending approval to offer the position
- Six candidates declined
- Three candidates have interviews scheduled
- Eight are pending candidate response

  - The additional Eligibility Technician I recruitment for a future Civil Service test yielded 265 candidates upon conclusion of the application period at the end of April. These applications are being pre-screened by DOA HR.
  - The DHS has also asked to conduct a joint DHS/DOA HR review of the Civil Service examination questions to make updates and enhancements.
  - Test administration is projected for July, with new Eligibility Technician I list availability in August.

- There are currently 228 candidates remaining from the Social Caseworker (SCW) examination list established in late 2019. This Civil Service list expires on December 4, 2023. The expectation is that an additional candidate recruitment for testing will be necessary, and a new SCW Civil Service announcement/recruitment is underway currently, ending June 2, 2023.   This early announcement ensures continuous list availability for the DHS in December, or before, if the agency wishes to transition to the new list prior to the current list expiration.
  - DOA in partnership with DHS initiated an availability mailing for candidates on the current SCW list to assess their interest and availability. This mailing was conducted in April and has yielded approximately 75 responses indicating they are available and remain interested in the position.

 See Appendix C at the end of the report.

Current Caseload Backlog*
Snapshot
Beginning with the Staffing and Operations Report dated May 28, 2023, the Department of Human Services will be providing a snapshot of the current caseload backlog. This update was made to ensure the agency is clearly defining its official backlog as those awaiting state action, a metric that is separate from the overall pending applications. Previous reports included all pending applications, including those not overdue and overdue awaiting constituent action, which did not accurately reflect the workload of staff or the impact to customers as a result going past federally mandated timeframes.

As the agency transitions the focus of this section to be on the official caseload backlog, DHS is reporting that the total pending applications have returned to a normal level of activity. Specifically, total pending applications cited in the March 29 Staffing and Operations Report (7,045) have declined by approximately 30 percent to 4,962 pending applications (includes all not overdue and overdue pending applications).

DHS achieved this reduction in several ways including targeting pending applications that needed to be archived; newly onboarded staff gaining more policy knowledge and case processing skills; working with IT vendors to analyze overdue undetermined medical cases and prioritizing the closure, purging, and merging of duplicate

cases; targeting incomplete applications submitted via the Customer Portal; and the success seen from the pilot Processing Wednesdays initiative (*please refer to the Processing Wednesdays analysis below for more information*).

| Program Name	Overdue Awaiting State Action
	State
SNAP Expedited	5
SNAP Non-Expedited	31
CCAP	14
GPA Burial	5
SSP	5
GPA	6
RIW	13
Undetermined Medical	2,037
Medicaid-MAGI	64
Medicare Premium Payments	14
Medicaid Complex	331
LTSS	48
Grand total	**2,573**

Reporting as of May 17, 2023.

Processing Wednesdays

On February 8, 2023, DHS launched a pilot initiative called Processing Wednesdays. With the goal of improving operational efficiency and customer service, the strategy shifts Call Center staff to prioritize case processing one day a week, deemed crucial for addressing any backlogs. Initial results from the pilot have been positive as DHS has seen an approximate 69 percent increase in tasks completed on Wednesdays since the start of the initiative.

As of May 15, DHS has seen an approximate 57 percent increase in the number of tasks completed, or an increase from 101.5 to 159.75 cases completed on average, when comparing the last four Wednesdays prior to launch, to the most recent four Wednesdays. While this only examines the tasks completed, Processing Wednesdays has also increased the number of tasks worked and helped reduce the backlog, which directly helps reduce the need for customers to seek additional support services either by phone or in-person.

See next page for chart on Processing Wednesdays.
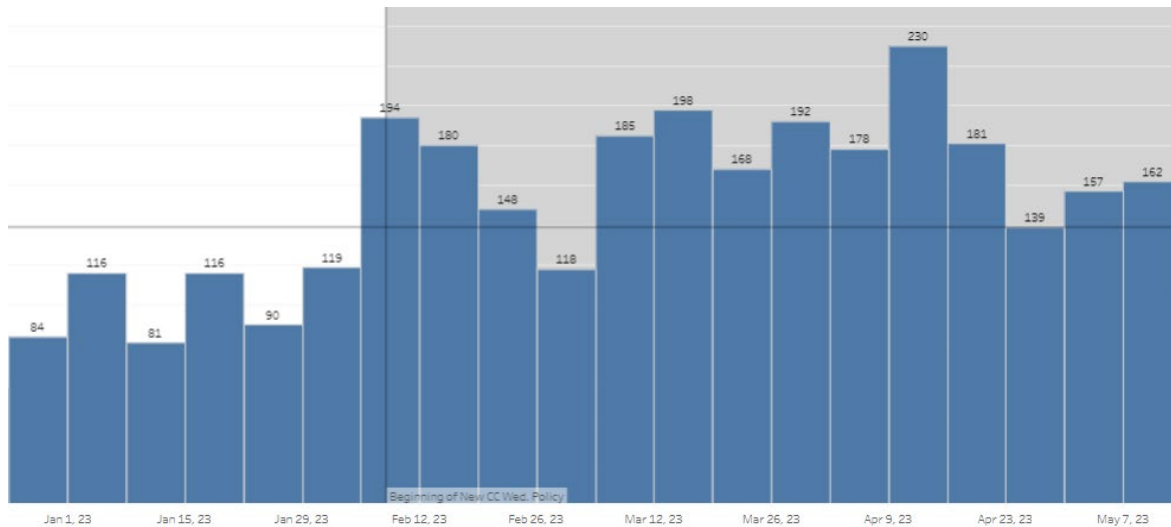
The chart above shows the number of tasks completed on Wednesdays. The dates listed are for the week beginning with the shaded area marking when Processing Wednesdays began.

Caseload Processing Averages

As the agency charged with administering health and human service public benefits, DHS must process applications that follow the federal government's mandatory timeliness standard. While most programs have a mandatory 30-day threshold – the amount of time DHS has to process an application before it is considered overdue – there are programs with longer deadlines for processing before it is considered overdue.

Refer to the chart on the right to see the mandatory timeliness standard per program. While the majority of cases per program are processed in a timely manner, a select number of cases awaiting customer or state action that become overdue may see a delay in authorization of benefits that is not reflective of the overall customer experience.

Program	Overdue Threshold for Applications	Avg. Number of Days from Applications Received to Authorized
Expedited SNAP	7 Days	8
Non-Expedited SNAP	30 Days	16
Cash Assistance (RIW/GPA)	30 Days	23
Medicaid MAGI	30 Days	21
Complex Medical	45 Days	43
Long Term Care (LTSS)	90 Days	49

Previous reports included an average days from overdue to authorization, which has been removed for clarity. The reported data was specific to a small proportion of customers whose cases had remained unresolved for numerous reasons such as failure to return missing documents. Additionally, undetermined medical was also removed as it is not a program. It is DHS's goal to process all applications within the federal standard and operational initiatives such as Processing Wednesdays will help move the agency towards that goal.

See Appendix D at the end of the report for additional context.

NEW Hire FTE Impact on Pending Applications

The Department currently has 23 Eligibility Technicians needing supervisory approval (ETSAs), who are collectively processing about 39 cases per week. All ETSAs have completed new hire training and have begun either SNAP or MAGI training. There are 10 who have completed training in community Medicaid. Of the total 23 ETSAs, all have started working in RIBridges. With direct coaching, training and support, case completion by ETSAs builds month over month until their final assessment at six months.

# of ETSAs	Assigned to:	Outcomes
7	Call Center onboarding (MAGI processing, SNAP training, triage on initial customer inquiry)	Each assigned group is averaging, per week, approximately:
0	outbound calls (branch based)	
15	SNAP applications, recertifications, or interim reviews	Outbound: 20 cases
1	Processing MAGI applications	SNAP: 371 cases
		Medical: 25 cases

ETSAs require supervisory approval because they have not completed their probation period. As a result, a review by a supervisor for final eligibility determination is required, adding time but assuring accuracy in processing.

Call Center

For the period between **March 18, 2023, through May 17, 2023**, the average wait time to speak to DHS staff was approximately **54 minutes**. DHS recognizes this average wait time remains longer than it should be and has implemented call back functionality to reduce the time customers spend waiting on the phone. The average wait time encompasses all calls (those opting for a call back and those that wait in queue) that are transferred and connected with a DHS worker.

In the charts below, data on average call wait time by program queue is provided. Wait times by queue can vary greatly due to various factors including, but not limited to high call volume, the availability of eligibility technicians or supervisors, and the type of action needed. DHS understands average call wait times, especially for queues such as SNAP interviews, remain elevated and the agency remains committed to introducing strategic initiatives to improve the customer experience.

Through strategic planning, technology resources, additional progress on keeping up with back-office tasks and hiring efforts, DHS anticipates continued progress in reducing average wait times and improving customer satisfaction. Importantly, the availability of call-back functionality changes on a daily basis due to staff availability and call volume. In order to reach all those in the queue by the end of the day, DHS makes it available strategically in the morning until capacity is reached. To help address current limitations, DHS has secured a resource through Knowledge Service that provides ongoing support on improved customer access to the functionality by way of full adoption of the place-in-line call backs; exploring individual queue max limits; expanding options for dispositions of calls and customer service satisfaction options; and provides ongoing support in DHS's ability to implement changes to IVR scripting independent of Verizon support.

Average Weekly Wait Times by Queue (callbacks excluded)

	March 19, 2023	March 26, 2023	April 2, 2023	April 9, 2023	April 16, 2023	April 23, 2023	April 30, 2023	May 7, 2023	May 14, 2023
Child Care	01:57:55	02:06:38	02:44:36	01:15:38	01:45:49	01:56:01	02:52:03	02:09:48	01:58:21
ECA Transfer	00:13:44	00:16:44	00:12:11	00:10:56	00:16:01	00:14:00	00:28:55	00:20:20	00:07:36
GPA	00:05:02	00:00:59	00:10:14	00:11:57	00:07:40	00:25:55	00:38:44	00:10:04	00:04:56
LTSS	00:28:00	00:27:40	00:19:11	00:13:52	00:23:54	00:17:16	00:08:35	00:16:13	00:10:05
Medical	01:45:15	02:10:49	02:11:54	02:19:27	01:57:58	02:51:15	03:03:01	02:16:48	02:05:42
RIW	01:58:28	01:32:17	02:05:16	03:14:47	01:44:20	02:01:00	02:07:52	01:50:10	02:39:15
SNAP	02:10:07	02:37:32	02:50:54	02:25:15	02:20:28	02:38:18	02:35:11	02:05:30	01:58:23
SNAP Interviews/Intakes	03:05:46	01:41:40	04:22:01	04:13:34	02:43:51	03:49:26	03:51:03	03:18:04	03:58:12
Specialty	00:08:29	00:20:05	00:19:05	00:03:48	00:17:01	00:09:14	00:42:21	00:18:46	00:02:31
SSP	00:09:19	00:08:53	00:10:43	00:11:46	00:12:07	00:22:23	01:23:15	00:06:08	00:08:43
Tech Help	00:17:30	00:20:30	00:15:25	00:11:17	00:13:39	00:13:35	00:11:18	00:12:45	00:17:30
Triage	00:22:20	00:31:53	00:04:41	00:00:51	00:00:29	00:01:39	00:01:15	00:00:22	00:00:17
Grand Total	01:20:13	01:31:24	01:35:15	01:03:57	00:59:37	01:24:41	01:38:26	01:07:21	00:54:48

Color Key
00:00:17   04:22:01

The charts below demonstrate the impact of call backs in lowering wait times for customers that opt to hang up and receive a call back by program queues.

Average Weekly Wait Times by Queue (callbacks included)

|	March 19, 2023	March 26, 2023	April 2, 2023	April 9, 2023	April 16, 2023	April 23, 2023	April 30, 2023	May 7, 2023	May 14, 2023
Child Care	01:07:36	01:10:05	01:24:15	00:38:24	00:55:49	00:54:39	01:32:18	00:52:16	00:41:20
ECA Transfer	00:13:44	00:15:16	00:12:14	00:10:58	00:15:56	00:14:00	00:27:14	00:18:45	00:07:36
GPA	00:05:02	00:00:59	00:10:21	00:11:43	00:07:30	00:24:15	00:35:27	00:10:02	00:04:56
LTSS	00:27:44	00:27:28	00:19:02	00:13:50	00:23:48	00:17:22	00:08:41	00:16:09	00:10:13
Medical	00:53:26	01:13:32	01:11:31	01:05:49	00:39:59	01:08:35	01:33:35	00:54:41	00:54:27
RIW	01:18:00	00:54:49	01:13:34	01:24:27	00:47:08	00:53:18	01:18:40	00:56:17	00:58:51
SNAP	01:09:43	01:07:03	01:27:40	01:06:15	01:02:54	01:06:01	01:21:13	01:03:38	00:50:44
SNAP Interviews/Intakes	01:50:00	00:55:53	02:02:06	01:28:15	00:52:03	01:33:30	01:48:56	01:46:29	01:28:08
Specialty	00:08:40	00:20:05	00:19:05	00:03:48	00:17:01	00:09:14	00:42:21	00:18:46	00:02:31
SSP	00:09:19	00:08:53	00:10:43	00:11:46	00:12:07	00:22:23	01:23:15	00:06:08	00:08:43
Tech Help	00:17:29	00:20:26	00:15:13	00:10:46	00:13:16	00:13:04	00:10:43	00:13:02	00:16:29
Triage	00:22:20	00:31:53	00:04:41	00:00:51	00:00:29	00:01:39	00:01:15	00:00:22	00:00:17
Grand Total	00:55:18	00:56:23	01:04:30	00:45:04	00:40:57	00:51:35	01:05:41	00:46:07	00:37:27

Color Key
00:00:17   02:02:06

During this time, there were approximately 39 staff members supporting the Call Center. This includes seven new Eligibility Technicians, which were hired in April and May. They are currently in various phases of the on-boarding and training process and will soon assist in handling calls.

On average, Eligibility Technicians handle approximately 15 calls per day, with an average handle time of approximately 27 minutes. The handle time includes both the time spent on the phone with the customer, as well as time spent taking action on the customer's account in RIBridges.

Call center summary 3/18/23 – 5/17/23
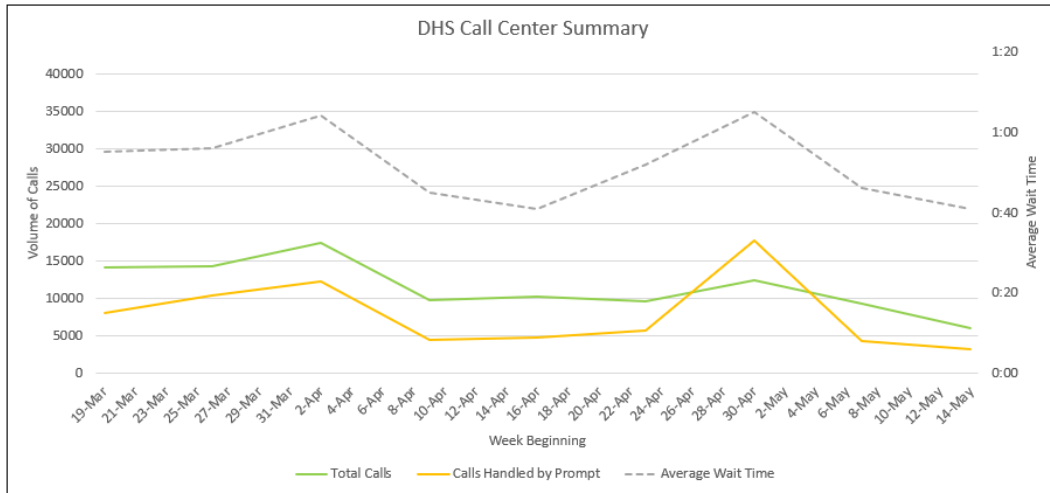
The Call Center typically sees a pattern of high call volume toward the beginning and end of each month. Since call volume may vary from day-to-day, DHS on occasion publishes a website notification to announce high call volume days and any changes to operational hours for the day.

Impact of NEW FTEs to Call Center Activity

As the agency continues to make progress in filling critical positions overall, the Department has maintained and addressed incoming calls to the Call Center. Call back functionality across all programs has been an instrumental tool in lowering overall wait times with data indicating callers who opted for call backs averaged approximately 15 minutes waiting on the phone.

With the goal of bringing call wait times to an average of 30 minutes, 7 of 23 ETSAs were hired within the Call Center, an Eligibility Technician III position was offered to a candidate who is expected to start in June, and there are candidates interested in the Eligibility Technicians II position, with interviews beginning in the next few weeks.

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Appendix A.

DOA Positions in Recruitment Definitions

Personnel Action Request (PAR) – *The Personnel Action Request (PAR) is the requisition that begins the process of filling a position. It is entered by a designated individual at the agency level and goes through several levels of approval. The specific approval process for DHS PARs includes DHS (CFO and Director), EOHHS, HR, Budget Analyst and Budget Management. Once all approvals are in place, HR and DHS work together to finalize the posting and the recruitment begins.*

PAR in Progress – *The term 'PAR in Process' refers to PARs that have been entered into the system by DHS but have not yet completed the approval process.*

Posting in Progress – *Once the PAR is approved, the position is prepared to be posted on apply.ri.gov. DOA/HR confers with DHS to determine when the position should be posted and as a result of such discussion, HR prepares a draft posting for DHS approval. Once DHS finalizes and approves the posting, it is returned to DOA/HR for posting.*

Position Posted – *The position is posted on apply.ri.gov for the required 10 calendar days.*

Pending Candidate Referral – *After the posting closes, DOA/HR reviews applicant information to determine who is eligible based on Collective Bargaining Agreements (if applicable for the position). If the position is a non-union position, all applicants are referred to DHS.*

In Recruitment – *The posting has closed and candidates are referred to DHS. During this time, the DHS is reviewing candidates' qualifications/screening to determine if they meet minimum qualifications. At this time in the process, interviews are conducted if appropriate.*

Candidate Recommended for Hire/Pending Approval to Offer – *The top candidate has been recommended by the DHS for hire in the Automated Applicant Tracking System (NeoGov). DOA/HR reviews and approves the hire recommendation and notifies DHS, which then makes a job offer to the candidate.*

Candidate Accepted, Pending Start Date – *The candidate has accepted the position and DHS is waiting on confirmation of when the employee will begin in their new role.*

Pending Employee Start in New Role – *Refers to employees who have started in their new role from the pay period used in the report to current date but would not have been included in a full pay period as of yet. This category also refers to individuals who have accepted a role and have a start date in the future.*

Pending Update in Payroll – *Refers to DHS and DOA payroll working to address discrepancies with regards to positions hired.*

Filled – *The candidate has accepted the position and has a confirmed start date for when they will move into the new role or join DHS.*

Appendix B.

DHS Hiring Terminology

Lateral Transfer – A lateral hire is an employee moving to a new home office location within the same job classification title. For example, an Eligibility Technician I moving from a home office of Warwick to Middletown.

Promotional Opportunity – A promotional opportunity is then an existing DHS employee accepts a different position opening from within DHS.

When an existing DHS employee takes another position opening with DHS, the employee is promoted into their new role resulting in a new vacancy. For example, a Supervising Eligibility Technician is promoted into a vacant Senior Casework Supervisor position. While adhering to any collective bargaining agreements, DHS promotes the internal employee and now needs to recruit for the vacant Supervising Eligibility Technician. **Please note:** *DOA considers a promotional opportunity to include the above but also includes when an employee from another state agency joins DHS and fills a vacant position, which increases DHS' workforce.*

New Hire – A new hire is a completed hire resulting in an increase to DHS workforce. This person is new to DHS (either from another state agency or new to state) and fills a vacancy at DHS not resulting in another vacancy to be filled. **Please note:** *DOA considers new hires as those new to state service.*

Appendix C.

DOA Civil Service HR Definitions

'Active' Candidates – *Refers to candidates who have passed the civil service examination with a score of 70 or more and appear in rank order of performance on this list.*

'Certified' Candidates – *Refers to candidates who have been reached on the list, based on their score/rank, and are eligible to be interviewed and considered for appointment by the Department's interview team.*

'Available' Candidates – *Refers to candidates on the list, who during exam administration, select "Regional Location" and "Position Type" preferences. These selections will influence their availability when "certified/reached" for Departmental interview.*

Appendix D.

Caseload Key Terminology

Not Overdue—*Refers to applications that are within the mandatory timeliness standard set by the federal government. Each program has its own timeliness standard before it is considered overdue.*

Overdue—*Refers to applications not yet processed and past the mandatory timeliness standard. Even if an overdue application is completed a single day later, it is tracked as overdue by the agency.*