



**Rhode Island Department of Human Services**  
25 Howard Avenue, Building 57  
Cranston, RI 02920  
Phone: (401) 462-2121 Fax: (401) 462-6594

August 19, 2022

The Honorable Marvin Abney  
Chairman, House Committee on Finance  
State House, Room 35  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: Response to request for additional information on staffing and operations report**

Dear Chairman Abney:

Upon request for additional information from Ms. Sharon Reynolds Ferland, please find an amended staffing and operations report and a copy of additional responses to questions raised by Ms. Ferland in response to the report that was initially submitted on August 2, 2022. It is our hope the additional information will provide further clarification.

Please note Acting Director Yvette M. Mendez, who authored the original report, has returned to the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS). In my new capacity as Acting Director, I will be submitting these reports moving forward. You are welcome to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Merolla-Brito".

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

CC: Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the House  
Honorable Dominick J. Ruggerio, President of the Senate  
Honorable Ryan W. Pearson, Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance



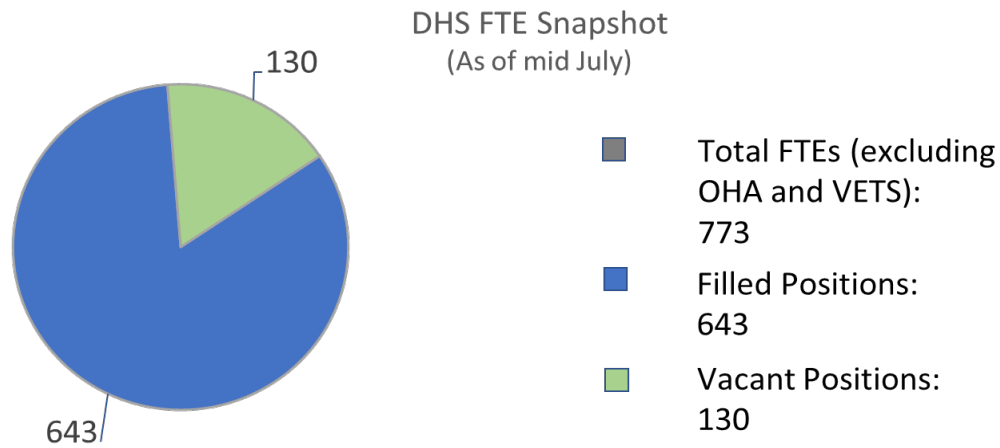
# Staffing and Operations Report

## August 1, 2022\*

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.

### Newly Filled and Vacant Positions

DHS continues to make progress in hiring candidates for critical positions identified after the agency experienced higher than usual turnover in 2021 during the Great Resignation. Since January 2022, DHS has **filled over 130 positions** through a combination of net new hires, promotional opportunities, and lateral movements. Between June 1, 2022 and July 15, 2022, **DHS hired 15 employees**. Of the total 773 DHS FTEs (excluding Office of Healthy Aging and Office of Veterans Services), approximately **83 percent of positions are filled**, and **17 percent are vacant**. Data cited below show a snapshot in time and could change from day to day.



*The Snapshot information is based on a DHS report from July 2, 2022. Please note that not all data points can be cross referenced with other agency data bases since different reports capture information at different points in time.*

New hires for the reporting period between June 1, 2022, and July 15, 2022, are comprised of back office and customer facing positions. These positions and titles include:

	Lateral Hires	Promotional Hires	Net New Hires
Consultant Public Health Nurse	0	2	0
Customer Service Aides	0	1	1
Eligibility Technician I	0	0	2
Employment and Career Advisor	0	2	0
Principal Clerk	0	0	1
Quality Control Supervisor	0	1	0
Senior Human Services Policy and Systems Specialist	0	1	0
Assistant Administrators	0	2	0
Supervising Eligibility Technician	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>

From June 1, 2022, through July 15, 2022, 6 individuals left DHS including:

- 1 Junior Resource Specialist
- 3 Eligibility Technician I
- 1 Principal Clerk
- 1 Clinical Training Specialist

## Civil Service Information

The Civil Service Exam is hosted by the RI Department of Administration (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. As of July 15, 2022, the number of eligible and available candidates includes:

- 273 active candidates on the Eligibility Technician I exam
- 220 active candidates on the Social Caseworker I exam
- 29 active candidates on the Social Caseworker II exam (*DHS' classification system does not include Social Caseworker II workers*)

The application period has closed for the upcoming 2022 Eligibility Technician I exam. Candidates are currently being screened to ensure all test takers meet minimum qualifications. Once the screening is completed, an exam date and location will be provided. *As of 7/27, approximately 110 individuals who had taken the civil service exam expressed interest in an ET-1 position with the State. These candidates were asked their current interest in permanent and/or "limited" ET-1 positions in addition to the "full-time" position interest they expressed, upon taking the exam in 2019.*

*For consistency, please see the definitions from DOA on the following terms:*

**'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.*

## Current Caseload\*

### Snapshot

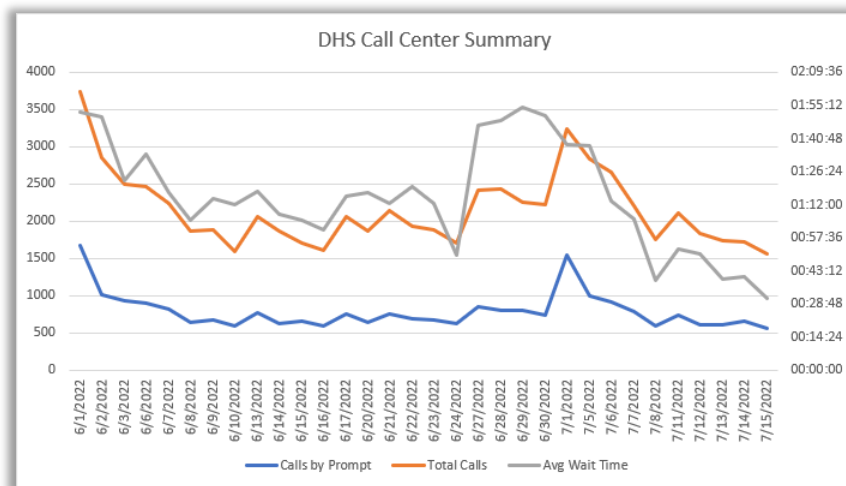
Data on pending applications reflect a point in time. As of **July 8, 2022**, the number of pending new applications across all programs was **6,475**. The total overdue pending applications awaiting State action was **2,410**. DHS continues to process applications within the mandatory timelines standard set by the federal government, which typically requires applications to be processed within 30 days with the exception of complex Medicaid and expedited SNAP. Approximately **98%** of the overdue pending applications (awaiting state action) are complex Medicaid and/or medical cases, requiring the review of more experienced supervisors and eligibility technicians.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
<b>SNAP Expedited</b>	28	334	362	16	53	69	<b>431</b>
<b>SNAP Non-Expedited</b>	486	737	1223	34	28	62	<b>1,285</b>
<b>CCAP</b>	17	303	320	4	31	35	<b>355</b>
<b>SSP</b>	0	48	48	0	4	4	<b>52</b>
<b>GPA</b>	13	46	59	4	14	18	<b>77</b>
<b>RIW</b>	127	238	365	19	31	50	<b>415</b>
<b>Undetermined Medical</b>	30	421	451	168	1,845	2,013	<b>2,464</b>
<b>Medicaid-MAGI</b>	32	39	71	123	140	263	<b>334</b>
<b>Medicare Premium Payments</b>	12	193	205	43	102	145	<b>350</b>
<b>Medicaid Complex</b>	11	48	59	20	270	290	<b>349</b>
<b>LTSS</b>	15	311	326	5	32	37	<b>363</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>2,680</b>	<b>3,419</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>2,410</b>	<b>2,986</b>	<b>6,475</b>

\*Reporting Period: June 16 to July 15, 2022

## Call Center

For the period between **June 1, 2022 through July 15, 2022**, the average wait time to DHS staff was approximately **1 hour and 15 minutes**. During this time period, there were approximately **32 employees** taking 5 calls per day (*this metric does not reflect all customer facing activities staff undertake, however, future reports may introduce other data points to better reflect work performed*).



The call center typically sees a pattern of high call volume toward the beginning and end of each month. Call volume begins to decline shortly after the first week of each month. In **July**, the mid-month call volume **decreased as anticipated** and **there were approximately 40 workers** that took 5 calls or more per day.

DHS rotates field staff into the call center on a weekly basis to support designated call center staff as necessary to address incoming calls. On occasion, DHS also places a notification on the website to alert customers of higher than usual call volume or other Call Center updates.

###