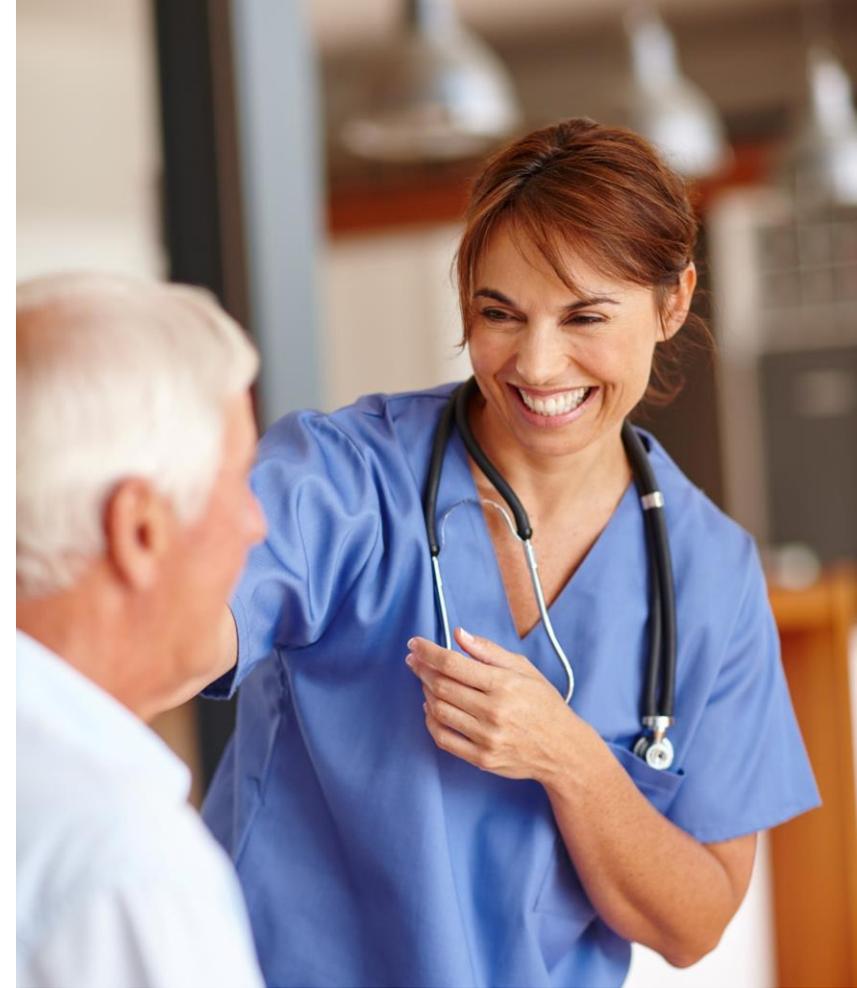




HEALTH CARE
AUTHORITY



LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
INCOME SUPPORT DIVISION

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

KYRA OCHOA, DEPUTY SECRETARY AND NIKI KOZLOWSKI, ISD DIRECTOR

INVESTING FOR TOMORROW, DELIVERING TODAY.

BEFORE WE START...

On behalf of all colleagues at the Health Care Authority, we humbly acknowledge we are on the unceded ancestral lands of the original peoples of the Pueblo, Apache, and Diné past, present, and future.

With gratitude we pay our respects to the land, the people and the communities that contribute to what today is known as the State of New Mexico.



Santa Cruz Lake, NM

Photo by HCA employee Jessica Gomez



HEALTH CARE
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Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.



HEALTH CARE
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MISSION

We ensure New Mexicans attain their highest level of health by providing whole-person, cost-effective, accessible, and high-quality health care and safety-net services.

VISION

Every New Mexican has access to affordable health care coverage through a coordinated and seamless health care system.

GOALS



IMPROVE Leverage purchasing power and partnerships to create innovative policies and models of comprehensive health care coverage that improve the health and well-being of New Mexicans and the workforce.



SUPPORT Build the best team in state government by supporting employees' continuous growth and wellness.



ADDRESS Achieve health equity by addressing poverty, discrimination, and lack of resources, building a New Mexico where everyone thrives.



PROVIDE Implement innovative technology and data-driven decision-making to provide unparalleled, convenient access to services and information.

AGENDA

- Year In Review
- Key Accomplishments
- Upcoming Priorities
- Community Service Block Grant



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MEET DANIELLE – CUSTOMER

- Single mother of a 3-year-old.
- Works at a convenience store; had been enrolled in a community college but had to drop out because her car needed a repair she can't afford.
- Currently only receives Medicaid. Has applied for SNAP and LIHEAP.
- Relying on getting approved for SNAP.
- **Monthly Income: \$1,344**
 - Works an average of 28 hours a week at \$12/hr.
 - Does not receive any child support.
- **Monthly Expenses: \$1550**
 - Rent \$600
 - Groceries average of \$400/month
 - Utilities (gas, electric, phone) average \$150
 - Childcare \$400 (\$100/week for a neighbor who is not certified)
- Comes to the Income Support Division (ISD) for help in September 2024.
- Submits applications for Emergency SNAP, Emergency LIHEAP.



MEET MAYA – CASEWORKER

- ISD Family Assistance Analyst (FAA) 1, started in 2023 to take care of her family and “because I love to help people in need”.
- **Meets Minimum Qualifications**
 - Highschool Diploma
 - Two (2) years of experience in customer service
- **Monthly Income as an FAA \$4,158.67 gross**
 - Base pay is \$22.13, now \$23.90/hr. (with the 8% temporary differential from FNS settlement).
- Loves the work but struggles with surges in workload and the complexity of the federal programs.
 - Would like to receive more in-depth training to better understand the job and be able to properly serve customers.
- Is glad to be helping customers in a more timely manner since ISD got out of backlog in July, but is concerned that if the temporary differential is cut, the division will lose people and her workload will become unmanageable, or she will have to find another job or go on benefits herself, as 20% of her coworkers must do.
- The office is having trouble recruiting and retaining staff due to the complexity of the job and low pay, Maya and her co-workers need more training and financial security.



YEAR IN REVIEW 2024

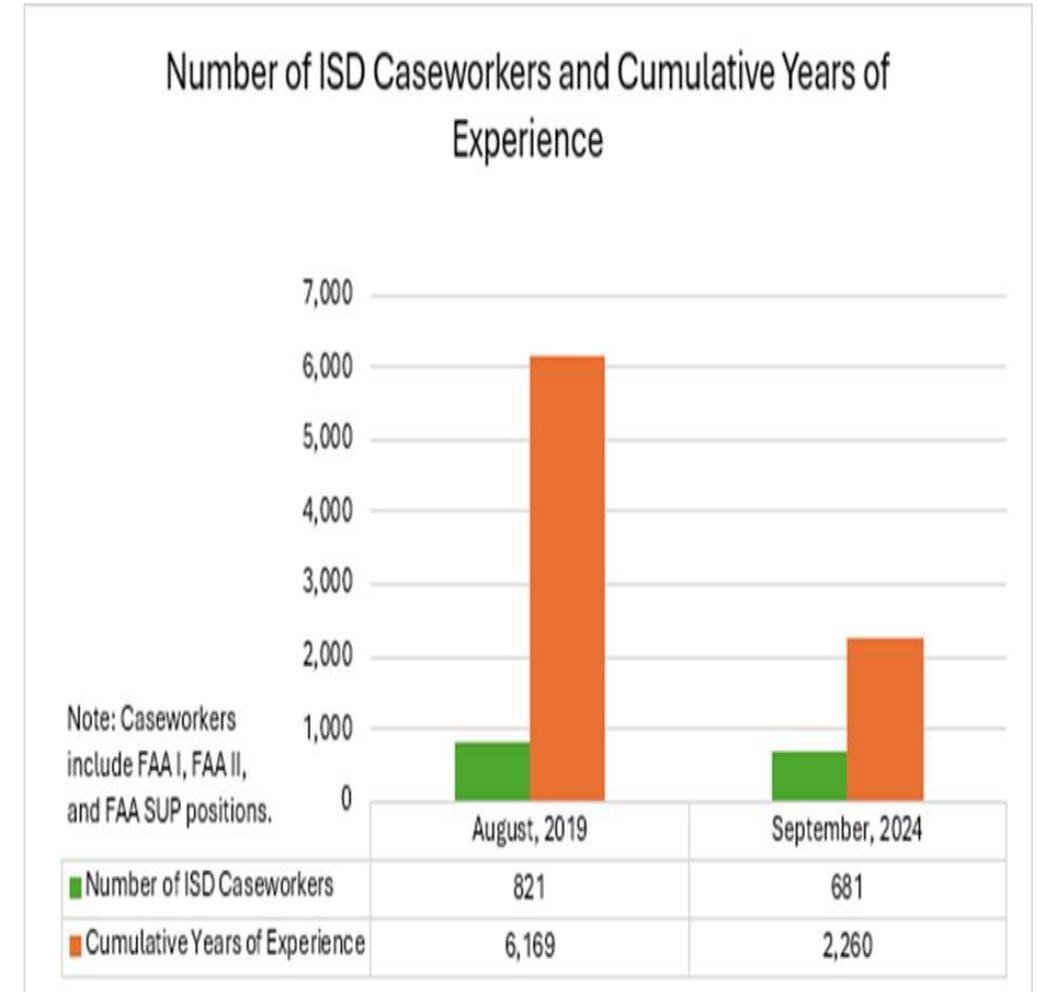
UNPRECEDENTED UNWINDING

SNAP and Medicaid were allowed flexibilities as a response to the Pandemic.

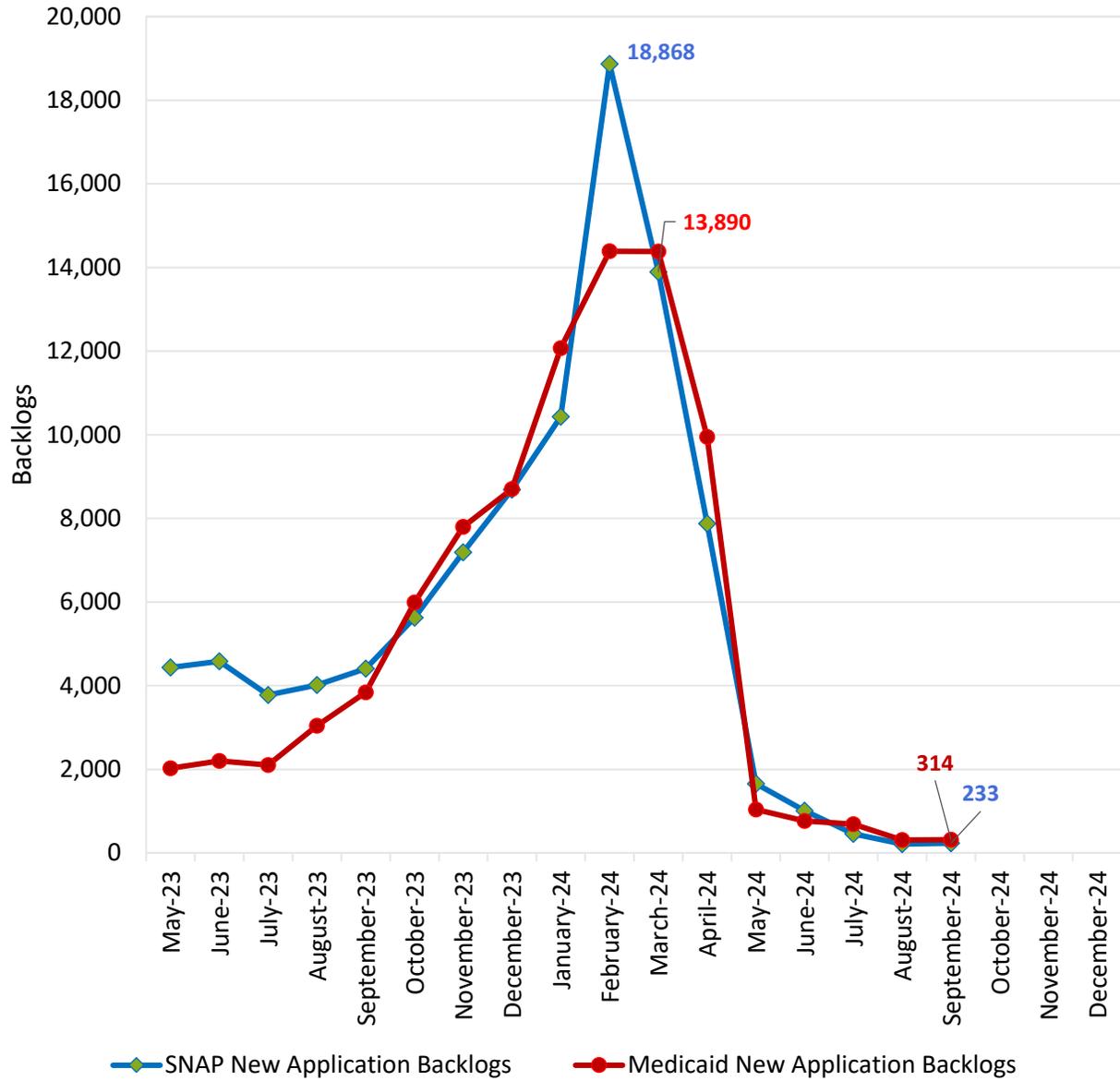
Waivers ended June 30, 2023, causing a backlog in December 2023.

Contributing Factors:

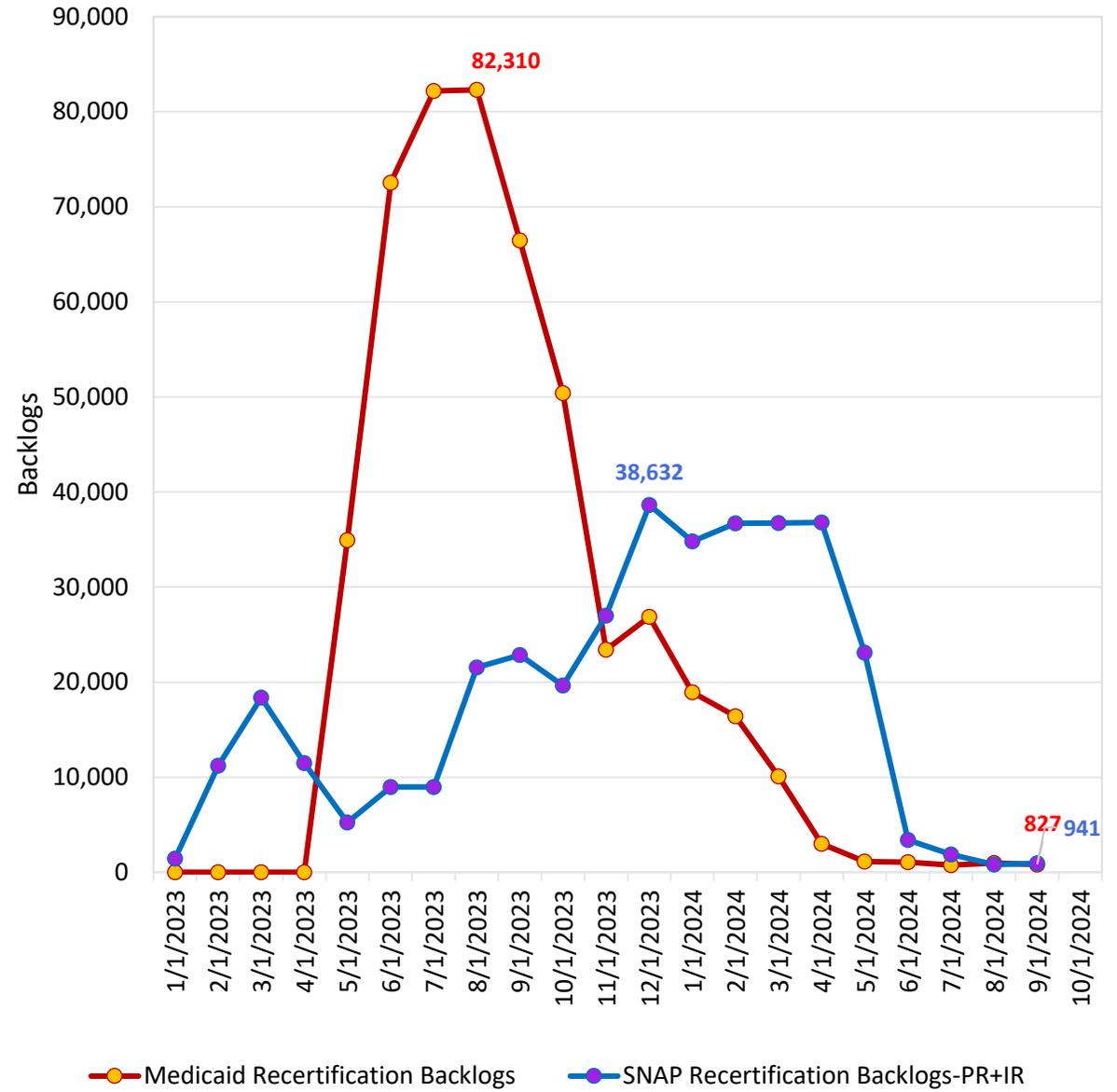
- **Automatic Extension of Certification:** Deferred recertifications piled up when waiver ended.
- **Waiver of Interim Reports:** Accumulated interim reports needed processing.
- **Flexibility in Interview Requirements:** Increased interview scheduling and conducting needs.
- **Temporary Increase in Benefits and Eligibility:** Higher caseloads from expanded benefits and eligibility.
- **Lower staffing** than previous years due to the great resignation, the return to office stipulation, and less schedule flexibility.



New Application Backlog Medicaid and SNAP



Recertification Backlogs Medicaid and SNAP



Note: Values reflect number of cases on the 1st of the month

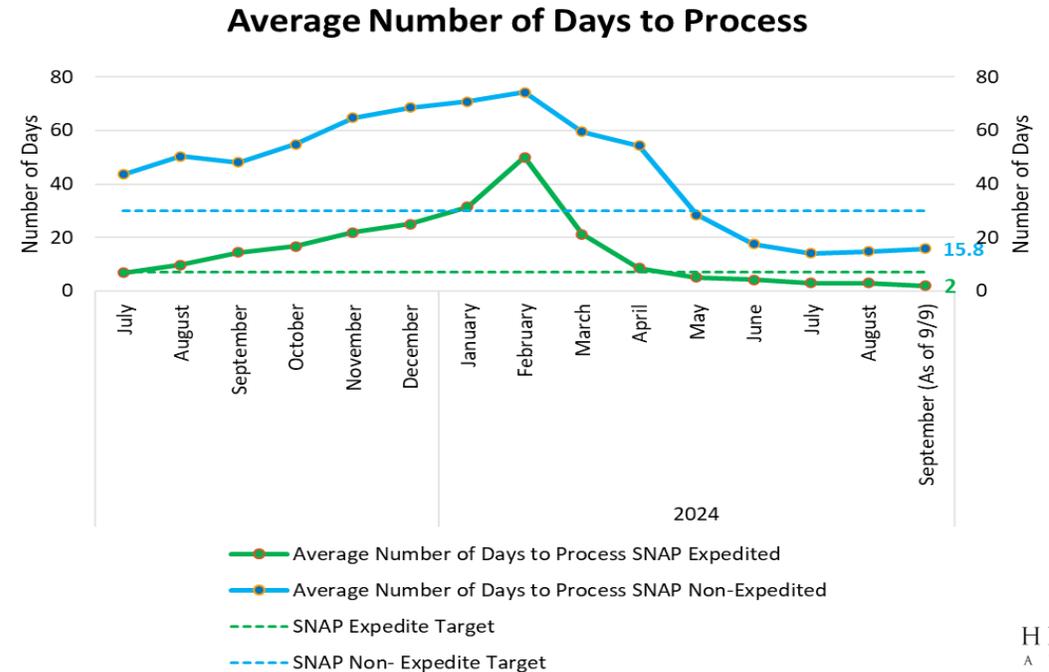
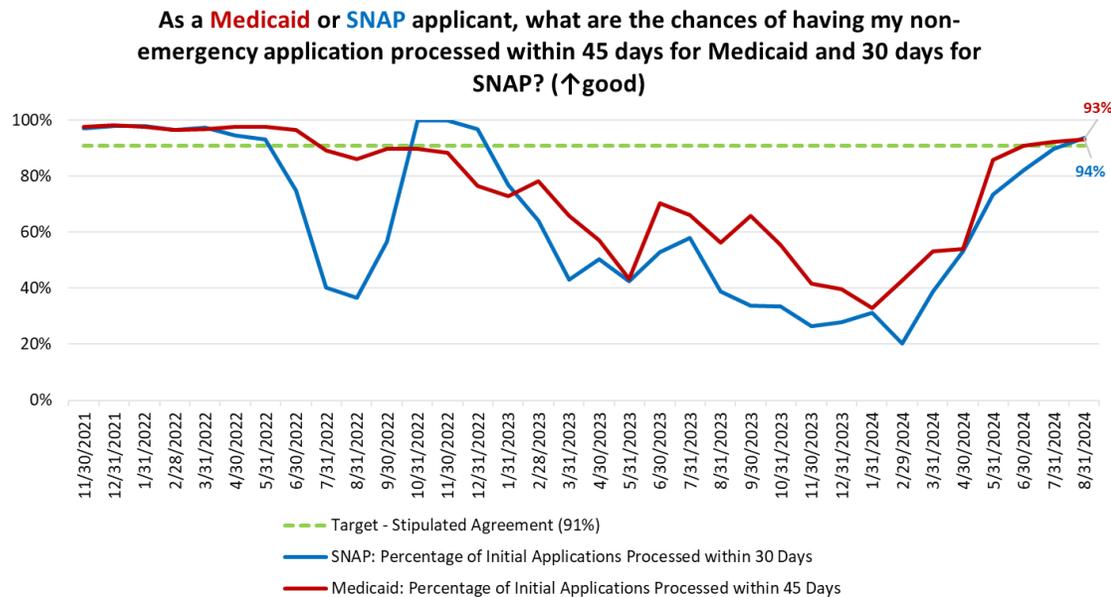
TIMELY BENEFIT DELIVERY

HCA ISD has resolved delays in processing applications and is now enhancing both timeliness and quality.

- A combination of increased demand, operational challenges and staffing issues led to backlog and delays in processing.

Leadership, organizational, and operational changes, along with hiring 348 new staff, many in rural areas, along with staff augmentation, have made the difference.

- Given a projected 13.0% increase in SNAP and Medicaid customers in FY26 and a historic underfunding of this division, sustaining success and getting New Mexicans needed benefits will require additional investment in the people who help the people.
- August 2024 division is currently at -14.3% funded vacancy rate.



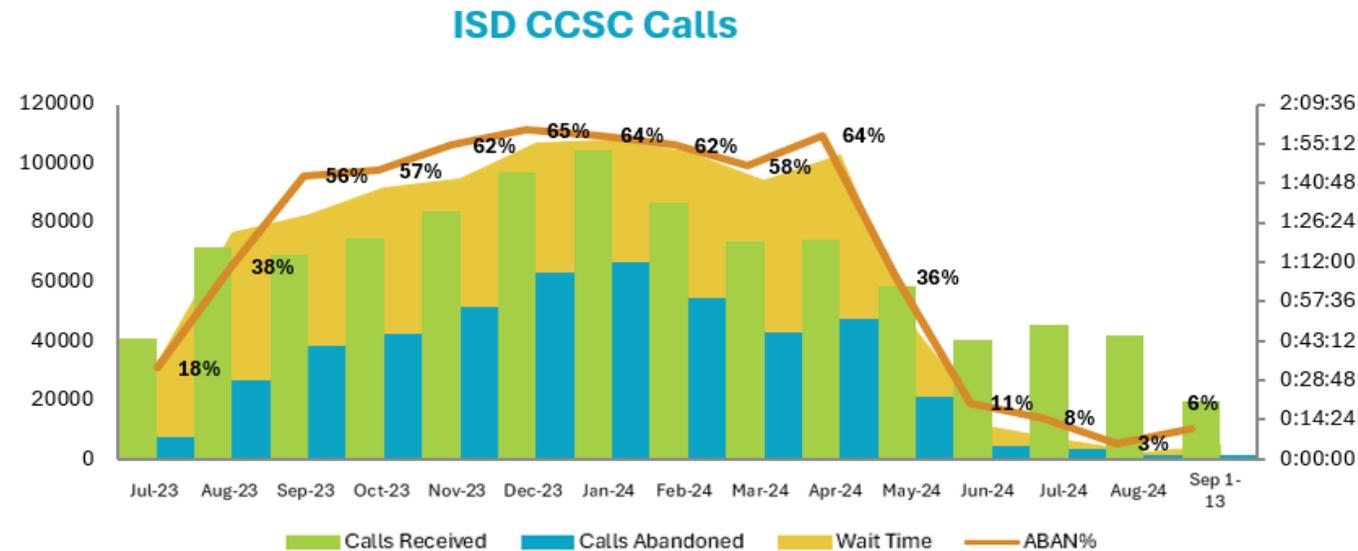
WHERE WE ARE TODAY

As a result of the backlog being cleared, customers now receive timely service when contacting the Consolidated Customer Service Center (CCSC).

- **Operational Strategies:**

- Streamlined processes and improved workflow.
- Timely benefits reduces the number of contacts per customer resulting in less call volume.
- Balanced staffing optimizing the abandonment rate.
- Statewide automatic task distribution has optimized who can work cases and how cases are worked in any areas of our work groups.

This strategic combination of enhanced workflows & additional resources improved responsiveness in both processing and Call Center hold/wait times.



SNAP EXPANSIONS

Projected add of 60,000 new SNAP households

To support the Governor's Hunger Initiatives, the HCA is enhancing food access, effective October 1, 2024.

- **Expanded SNAP Eligibility:** Raises the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) threshold from 165% to 200%, allowing more New Mexicans to qualify for SNAP.
- **Increased State SNAP Supplement:** Raises the minimum monthly benefit for elderly and disabled households to \$100.

The funding for the initiatives is recurring.

Priority	Estimated # of Households Impacted	Average Household Benefit (Monthly)	Estimated Additional SNAP Benefits (Annually)
200% FPL Increase	67,697	\$369	\$299,762,316
SNAP Supplement increase Elderly and Disabled	26,451	\$100	\$14,106,789

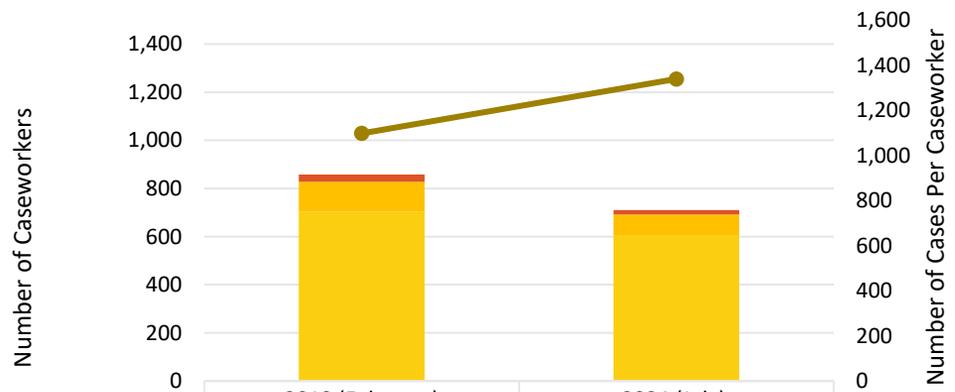


CASELOAD CHALLENGES

Although ISD has implemented many operational efficiencies and strategies, staffing remains a concern:

- Projected 13.0% increase in SNAP and Medicaid customers in FY26.
- As of March 2024, each caseworker responsible for 1,350 cases, a 20% increase since 2019.
- Due to the increase in households eligible we are underfunded for caseworkers
- Maximizing efficiencies and automations alone will not maintain timeliness
- August 2024 the division is at a -14.3% funded vacancy rate.

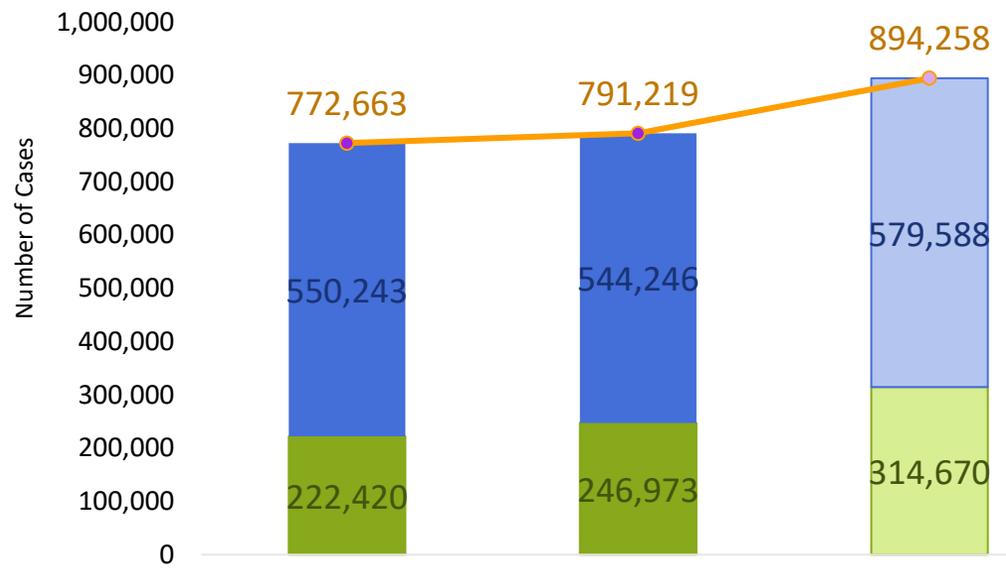
Caseworkers and Cases Per Caseworker



Office Clerks	30	18
Supervisors (FAA-Sup)	124	89
Caseworkers (FAA i/ii)	704	603
Cases Per Caseworker (Right Axis)	1,098	1,339

■ Caseworkers (FAA i/ii) ■ Supervisors (FAA-Sup)
■ Office Clerks —●— Cases Per Caseworker (Right Axis)

Medicaid and SNAP Cases and Aggregate



■ SNAP ■ Medicaid —●— SNAP+Medicaid



SNAP AND MEDICAID QUALITY MEASURES

ISD is focused on reinstating quality measures to meet and exceed federal performance standards, while ensuring accurate and timely service for New Mexicans.

Top Error Trends for SFY 2023:

- **Agency Errors:**
 - Disregarded or misapplied reported information
 - Incorrect policy application
 - Failure to verify required information
- **Client Errors:**
 - Withheld information
 - Unreported information
 - Incorrect information provided

State Case Reviews	Updates to Organizational Structure	Corrective Action Planning	Training
Increased case reviews focus on those with the highest error rates.	Local office management changes adding additional support for staff.	A Quality Council, comprising members from each Bureau, reviews error trends, discuss mitigation strategies, and recommend corrective actions.	ISD provided interview training to restore normal SNAP interview processes. Additional supplemental training will continue over the next quarter.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS
AND
UPCOMING PRIORITIES

SUMMER ELECTRONIC BENEFITS TRANSFER

Congress established the program to reduce child hunger by 33% .

Dec 2023: ISD Received the interim final ruling and went live in 6 months.

May 2024: Successfully launched providing \$120 per eligible child on Summer EBT cards for use at grocery stores and authorized retailers, supporting families and local economies.

Next Steps:

- **System Enhancements:** Streamline yearly benefits
- **Simplified Application:** Implement real-time eligibility
- **Process Coordination:** Enhance customer experience
- **Data Collection:** Improve for direct certified eligible students
- **Expand Stakeholders:** Collaborate with CYFD, FDPIR, WIC, and Tribal Liaison
- **Improve Outreach:** Strengthen communication and education
- **Staffing and Operations:** Assess needs, monitor compliance, and support program efficiency



2023 – 2024 School Year As of September 3, 2024

Benefits Issued	\$34,065,360.00 (\$120 per child)
Children Served	283,878
SUN Bucks Cards Issued	165,438



DISASTER SNAP

Disaster SNAP provided essential food assistance for recovery.

The New Mexico HCA quickly responded to the needs of those affected:

- Fires and floods in Lincoln and Otero Counties, and the Mescalero Apache Tribe.
- Floods in Rio Arriba and San Juan Counties.

Key Actions Taken:

- **June 21, 2024:** Waiver for the 10-day reporting requirement for lost SNAP food in Lincoln County and Mescalero Apache Reservation.
- **June 27, 2024:** Waiver allowing SNAP households to buy hot foods through July 26, 2024.
- **July 3, 2024:** D-SNAP operations for Otero County, Mescalero Apache Reservation, and Lincoln County from July 10-12 and July 14-17, 2024.
- **July 19, 2024:** Extended hot food waiver for all 33 counties and Mescalero Apache Reservation through August 25, 2024.
- **July 24, 2024:** Expanded D-SNAP to Rio Arriba and San Juan counties from August 12-17 and August 19, 2024.
- **July 26, 2024:** Extended the waiver for the 10-day reporting requirement due to wildfire power outages, covering Otero, Rio Arriba, and San Juan counties through August 16, 2024.



DISASTER SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Disaster Area	Signed Declaration by President Biden	Implementation Dates	Number of Individuals Received	Dollar Amount Issued
Lincoln, Otero County & Mescalero Apache	June 20, 2024	July 10, 2024 to July 17, 2024	3,927	\$606,576
San Juan & Rio Arriba County	July 11, 2024	August 12, 2024 To August 19, 2024	22,555	\$2,779,852

[Disaster SNAP Guidance \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/disaster-snap)



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KNOWLEDGE MODERNIZATION

Modernize and Enhance Caseworker Training - Develop a comprehensive solution with e-learning, virtual, and in-person options for staff development.

- **Elevate ISD Culture:** Integrate and enhance organizational culture
- **Streamline Operations:** Improve efficiency and accuracy in benefit delivery
- **Role-Based Workflows:** Shorten staff ramp-up time with targeted workflows
- **Increase Retention:** Offer meaningful training and tools to support early employment
- **Leadership Development:** Create content to boost team performance and retention

Examples:

- Micro Learnings
- Real time Demonstration
- Mock learning environments
- Workflows and Checklists
- Role Specific Guides
- Layering tools and help guides within specific eligibility screens



UPDATE ON DANIELLE

- Maya renewed her Medicaid, got quickly approved for SNAP, and qualified for TANF's Education Works Program.
- With cash assistance and money saved on food with SNAP, Danielle has been able to secure her housing and meet her and daughters' basic needs.
- Through her Education Works Program:
 - Her DWS Career Development Specialist assisted her with re-enrollment in the community college where she is working towards a degree in social work.
 - She received the ongoing coaching and mentoring to identify additional community resources.
- Receiving TANF allowed her to receive Support Services such as:
 - Childcare assistance
 - Monthly gas card
 - Educational Costs supports
- Danielle is able to keep her housing, pay her bills, and accelerate her college studies, obtaining a degree.



UPDATE ON MAYA

- Interviewed Danielle and found out she qualified for EWP, then processed her application within 3 days.
- Maya provided Danielle a referral to the NMW EWP program which allows her to continue her education and obtain a degree while she is receiving the TANF.
- Maya has participated in multiple targeted trainings to strengthen her skills as a caseworker and is feeling confident about her job. This has improved her customer service along with productivity and accuracy.
- Maya developed a strong, effective relationship with her supervisor and co-workers, and feels supported by management and all staff in the office.
- Last month, Maya processed 28 cases (multiple categories) and 51 applications, providing 36,413 meals and 50 people with health insurance
- Monthly Income Now: \$4,782.42 Promoted to Lead Worker. Hourly rate increase to \$27.49 (w/ 8% differential).
- She is able to pay her bills, enjoys new training opportunities, and is taking a course in management, and looks forward to a fulfilling career with ISD.



COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT

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COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

Purpose

CSBG is a federally funded block grant that provides federal funding to administer support services that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in under resourced communities. We partner with our Community Action Agencies (CAA) to help administer these services.

Services Provided by Community Action Agencies

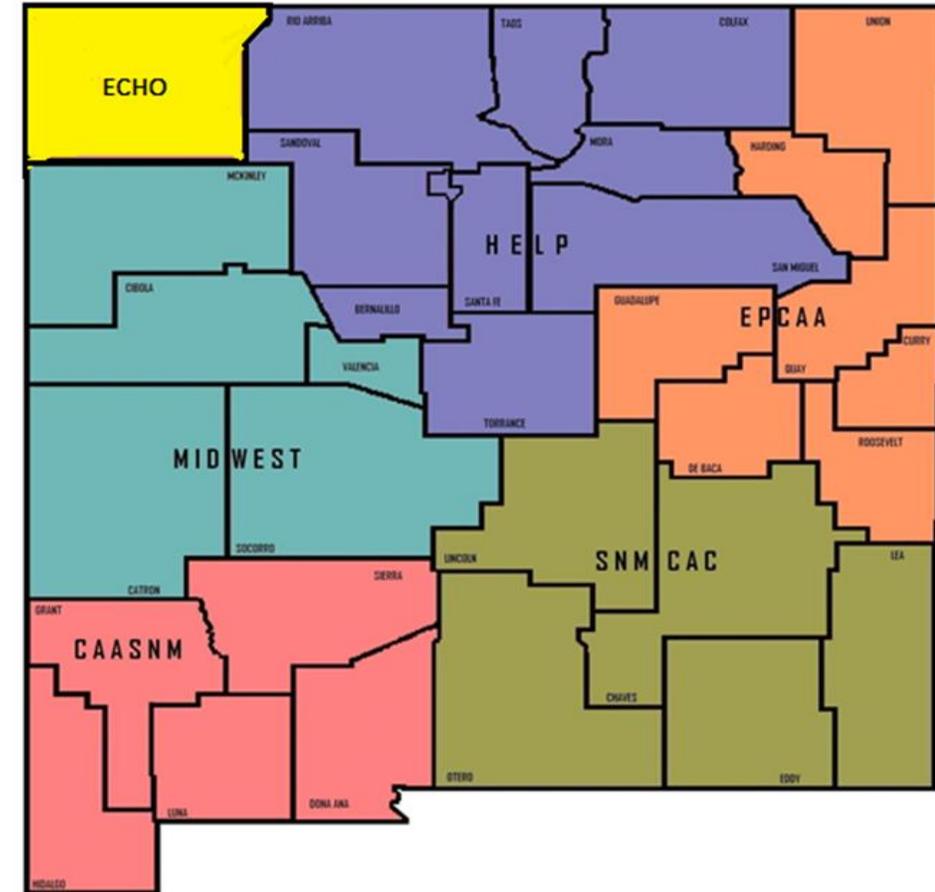
- Housing assistance
- Access to food and nutrition
- Utility assistance
- Home and Vehicle repair
- Transportation
- Employment and Education
- Crisis and emergency services
- Senior programs



CURRENT COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES (CAAs)

New Mexico Community Action Agencies

- **Community Action Agency of Southern NM (CAASN) 289k pop**
 - Serves Dona Ana, Sierra, Luna, Grant and Hidalgo counties
- **Eastern plains Community Action Agency (EPCAA) 87k pop**
 - Serves Curry, De Baca, Guadalupe, Harding, Quay, Roosevelt and Union counties
- **ECHO 122k pop**
 - Serves San Juan county
- **HELP NM 1.1M pop**
 - Serves Bernalillo, Colfax, Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Sandoval, Santa Fe, Taos and Tarrant counties
- **Mid-West Community Action Program 196k pop**
 - Serves Valencia, Socorro, Catron, Cibola and McKinley counties
- **Southeast NM Community Action Corporation 290k pop**
 - Serves Lincoln, Chaves, Eddy, Otero and Lea counties



SOCIAL IMPACT ACHIEVED IN FFY2023

Infants and Children served:

- 2,002 children participated in pre-school activities to develop school readiness skills
- 572 children participated in a summer education program

Seniors (65+) and Disabled Individuals assisted in maintaining an independent lifestyle:

- 1,550 seniors served
- 2,146 disabled individuals served

Overall Served

- 91,548 Households were served
- 54,891 Individuals were served

Emergency Assistance provided:

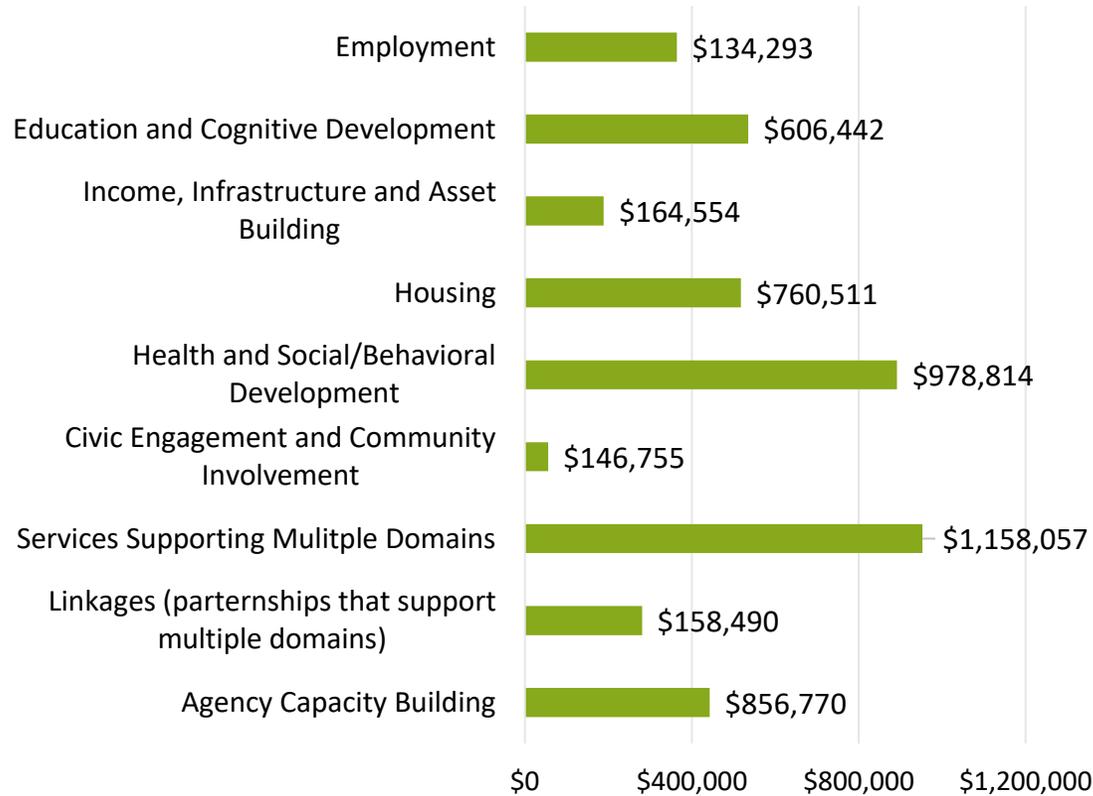
- 6,605 individuals received payment assistance for utilities
- 1,362 individuals received payment assistance for housing
- 3,287 individuals received clothing assistance
- 2,481 individuals received transportation services
- 19,572 individuals received referral services
- 19,459 Food Distributions (food Bags/Boxes, Food Share Programs, Bags of Groceries provided)
- 2,156,988 prepared meals were provided

*Reflects CSBG funds leveraged with other eligible federal and state funding

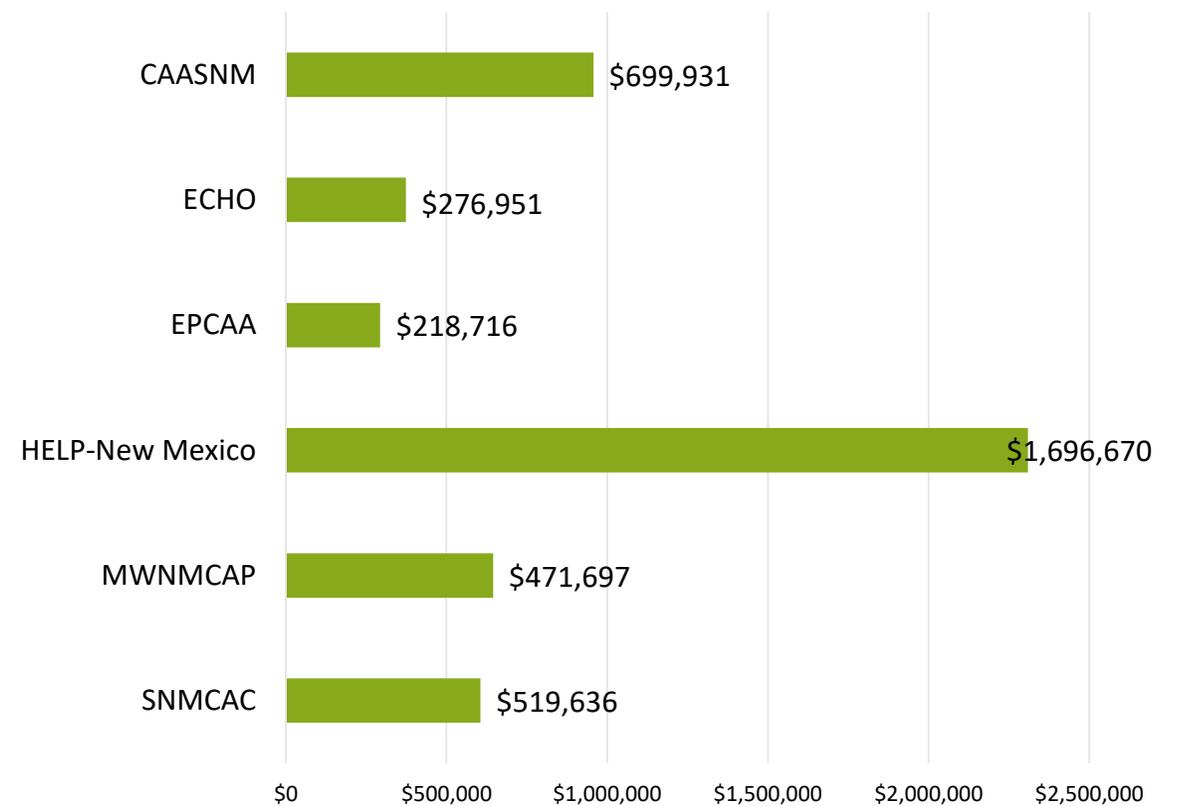


CSBG EXPENDITURES IN FFY2023

CAAs FFY2023 CSBG Expenditure Types



FFY2023 Distribution of CSBG Funds including discretionary funds





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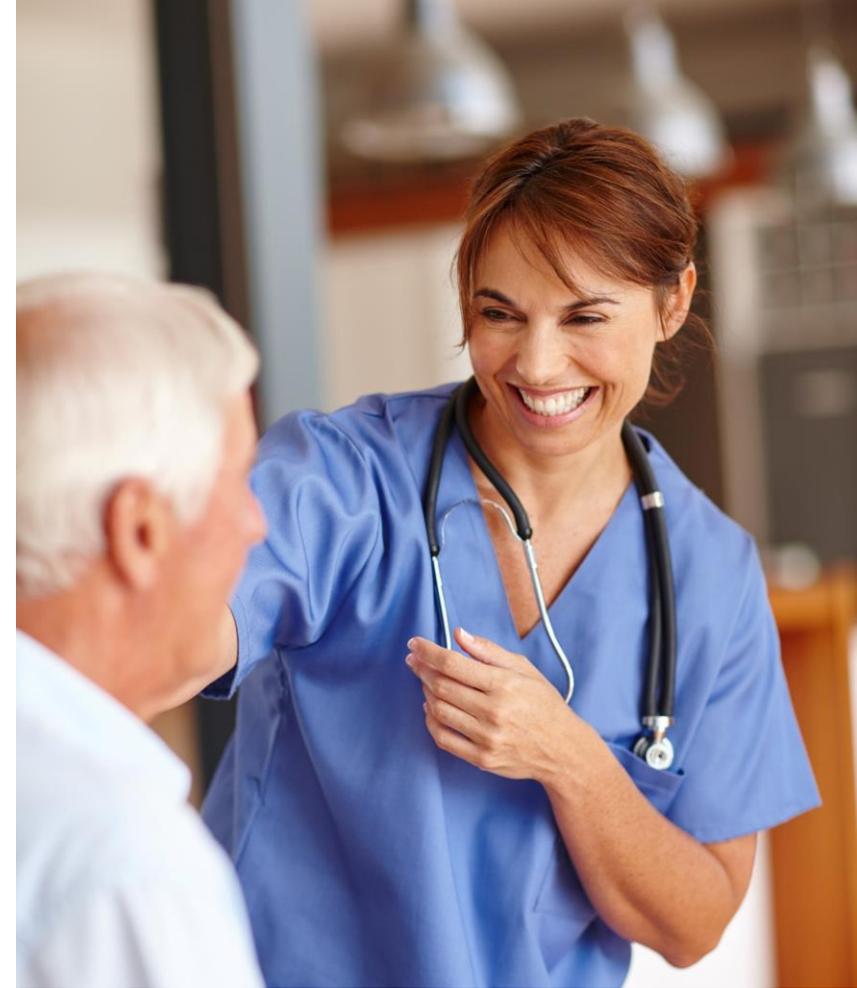


THANK YOU & QUESTIONS

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APPENDIX

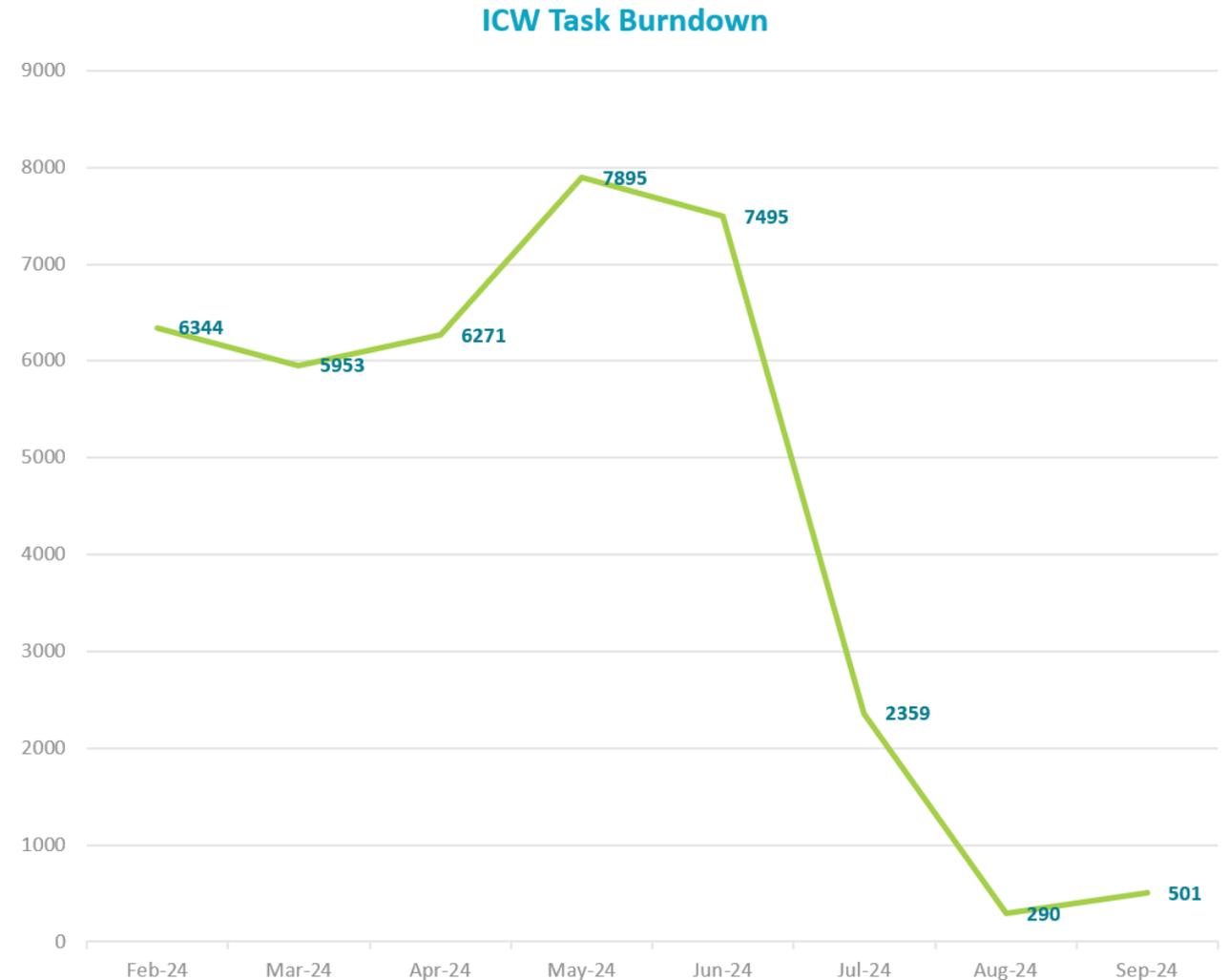
APPENDIX IS NOT REQUIRED, BUT CAN BE USED IF PRESENTER WANTS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION INCLUDED IN PRESENTATION

INVESTING FOR TOMORROW, DELIVERING TODAY.

ICW TIMELINE

- The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a series of unexpected challenges that significantly impacted our various ISD programs including the Institutional Care and Waiver Medicaid. These programs, known for their specialized requirements and complex policy frameworks, faced considerable disruptions during the pandemic.
- The deferral of normal processing activities due to the various waivers created a backlog, which needed to be addressed once the emergency measures were lifted.
- The pandemic introduced complex and rapidly changing rules and guidelines. Staff had to manage a higher volume of cases while adapting to these frequent changes, which added to the processing challenges. The combination of increased caseloads and evolving rules made it difficult to maintain efficient processing times. Additionally, the shortage of staff compounded the backlog issue, as fewer staff members were available to handle the growing number of specialized cases.
- HCA ISD (Health Care Authority Income Support Division) has successfully resolved the backlog of the Institutional Care and Waiver Medicaid cases. This was achieved through targeted efforts to address the delays and implement strategies to streamline processing.
- With the backlog resolved, HCA ISD is now focusing on enhancing both the timeliness and quality of Institutional Care and Waiver Medicaid processing. While the pandemic created significant challenges for Institutional Care and Waiver Medicaid operations, including increased demand, complex processing requirements, and staffing issues, these have been addressed with targeted resolutions and ongoing improvements to ensure better service delivery in the future.

*Data through 9/10/2024.



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