

May 6, 2016

Patrick O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 2018  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

RE: ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Report

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

In accordance with Legislative Bill 657 (2016) ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Reports, please find attached a copy of the report for First Quarter 2016. This report contains operational performance metrics for the Economic Assistance and Medicaid Programs.

I am pleased to report improvement, from the previous quarter.

Sincerely,



Courtney N. Phillips, MPA  
Chief Executive Officer  
Department of Health and Human Services

**Department of Health and Human Services  
Legislative Report  
LB 657**

**ACCESSNebraska**

**January – March 2016 Quarter**

**REPORT FOR: LEGISLATURE**  
**REPORT DATE: APRIL 28, 2016**  
**LEGISLATIVE BILL: LB 657**  
**COMMITTEE NAME: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**CONTACT PERSON: COURTNEY PHILLIPS, CEO**  
**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**DOUGLAS WEINBERG, DIRECTOR**  
**CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION**  
**CALDER LYNCH, DIRECTOR**  
**MEDICAID AND LONG-TERM CARE DIVISION**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administers and manages eligibility for Economic Assistance Programs and Medicaid through a service delivery system known as ACCESSNebraska. The ACCESSNebraska program was started in September 2008 with a public website containing an online application for benefits. ACCESSNebraska was fully implemented in April 2012. ACCESSNebraska operations contain the following components:

- ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov website
- Document Management with two imaging centers (Lincoln and Omaha)
- Customer Service Centers for Economic Assistance (Fremont and Scottsbluff) and Medicaid (Lexington and Lincoln)
- Local Offices (over 50 throughout Nebraska)
- N-FOCUS eligibility system

In May 2015, ACCESSNebraska began operating with a cross-divisional team focused on addressing operational improvement through a series of process initiatives. The team meets weekly with the current focus on stabilizing the Economic Assistance operations. Stabilization is defined as the operational performance at or above the established metrics. Once stabilization is achieved, the team will turn its focus to the overall operations and begin assessing, evaluating and creating the long-term strategy (operations, systems, workforce, administration) for ACCESSNebraska.

ACCESSNebraska has two Program Managers who facilitate 11 focus areas. The focus areas include:

1. Document Management
2. Call Management
3. Field Operations and Task Management
4. Recruiting/Retention
5. Policy Reviews and Enhancements
6. Workforce Management/Capacity Planning
7. Communications
8. Legislative Reporting
9. Change Management
10. ACCESSNebraska Mobile Application Project with UNL Raikes School
11. Client Feedback

Client feedback was established as a focus area in January 2016. This work team is developing methods for ACCESSNebraska to obtain client feedback about customer service. The team is conducting interviews with stakeholders to identify topic areas to develop surveys.

The purpose of this report is to reflect the operational performance for the first quarter of 2016 (January through March). During this quarter, ACCESSNebraska operational performance improved. Below are a few of the highlights.

### **Economic Assistance**

- Average call wait time for this quarter was 2 minutes and 34 seconds, below the set target of five minutes or less.
- There were 52,049 applications processed in the first quarter 2016, with an average process time for the quarter of eleven (11) days.
- Staff processed 12,764 applications (25 percent) the same day the application was received by the Department.
- State calculated SNAP application (Initial, Expedited, Recertification) timeliness rate for the quarter was 97.4 percent.

## **Medicaid**

- Average call wait time for this quarter was 2 minutes and 28 seconds, well below the target of five minutes or less.
- The median Medicaid application processing time for children and families was 25 days, and for aged and disabled was 21 days this quarter. Federal benchmarks for application processing are 45 days for children and families and 90 days for aged and disabled applicants.
- 25,223 Medicaid applications were received in the quarter including volume from the federal marketplace which decrease as the open enrollment period ended.
- Eligibility accuracy for the quarter was at 97.73 percent.

## **Process Improvements**

- Economic Assistance work group recommendations for new worker training began implementation. Structured learning tasks are in place for staff that begin work before the classroom training starts. A supervisor tool kit has been developed for use with new trainees. A key concept of the new program is the integration of the trainees into the future work teams from day one. More emphasis during training is on the application of policy as it occurs in the case management process.
- Economic Assistance has placed front desk staff into teams of staff with like duties. These teams have a single supervisor who is focused on customer service in the local offices. The supervisors are knowledgeable about front desk tasks such as application management and document management. The intention is to provide staff with more support in delivering customer service to those who come to the local offices.
- MLTC has developed a "Statewide Focus Team" with frontline staff, along with representatives from the eligibility policy and business analyst teams, to review current processes to determine if they are up-to-date, and make recommendations on potential improvements. This effort will assist with the next step of modifying process and practice for Nebraska Timely, Responsive, Accurate, Customer Service/Eligibility and Enrollment Solution (NTRAC/EES) implementation.
- MLTC is working in conjunction with Human Resource and Development-Training Staff to develop a lesson-plan approach to field work days (non-classroom training days). Providing more structure during field work days will allow for the trainee to feel supported and lead towards better retention.

## **Communications**

- Economic Assistance has expanded EARL (Economic Assistance Resource Library) to include performance metrics on productivity and accuracy.
- Economic Assistance continues operating with daily huddle calls to share information.
- MLTC kicked off the "Change Champion Network" to keep staff engaged and informed about NTRAC/EES activities.
- MLTC management continues a daily huddle call to share information, adjust resources, and improve operational efficiency.
- The ACCESSNebraska team meets regularly on Mondays to share information from across the program.

## **Staffing**

- Economic Assistance has five vacancies in the Fremont customer service center and two vacancies in the Scottsbluff Customer Service Center, five vacancies in other local offices throughout the state and one vacancy at the Omaha Document Imaging/Application Management Center.

- MLTC currently has seven vacancies at the Lexington/Lincoln Customer Service Centers, six vacancies in local offices and two vacancies at the Lincoln Document Imaging/Application Management Center.

**LB 657 ACCESSNebraska Quarterly Report  
January – March 2016**

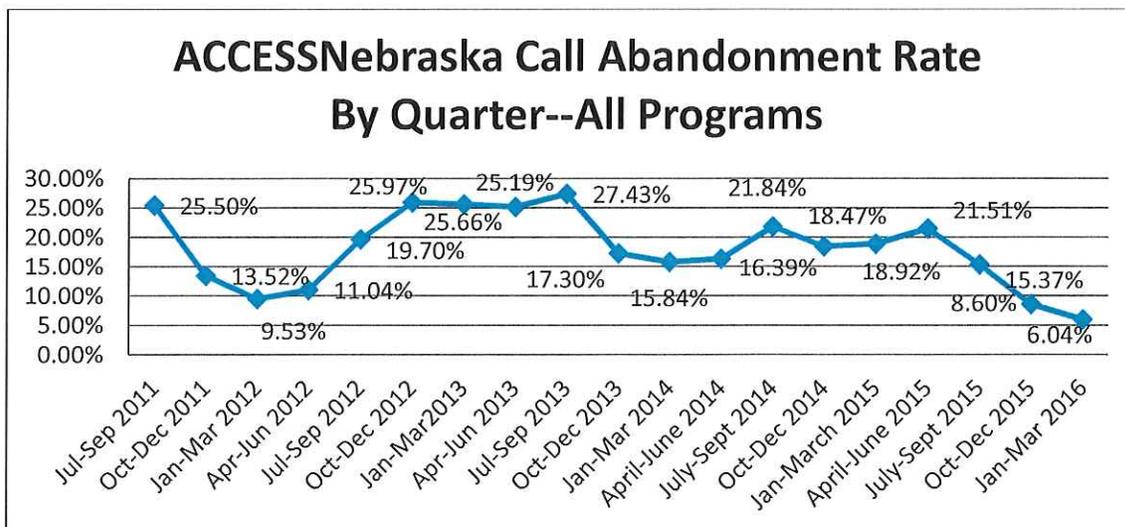
**Element One: Call Wait Times**

Average Call Wait	January	February	March	Quarter
Economic Assistance	4:11	2:18	1:03	2:34
Medicaid	2:42	2:19	2:23	2:28

**Element Two: Call Abandonment Rates**

Call abandonment is the number of calls that are terminated before a staff member answers. The termination is due to the client hanging up or the phone signal was dropped.

Call Terminations	January	February	March	Quarter
<b>Economic Assistance</b>				
Abandonment Rate	8.68%	5.08%	2.65%	5.65%
Number of Abandons	3,153	1,610	809	5,572
Average Time to Abandon	5:42	3:46	1:46	4:34
<b>Medicaid</b>				
Abandonment Rate	6.77%	5.99%	6.38%	6.40%
Number of Abandons	2,578	2,007	2,101	6,686
Average Time to Abandon	2:22	2:10	2:12	2:15



**Element Three: Timeliness, or the time period from the date the application is received to when the case is approved or denied, of Initial Applications by benefit program including client or department processing reason for untimely application.**

Program	Timeliness Percentage
SNAP Expedited	99.42%
SNAP Non-Expedited	98.04%
Child Care	94.21%
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	96.36%
Aid to Dependent Children	97.11%
Assistance to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	98.54%
Medicaid and CHIP	93.17%

The following chart shows reason for the untimely processing percentages (client, agency, third party and system).

Program	Agency	Client	Third Party	System
SNAP Expedited	30.56%	55.55%	2.78%	11.11%
SNAP Non-Expedited	22.02%	59.63%	3.21%	15.14%
Child Care	29.61%	57.04%	5.10%	8.25%
Low Income Home Energy Assistance	33.00%	51.09%	3.58%	12.33%
Aid to Dependent Children	22.22%	58.89%	5.56%	13.33%
Assistance to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	25.30%	30.12%	28.92%	15.66%
Medicaid and CHIP	25.88%	68.73%	5.39%	NA

**Element Four: Timeliness of Renewal Applications by benefit program including client or department processing reason for untimely applications.**

Program	Timeliness Percentage
SNAP Non-Expedited Timely	95.85%
SNAP Non-Expedited Untimely	97.74%
SNAP Expedited Late	98.84%
SNAP Non-Expedited Late	99.39%
Child Care	81.65%
Aid to Dependent Children	90.28%
Assistance to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment	89.55%
Medicaid and CHIP	68.07%

The following chart shows the reason for untimely processing percentages (client, agency, third party and system) for renewal applications.

Program	Agency	Client	Third Party	System
SNAP Non-Expedited Timely	24.72%	56.60%	0.98%	17.70%
SNAP Non-Expedited Untimely	29.89%	43.67%	0.00%	26.44%
SNAP Expedited Late	27.78%	61.11%	5.56%	5.55%
SNAP Non-Expedited Late	12.50%	68.75%	12.50%	6.25%
Child Care	18.11%	74.02%	4.72%	3.15%

<b>Aid to Dependent Children</b>	<b>15.38%</b>	<b>75.38%</b>	<b>4.62%</b>	<b>4.62%</b>
<b>Assistance to Aged, Blind and Disabled Payment</b>	<b>50.00%</b>	<b>35.71%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>14.29%</b>
<b>Medicaid and CHIP</b>	<b>44.01%</b>	<b>51.15%</b>	<b>4.84%</b>	<b>NA</b>

SNAP timely recertification includes recertification forms received by the Department on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month of expiration.

SNAP untimely recertification includes recertification forms received by the Department from 16<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> of the month of expiration.

SNAP late recertification includes recertification forms submitted in the 30 days following the end of certification.

**Element Five: Data related to client cases closed who reapply for benefits within 30 days and 60 days after the case closure.**

	Reapply Within 30 Days	Reapply between 30 - 60 Days
<b>Economic Assistance &amp; Medicaid</b>		
Closed 12/01/2015	29.32%	8.55%
Closed 01/01/2016	26.50%	9.09%
Closed 02/01/2016	26.23%	11.21%

**Element Six: Any other data relevant to the effectiveness of the ACCESSNebraska program.**

- ACCESSNebraska Monthly Dashboard