

Department of Social Services Eligibility Operations Call Center Update

10/10/2025

Call Center Operations Improvements



People

- Establishment of Tier 1 service delivery model



Process

- Virtual hold option for future call back
- Improved document upload feature



Technology

- Website improvements to improve access to program and forms
- Text messages for renewal and document verification reminders

2023 - 2024

- Establishment of first touch job classification series

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) interview phone queue

- Launched online chatbot, “Laurel” to assist with routine questions regarding benefit inquiry and status
- Automation of “no change” periodic eligibility review forms
- New Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system

2025 - 2026

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

DSS is finalizing the implementation and roll out of its new IVR system aimed at improving the client experience and efficiency of eligibility service agents

Client Pain Points

- Long call wait times
- Limited self-service menu options for benefit status
- Inefficient call routing to eligibility agents



Client Improvements

- 24/7 self-service to obtain benefit status and general inquiry
- Simplified service menu with direct connection to an eligibility service agent
- Reduce unnecessary transfers and improve resolution to inquiries

Eligibility Agent Pain Points

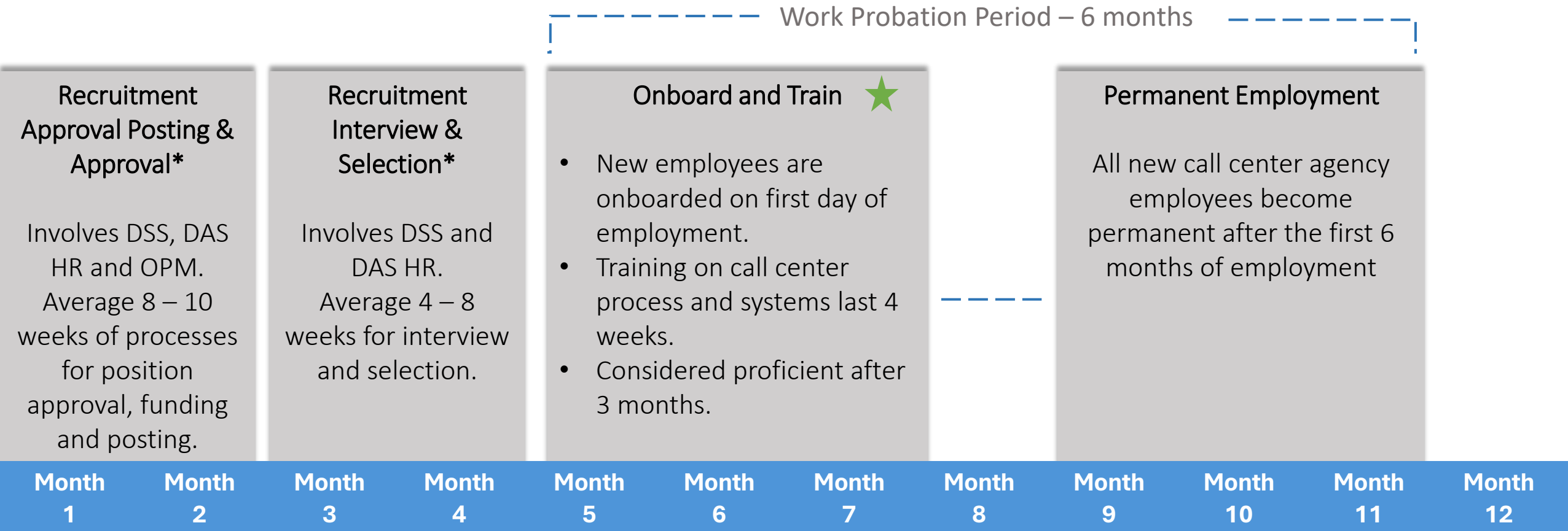
- Too much time needed to research client case and prior interactions
- Multiple repositories for policy and training reference guides
- Proactive alerts to team leads and supervisors to assist with more complex cases



Eligibility Agent Improvements

- Real-time knowledge articles and contextual policy guidance
- Comprehensive client information and interaction history to deliver a personalized experience
- Improved data analytics to forecast call volume and optimize staffing schedules and capacity

DSS Call Center Agent Onboarding and Training

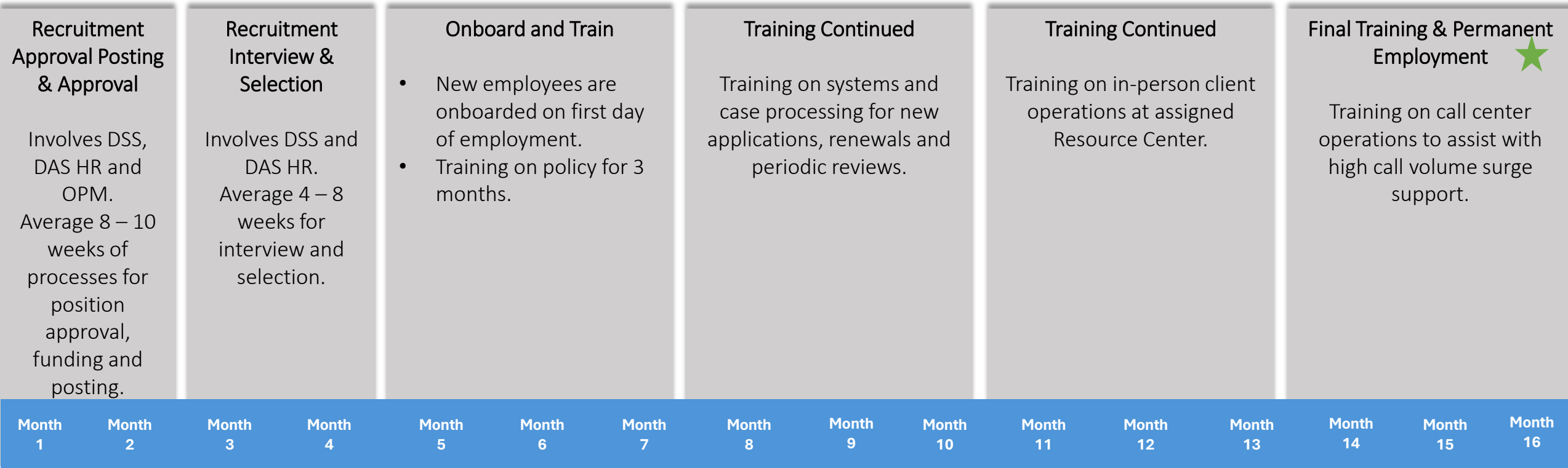


* Can be shorter duration based on urgency

Call Center agents are responsible for answering calls received in our Tier 1 phone queue. Their responsibilities include answering basic questions related to eligibility status/requirements, make necessary internal/external referrals, issue EBT cards, issue budget letters, and make appointments. Call Center agents **do not make eligibility determinations** on client cases nor do they perform in-person client visits. Career progression to the next level of Eligibility Services Worker is available based on performance and education criteria.

DSS Eligibility Services Worker Onboarding and Training

— — — Work Probation Period – 6 months — —



* Can be shorter duration based on urgency

Eligibility Services Workers follow a one-year training path in which they learn eligibility for SNAP, and medical and cash assistance programs. Their responsibilities include processing and determining eligibility for new applications, renewals, periodic review changes, and Tier 2 calls for complex client needs. Additional responsibilities also include servicing in-person client visits at the Resource Centers and Tier 1 Call Center support during high call volume periods.

SNAP Work Requirement Implementation



People

- Hiring 30 Call Center staff (24 agents, 3 leads, and 3 supervisors)
- Augment Tier 1 call center agents with third party vendor for surge support during high call volumes
- Leverage overtime for increased application processing for renewals, call volume and fair hearings



Process

- Socialize new policy work requirements and rules
- Conduct training for internal staff and external community partners



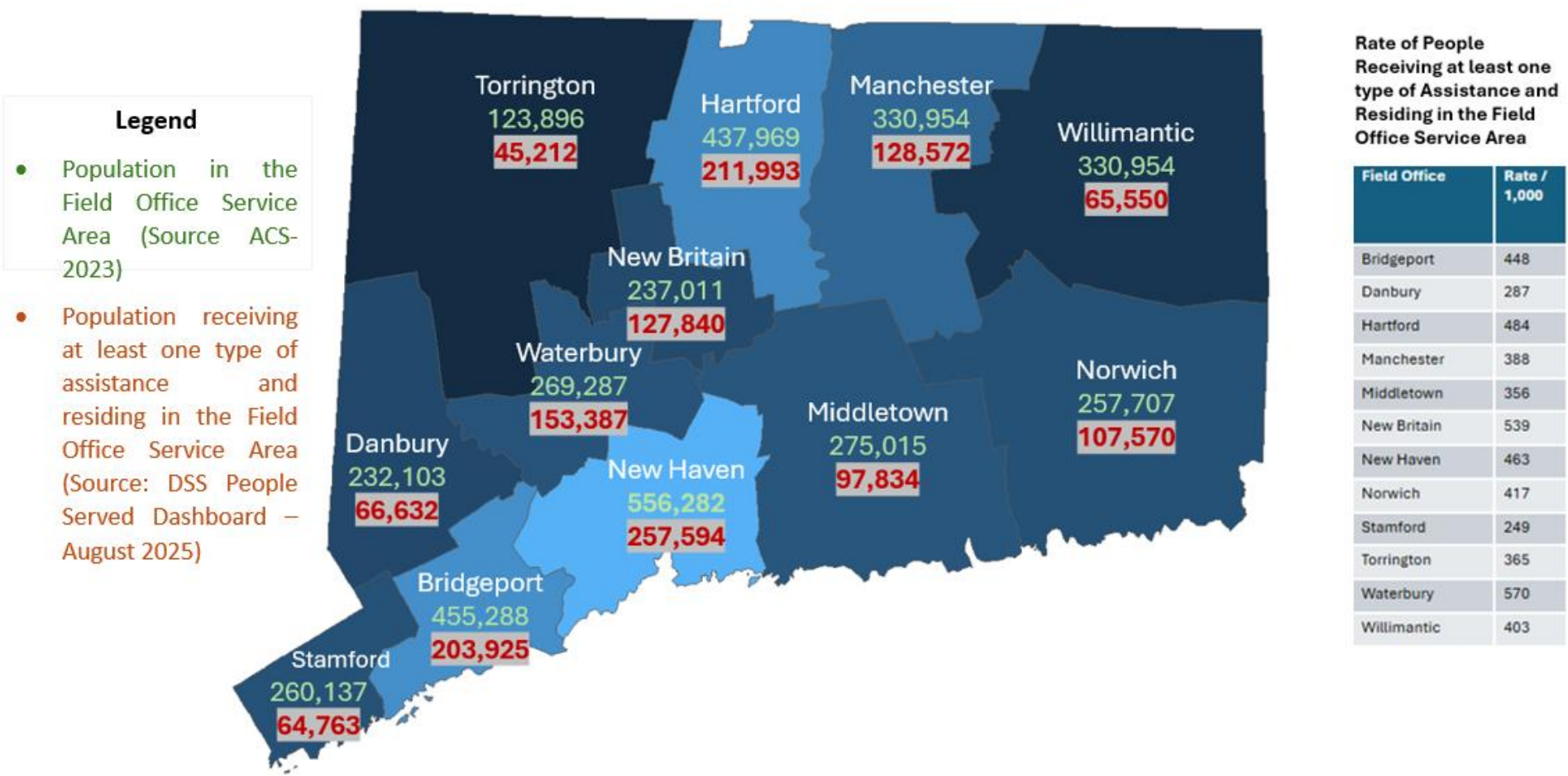
Technology

- Execute online campaigns across website, social media and webinars on new changes to work requirements
- Procure vendor partner to implement new work requirement rules in eligibility system
- Expand text messaging to remind clients to submit renewal applications ahead of benefit end date

DSS Resource Center Locations and People Served

DSS serves 1 in 3 CT residents statewide. Many choose to visit one of our 12 Resource Centers to conduct a variety of in-person services related to applying for benefits, submitting document verification, SNAP interviews, fair hearings and more. Location and direction to all 12 DSS Resource Centers can be found online at - [Office Locator](#) | [CT DSS](#).

CT Population + Persons Served by DSS Field Offices



Rate of People
Receiving at least one
type of Assistance and
Residing in the Field
Office Service Area

Field Office	Rate / 1,000
Bridgeport	448
Danbury	287
Hartford	484
Manchester	388
Middletown	356
New Britain	539
New Haven	463
Norwich	417
Stamford	249
Torrington	365
Waterbury	570
Willimantic	403