

CONNECTIONS

Build 15 Highlights

CHANGES FOR ALL CONNECTIONS USERS

PHONETIC ADDRESS SEARCH

The CONNECTIONS search functionality has been expanded in Build 15 to support a phonetic address search capability in Person Search, Resource Search, and Foster and Adoptive Home Search. Phonetic Address Search provides users with additional options for returning the best pool of matches based on available search criteria. A Phonetic Address Search can be performed using full or partial address information. Street Name is required. Search results are based on the phonetic similarity of information entered in Line 1 of the Street Name. The pool of results are then weighted and scored based on additional address information entered in the search.

PERSON MERGE/SPLIT ENHANCEMENTS

Several enhancements have been made in Person Merge and Split in Build 15. These enhancements are geared toward improving data quality and system ease of use. When completing a person merge, the system will allow the worker to associate specific demographic information to the individual who will remain in CONNECTIONS after the merge. When the merge is complete, demographics are applied across CONNECTIONS to all non-intake stages, events and allegations for the individual. The Person Split functions have also been enhanced to more fully and accurately restore individual characteristics after a split.

FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR RACE AND ETHNICITY

Modifications have been made throughout CONNECTIONS to meet new federal reporting standards for the collection of multiple races for an individual, and for the use of new ethnicity categories. Existing ethnicity codes in CONNECTIONS will be converted prior to Build 15 implementation.

COMMON SYSTEM IDENTIFIERS

Additional system identifiers (e.g. Stage ID, Resource ID, Case Name) have been uniformly added to several CONNECTIONS windows in order to improve overall system utility. The identifiers will orient users when navigating through multiple windows in a case.

EVENT DATES

Two new dates have been added to Events to expand information available on the Event List in CONNECTIONS. The “Date Event Occurred” field will capture a date that has

been recorded by the caseworker for a particular activity or task, when applicable. The “System Transaction Date” field will display the date information is entered into CONNECTIONS related to a particular event.

REJECTION TASK TO- DO

This enhancement will improve support for the supervisory review process by providing workers with easier access to supervisory comments concerning work returned after supervisory review. The enhancement also supports direct access to the supervisor’s comments and to the applicable work.

PERSON MAINTENANCE

New Build 15 functionality will allow local staff under specific circumstances, and with appropriate security, to make corrections to individuals added to the system in error. The “Remove Person/Added in Error” option replaces the current delete function, and is designed to meet the need to delete a new individual created and added in error to a FAD, INV or ARI stage.

COMMUNITY DISTRICT (NYC ONLY)

To support New York City’s community-based programming initiative, with the implementation of Build 15 Community District (CD) will be maintained at the individual and stage level for all New York City addresses, regardless of case assignment. During CPS Intake, the CD information will be retrieved in the Call Person Detail window to determine the applicable on-call worker for assignment. There will not be any changes to the assignment rules for Community District as a result of this change.

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOME DEVELOPMENT CHANGES

THE FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOME RECORD SUMMARY (FRS)

The Foster and Adoptive Home Record Summary (FRS) is a new case recording/review tool that will be implemented in Build 15. The FRS provides a comprehensive view of FAD information that has been recorded in CONNECTIONS. With the introduction of the FAD Record Summary, the FRS becomes the on-line mechanism for the creation and updating of Home Study Narratives and contact information. Supervisors will be able to use the FRS to review home information, Home Study and Reauthorization narratives and contact notes in a user-friendly format.

The FRS is organized into 9 tabbed sections. Most tabs combine the ability to display information that has been recorded in the CONNECTIONS Application, as well as enter comments, or notes within the FRS itself. In the case of the Home Study and Annual Reauthorization tabs, creation and editing of narratives takes place directly within the FRS. The FAD Checklist, which can be accessed through the FAD Checklist tab, will assist the caseworker in verifying that all tasks necessary for proper certification/approval and reauthorization/reapproval of foster and adoptive homes have been completed. The

Contacts tab will provide a place for workers to record all contacts made for a home, which will create a running record of activities for each home.

The FRS allows the worker to choose any or all of the FRS tabs to be formatted into a single document that can be printed. Information entered in the FRS will be stored in the CONNECTIONS database at the point that you exit the FRS. When you re-enter the FRS it will be refreshed with the most current information from the CONNECTIONS database.

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE RECORD SUMMARY HELP

The FRS Help features context sensitive help for all elements of the FRS including tabs, grids, buttons and individual fields. This feature includes index and search functions that provide alternate means of finding information, interactive graphics and hyperlinks that will take the user directly to related information such as definitions and procedural guidelines.

LOCAL SAVE OPTION (Enhanced Narrative Locking)

This capability, also referred to as “Enhanced Narrative Locking”, is supported in the Home Study and Annual Reauthorization narratives as well as the Criminal History Record Check Safety Assessment within the FRS. This feature will allow workers to save their work locally if someone else is making modifications to the document at the same time. Narratives will be saved to a Local Save Directory, and can be retrieved via the Local Save Documents folder through the window’s start menu.

HOME DEMOGRAPHICS WINDOW

To improve utility of the Home Demographics window when a primary address or phone number for a FAD home is changed and approved, the primary address and phone number of all Principals in the home, except for those persons found in an open CPS Stage, will be updated automatically. When a FAD home is opened, the addresses and phone numbers for the Principals will default to those of the home except for those individuals found in an open CPS Stage.

FAD HOME COMPOSITION/HISTORICAL PERSON LIST

Build 15 incorporates a new “Remove Person-Left Home” option to aid in the recording of persons leaving a FAD home. The Historical Person List will display all individuals who are removed from a FAD Home/Stage via the Remove Person-Left Home option.

FAD HOMES IN EMERGENCY STATUS

To support regulatory requirements, Build 15 increases the length of time a Foster Home can be in Emergency status from 60 to 90 days, and includes a system edit to ensure that an appropriate Facility Type exists for Emergency Status. Changes have also been made to improve the accuracy of dates when progressing a home from Emergency to Accepted/Active Status.

MEDICAL AND FINGERPRINT REQUIREMENTS

Current regulatory requirements state that medical and fingerprint dates are to be

recorded for all applicable members of a foster/adoptive home. Included in Build 15 are system edits that will bring the CONNECTIONS Application in line with existing regulatory requirements. Build 15 allows FAD workers to extend the current approval/certification of a foster home for up to four 90-day periods pending the receipt of fingerprint results.

SETTING AND PROGRAM TYPE EDITS

System edits have been added to the F/A Home License window to ensure that Setting and Program Type as entered in the system comply with regulatory requirements.

FAD HOME CLOSURE REPORT

Build 15 provides support for documenting the closure of a foster home in the CONNECTIONS system. The new FAD Home Closure Report includes a narrative in which workers record the reasons for home closure, as well as basic home demographics and the home closure decision.

EASE OF USE IMPROVEMENTS

Numerous changes have been made to streamline the FAD dialogue and simplify system navigation needed to create and maintain a FAD home. The overall number of windows and steps required within the dialogue has been reduced.

CPS CHANGES

MAINTAIN HISTORICAL JURISDICTION

This enhancement expands the definition of jurisdictional access to system information. Currently, local staff that have the 'Access All in District' security attribute can access an entire case when any stage of the case was closed within their district/agency. However, if the stage was reassigned, the previously assigned agency lost access to the stage unless it retained involvement in another stage in the case. After Build 15, the system will maintain a record of historical jurisdiction in order to allow access if a worker in the district/agency was ever assigned to a stage in the case.

PERSON DETAIL WINDOW MODIFICATIONS

The purpose of this enhancement is to streamline the process for changing and/or adding individual demographics in CONNECTIONS. The Person Detail window has been modified to include two new menu items on the Options menu, the AKA Name List/Detail and Person Identifiers. The address and phone have also been added, thus enabling workers to view and update the majority of demographic information in a single window. In addition, the View Person Events and View Case List, currently located on the View Options menu, have been renamed appropriately and moved to the Options menu. The View Options menu has been removed from the Person Detail window. A new Reports menu has also been added. This new menu will support access to the 30 Day Child Fatality Summary Report and 24 Hour Fatality Summary Report.

PERSON MAINTENANCE

Two new functions have been added to allow local district staff to make corrections to individuals. The “Person Reported In Error” function supports the ability to modify the role of persons who were reported in error during Intake. The “Person Unrelate” function provides local workers with the ability to unrelate an individual who was related in error during Intake. These two functions, specific to CPS, are in addition to the “Remove Person/Added in Error” function that will be available in the Investigation, FAD, and ARI Stages.

MAINTAIN PRIMARY ADDRESS AND PHONE WINDOW

A new task has been added to the Investigation Task List to allow users to navigate to one window to maintain primary address and phone information for multiple people in a stage. The Maintain Primary Address and Phone window can also be used to select an existing primary address for individuals newly added to a stage.

CANCELING ASSIGNMENTS

Build 15 introduces an easier process for changing assignments made in the Investigation Stage. A local worker who makes an assignment will be able to navigate from the Unit Icon to the Assigned Workload window, and from there access the new “List Assignments Made” window. The “Canceling Assignments” function will allow the stage to be reassigned providing that stage has not yet been accessed by a worker.

NEW ALERT FOR UNIT APPROVER

With this change if work is submitted for approval to anyone other than the Unit Approver, the Unit Approver will be issued an Alert. This Alert applies to all tasks that are Saved & Submitted for approval. The Alert will also be generated if the Unit Approver submits work to a Manager other than his/her own Manager.

CPS NOTIFICATION LETTERS

The CPS Notification letters (Notice of Existence and Notice of Indication) have been updated.

- The wording in the Notice of Indication Letter has been modified so that it is correct for either confirmed or non-confirmed subjects. The context of the Notice of Indication is based on a person’s role.
- The heading sections have been increased to accommodate the letterhead for individual counties.
- All references to DSS have been replaced with OCFS.
- The SCR address has been updated, and the letter is justified.

PRIORITY CLOSURE WINDOW CHANGES

Changes have been made to the Priority Closure Window in order to prevent “Additional Information” and “Duplicate Reports” from being split into a single stage case, i.e. not connected to an Intake Stage. The Priority Closure window will no longer allow closure of an Additional Information Report or Duplicate Report if it is the only stage in the case or a Case Merge is pending. In both instances, a message will display informing the user

that the Stage cannot be closed. In addition, to support better tracking of closure comments, the Priority Closure window will include an expanded comments field, and comments entered upon closure will be viewable in the priority closure event detail.