

NYS Office of Children and Family Services
CONNECTIONS Case Management

Impact Analysis

Subject: Permanency Hearing Report

Functional Area: Case Management

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

The Permanency Bill requires that local users create a report to be mailed to required parties fourteen days prior to each and every permanency hearing date certain and filed with the court. A notice must also be submitted or mailed to the required parties and a statement submitted to the Court, listing all those who received the Notice and the Permanency Hearing Report. Currently, there are templates available on the OCFS Internet website for download for each of the three Permanency Hearing Report versions, and two additional documents, the Notice and Statement.

Information, where applicable, can be copied and pasted from a Progress Note or Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) or - for children freed for adoption - a Child Assessment and Service Plan (CASP) into the Permanency Hearing Report template.

What Remains the Same:

- All statutory and regulatory requirements associated with 'date certain' timeframes as they apply to completion and submission of the Permanency Hearing Report (PHR) remains in effect as detailed in Chapter 3 of the Laws of 2005, also known as the Governor's Permanency Bill.
- Current models of practice related to contributors to the PHR will remain the same.
- Multiple workers with an assigned role in the case can contribute to the PHR.
- None of the Templates have changed.
- ACS can continue to use the LTS system.

What is New or Changes:

- CONNECTIONS will generate the Permanency Hearing Report, customized for the child's permanency planning goal. It will be supported in template fashion with Microsoft Word-like functionality available. Templates for the PH -1, 2 & 3 will be housed in the system. Selecting a single child will automatically generate the PH-1, unless that child is freed for adoption which will then generate the PH-3. Selecting multiple children in the same placement will automatically produce the PH-2.
- Demographic information will populate the PHR and is not modifiable on the report, whether "pre-fill" or "no pre-fill" is selected.
- Workers with a role in the case can launch a PHR and select either "pre-fill" or "no pre-fill". Selecting "pre-fill" will produce a document already populated with information from the FSS (most recent FASP, Plan Amendment, Removal Update, Health and Education), however some information will still need to be manually entered into the "pre-filled" PHR (particularly the

Freed Child report). System data will be drawn from areas within the FASP, such as List of Services, Tracked Child Detail, and many narrative questions in Foster Care Issues and will be modifiable by the users. All information pre-filled in the template must be reviewed.

- Contributors with a role in the stage will be able to work in the PHR template within the system. The templates do not have narrative locking. If multiple workers are editing the PHR at the same time the worker who saves first will overwrite the existing template. A PHR housed in the system may still be e-mailed to parties outside of CONNECTIONS, such as an attorney. They are to be password protected in accordance with the instructions in the Guide for Caseworkers – Permanency Hearing Report, December 2005 and in keeping with “Security Guidelines for using Electronic Communication for Sharing Case Specific Information” located on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Security page.
- A history of all PHR’s generated for each child in a stage will be maintained in CONNECTIONS
- A PHR that is in draft status can be deleted from the system should there be a need to do so resulting from a change in circumstance for that particular child. A PHR launched in error may also be deleted as long as it is in draft status.
- The Key Dates tab will remain visible for any case closed prior to implementation of Build 18.9. This tab was disabled after 18.8. This tab is replaced by the Permanency tab for all cases open at the time of implementation. The Key Date formerly captured in CONNECTIONS were derived from CCRS and remain in CCRS.
- The Permanency Hearing Notices and Statements will be generated by CONNECTIONS. Court information necessary for these notices is entered in CONNECTIONS. The system will note when the document was generated; workers can note when they were mailed. A history is kept on who they were sent to and when.
- Other participants in the Permanency Hearing can be added to the Invitee List for the Permanency Hearing via the “Add Other Participants” function (from the Stage Composition Options menu).

Implications/Considerations:

System

- Permanency Hearing Reports, Statement and Notice templates will be available within the CONNECTIONS application.
- More than one PHR can be launched and in process within a stage, however, only one can be in process at any one time per child (or children if PH-2 is being used for multiple children placed together).

Program

- The pre-filled information comes from the most recently approved FASP, Plan Amendment or Removal Update and also from the new Health and Education modules. Not all questions will have pre-filled information.
- If the worker selects the pre-fill option, it is critical that they review the information in the answer fields to make sure it is appropriate and accurate. Editing will be required in many cases.

Recommendations:

- Anyone with a role in the stage can launch a PHR. Will LDSS's & VA's want to establish protocol for who actually does this and when?
- Anyone with a role in the stage can check the PHR as final. This freezes the report. What are the implications of this for the review and approval process (CONNECTIONS does not have an approval step for the PHR)? Who will make the decision that the PHR is complete?
- Version control – with multiple contributors, by whom and how will modifications be tracked? If more than one person is editing the document at the same time, the first person who saves will update the shared document. There is no “Narrative Locking” in the PHR template.