



CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes 6/27/09

Q2-09 Quarterly Improvement Plan Release Notes

-- Implementation Date: June 27, 2009 --

[The purpose of this document is to provide an in-depth description of the improvements, modifications, enhancements (SIRS), and impacts that are included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan.]

CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes

Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes

On June 27, 2009, OCFS will implement the second Quarterly Improvement Plan of this year (a/k/a Q2-09). Q2-09 will include important enhancements to the CONNECTIONS application that support programmatic changes, as well as several system improvements.

The major ease of use enhancements included in Q2-09 are recommendations from the Child Welfare System Transformation Business Team. These recommended enhancements are based on a collaborative effort on the part of OCFS, local district and voluntary agency casework and supervisory staff. The following are the key areas of the application that will encompass the noted enhancements:

- **FASP** - efficiencies in entry and options to streamline documentation requirements
- **Permanency Hearing Report** - increased options and improved pre-fills
- **FAD** - support for regulatory requirements
- **Other System Enhancements**
 - **Progress Notes**
 - **Safety Assessment**
 - **Time Limit To-Do Display**
 - **Case List Sort Order**
 - **Update/View Placement Information**

Definitions of the terms used in this document

The following describes the terms used in this document. The *Functional Area* section identifies the part of the application that is involved in the improvement, modification, enhancement or fix. The *Issue Description* section describes the issue that will be resolved. The *Fix/Impact* section describes what the improvement is expected to accomplish (impact), and the *SIR ID* section identifies the internal tracking number of that request.

CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes

Resource Tools

- Q2-09 Highlights
- An update to online HELP (within the CONNECTIONS application)
- An Impact Analysis document titled: *Changes to the Family Assessment and Service Plan*
- CONNECTIONS Q2-09 Quarterly Improvements Job Aid

Questions, please refer to the following resources

- If you have questions about local practice, policy or procedures, we ask that you first review these procedures with your supervisor.
- For all other CONNECTIONS related questions you can contact:
 - the APP HELP mailbox by filling in the form titled: *CONNECTIONS Application Help Request* (posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on the CONNECTIONS Forms page) and emailing the completed form to the following address: ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us. A few points about the address: please note that there is one underscore in the address, and the underscore has to be typed into the address in order for the email to be directed to the correct mailbox, and if you are emailing 'out of our network' we ask that you tack on the following piece to the address: @dfa.state.ny.us or, @nysemail.state.ny.us
 - the Help Desk 1-800-697-1323
- WMS questions should be directed to the OCFS-IT Customer Support Help Line at 1-800-342-3727
- BICS issues should be reported to the BICS hotline at 1-800-342-3010
- SSPS issues should be reported to either Nancy Pare at 212-383-1382 or Maureen Godwin at 212-383-2483

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

**Q2-09 Quarterly Improvements
Implementation Date: June 27, 2009**

Functional Area	Issue Description	Fix Impact	SIR ID
FASP - O & A Blocks	<p>Caseworkers have requested an ability to Pre-fill/Create O&A blocks from Scale/Risk to Service Plan for an In-Process FASP.</p>	<p>Workers will be able to build an O&A Block directly from their rating in any Strength, Needs and Risk Scale and from Elevated Risk Elements.</p> <p>A new column titled "Create O&A Block" will be added to the Scales (Family, Child, Parent/Caretaker) and Elevated Risks windows to create an O&A block that will be carried over to the Service Plan.</p> <p>One new block will be created for each scale and each elevated risk element selected when the check box is checked and saved. The selected scale response will pre-fill the problem/concern portion of the O&A block.</p> <p>Initially, these O&A blocks will have the status of "Temp."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Temp" status blocks will not carry over to the next FASP. Completing the remaining portions of the Temp blocks and saving changes the status to "New," allowing them to be submitted with the current FASP and carried over to the next FASP. • The "Temp" status O&A blocks will be displayed on the CONNECTIONS window but not in any outputs. If an O&A block of "Temp" status exists when a FASP is approved, it will be deleted from the current FASP, and will not carry forward to the next FASP. If a FASP is rejected with 	<p>9137 BT</p>

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

		<p>O&A blocks in “Temp” status, the worker will be able to see them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a FASP is submitted that contains “Temp” O&A blocks, a message will display on Check FASP Detail. <p>A new push button named, “Delete” will be added to the O&A block window allowing the worker to delete a block in “New” or “Temp” status.</p> <p>A new column titled “Problems/Concerns” will be added to the O&A block index grid. Each block in the column displays up to 100 characters. The first 100 characters from the Scales response/Elevated Risk will be pre-filled in this window. Information can be modified by making the appropriate changes on the corresponding section of the O&A block window.</p>	
<p>FASP - Assessment Scales</p>	<p>When a caseworker completes the Child, Family and Parent/Caretaker Scales in a FASP they are required to answer each question for each person listed.</p> <p>Also, caseworkers are unable to multi-select answers for age-based questions if all the children listed do not fall within the age limits.</p>	<p>Modifications have been made to the FASP Tree to correspond with the decision to make certain scales optional.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Districts can choose to lift the system edits requiring the completion of certain scales, except that scales in a case with a “Protective” Program Choice which map to the RAP must always be completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For the required scales, the “Required” indicator will display on the FASP Tree. If these scales are not complete a message will be displayed on the “Check FASP Detail”. ▪ If a district elects to lift the system edits, the SNR Scales remain 	<p>9143/9171 BT</p>

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

		<p>available to be completed on every case for every individual, as the case circumstances and local policies dictate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Scale items will display in outputs, even if they are optional and have not been answered. <p>Note: For detailed information please refer to the CONNECTIONS Q2-09 Quarterly Improvement Job Aid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Districts must contact their regional CONNECTIONS representative to request lifting of the system edits.• If a local district exercises this option, it must alert voluntary agencies under contract to the district of this decision and inform them of any guidelines or contractual requirements regarding completion of the SNR Scales. <p>2. Local Districts which elect not to lift system edits on scales: No changes will be made to the scales/edits.</p> <p>3. All Local Districts: When the worker selects the "All" column for a scale that has an age restriction (Example: Academic Performance (Children age 6 or over), the system will select the checkboxes for children within the range and leave the others who are out of range blank.</p>	
--	--	---	--

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

<p>FASP - Original Reason for Case Opening</p>	<p>Information on the Original Reason for Case Opening tab is recorded in the initial FASP. The information is “frozen” when the FASP is approved, and as a result can not be updated. The “frozen” information is carried forward to subsequent FASPs. Caseworkers and supervisors have requested a way to modify this information if necessary.</p>	<p>The Original Reason for Case Opening tab will be recorded as one continuous narrative on the first FASP completed in the stage. After the first FASP is approved, addendums can be added on subsequent FASPs by the Case Manager or Case Planner in order to make corrections or modifications. All addendums include a date and signature stamp.</p>	<p>9152 BT</p>
<p>FASP - Needed Improvements Changes Tab</p>	<p>Caseworkers have requested that the FASP be streamlined.</p>	<p>The Needed Improvements/Changes tab will be removed on the Family Assessment/Analysis dialogue. Caseworkers remain able to record information regarding the Family View, Behaviors/Contributing Factors, and Strengths that are not captured in the Scales, Safety Assessment and RAP and document Needed Improvements/Changes as part of the Service Plan in the O & A blocks.</p> <p>For FASPs that already exist at the time of Q2-09 implementation, the Needed Improvements/Changes tab, and tab information visible on the Family Update window and FASP reports, will remain accessible. No information already entered will be lost.</p>	<p>9154</p>
<p>FASP- Tracked Child Detail</p>	<p>Caseworkers are able to edit child’s placement location when completing a FASP, but if changes are made in the FASP, the older/outdated information remains on the Tracked Child Detail window until CCRS is updated.</p> <p>This results in a situation in which information regarding a child’s placement, carried over to CONNECTIONS Tracked Child Detail window from</p>	<p>In order to view and modify placement details, a new Location Detail window will be added. This window will be accessed, via a push button, from the Location of Child tab of the FASP, or from the Placement Information tab on the Tracked Child Detail window.</p> <p>One side of the Location Detail window will be labeled “CCRS Information and the other side will</p>	<p>9158 /9890 BT</p>

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

	<p>CCRS, is not in sync with the placement information updated in the FASP.</p>	<p>be labeled “CONNECTIONS Information.” The child’s location will be able to be updated on the CONNECTIONS Information side of the screen.</p> <p>Note: For detailed information please refer to the CONNECTIONS Q2-09 Quarterly Improvement Job Aid.</p> <p><i>Please note</i> that regardless of whether location detail is saved to the FASP, changes made on the Location Detail window will <u>not</u> overwrite information in CCRS. CCRS information must be updated separately.</p> <p>A message “Alternate information exists in CONNECTIONS.” will display on the Tracked Child Detail/Placement tab, in order to alert the worker when placement information other than that which is obtained from CCRS is available. This message will display whenever placement information exists from a previous FASP, or has been modified in an In-Process FASP, or has been recorded on Tracked Child Detail.</p>	
<p>FASP & PHR</p>	<p>Caseworkers completing both the FASP and Permanency Hearing Report are required to answer similar questions with very similar statements.</p> <p>When caseworkers complete the FASP they are not alerted to which questions will be used to complete information in the PHR (if pre-fill is selected).</p>	<p>A pushbutton labeled “PHR Questions” will exist on every FASP tab that contains a question to be mapped to the PHR. Upon selection, a window will open displaying a table with the following columns: FASP question, PHR question and any conditions associated with that pre-fill.</p> <p>This enhancement will assist workers to develop answers to FASP questions that are consistent with the corresponding/mapped PHR question when pre-filling from the FASP to the PHR.</p>	<p>9646 BT</p>

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

		Note: This will only exist in FASPs where a child in the FSS (CWS or CCR) has a Program Choice of Placement or Non-LDSS Custody, requiring a PHR.	
PHR - Pre-fill Diagnosis	If the pre-fill option is selected, the system pre-fills the PHR with a diagnosis of “well-child” if this had been entered in the Health Services Module. This was identified as being misleading in the context of the PHR. .	A diagnosis of “well-child” will no longer pre-fill from the Health Module in CONNECTIONS to the Permanency Hearing Report. Questions #21 and 23 of the PHR Multiple Child Report and questions #23 and 25 of the Freed Child Report, which ask for information about significant chronic conditions and treatments, will no longer display the response of “Well Child”.	9647
PHR - Pre-fill Selection	The ability to pre-fill from a FASP to the PHR was limited to approved FASPs only. If some time has elapsed since the FASP was approved, a caseworker may have begun a newer FASP, but it has not yet been approved. CONNECTIONS users have requested more flexibility in the pre-fill options.	The fix will allow the user to select Approved FASP, In-Process/Pending FASP or No Pre-fill when launching a PHR. If no in-process or pending FASP exists, the user will be provided with a message stating that the PHR will pre-fill from the last approved FASP.	9650 BT
PHR - Pre- fill Placement Information	Placement information is displayed in a FASP from an interface with CCRS. Placement information has not been used to pre-fill the placement location question in the PHR. Placement information in the PHR must be manually entered by caseworkers.	Placement information saved in the latest approved, pending or in-process FASP will be used to pre-fill the placement location question on the PHR. Facility Name and Type will be retrieved from the FASP, Location Detail in Appropriateness of Placement to populate the following PHR questions: Individual Child PHR - Question #15 Multiple Child PHR - Question #15 Freed Child PHR - Question #17 If no information exists, the corresponding fields in the PHR will be blank and must be manually entered by the worker.	9671 BT

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

FSS - SPR	Workers with the Business Function ACC SERPLAN REV were unable to access the SPR dialog to create/modify Service Plan Reviews via the navigation path associated to the Business Function.	The security to support the navigation path will be corrected and now those with the Business Function, ACC SERPLAN REV can navigate to the SPR dialog via case search/ case list/ case summary/ options/ SPR. This is a specialty Business Function that is to be used the same way ENT PROG NOTES is used to allow access to the SPR while limiting access to the rest of the case. It is useful for those staff who only need to document the SPR.	7066
Staff Detail Window	The “Delete” menu item on the Staff Detail window was enabled and allowed staff to be deleted from CONNECTIONS instead of end-dated. The deletion of staff from CONNECTIONS causes historical access, historical documentation, and Data Warehouse reporting problems.	The “Delete” menu item on the Staff Detail window will be disabled.	8018
Progress Notes	Caseworkers have requested a value of “Attempted Collateral Contact” on Progress Notes to assist with documentation and searching.	In order to more easily record and retrieve information in Progress Notes regarding attempted collateral contacts, a new progress note type “Attempted Collateral Contact” will be added.	9147 BT
Progress Notes	On the Participant/Focus grid in progress notes the list displays the individual’s name and PID. If two (or more) family members have the same name, there is no way for caseworkers to differentiate between the two without knowing the PID.	An additional column will be added to the Family Participant/Focus grid in which the age of each individual will be displayed. The age will be in focus without scrolling.	9537 BT
CPS/FSS Safety	Since the implementation of Q3-08, workers cannot enter comments in a Safety Assessment	An option will be added for workers to be able to enter comments on the Safety Factors window in	9539 BT

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

Assessment	when the “No Safety Factors Present” checkbox is selected.	the Safety Assessment when “No Safety Factors Present” is selected.	
ALL TO-DO’s	Alert, Reminder, and non-navigable Task TO DO’s are not automatically deleted by the system. As a result, these TO-DO’s can remain on the worker’s TO-DO List for months, and sometimes years, making use of the TO-DO list cumbersome and ineffective in identifying the current work to be done.	Alert, Reminder, and non-navigable Task TO DO’s will no longer be displayed by the system after a specified period of time. The number of days that Alerts, Reminders, and non-navigable Task To-Do’s will display on the To-Do List varies by stage, as follows: <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Display for 30 Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - INT Stages - INV Stages (including IAB) - ARI Stages - To-Do’s not associated with a Stage <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Display for 90 Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FSI - FSS stages <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Display for 180 Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FAD stages <p>Note: No change has been made to navigable Task and approval To-Do’s. They will remain on the To-Do list until completion of the associated task.</p>	9136 BT
ALL - Person Search/Person List	When a search is done in CONNECTIONS, the results displayed on the Case List window are not predictably ordered. Caseworkers have requested the results be displayed in descending order sorted by Case ID.	This modification will make it easier for caseworkers to review search results in CONNECTIONS when a Person search is done based on Person ID. The Case List will be sorted in descending order by case ID when the search is executed through either a person search or a	9141 BT

CONNECTIONS

*NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes*

		person list path.	
ALL - Case List Window	When accessed either via Case Search or Person Search, the case list window is populated with the name and number of the caseworker. The name and number displayed is not that of the worker who is currently assigned to the open stage. .	Caseworkers reviewing case list will see the current assigned worker associated to an open stage and the caseworker's phone number as recorded within Staff Detail.	9214
ALL - Person Merge/Split and Person Identifiers	Upon Person Merge, Person Identifiers of the Closed Person are copied over to the Forward Person. Upon split of that merge, the copied Person Identifiers continue to stay with the Forward Person.	Upon Person Split, Person Identifiers that came over to the Forward Person will be invalidated and end dated. This will only affect (a) single-level merge (A to B) scenarios (Chain Merges (A to B to C to D, etc.) will not revert Person Identifiers back to Closed Person).; and (b) Person Identifiers except for CIN. (CINs cannot be invalidated because of WMS implications). Otherwise the Person Identifiers that are reverted will be invalidated and end-dated.	9296
CPS - INT	When a caseworker uses the Intake Priority Stage Closure window to close a DUP INT or ADD INFO, the Save button in the window does not enable. It must be closed by going to the File Menu and selecting Save & Close, or Save & Merge, if closing an INI as a Duplicate, or changing the type from INI to SUB.	Selections that have been previously located only under the File Menu will be added to the window as new buttons. The "Save & Close" and "Save & Merge" buttons will be added.	8174
CPS - Case Summary	Caseworkers have requested the ability to view the determination of closed investigations without drilling into the case. Currently, when reviewing a case using the path of workload (select an INV stage)-options-case summary the determination of closed investigations is not visible. Caseworkers have to go to the conclusion window on each closed stage.	A determination column will display on the case summary window for each investigation stage accessed using the path described (workload-options-case summary).	9144 BT

CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services

Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes

Finalized Adoption - Person Merge	<p>At the point when a child's adoption is finalized, CONNECTIONS creates a new PID for the child. Once a post adoptive PID is created a new PID may not be merged to it. This prevented the correction of multiple PIDS created post-adoption.</p>	<p>The PID of a person created <i>after</i> the adoption finalization will be allowed to be merged into the post-adoptive PID. The merge can be performed for a finalized PID as long as the PID is for the person forward. (The date the person was closed would have to be greater than the child's assigned PID post finalization.)</p>	<p>7636</p>
FAD	<p>When the system batch closes a Dual Purpose Home (foster home and adoption subsidy home), the system is incorrectly recording a date the resource closed. This causes CCRS to read the home as completely closed, rather than recognizing that the Adoption Subsidy portion of the home is still open.</p>	<p>When the foster home component of a Dual Purpose Home is closed, the home will be converted to an Adoption Subsidy Home by the system so that CCRS contains the correct status of the home.</p>	<p>8605</p>
FAD	<p>There is no system edit for the existence of In-State SCR Database Check "Sent Date", "Received Date" or "Results" for new FAD homes to be submitted for approval</p>	<p>An edit will be added on the FRS Household Member Detail window in CONNECTIONS requiring the recording of information regarding the In-State SCR Database Check. The edit will check for completion of "Sent Date", "Received Date," and "Results" for foster parents, and will prevent submission of approval of a new FAD home unless these fields have been completed.</p> <p>Please note: that the new edit will also apply for homes that are closed (by worker or system). In order to reopen homes that have closed the caseworker will need to record the SCR database check fields.</p>	<p>9132/9150 BT</p>
FAD-AFCARS	<p>The labels for Adoptive Parent Demographics are not gender neutral.</p>	<p>The labels on the AFCARS Adoption Information window will be changed from Adoptive Mother/Adoptive Father to Adoptive Parent 1/ Adoptive Parent 2.</p>	<p>9159</p>

CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services Q2-09 Improvement Plan Release Notes

FAD	When the system closes the foster home portion of a dual purpose home via the batch job and there is an in-process or pending Home Study or Reauthorization, caseworkers cannot access the FAD Record Summary (FRS) via the push buttons on the Task List window.	Caseworkers will be able to access the FRS via the push buttons on the Task List window in Dual Purpose homes which are in-process or pending Home Study or Reauthorization when the foster home portion has been system closed via the batch job.	9352
FAD	There is no way to enter a prior closing date of a foster care facility in CONNECTIONS or to back-date a facility closing, resulting in improper reimbursement of these facilities. The end date is currently set at the date the worker closes the facility in the CONNECTIONS application and cannot be modified. This applies to all types of congregate care settings.	A new field, "Operating End Date" will be added on the FAD Close Home window. The new field will better support proper reimbursements to facilities by allowing for the recording of an actual closing date, including a prior date. Even though the "Operating End Date" appears on all Close Home windows, it applies only to congregate care facilities.	9597
IAB - Progress Notes	Currently caseworkers must drill down multiple levels in an IAB INV stage to enter investigation notes.	Caseworkers with IAB stages will be able to access their notes template from the workload in the same manor as workers with FSS and INV stages access Progress Notes.	9538
IAB - Progress Notes Template	The Determination Matrix contained in the IAB Notes Template is inaccurate due to the statutory changes.	The Determination Matrix contained in the IAB Progress Notes template will be removed.	9938
FSI for Family Assessment Response	In Family Assessment Response cases the FAM/FSI stage can not be reassigned within the district - from either the workload or the FSI Decision Tab (submit for review).	In order to support the procedures of districts participating in Family Assessment Response, and to allow for flexibility, the edits preventing reassignment of the FSI will be removed for Family Assessment Response Cases.	9582
SCR Only	In Family Assessment Response cases the case status display is incorrect in the SCR view in INV-FAM stages.	Case status for the SCR view column will display OPN when the only open stages are the FSI-OTI/FAM or the FSS-OTI-FAM.	9506