



CONNECTIONS

NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Q4-08 Highlights

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-- Implementation Date: January 23, 2009 --

[The purpose of this document is to provide a *high level* description of the improvements, modifications and enhancements that are included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan.]

CONNECTIONS Intranet site: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>

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Background Information Related to the Definition of Quarterly Improvement Plans

System improvements implemented in response to 'SIRs' (System Information Requests) and 'Change Requests' have previously been referred to as "Builds." Beginning in January 2008 however, OCFS began to implement system improvements on a quarterly basis (for example: Q1-08 was implemented in March 2008 and Q2-08 was implemented in June 2008). These system improvements are now called *Quarterly Improvement Plans*. On January 23, 2009, OCFS will implement the fourth Quarterly Improvement Plan, Q4-08.

What is the Purpose of the *Q4-08 Highlights* Document?

The *Q4-08 Highlights* document presents a high-level overview of programmatic and application changes, modifications and enhancements. It is one in a series of tools that define, describe and detail the system changes and enhancements that will be included in this *Quarterly Improvement Plan*. A listing of other Q4-08 tools to aid in the implementation of these system improvements will be detailed later in this document.

What Will the Implementation of Q4-08 Include?

Q4-08 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 Q4-08 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 areas of the application that will encompass the noted enhancements: Family Services Stage, Approvals, Permanency Hearing Report (PHR), Progress Notes, Investigation Stage, Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD), as well as System Messaging.

High-Level Overview of the Ease of Use Enhancements Included in Q4-08

The following highlight the recommended enhancements to be included in this Quarterly Improvement.

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- FASP improvements to reduce navigation steps for the Caseworker. These include reordering of components to be consistent across areas, opening windows with expanded information immediately available and combining multiple messages into one display.
- Upgraded display of FASP Due Dates and “FASP is Overdue” messages will be implemented.
- Navigation requirements in the FASP Case Planner Summary and draft areas, created to facilitate collaboration across multiple workers contributing to a FASP, will be streamlined when cases have only a Case Planner and a Case Manager and no other workers assigned.
- Progress Notes ‘Sort’ button to be changed to support ‘New Using’ functionality for easier and more readily identified use. Enhance the sorting features on the Progress Notes List grid.
- Elimination of pop-up messages that slow a workers flow through entry of Progress Notes, Risk and Safety Narratives.
- **ACS Only Impact** - Elimination of redundancy in the existing Child Protective Recording Transmittal (CPRT) - the ACS Local Protocol and Progress Notes. This item will significantly reduce the CPRT recording requirements for ACS Child Protective Workers.
- Add a method to identify an “Amended Hearing Date,” when a rescheduled permanency hearing date is entered on the Court Information window.
- Lift the restriction for entering Education information prior to the start of the academic year.
- A new FAD Closure Reason has been added to support implementation of the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006. Effective October 1, 2008, this legislation requires the mandatory disqualification of

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prospective foster/adoptive parents who were convicted of certain categories of felonies. Also, if a current foster/adoptive parent is convicted of a crime in this category beginning October 1, 2008, their certification/approval must be terminated. To support recording this in CONNECTIONS, a new code, "Criminal History - Mandatory Disqualifier", has been added to the drop-down closure reasons on the FAD Close Home window.

Additional Q4-08 Tools

Other Q4-08 tools will be developed to aid in the implementation of these system improvements. These tools are listed below.

- Q4-08 Release Notes
- An update to On-line HELP
- An Impact Analysis document
- A Job Aid