

CONNECTIONS Case Management Build 18 Highlights

Please note that the following information is relevant as districts/agencies reach their implementation date.

CHANGES FOR ALL CONNECTIONS USERS

□ Changes to the CONNECTIONS Toolbar

Three new commands are added to the Intake menu on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar:

- Record Family Services
- Record Family Services I&R
- Family Services Intake Log

These functions are available to any worker who has been assigned the CREATE FSI Business Function.

Build 18 Case Management will add two new stages to CONNECTIONS:

- Family Services Intake (FSI)
- Family Services Stage (FSS)

The functionality that will be implemented in Build 18 Case Management establishes a single electronic case record for services cases and extends critical CONNECTIONS functionality to the service case for the first time. With the implementation of Build 18, all Intakes for Services must be recorded in a standard format within CONNECTIONS and all ongoing child welfare services will be documented within a single online, real-time case record. All workers assigned to the case will work within this record and, as a result, will also see the work of all other assigned workers, including each other's progress notes. Increased information sharing will support service coordination and timely, informed decision-making. Build 18 functionality also requires the maintenance of confidentiality by all staff involved in a case.

The following are features of this Build:

- A standardized recording for all Service Intakes
- A family-focused strength-based framework for assessment and service planning
- Efficiencies in documentation of case events and activities
- Casework tools to support best practice and improve decision-making
- Support for coordinated work and service planning where multiple workers are involved in a case
- Capacity for online workload management by workers and supervisors

The extension of case management functionality to services cases brings over 10,000 new users, including Local District and Voluntary Agency Preventive, Foster Care and Adoption staff, online. Build 18 also calls for the re-engineering of work processes to take advantage of system benefits and efficiencies, and to accommodate the demands of cooperative work within a single record.

□ Family Service Intake - Features

- Standardizes non-CPS intake documentation
- Opens services case for all cases
- Has Behavioral Concerns and Family Issues (BCFI) pre-assessment for non-CPS cases
- Fields pre-filled from Investigation (INV)
- LDSS or Agency may initiate; LDSS must accept

A Family Services Intake stage (FSI) will be opened for the purpose of providing increased information sharing and timely reporting. The FSI stage, which is the only route to a Family Services Stage (FSS), may be opened in one of two ways: either by a CPS worker from within an Investigation stage, or from the CONNECTIONS Toolbar by any worker whose Business Function Profile (BFP) contains the CREATE FSI Business Function. The Family Services Intake will be opened automatically whenever a CPS worker records an Investigation Conclusion with any Case Open closure reason.

If the FSI is opened from within an Investigation stage, demographic data from the CPS Investigation will pre-fill the Intake and the CPS worker will be listed as the source of the FSI. The CPS worker will need only to record a brief narrative, update the demographics if appropriate, and record the decision to open a Family Services Stage. If a non-CPS worker is opening the case, completion of a screening tool for emergency needs, called the Behavioral Concerns and Family Issues (BCFI), and documentation of any interventions taken will also be required. This is only required for Child Welfare Service (CWS) stage types. (See below.)

There is no approval process for FSIs, although cases may be submitted to a supervisor for “review,” if desired. Either a Local District or a Voluntary Agency worker may initiate intakes, but only a Local District worker can progress an FSI to the Family Services Stage. Voluntary Agencies that take FSIs on the behalf of Local Districts will submit those FSIs to the Local District for acceptance and progression to a Family Services Stage.

There can only be one worker assigned to the Family Services Intake stage at any given time. The role assigned is Case Worker. When the stage is sent to any other worker for “review”, the “reviewer” becomes the new Case Worker.

□ Family Service Stage – Features

- Framework for Family Assessment and Service Planning
- Family Focused
- Strength Based
- All staff work in same Assessment, Service Plan, Progress Notes (a single Case Planner coordinates case)
- CCRS Interface for key dates/ tracking support
- Case Manager, Case Planner, Caseworker and CPS Worker/Monitor Roles

In CONNECTIONS, there can be only one open Family Services Stage (FSS) for a family per jurisdiction (Local District). Multiple workers, including workers from other Voluntary Agencies, may be assigned to this stage. Each worker is assigned to one of four roles (See next page), which govern what workers do and their ability to enter data in various system components. The addition of the Family Services Stage (FSS) provides the umbrella for documentation of work on services cases. In Build 18, the Family Services Stage consists of six sections or tabs:

- Stage Composition
- Family Assessment and Service Plan
- Service Plan Review
- Progress Notes
- Key Dates
- Case Summary

The FSS includes five stage types:

- CWS Child Welfare Services (Foster Care, Preventive, Protective and Adoption Services)
- OTI Out of Town Inquiry
- COI Court Ordered Investigation
- ICPC Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (Incoming public cases)
- ADVPO Advocates Preventive Only (NYC)

All CWS type stages must be fully documented; including online completion of the revised UCR renamed Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP). All FSS tabs are enabled for this stage type. OTI, COI, ICPC, and ADVPO type stages use only the Stage Composition Progress Notes, and Case Summary tabs; the other FSS tabs are disabled.

□ Family Services Stage Roles

There can be only one *open* Family Services Stage (FSS) for a family per jurisdiction (Local District). Every worker is assigned to one of the following four roles, which govern what they do and their ability to enter data in various system components:

- Case Manager
- Case Planner
- Case Worker
- CPS Worker/Monitor

The Sections/Tabs of the FSS are briefly described below. For further descriptive information please refer to the Build 18 Step by Step Guide.

□ Stage Composition

Stage Composition is the “Home” tab of the Family Services Stage. When the Family Services Stage is opened, this tab will display. Demographic data (name, address, phone, date of birth, ethnicity, race, person identifiers [PID, CIN, etc.]) for all persons named in the stage and is readily available for view and may be updated by anyone with a role in the stage. Persons are added to the stage or end-dated here and historical stage composition can be viewed. It is very important that workers accurately maintain persons on this tab to ensure accurate AFCARS and NCANDS data and to avoid creation of duplicate persons/cases within CONNECTIONS.

□ Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)

□ Changes to the Process of the UCR Assessment and Service Plan Completion and Approval

CONNECTIONS will support the requirement for a UCR Assessment and Service Plan (which is currently completed in paper or template form) with a revised and renamed Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP). The FASP is designed to support family- and outcome-focused, strength-based casework. Workers will continue to assess and plan with families for children’s safety, permanency and well being, but the format and content of that documentation is changed. The FASP supports a fuller, more accurate assessment and an increased emphasis on including the family’s perspective.

- Multiple Workers Recording Within a Single Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP)
- Online Approval of the FASP
- Online Completion of Plan Amendments

□ Content of the FASP

Structured decision-making tools (i.e., the revised Safety Assessment and the Risk Assessment Profile) are employed in all CPS cases to support improved safety and casework decisions. The FASP includes new Strengths, Needs and Risk scales that reflect the expectation that caseworkers assess family and child strengths as well as needs to guide the assessment. Workers will be required to document their assessment of all “tracked” children individually (children with a program choice and permanency planning goal). Important information regarding all tracked children in the stage will be recorded and displayed in Tracked Child Detail on the Family Assessment and Service Plan tab. Anyone with a role in the stage can record or update PPG and Program Choice, Workers can also be associated to a specific child in this dialog. When a Caseworker is “associated” to a specific child it limits update capability for that child in the Child Scales and the Foster Care Issues dialog to that Caseworker and the Case Planner. In addition, certain placement information from CCRS (Agency, Placement Date, and Facility ID, Address and Type) will be brought forward and displayed. The historical record of all PPGs and Program Choices is also available. Primary and Secondary Parent/Caretakers will also be assessed individually. The Foster Care Issues tab is required to be completed for each placed child. This incorporates and revises UCR template sections for Appropriateness of Placement, Permanency Planning, Concurrent Planning, and Visiting Plan.

□ System Efficiencies of the FASP

Important efficiencies are provided by the system. CONNECTIONS will customize the FASP according to FASP type (Initial, Comprehensive, Reassessment) the Program Choice, PPG, and age of tracked children in the stage. As a result, the FASP will present only the relevant/required components for completion. Information from the most recently approved FASP will come forward and pre-fill selected FASP components. The original needs/concerns that prompted opening of the services case will be documented in the Initial FASP and will automatically display in all subsequent FASPs for worker information. Placement information will be brought forward from CCRS (Agency, Placement Date, and Facility ID, Address, and Type) and displayed on the Tracked Child Detail tab. The system also provides for copying of appropriate entries to other children in the stage to avoid redundant data entry provided certain conditions are met. CONNECTIONS will cue all assigned workers when a FASP is coming due or overdue.

□ Process of the FASP

All workers with update access will document their work within a single, shared FASP. Workers will enter their contribution to specified FASP components in draft format. The Case Planner will then compile the draft entries of all workers into a single narrative and modify as appropriate. This “Case Planner Summary” constitutes the official FASP document.

Unlike the UCR templates, which can be opened and worked in at any time, there are system rules governing who can launch (open and start work in) a new FASP and when they can do it. Multiple workers may also work within a single Plan Amendment to document several status changes. (Please refer to the Build 18 Step by Step Guide for further information)

□ New Program Choice: Non-LDSS Custody

There is a new Program Choice, “Non-LDSS Custody,” for children in the care of a relative or other resource person, but not in the custody of the local Commissioner of Social Services. The Program Choice is an “add” that reflects the unique legal status and planning needs of this population. It is not meant to be a substitution for “Protective” or “Preventive Services” program choices. Appropriate FASP questions are customized for this population.

□ Progress Notes

All progress notes will be recorded in CONNECTIONS. Progress notes may be entered as either “draft” or “final” by anyone with a role in the stage or with access to the workload of such a staff person or with the Business Function of ENTER PROG NOTES. Addenda to notes can be entered at any time; the system will mark the author and date of entry of the addendum and attach it to the note being amended.

□ Key Dates

The Key Dates tab is a “view only” window of permanency-related information from CCRS. It cannot be updated in CONNECTIONS and is only as accurate as the information that has been recorded in CCRS.

The following information is displayed:

- Children in Placement
- ASFA Day 1
- Due Date for Next Permanency Petition Filing
- Due Date for Next Permanency Hearing
- Date for TPR Decision Deadline

□ Case Summary

The Case Summary tab provides a quick “index” of all the stages that the user has the security access to view, open or closed, in a case. It mirrors the currently available window in CONNECTIONS (pre-Build 18) that includes a listing of all stages and workers, but does not navigate the worker to other stages. The Case Manager or Case Planner initiates the stage closing process from this tab. The Case Manager may also change the stage type from this tab.

□ Child Case Record (CCR)

A Child Case Record (CCR) will be created for any child who is completely legally free. The CCR is a new and separate case with a new case and stage number. The legally freed child is automatically end dated in the FSS/CWS. This record is customized for the child’s new status, so information about parents is not required and questions are geared directly to the child. Until the child is finalized in an adoptive setting, the child’s CIN and PID remain the same. At adoption finalization, a new CIN and PID are created for the child. For children in a CCR who are not adopted the CCR record functions as a continuation of their foster care case.

□ Service Plan Review (SPR)

Service Plan Review information will be recorded via a separate tab outside of the FASP. CONNECTIONS provides online support for scheduling and notification of Service Plan Review (SPR) conferences. Because the SPR tab is located outside of the FASP, it may be accessed whenever needed. Clerical workers may be assigned the Business Function ACC SERPLAN REV to schedule conferences and record SPR information. CONNECTIONS also provides support for the documentation of SPR conferences. Selected SPR meeting data (date scheduled, date held, invitees/role, invitee notification date, attendance indicator for all invitees, reason for not attending) entered on this tab will be carried forward by the system into the associated FASP Report. Workers may also record narrative comments regarding family input, meeting outcomes, and third party reviewer comments on the SPR tab. The third-party reviewer comments must be entered in the system. This information is *not* brought forward to the FASP.

INTERFACES & CONVERSION

□ Interfaces

With the implementation of the CONNECTIONS Case Management System (Build 18), CONNECTIONS begins sharing information with two Legacy systems: the Welfare Management System (WMS) and the Child Care Review Service (CCRS). These two Legacy systems remain as the system of record for Child Welfare Services cases until full implementation with Build 19. Application Registration (APP REG) and maintenance is conducted in CONNECTIONS; the WMS initiation of Application Registration is disabled for Child Welfare Services cases.

□ Conversion

Conversion provides a way for two systems to transfer data and communicate with each other. With the implementation of Build 18, Conversion will occur when limited data is brought over to CONNECTIONS from WMS and CCRS. Conversion for CONNECTIONS is a one-time-only process happening on Day 1 of Implementation, based on the Phased Implementation schedule

□ Interim Period of Dual Entry

From the time Build 18 is implemented and until implementation of Build 19, workers continue to complete all CCRS components: Registration, Assessment and Service Plans as well as Legal, Movement and Adoption activities. After Conversion, it is necessary to keep the shared data between CCRS and CONNECTIONS in synch. Communication in CCRS is only one-way CCRS⇒CONNECTIONS.

CHANGES FOR CPS

- Continuity from INV into FSS
- Structured format replaces narratives

□ Creating a Family Services Intake from a CPS Investigation

A CPS worker can open an FSI during the Investigation of a CPS report via the *Assigned Workload*. An FSI automatically opens upon the approval of a CPS Investigation Conclusion when the CPS stage is closed with an “open for services” Closure Reason:

Unfounded CPS Report:

- Case Open-Services

Indicated CPS Report:

- Case Open-CPS not required
- Case Open-CPS required

□ Changes to the CPS Investigation Conclusion Window

With the implementation of Build 18, the **Closure Reasons** on the *CPS Investigation Conclusion* window are revised to reflect the outcome of the Investigation stage. In addition, the recording and validation of the **WMS Number** is no longer necessary on the *CPS Investigation Conclusion* window.

□ Changes to Investigation Conclusion Closure Reasons

Pre-Build 18 Closure Reason

Build 18 Closure Reason

Unfounded Determinations

Unfounded Determinations

- Close - No credible evidence
- Close - Unable to contact
- Open – Court ordered services
- Open - Court ordered supervision
- Open – Voluntary services
- Open – Voluntary placement
- Open – Court ordered placement

- Closed - No services required
 - OR
- Closed- Refused services
 - OR
- Closed- Unable to contact/moved out of jurisdiction
- Closed – Unable to contact/moved out of jurisdiction
- Case open – Services

Indicated Determinations

Indicated Determinations

- Close – Refuse service/unable to take legal action
- Close – No services required
- Close – Lost Contact
- Close – Only child died
- Open – Court ordered services
- Open - Court ordered supervision
- Open – Voluntary services
- Open – Voluntary placement
- Open – Court ordered placement

- Closed – Services refused/unable to take or continue legal action
- Closed – No services required
- Closed – Unable to contact/moved out of jurisdiction
- Closed – No surviving children
- Case open – CPS required
 - OR
- Case open – CPS not required

Selection of any ‘Case open’ reason will automatically create an FSI (unless one already exists) and pre-fill demographic data. Selection of ‘Case open – CPS required’ in an indicated investigation will automatically generate the Program Choice of Protective for all children in the open FSS (provided that they are not a “tracked child” in another case). The programmatic function of CPS Worker/Monitor must be fulfilled when there is a Program Choice of Protective.

Unlike the rest of Build 18 implementation that occurs in waves, the *Closure Reasons in Investigation Conclusion will change for all districts as soon as the first district is implemented*. All CPS workers will select from the new Build 18 Closure Reasons upon implementation of wave 1. However, selection of ‘Case open’ will system generate a Family Services Intake only in districts that are implemented. Primary workers in an *implemented* social services district who are concluding an investigation will see the message “This is a build 18 implemented Investigation Conclusion” at the top of the Investigation Conclusion window. (This message is a tool to aid staff at the help desk distinguish between implemented and non-implemented districts; it will no longer display after all districts have been implemented).

□ Required Action

All CPS workers statewide must use the revised Closure Reasons in Investigation Conclusion upon Wave 1 Build 18 implementation (2/28/05).

CPS workers must select the 'Case open – CPS required' Closure Reason if there are ongoing child welfare issues requiring the continued assessment of safety and risk.

After Build 18 implementation of Wave 1, CPS workers must select a Build 18 Closure Reason if a pending investigation with a pre-Build 18 reason is rejected, or if a pre-Build 18 Closure Reason was saved *but not submitted for approval* before Wave 1 implementation.

If a pending Investigation Conclusion with a pre-Build 18 Closure Reason is approved, workers must add the program choice 'Protective' to the FSS, as the system will not automatically do so.

The programmatic function of CPS Worker/Monitor must be fulfilled when there is a Program Choice of Protective.

□ Risk Assessment

- Ongoing through Family Services Stage
- INV RAP informs Initial Plan RAP
- RAP embedded in Family Assessment Scales (after Initial Plan)

□ Changes to Person Relate

The person relate function is enhanced in Build 18 to support relating individuals in the FSI or FSS. (See CONNECTIONS Case Management Step-by Step for details)

RESOURCES

✂ Tools for CONNECTIONS Build 18 Case Management

- Training and Training aids
- Communications: Website and weekly updates; other announcements of interest to CONNECTIONS users
- Field Support: pre- and post-technical assistance to Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies
- Field Support consists of:
 - Regional Implementation Specialists assigned by wave to various districts and agencies.
 - IS 2's assigned by wave, who will coordinate and oversee hands-on assistance from IS 1's
 - IS 1's who will be assigned to a group of not more than 65 workers/wave.

On-site implementation assistance, provided by CONNECTIONS Field Support Staff, is planned for Builds 18 and 19. CONNECTIONS Field Support Staff will work closely with district/agency staff to assure that preparations for the build(s) have been accomplished.

CONNECTIONS Build 18 Case Management Step-By-Step Guide

Each Implementation Coordinator from the Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies was sent a hard copy of the Build 18 Step-By-Step Guide. All training participants are given a CD of the Build 18 Step By Step Guide when they attend the 2-day Introduction to Build 18 computer-based training. The Step-By-Step Guide is also available on the CONNECTIONS intranet site

OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

The OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site contains many of the same documents and types of information that are available in the Public Folders.

Online Help

The CONNECTIONS system contains its own dynamic Online Help feature, which provides step-by-step instructions, as well as policy and practice information that provide context for the CONNECTIONS functions.

Public Folders

OCFS maintains Public Folders in Microsoft Outlook to provide information that users can access at any time.