

NYS Office of Children and Family Services
CONNECTIONS Case Management

Impact Analysis

Subject: Family Services Intake (FSI)

Functional Area: Documenting Intake

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

Currently, the Intake process occurs entirely outside of CONNECTIONS. The Application for Services, which may be signed by the client or by the caseworker on behalf of the client, is completed on a paper form. There is no standardized format for documenting an Intake for services case, including presenting needs and services requested. Each district follows its own procedures.

What Remains the Same:

- The Common Application for Services continues to be completed off-line in paper form. To avoid redundant entry of demographic information, demographic information entered into CONNECTIONS can be printed for attachment to the Common Application for Services.
- Intakes are initiated by LDSS or by Voluntary Agencies.
- LDSS approval is required to open a case for ongoing services.
- The criteria for opening a case are unchanged.

What is New or Changes:

- All Intakes will be recorded in CONNECTIONS. An Intake must be completed before a case can be opened for services. Family Service Intakes may be opened either from within the Investigation stage (either while the Investigation is in process or at Investigation Conclusion) or entirely independent of the Investigation.
- There will be a standardized format for recording Intakes for Family Services.
 - A screening for behavioral concerns and family issues must be completed for all Intakes for Child Welfare Services (CWS) that do not originate from a CPS Investigation.
 - Emergency interventions taken during the Intake stage must be documented.
 - In order to determine if a case is eligible for mandated preventive services, Programmatic Eligibility must be completed as a part of all Intakes for “Preventive only” services.
 - Local districts may opt to require worker completion of a checklist of “Requested Services.”
- Workers have the ability to perform various case maintenance activities within the FSI. These include relating and unrelating persons and linking the FSI to an existing CONNECTIONS case.
- The system will automatically open a Family Service Intake upon approval of an Investigation Conclusion (both indicated and unfounded) with a closure reason indicating that the case will be opened for services.
- Case Composition fields will be pre-filled if the Intake is opened from a CPS Investigation.
- There is a new concept of “types” of Intakes. Examples are: Child Welfare Services, Court Ordered Investigations, ICPC, Out of Town Inquiries, Advocate Preventive Only (NYC only). All Intakes must be assigned a Type in order to be completed. Both Intake and Family Service Stage documentation requirements differ by type. For example, Intakes for certain types (COI, ICPC, OTI) do not require completion of Behavioral Concerns and Family Issues (even though the Intake

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does not originate from a CPS Investigation) and the FSS for these types does not require completion of the Family Assessment and Service Plan.

- Intakes may be “submitted for review” to a supervisor (LDSS or VA) for internal review if desired although this is not required. Upon submission, they are taken off the intake worker’s caseload and are assigned to the supervisor.
- Only a LDSS worker can open a case for services. Intakes taken by a Voluntary Agency must be submitted for LDSS acceptance. This is done online. Upon submission, the Intake is taken off the workload of the VA caseworker and is assigned to the LDSS Intake Unit to which it is being submitted. If LDSS accepts the Intake, the LDSS worker will open the Family Services Stage online and either keep the role of Case Manager or reassign it to another LDSS staff. Case Planning will be assigned back to the Voluntary Agency that initiated the Intake. (Rejected Intakes are returned to the worker who submitted it.)
- Voluntary Agencies may close an Intake without LDSS approval, unless the worker received an Application for Services signed by a parent/client. If a signed application was received, the Intake must be submitted to LDSS for acceptance so LDSS can approve its closing.
- The system will automatically close Intakes if there has been no activity (FSI has not been updated) for a period of 60 days and the “Date LDSS Received Application Signed by Parent/Client” is not filled in. The system will not automatically close an FSI if this date has been entered.
- There is a new security BFP, “Create FSI.”
- *Note: A separate process will be used to document Information and Referral Inquiries.*

Implications/Considerations:

System

- All Local Districts need to build a single “FSI Acceptance Unit” for acceptance of these Intakes.
- All Voluntary Agencies need to build a single “FSS Assign Unit” for acceptance of cases from local districts.
- Intake workers are responsible for maintaining the system so that duplicate persons and cases will not be created. This is a new role for many workers.
- Intake workers need to ensure that only the relevant persons from an Investigation Stage go forward into the Family Services Stage. Workers have the ability to delete a person from the FSI. Once a Family Services Stage is opened, persons can only be end-dated, not deleted.

Program

- The online, standardized Intake process will undoubtedly require re-engineering of district intake procedures.
- The Family Services Intake can only be on one person’s workload at a time.
- Because submitting a case for LDSS acceptance takes it off the VA worker’s caseload, timely LDSS approval and reassignment back to the Voluntary Agency is necessary to allow the Voluntary Agency to continue to work on the case within CONNECTIONS.

Recommendations:

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1. Review current agency intake procedures and revise as necessary to accommodate the online process and the need to accurately maintain persons and cases within FSI.
2. Prior to Build 18, local districts need to identify (by name, code) a single “FSI Acceptance Unit” for acceptance of Intake stages from Voluntary Agencies. The unit name and code must be hard coded by CONNECTIONS staff into the system.
3. Local districts should develop procedures for acceptance and timely review/approval of Intake stages from Voluntary agencies.
4. Prior to Build 18, Voluntary Agencies need to identify (by name, code) a single “FSS Assign Unit” for acceptance of Family Services stages from local districts. The unit name and code must be hard coded into the CONNECTIONS system.
5. Voluntary Agencies should develop procedures for acceptance and reassignment of Family Service stages assigned to them by LDSS.
6. Prior to Build 18, local districts need to determine if they will require completion of “Requested Services” in Intake so that the correct system edit can be set.
7. Train all Intake workers who do not currently have the “maintain person” functionality.