

3/3/2008

CONNECTIONS

***System Build 18.9.6
Job Aid***

***Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and
Reporting System (AFCARS)***

***Functionality for Foster Care Workers,
Caseworkers, Case Planners and
Case Managers***



CONNECTIONS Training Project
Professional Development Program
Rockefeller College
University at Albany

Version 1.0

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**CONNECTIONS – System Build 18.9.6 AFCARS Job Aid
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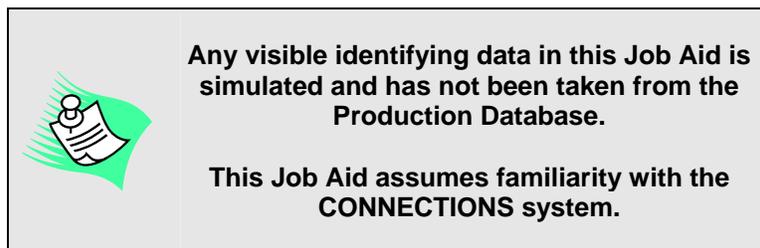
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Introduction

This Job Aid provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes being introduced with Build 18.9.6 and specifically information about updates to the *Tracked Children Detail* and *Finalize Adoption* windows that accommodate the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). This Job Aid is intended for all CONNECTIONS users who will be responsible for recording foster care and adoption information in CONNECTIONS.

Specifically, this Job Aid contains information about enhancements to the following functional areas:

- Tracked Children Detail window
- Program Choice/PPG tab
- Removal Information tab
- Placement Information tab
- FASP Components: Appropriateness of Placement and Plan Amendment
- Finalize Adoption
- AFCARS Adoption Information window



This Job Aid is available on the CONNECTIONS intranet site:
OCFS intranet home page > CONNECTIONS > Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips

The OCFS CONNECTIONS intranet site also contains information about trainings offered to support you in your work in CONNECTIONS.

Introduction to Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

Federal law and regulation requires states to report certain data on foster and adopted children. To meet these requirements, the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), collects case level information on all children in foster care, and on those foster children who are adopted. AFCARS also collects information on foster and adoptive parents.

CONNECTIONS and other legacy systems, principally the Child Care Review Service (CCRS), are the data sources that meet federal reporting requirements. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, CONNECTIONS has been enhanced to capture additional AFCARS information on the **Removal Information** and **Placement Information** tabs and on the *Finalize Adoption* window.

Functionality of AFCARS in CONNECTIONS

Prior to Build 18.9.6 workers recorded some foster care and related adoption information on the *Tracked Children Detail* window tabs (e.g., Program Choice/PPG, Placement and Removal Information tabs), pertinent sections of the FASP, and the *Finalize Adoption* window. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, additional AFCARS information will be collected. For example, the **Placement Information** tab on the *Tracked Children Detail* window features a new AFCARS Foster Care Information section. In addition, a new *AFCARS Adoption Information* window has been added to CONNECTIONS that captures additional adoption reporting elements.

Build 18.9.6 will also provide warning messages on various windows and tabs during entry to remind workers to complete AFCARS information. The new AFCARS fields will be denoted by an asterisk (*), which identifies the information as AFCARS data elements.

Furthermore, the principal sources of AFCARS information are derived from the Permanency Planning Goal (PPG) information (e.g., PPG selection), the Child Care Review Service (CCRS), and the Welfare Management System (WMS). Additional foster care-related AFCARS information will be derived from the Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal* (e.g., Manner of Removal) field on the **Removal Information** tab, Caretaker Information (e.g., Relationship Matrix) and Health Services (e.g., Clinical Appointments) information in CONNECTIONS.

Tracked Children Detail Window

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, various features on the **Program Choice/PPG**, **Placement Information** and **Removal Information** tabs on the *Tracked Children Detail* window have been enhanced to accommodate additional AFCARS reporting. For example, a new AFCARS Foster Care Information section displays on the **Placement Information** tab. In addition, fields that are AFCARS elements are denoted an asterisk (*).



Step-by-Step: Accessing the *Tracked Children Detail* window from the *Assigned Workload*

- 1 Click on the **WORK** button on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The Assigned Workload displays.
- 2 Select the appropriate FSS stage on the *Assigned Workload*.
*The **Tasks...** button enables.*
- 3 Click on the **Tasks...** button.
*The Family Services Stage window displays. The **Stage Composition** tab is active.*
- 4 Click on the **Family Assessment and Service Plan** tab.
The FASP window displays.
- 5 Click on the **Tracked Children** button.
The Tracked Children Detail window displays. The Program Choice/PPG tab is the active tab.

Program Choice/PPG Tab

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, upon entry into the *Tracked Children Detail* window, all tabs on the window will be enabled. Once data is modified or new choices are added on the **Program Choice/PPG** tab, the **Placement Information**, **Associated Caseworker**, and **Removal Information** tabs will be disabled. Once an entry is saved and the selected child has a program choice of Placement, all tabs will be enabled. If the child selected does not have a Program Choice of Placement or a history of Placement, the **Removal Information** tab will not be enabled. The Select Children grid will be populated with all currently tracked children and all other children available to be tracked in the stage. Any child that is currently tracked in another stage is not populated in the grid.

Family Assessment & Service Plan - Collins,Kristi - S:24502821/C:22313447
 File Options Reports Help
 Case Name: Collins,Kristi Case Initiation Date: 01/07/2008

Tracked Children Detail - Collins,Kristi - S:24502821/C:22313447
 File Options Help

Program Choice/PPG Placement Information Associate Worker Removal Information

Select Children:

Child	Age	CaseWorker
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collins,Patrick	15	
<input type="checkbox"/> Collins,Tyler	1	
<input type="checkbox"/> Collins,Kimberly	9	

Program Choice Information

Program Choice	Eff Date	End Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C Placement	01/07/2008	
<input type="checkbox"/> D Protective	01/07/2008	

Program Choice:

Effective Date:

End Date:

Permanency Planning Goal (PPG) Information

PPG	Eff Date	End Date	Ant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1(1a) Return to Parent [Parent]	01/07/2008		

*PPG:

*Subcategory:

Effective Date: End Date:

*Anticipated Completion Date:

View Active All

Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Placement Information tab.

Adding a Program Choice

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, when the **Program Choice** field of the selected child(ren) is changed to Placement and saved, the system displays the following warning message: **“Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Placement Information tab”** on the bottom corner of the tab to remind you to record AFCARS foster care information. This message will clear when the Program Choice of Placement is end-dated and saved for the selected child(ren).

To record and verify AFCARS foster care information, click on the **Placement Information** tab on the *Tracked Children Detail* window and select a child with a Program Choice of Placement from the **Select Child** grid. If information exists for the selected child, it will be displayed in the AFCARS Foster Care Information section. Verify that the information is correct and make any corrections needed. If no AFCARS foster care information exists, record and save the AFCARS foster care information.

When the Program Choice is modified while a FASP is in process and there are no longer any children in Placement, the AFCARS message will not be displayed.

Placement Information Tab

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, upon entry into the *Tracked Children Detail* window, the **Placement Information** tab will be enabled. The **Select Child** grid will include all non-end-dated children in the stage and will no longer be restricted to children with a Program Choice of Placement. The grid will contain a checkbox that will be checked by the system if the child's Program Choice is Placement.

In addition, with Build 18.9.6, an AFCARS Foster Care Information section has been added to the **Placement Information** tab that will allow you to record and view AFCARS foster care information. This section will be displayed for FSS/CWS and FSS/CCR stages. Any worker with a role in the FSS/CWS or FSS/CCR stage, as well as any user with access to that worker's *Assigned Workload*, may view and modify AFCARS foster care information.



Step-by-Step: Accessing the Placement Information Tab

- 1 On the *Tracked Children Detail* window, click on the **Placement Information** tab. *The Placement Information tab displays.*

Family Assessment & Service Plan - Collins,Kristi - S:24502821/C:22313447

File Options Reports Help

Case Name: Collins,Kristi Case Initiation Date: 01/07/2008

Tracked Children Detail - Collins,Kristi - S:24502821/C:22313447

File Help

Program Choice/PPG **Placement Information** Associate Worker Removal Information

Select Child:

Child	Age	F/C	CaseWorker
▶ Collins,Patrick	15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Collins,Tyler	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Collins,Kimberly	9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

CCRS/Connections Placement Data as of 1/7/2008 2:42:55 PM

Agency Name:

Placement Date:

Facility ID:

Facility Address:

Facility Type:

Name of Discharge Resource:

Completely Freed for Adoption: (Creates Child Case Record)

AFCARS Foster Care Information

Child Placed in Congregate Care:

Foster Family Structure: *

Has the child been previously adopted? * Yes No Unable To Determine

Was the child adopted internationally? Yes No

How old was the child when the previous adoption was finalized? *

Save Cancel

Close

Selecting a child in Placement from the **Select Child** grid will display the **Name of the Discharge Resource**. If there is placement information in CCRS for the child, the information will be populated on the CCRS section of the window. Review the CCRS information to ensure that it is accurate. If any of the information is incorrect, correct the information before proceeding.

The AFCARS Foster Care Information section contains questions regarding the foster care family structure and history of previous adoptions including international adoption information. The AFCARS fields are as follows:

Field Name	Description	Condition
Child placed in Congregate Care?	This field is used to record if the selected child is placed in congregate care.	When recorded, the Foster Family Structure field will be cleared and disabled. The field Has the child been previously adopted?* must be completed.
Foster Family Structure*	This field is used to record the marital status of the foster family at the time of placement. It is defined with an * sign to identify it as an AFCARS element. Responses are selected from a drop-down list. The available selections are Married couple, Unmarried couple, Single female, and Single male.	When recorded, the Child placed in Congregate Care field will remain disabled and be unchecked. The field Has the child been previously adopted?* must be completed.
Has the child been previously adopted?*	This field is used to indicate whether the selected child was previously adopted. It is defined with an * sign to identify it as an AFCARS element. A response is recorded by checking the appropriate radio button. Valid responses are Yes, No, and Unable to Determine.	If response is Yes, the fields Was the child adopted internationally? and How old was the child when the adoption was finalized? , will be enabled and must be completed. If the response is No or Unable to determine, the Save and Cancel buttons will be enabled.
The Foster Family Structure (or Child placed in Congregate Care) and Has the child been previously adopted? fields are required. Once information is recorded in a field, the Cancel button is enabled. The Save button is enabled when all required fields are complete.		
Was the child adopted internationally?	This field is used to indicate whether the selected child was adopted internationally. A response is selected by checking the appropriate radio button. Valid responses are Yes and No.	If response was Yes to the field Has the child been previously adopted?* this field must be completed.
How old was the child when the previous adoption was finalized?*	This field is used to record the age of the selected child when the previous adoption was finalized. It is defined with an asterisk (*) to identify it as an AFCARS element. A response is selected from a drop-down list. The available selections are: Less than 2 years, 2 to 5 years, 6 to 12 years, 13 years or older, and Unable to determine.	If response was Yes to the field Has the child been previously adopted?* , this field must be completed.

The most recent AFCARS foster care information saved in the FSS/CWS stage will be carried forward to the FSS/CCR stage and will be displayed in the respective section for the selected child. Only the most recently saved information will be displayed in the AFCARS Foster Care Information section.

For a FSS/CWS stage with the selection of a child(ren) not in Placement (**F/C** field is not checked), the AFCARS Foster Care Information section will display previously saved information, if it exists. However, all fields in the window, including those in the AFCARS Foster Care section, will be disabled and are view-only. When a child with an active Placement (**F/C** field is checked) is selected, the AFCARS Foster Care Information section will display previously saved information, if it exists, and all fields will be enabled and can be modified.

For a FSS/CCR stage, only the selected child's previously saved information, if it exists, is displayed in the AFCARS Foster Care Information section. All fields on the window, including those in the AFCARS Foster Care section, will be enabled and can be modified.

AFCARS Foster Care Information cannot be partially saved (e.g., only one or two fields completed and saved, then other fields completed at another time) on the **Placement** tab. All required fields must be recorded in order to enable the **Save** button.

When the AFCARS Foster Care Information is modified, the previously saved information will be replaced with the new information. There is no history of changes maintained. When all required information has been recorded, the **Save** and **Cancel** buttons will be enabled. The **Cancel** button will be enabled whenever a change is made to the window.



Step-by-Step: Recording AFCARS Foster Care Information on the Placement Information Tab

- 1 Select a child with a Program Choice of Placement from the **Select Child** grid by clicking on the box to the left of the child's name.
- 2 If the selected child was placed in congregate care, click on the **Child Placed in Congregate Care** checkbox and skip to Step 4 below. Otherwise, continue to Step 3.
- 3 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **Foster Family Structure*** field and select the appropriate response.
- 4 Click on the appropriate radio button in the **Has the child been previously adopted?*** field to answer the question. If the answer is No or Unable to determine, the remaining fields are disabled; skip to Step 7 below.
- 5 Click on the appropriate radio button in the **Was the child adopted internationally?** field to answer the question.
- 6 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **How old was the child when the previous adoption was finalized? *** field and select the appropriate response.
- 7 Click on the **Save** button.



Where am I?

*Assigned Workload > Tasks >
FSS > Tracked Children Detail >
Placement Information tab*



**Step-by-Step:
Viewing previously recorded AFCARS Foster Care Information on the
Placement Information Tab**

- 1 On the *Tracked Children Detail* window, click on the **Placement Information** tab.
- 2 Select a child with an active or historical Program Choice of Placement from the **Select Children** grid by clicking on the box to the left of the child's name. *The child's AFCARS information displays in the AFCARS Foster Care Information section.*



Where am I?

Assigned Workload > Tasks > FSS > FASP > Tracked Children Detail > Placement Information tab

Child Completely Freed for Adoption and Name of Discharge Fields

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the existing functionality of the fields **Name of the Discharge Resource** and **Completely Freed for Adoption** remains the same. When either of these fields is completed (with or without entering or modifying AFCARS information), the **Save** button will be enabled. Please note that the **Completely Freed for Adoption** checkbox is only visible to the Case Manager or those with access to the assigned Workload of the Case Manager.



In order to access the **Removal Information** tab, the child must have a current or historical Program Choice of Placement.

Removal Information Tab

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6 a new field, **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal***, has been added to the **Removal Information** tab to allow workers to record additional information regarding circumstances or conditions associated with the child's removal for AFCARS reporting. If the Program Choice is Placement, recording of the Conditions Associated with Child's Removal is required; it is optional if the Program Choice is Non LDSS Custody. The conditions will be selected from a checkbox listing; one or more boxes may be checked. In addition, AFCARS fields (e.g. **Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal*** and **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal***) are denoted with an asterisk (*).



**Step-by-Step:
Accessing the Removal Information Tab**

- 1 On the *Tracked Children Detail* window, click on the **Removal Information** tab. *The **Removal Information** tab displays. When more than one child appears in the grid, the grid displays in youngest child order.*



Where am I?

Assigned Workload > FSS > Tasks > Tracked Children Detail

Tracked Children Detail - Collins.Patrick - S:24503016/C:22313562

File Options Help

Program Choice/PPG Placement Information Associate Worker **Removal Information**

Select Child:

Child	Age	Caseworker
Collins.Patrick	15	

Activity Date:

Next Permanency Hearing Date Certain:

Removal Information

History of Removals:

Invalid	Removal Date	Legal Event	Date Saved

Date of Physical Removal:

Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal: *

Condition Associated with Child's Removal: *

- Abandonment
- Alcohol Abuse (Child)
- Alcohol Abuse (Parent)
- Child's Behavior Problem
- Child's Disability
- Caretaker's Inability to Cope due to Illness or Other
- Drug Abuse (Child)
- Death of Parent(s)
- Drug Abuse (Parent)
- Inadequate Housing
- Incarceration of Parent(s)

Clear Save Cancel Close

Upon opening the **Removal Information** tab, children will display in the **Select Child** grid from in order from youngest to oldest. The removal records in the Removal Information grid will be displayed in descending order (most recent on top and the oldest on the bottom), which cannot be modified (i.e., the columns cannot be sorted).

The following circumstances or conditions are available for selection in the **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal*** field:

- Abandonment
- Alcohol Abuse (Child)
- Alcohol Abuse (Parent)
- Child's Behavior problem
- Child's Disability
- Caretaker's inability to cope due to illness or other reasons
- Drug Abuse (Child)
- Death of Parent(s)
- Drug Abuse (Parent)
- Inadequate Housing
- Incarceration of Parent(s)
- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Relinquishment
- Sexual Abuse

When adding a new removal record, if the selected child has a Program Choice of Placement, the fields **Date of Physical Removal**, **Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal *** and **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal*** are required in order to add a new removal record to the **Removal Information** grid. When the selected child has a Program Choice of Non-LDSS Custody, only the **Date of Physical Removal** and **Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal*** fields are required. The **Cancel** button enables as soon as you start to record information. The **Save** button enables only when all the required fields have been completed.

When a record is selected on the **History of Removals** grid, the **Date of Physical Removal**, **Type of Legal Event Associated with the Removal*** and **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal*** information (if previously recorded) will be system-populated and can be modified. If the Program Choice is modified from Non-LDSS Custody to Placement and the Conditions Associated with the Child's Removal has not been recorded, the warning message "**Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Placement Information tab**" displays on the **Program Choice/PPG** tab; removal information and Conditions Associated with Child's Removal* information will be required. The **Save** button will not be enabled until the required field is completed.

After modifying the required fields (i.e., **Date of Physical Removal**, **Type of Legal Event Associated with Removal** and **Conditions Associated with Child's Removal** [applicable only for Placement]), the **Save** button will be enabled and all tabs will be disabled. The **Cancel** button will enable as soon as you modify information in any field.

Selecting a record in the **History of Removals** grid enables the **Clear** button. Clicking on this button with a record highlighted clears the data fields. Clicking on this button when recording a new record clears the newly recorded information.

FASP Components

FASP – Foster Care Issues Node – Appropriateness of Placement

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, in a FSS/CSW or FSS/CCR stage, when the worker clicks on the **Child has entered or reentered foster care** and or the **Child has been moved from one foster care setting to another** checkbox(es) on the **Appropriateness of Placement** sub-node, the message **“Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Tracked Child Detail - Placement Information tab”** displays to remind workers to record and verify AFCARS foster care information. Clicking on the **OK** button on the message window redisplay the *Appropriateness of Placement* sub-node window. This time when you click on the **OK** button on this window, the *Appropriateness of Placement* window will display.



To record and verify AFCARS foster care information, click on the **Tracked Children** button on the *Family Assessment and Service Plan* window, click on the **Placement Information** tab on the *Tracked Children Detail* window, and select a child with a Program Choice of Placement from the **Select Child** grid. Verify that the information is correct and make any corrections needed. If no AFCARS foster care information exists, record and save the AFCARS foster care information. Refer to *Recording AFCARS Foster Care Information* in this Job Aid for more information.



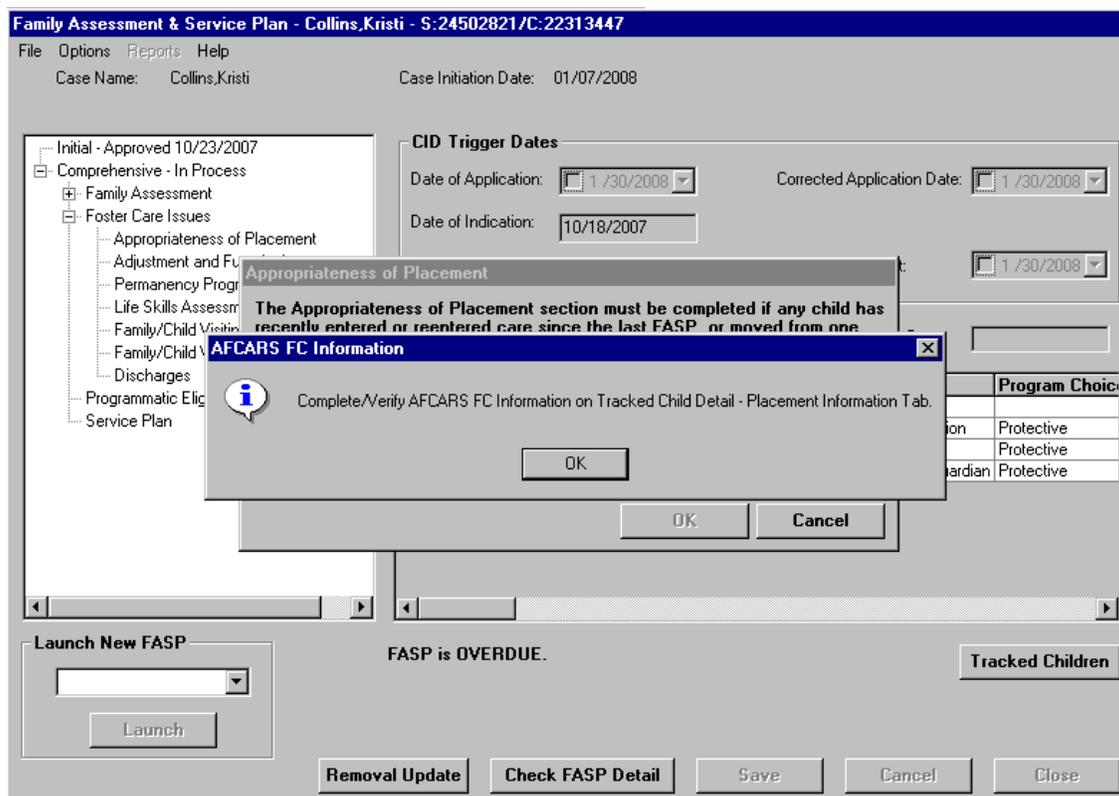
Step-by-Step: Opening the *Appropriateness of Placement* Sub-node

- 1 From the **Foster Care Issues** node, click on the **Appropriateness of Placement** sub-node.
The Appropriateness of Placement message window displays for all FASP types except Initial. If Appropriateness of Placement information was previously recorded and saved in CONNECTIONS or this in an Initial FASP, this message window does not display.
- 2 Select the applicable checkbox.
*The AFCARS message, “**Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Tracked Child Detail - Placement Information tab**” displays. If the **Does not apply to any child** checkbox was selected, the AFCARS message does not display.*
- 3 Click on the **OK** button.
The Appropriateness of Placement sub-node redisplay to allow for additional entries.
- 4 Click on the **OK** button.
The Appropriateness of Placement window displays.



Where am I?

Assigned Workload > FSS > Tasks > FASP tab > FASP Tree > Foster Care Issues node



FASP – Plan Amendment – Child Entering/Reentering Foster Care node or Child Moved from One Foster Setting to Another

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, when the “Child Entering/Reentering Foster Care” or “Child Moved from One Foster Care Setting to Another” status change is selected on the **Plan Amendment** node, the following AFCARS message displays to remind you to record and verify AFCARS foster care information: **“Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Tracked Child Detail - Placement Information tab.”** Clicking on the **OK** button displays the *Appropriateness of Placement* window.



To record and verify AFCARS foster care information, click on the **Tracked Children** button on the *Family Assessment and Service Plan* window, click on the **Placement Information** tab on the *Tracked Children Detail* window, and select a child with a Program Choice of Placement from the **Select Child** grid. Verify that the information is correct and make any corrections needed. If no AFCARS foster care information exists, record and save the AFCARS foster care information. Refer to *Recording AFCARS Foster Care Information* in this Job Aid for more information.

Family Assessment & Service Plan - Collins,Kristi - S:24502821/C:22313447'

File Options Reports Help
 Case Name: Collins,Kristi Case Initiation Date: 12/12/2005

- Initial - Approved 01/24/2006
- Comprehensive - Approved 03/29/2006
- Reassessment - Approved 07/24/2006
- Reassessment - Approved 01/29/2007
- Reassessment - Approved 07/16/2007
- Plan Amendment - In Process
 - Child Entering/Reentering Foster Care**
 - Child Discharged to Home, Relative or Oth
 - Child Moved From One Foster Care Setting
 - Update Service Plan
 - Visitation Plan Changed

CID Trigger Dates

Date of Application: Corrected Application Date:

Date of Indication:

Date of Court Order: Date of Placement:

Next FASP Due Date: Next SPR Meeting Date:

AFCARS FC Information

Complete/Verify AFCARS FC Information on Tracked Child Detail - Placement Information tab.

Launch New FASP

Tracked Children

Finalize Adoption

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, an **AFCARS** button has been added to the *Finalize Adoption* window to allow you to access the new *AFCARS Adoption Information* window. The *AFCARS Adoption Information* window will be used to record adoptive parent and biological parent information, as well as adoption agency information. Any worker assigned a role in the FSS/CCR stage can view and modify information. A worker must have the ACC SEALED ADOP Business Function to access the *Finalize Adoption* window once the FSS/CCR stage is closed; it is not needed to record or view the information when the stage is open. Also in Build18.9.6, the message “**Complete AFCARS Adoption Information**” will display on the *Finalize Adoption* window to remind workers to complete the AFCARS adoption information.



The AFCARS adoption information can only be recorded after the *Finalize Adoption* window has been completed and saved.

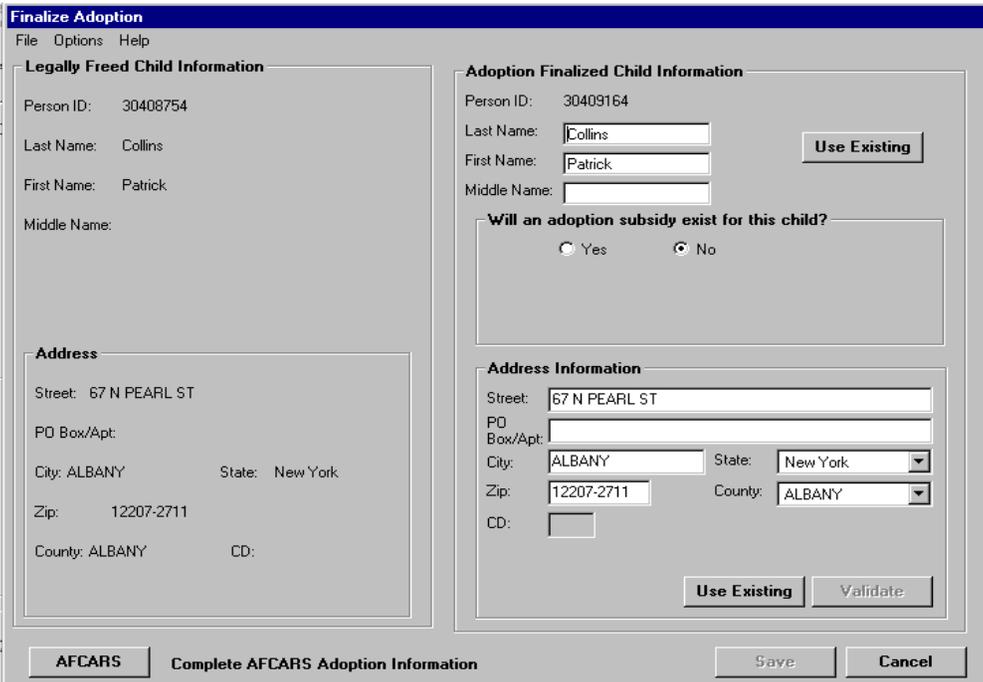


Step-by-Step: Accessing the *Finalize Adoption* Window

- 1 On the FSS **Stage Composition** tab, click on the **Options** menu and select the **Finalize Adoption** command.
The Finalize Adoption window displays with the AFCARS button disabled.



Where am I?
Assigned Workload > FSS/CCR > Tasks



Finalize Adoption
File Options Help

Legally Freed Child Information

Person ID: 30408754
Last Name: Collins
First Name: Patrick
Middle Name:

Address

Street: 67 N PEARL ST
PO Box/Apt:
City: ALBANY State: New York
Zip: 12207-2711
County: ALBANY CD:

Adoption Finalized Child Information

Person ID: 30409164
Last Name:
First Name:
Middle Name:

Will an adoption subsidy exist for this child?
 Yes No

Address Information

Street:
PO Box/Apt:
City: State:
Zip: County:
CD:

Complete AFCARS Adoption Information

Upon first entry to the *Finalize Adoption* window—and prior to completing and saving the finalization information—the **AFCARS** button will be disabled. After adoption finalization information is recorded, completed, and saved—and upon future entry into the window—the **AFCARS** button will be enabled.

The AFCARS message, “**Complete AFCARS Adoption Information**” will be displayed on the bottom of the *Finalize Adoption* window until all AFCARS adoption information has been recorded and saved. AFCARS adoption information can be modified until the stage is closed.

AFCARS Adoption Information Window

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, a new *AFCARS Adoption Information* window has been added, which allows Case Managers and assigned workers to record and view certain adoption information pertaining to both the biological and adoptive parents, as well as the adoption agency. For closed stages, workers with access to the *Finalize Adoption* window will be able to access the *AFCARS Adoption Information* window as well. The *AFCARS Adoption Information* window is accessed from the *Finalize Adoption* window only after the adoption finalization information is saved by clicking on the **AFCARS** button. The *Finalize Adoption* window must be completed and saved before the **AFCARS** button will enable. Workers will also be allowed to navigate to the *AFCARS Adoption Information* window in view-only mode once a stage has been closed.



When entering information for a single female or male even though all required information has been entered the message “Complete AFCARS Adoption Information will continue to display. This will be corrected in a future Build and can be ignored.



Step-by-Step: Accessing the *AFCARS Adoption Information* window

- 1 Click on the **AFCARS** button.
The AFCARS Adoption Information window displays.



Where am I?

*Assigned Workload > FSS
>Tasks > Options
> Finalize Adoption*



The *Finalize Adoption* window must be completed and saved in order for the **AFCARS** button to be enabled.

The *AFCARS Adoption Information* window is comprised of a header, footer, menu items, and various buttons. The header is always visible and includes the Case Name, Person ID, **File** menu, and **Help** menu. The window is comprised of the following sections: Adoption Finalized Child – Adoption Information, Adoptive Mother Demographics, and Adoptive Father Demographics. The footer contains the **Save**, **Cancel** and **Close** buttons.

Upon entry to the *AFCARS Adoption Information* window, all fields will be enabled and can be modified. Once information is recorded in any field, the **Save** and **Cancel** buttons enable; the **Close** button is always enabled.

The Adoption Finalized Child – Adoption Information section

<p>Was biological mother married at time of child’s birth?</p>	<p>This field is used to record the marital status of the biological mother at the time of the child’s birth. The responses are selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Yes, No, and Unable to determine.</p>
<p>Adoptive Family Structure</p>	<p>This field is used to record the family structure of the adoptive family. The responses are selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Married Couple, Unmarried couple, Single female and Single male. If the Adoptive Family Structure is either Single female or Single male, record the demographic information for either the adoptive mother or adoptive father. (When entering information for a single female or male even though all required information has</p>

	been entered, the message “Complete AFCARS Adoption Information” will continue to display; this will be corrected in a future Build and can be ignored.)
Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child	This field is used to record the relationship of the adopted parent(s) to the child. The responses are selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Stepparent, Other Relative, Foster Parent and Other Non-Relative.
Location of Adoption Agency	This field is used to record the location of the adoption agency. The responses are selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Within the state, and Another state.

Adoptive Mother Demographics Section

Year of Birth	This field is used to record the year of birth of the adoptive mother. The year is selected from a dropdown list of years from 1900 to the current year.
Race	This field is used to record the race of the adoptive mother. The response is selected from a checkbox. Valid responses are: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native American or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Unable to determine. More than one race can be recorded.
Hispanic Origin	This field is used to record whether the adoptive mother is of Hispanic origin. The response is selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Yes, No, and Unable to determine.

Adoptive Father Demographics Section

Year of Birth	This field is used to record the year of birth of the adoptive father. The year is selected from a dropdown list of years from 1900 to the current year.
Race	This field is used to record the race of the adoptive father. The response is selected from a checkbox. Valid responses are: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native American or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Unable to determine. More than one race can be recorded.
Hispanic Origin	This field is used to record whether the adoptive father is of Hispanic origin. The response is selected from a dropdown list. Valid responses are: Yes, No, and Unable to determine.

The following buttons display on the bottom of the *AFCARS Adoption Information* window:

Save Clicking on this button saves modifications that have been made.

Cancel When you click on the Cancel button, the following message displays:

“Do you want to cancel? Unsaved data and/or narrative(s) will be lost.”

- Click on the **Yes** button to close the window without saving the information.
- Click on the **No** button to leave the window open; all changes remain pending.

Close Clicking on this button closes the window and displays the *Finalize Adoption* window. If any unsaved changes exist on the window when you click on this button, the following message displays:

*“Do you want to Exit?
Unsaved data and/or narrative(s) will be lost.”*

- Clicking on the **Yes** button discards the unsaved changes and closes the window.
- Clicking on the **No** button closes the message without closing the window; all changes remain pending.



Step-by-Step: Recording AFCARS Adoption Information

- 1 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **Was biological mother married at time of child’s birth?** field and select the appropriate response.
*The **Save** and **Cancel** buttons enables.*
- 2 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child** field and select the appropriate response.
- 3 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **Adoptive Family Structure** and select the appropriate response.
- 4 Click on the drop-down arrow in the **Location of Adoption Agency** field and select the appropriate location.
- 5 In the Adoptive Mother Demographics section, if applicable, click on the drop-down arrow in the **Year of Birth** field and select the appropriate year.
- 6 In the **Race** field, click on the race of the adoptive mother.
- 7 In the **Hispanic Origin** field, click on the drop-down arrow and select the appropriate response.



Where am I?

*Assigned Workload > FSS
>Tasks > Options
> Finalize Adoption >
AFCARS Button*

- 8** In the Adoptive Father Demographics section, if applicable, click on the drop-down arrow in the **Year of Birth** field and select the appropriate year.
- 9** In the **Race** field, click on the race of the adoptive father.
- 10** In the **Hispanic Origin** field, click on the drop-down arrow and select the appropriate response.
- 11** Click on the **Save** button.
The adoption information is saved and the AFCARS Adoption Information window displays.
- 12** Click on the **Close** button.
The Finalize Adoption window displays.

Support Tools

Online Help

CONNECTIONS Online Help provides descriptions for various windows, as well as step-by-step instructions for common tasks. You can access Online Help at any time, from any window in CONNECTIONS by clicking on the **Help** menu or pressing the **F1** key on your keyboard.

The **Contents**, **Index** and **Search** tabs in Online Help allow you to search for and navigate to the topic(s) you need help on.



Step-by-Step: Accessing Online Help

- 1 Click on the **Help** menu on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The following list of commands displays:

Contents	<i>A table of contents for the help facility with links to major sections.</i>
How Do I?	<i>Step-by-instructions to help you complete tasks using CONNECTIONS.</i>
Window Descriptions	<i>Descriptions of windows in CONNECTIONS, along with information on various fields.</i>
DSS Policy	<i>Online OCFS policy handbooks (under revision).</i>
Help On This Window	<i>Window description help for the window you are on.</i>
Help for Help	<i>Instructions on how to use the help functionality.</i>
About CONNECTIONS	<i>Information about the current CONNECTIONS version and build.</i>
- 2 Click on a command from the **Help** menu.
*The window related to your selection displays. In some cases, you will need to make another selection in that window to obtain instructions. At the top of each window you will see additional buttons and menus. Use the **Search** button to search for specific information in the Help function and use the **Back** button to return to windows you have just visited in Help. The **Glossary** button opens a list of important CONNECTIONS terms and the **Print** button allows you to print Help information.*
- 3 When you are done reviewing information in Help, close each *Help* window by clicking on the **Close** button (☒) in the top right corner of the window.
The system returns to the window you were using when you accessed Help.

Enterprise Help Desk

The New York State Office for Technology (NYS OFT) Enterprise Help Desk staff is available to answer basic questions related to your equipment or to solve problems you are having with the CONNECTIONS application. If they cannot solve your problem, they will record your information and forward it to others who can.

Your agency may have procedures in place for contacting the Enterprise Help Desk. Check with your supervisor before you call.

The Enterprise Help Desk is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The telephone number is:

1-800-NYS-1323

1-800-697-1323

When you call the Enterprise Help Desk with a problem, you will be given a ticket number to use for tracking your issue and its resolution. Keep a record of this number; you will need it for any follow-up conversations with the Enterprise Help Desk.

OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

A variety of training-related materials are available from the OCFS CONNECTIONS intranet site (<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>). The intranet site contains a wealth of information related to various aspects of CONNECTIONS, including training schedules, Alerts and Notices, Step-by-Step Guides (including the *CONNECTIONS Case Management Step-By-Step Guide*), Job Aids and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Release Notes – a complete list of the modifications, enhancements, fixes and impacts in the Build – is also available from the CONNECTIONS intranet site.



Step-by-Step: Accessing the OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

- 1 From your local desktop, double-click on the **Internet Explorer** icon.
- 2 If the browser does not display the OCFS intranet site automatically, enter *http://ocfs.state.nyenet* into the browser's address line and press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.
The OCFS intranet home page displays.
- 3 Click on the **CONNECTIONS** link.
The CONNECTIONS home page displays.
- 4 Click on a topic to access information. For access to various Step-by-Step Guides and Job Aids, click on the **Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips** link. For access to Release Notes for a Build, click on the **Implementation** link.
- 5 To close Internet Explorer, click on the **File** menu and select **Close**.