

~The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY~
February 24 ~ March 3, 2006



The CONNECTIONS Program Improvement Plan Update...

In response to concerns related to the performance of the CONNECTIONS system, we have initiated a *CONNECTIONS Performance Improvement Project*, and we are partnering with staff from OFT, OCFS, as well as vendors, to analyze all aspects of the infrastructure design (i.e. servers, network, database, etc.) and application design, to determine the root cause of these performance issues. To improve a system of this magnitude, a representative sample of transactions has been identified to benchmark and focus problem resolution. Other system changes will be controlled to ensure integrity of the problem resolution. OCFS has identified the top 10 transactions for benchmarking. Test Plans have been created and baseline testing have taken place at the following locations: Albany – 40 North Pearl 6th floor lab – (02.13.06), the Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families – 112 State St. – (02.15.06), and the ACS Manhattan Field Office – 125th St. – (02.22.06). Testing was successfully completed at all three locations. The next step is to finalize the initial performance improvement recommendations on 02.27.06.

Permanency Hearing Report Alerts & SPR/Consultation Alerts Related to the "Date Certain"...

At this time, there is an issue with the Permanency Hearing Report alerts and the alerts for the SPR/Consultation related to the "Date Certain". Currently, CONNECTIONS draws over the Date Certain for the next Permanency Hearing from CCRS in a nightly interface. Based on today's date, the batch program compares today's date and the Date Certain for the next hearing. If the date is exactly 45 days from today until the upcoming Date Certain, the program creates the appropriate alert for the Permanency Hearing Report and SPR/Consultation coming due. However, if the date is more than 45 days from today until the upcoming Date Certain, the program does not create the alerts. It "marks" the Date Certain from CCRS as "processed" and does not go back. The alerts that have been created are accurate; however, the program is not creating alerts for all of the entries that are brought over. If you get an alert, it is correct however, you may not get an alert. It should be noted that all alerts that are based upon the removal date are working accurately.

Please note that correction of the Permanency Hearing Report alerts and alerts for the SPR/Consultation are a high priority and will be implemented as soon as

possible; however, until they are fixed we ask that you use manual methods to track these events.

The CONNECTIONS Intranet Site Redesign Is Complete...

The look of the CONNECTIONS intranet site has changed! Over the last several months we have been working on a new look for the CONNECTIONS intranet. In light of the many new system users, we have taken on the task of redesigning the intranet site to showcase a fresh face! Please take a look at the site and let us know what you think!

New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...

The following documents were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:

- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - CPS Safety Assessment Practice Guidelines
- CONNECTIONS Case Management Step by Step Guide – Version 1.4 revised 1/23/06. This document includes information through Build 18.7
- Identified Revisions to the Case Management Step by Step Guide – Version 1.4
- Supplement to the Administrative Opening of a CONNECTIONS Case to Make Payments

Change to the Webstar URL and IP Address...

On February 23, 2006, a communication was forwarded from the NYS OFT Customer Relations team relaying that there will be a change to the Webstar URL and IP address in the near future. Please note that the date/time that this change will take place is the morning of *Friday, March 3rd*. For your convenience, the communication that OFT forwarded is attached below. If there are any questions regarding the information provided in the OFT communication you may contact the Webstar team at the following address: OFT.SM.CNS.WEBSTAR@nysemail.state.ny.us or, you may call your Customer Relations manager for further support.



2006-CRC-16
Change to the Web

District Agency Profile (DAP)...

Just an FYI, in case you have the DAP as a shortcut on your desktop, the URL on the DAP was changed a few months ago. It is now: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/dpm/>. This change was a result of the switch to the nyenet addresses.

Supplement to the Administrative Opening of a CONNECTIONS Case to Make Retroactive Payments...

Please note that a communication was forwarded to SSPS liaisons related to a supplemental document that provided additional information regarding the administrative opening of a CONNECTIONS case to make retroactive payments.

This document will be posted to the CONNECTIONS website for your convenience.

WMS Discrepancy Report...

The WMS Discrepancy Report is a production report generated monthly from the OCFS Data Warehouse. The report is displayed in the Reports Folder, and reflects a “point in time” when CONNECTIONS and WMS are out of synch. This report will be made available to staff at **local districts only**. It will be sent to the Report List window of each user designated to receive the report.

The report lists 3 different types of discrepancies in data in the two systems:

1. Any case in CONNECTIONS when the corresponding WMS case does not exist, or is incomplete (the case is still in “APP REG” status in WMS).
2. Any case in which the Family Services Stage is closed in CONNECTIONS but the corresponding WMS case is still open.
3. Individuals in an active case who have different demographic data in the two systems – Case Manager ID, Individual Name, Date of Birth, Sex, Social Security Number, and/or Case Address (address of primary caretaker in CONNECTIONS to Case Address in WMS).

It should be noted that the WMS Discrepancy Report is being prepared for distribution in March 2006 and your Regional Implementation Field Support Lead will be contacting you to discuss this report.

***Please note:* In order to either initially identify, or change, the WMS Discrepancy Report recipients we ask that you complete the Management Report Update form, posted below. Instructions regarding completion of the form are identified in the piece below.

Management Report Update Form...

Please note that the Management Report Update form and instructions for completion of the form was initially forwarded to Directors of Service in August 2005 and then again in October 2005, with an attached spreadsheet identifying the individuals at the local district who currently receive the management reports. This form allows the local district to identify who they want to receive copies of the following reports:

- OCI Monthly Management Report
- OCI Monthly Management Summary Report
- Summary of Characteristics Report
- To Be Expunged Report
- Expungement Report
- CIN PID
- WMS Discrepancy Report

In order to either initially identify, or change, any of the report recipients we ask that you complete the form (posted below) and submit it to Marie Wiley.

Instructions for completion of the form:

1. The form can be completed by tabbing to each field; you can then hit the “enter” key to either add or delete the identified name for each report.
2. After completion of the document hit the “Submit by Email” button, located in the upper right-hand corner of the form;
3. you will receive a pop-up box titled “Submit Email Client” and the field “Desktop Email Application” will be pre filled, click “OK”;
4. you will receive a pop-up box titled “Send Data File”, click the “Send Data File” button;
5. you will receive a pop-up box titled “Email Confirmation”; click the “Close” button;
6. you will receive a pop-up box titled “Adobe Acrobat”, the message will ask if you want to save changes to the Management Reports Update Form before closing; click either “Yes”, “No”, or “Cancel”.



Management
Reports Update Form..

When CONNECTIONS Will Be Unavailable...

- **Friday, 2/24/06** from 5:00AM - 7:00AM
- **Wednesday, 3/1/06** from 5:00AM – 7:00AM
- **Friday, 3/3/06** from 5:00AM – 7:00AM