

# **~ The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY ~**

## **January 19 ~ 26, 2007**



### ***Build 18.9 Functionality Letter...***

A letter was sent to Local Social Service District Commissioners and Voluntary Agency Directors on January 17, 2007 regarding implementation and training for Build 18.9 which is scheduled to be released on March 23, 2007. This letter clarifies which parts of the functionality included in the Build are optional, which parts are to be implemented at the time of the release and, under what circumstances.

Attached to the letter is a Training Needs document for each local district to complete and return to their CONNECTIONS Regional Office Implementation Staff. This document is necessary to plan the frequency and location of training. Your prompt attention will assist in this endeavor. For your convenience a copy of the letter and the attachment is posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet website home page at <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>.

### ***Important OCFS Data Warehouse Cognos 8 Migration Information...***

For OCFS Data Warehouse users with essential reports saved to your T: Drive or My Folders it is necessary that you complete the online survey at <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/ohrd/survey/datawarehouse>, so that the Data Warehouse Team can best prepare you for the migration. Reports that you need to keep have to be rebuilt so your prompt attention is required. Please be patient if the survey takes a minute to appear. For an email version of the survey, contact Jennifer Gordon at [jennifer.gordon@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:jennifer.gordon@ocfs.state.ny.us).

### ***"Cognos 8 Migration FAQ" Document...***

If you are a Data Warehouse user and want the most up-to-date info on the Cognos 8 migration, we ask that you take a look at the *newly revised* "Cognos 8 Migration Frequently Asked Questions" document that is posted to the Data Warehouse page of the CONNECTIONS Intranet. The document contains important information about the upcoming move to Cognos 8!

### ***"Be Our Guest", "Be Our Guest", "Be Our Guest"...***

In preparation for the implementation of Build 18.9, we have organized Guest Testing of the new functionality that will be introduced in the Build. The testing is scheduled to be conducted in the lab in Albany at 40 North Pearl Street. The dates and regional assignments are as follows:

- ***Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>*** for Albany and Syracuse region testers

- **Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>** for Yonkers and Buffalo region testers
- **Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>** for Yonkers and Buffalo region testers
- **Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup>** for Yonkers and Rochester region testers
- **Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>** for Albany, Syracuse and Rochester region testers
- **Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>** for NYC region testers

Thank you for all the volunteers! A memo outlining the logistics for testing will be sent to you shortly. We appreciate your time and look forward to working with you as our “Guest”!

### ***National (FBI) Fingerprint Checks for Foster & Adoptive Parents...***

Local District Commissioners and Directors of Services were e-mailed Interim Procedures on January 11, 2007 to implement national criminal history record checks. These procedures have also been mailed to Voluntary foster care agencies with foster boarding home programs and adoption agencies.

Also, OCFS filed regulations on an emergency basis effective January 11, 2007 amending the criminal history record check standards for the approval of adoptive parents (18 NYCRR Part 421) and for the certification or approval of foster parents (18 NYCRR Part 443).

A National criminal history record check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), along with a State criminal history record check through the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), must be performed for all applicants and other persons over the age of 18 who reside in the home of the applicants where the foster or adoptive home was not finally and fully certified or approved before January 11, 2007. Also, effective January 11, 2007, an FBI criminal history record check, along with a State DCJS criminal history record check, must be completed at the point of recertification or re-approval of foster homes where a new person over the age of 18 resides in the home or a person who had been in the home turns 18 since the prior certification or approval of the home. Unless fully and finally certified or approved prior to January 11, 2007, no foster or adoptive home can be finally certified or approved until both the State and FBI reviews have been completed.

It is important to note that the use of the “Notice Regarding Fingerprinting Requirements” English and Spanish versions, which are still available in CONNECTIONS (FAD), must be discontinued. Likewise the “Denial/Revocation Letter/Notice of Results of Fingerprinting/Criminal Record Found” English and Spanish versions which are still available in CONNECTIONS (FAD) must be discontinued. New versions of the Notice and the Denial/Revocation Letter were attached to the January 11, 2007 letter referenced above. You will be advised when the system is updated.

### ***A Report on the Portable Information Technology Pilot Program...***

For your reference, OCFS recently released a report titled Portable Information Technology Pilot Program – Report to the Governor and Legislature. This report describes the results of a pilot program that was conducted in New York City, Westchester and Monroe counties, to test best practices in portable information technology for child protective services (CPS) caseworkers, as well as address the issue of cyber security. It should be noted that the State Legislature directed OCFS to conduct this pilot and produce a report as part of the 2006-07 State Budget process.

An independent evaluation of the piloted technologies, which included laptop PCs, tablet PCs, and digital pens, was conducted by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), University at Albany/SUNY. The results of the evaluation suggested that portable technology assists CPS caseworkers to more effectively perform investigation tasks. It should be noted that, CTG recommended additional testing to validate these preliminary results.

### ***Report Recommendations***

In its report, OCFS recommends the continuation and expansion of the portable information technology pilot program. Testing portable technology in additional organizational and geographic environments will provide OCFS with a greater opportunity to determine the best investments to pursue in future years. The report further outlines the actions that OCFS is currently taking to support the use of portable information technology in the field, as well as how it is addressing cyber security. For your review, the OCFS report on portable technology is posted to the CONNECTIONS website on both the Home and System/Network pages.

### ***The Business Process Redesign Manual...***

Just a note that an updated copy of the Business Redesign Manual is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site. This manual is intended to be used in supporting the change in business processes associated with Build 18.9. Please contact your CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff if you require support, they will assist you in using the manual and can demonstrate the new functionality using the Build 18.9 prototype.

### ***CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid ~ Health Services...***

Just to let you know...a DRAFT copy of the Health Services Job Aid has been posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site. The Job Aid details the CONNECTIONS system changes being introduced with the implementation of Build 18.9 as they relate to health services. A few of the topics that the Job Aid highlights are ~ the security and confidentiality of health information, viewing, recording and modifying health information and generating forms and reports. Check out the rest of the Job Aid for a more detail!

### ***CCRS & CONNECTIONS ~ A Crossing Point...***

#### ***Assessment & Service Plans Relief***

***Please note that this enhancement is scheduled to be available to users on Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup>.***

In an effort to provide mandate relief to users who are currently entering duplicative information into both CCRS as well as the CONNECTIONS application, we have developed a “crossing point” that will eliminate the need for duplicative entry. Districts will **no** longer enter Assessment and Service Plans directly into CCRS as data will be fed from CONNECTIONS. Most CCRS edits will be suspended for plans, and the system of record for the CID and Assessment and Service Plans will be CONNECTIONS. It should be noted that the goal is to replace the CCRS Assessment and Service Plan function, not keep it in sync. Please note that you must continue to register the case in CCRS, as CCRS remains the system of record for placement/movement, legal and adoption activities and CONNECTIONS becomes the system of record for Service Plans.

The following is an explanation of the way that the cross-over will operate. Each night approved FASP data from the last five days will be sent from the OCFS Data Warehouse (taken from CONNECTIONS) to CCRS. Information from the Data Warehouse will also be sent over if there are changes in the PPG, Anticipated Completion Date and/or Program Choices. If there is an open CCRS case the system will compare the FASP approval date to what it sees in CCRS (dates and type plan). If what is coming from the Warehouse is newer, it will add a new Assessment Service Plan to CCRS. If the CCRS Plan Type and Date match what is coming from the Data Warehouse and there are changes in the PPG, Anticipated Completion date and/or the Program Choices, the current CCRS Assessment Service Plan will be modified with that new information. If the CCRS case is NOT open, it will try for 5 days. After that it will stop trying until a newer plan or additional changes to PPG, Anticipated Completion Date and/or the Program Choices comes from CONNECTIONS to the Warehouse to CCRS. So, if WMS and CCRS opening lags and your initial (comprehensive...) FASP is done and approved prior to your opening the CCRS case, those FASPs will just not be reflected in CCRS. Once the CCRS case is open whatever FASP is next approved or when there is a PPG, Anticipated Completion Date and/or Program Choice change made and there is an existing approved FASP, that current information will go over and in CCRS the appropriate plan will be stored. Plans will NOT cue up to be entered in the right order in CCRS if CCRS is not open to receive them. This is okay. Remember that the goal here is **NOT** to keep CCRS and CONNECTIONS in synch. The system of record for plans and the CID date is/will be CONNECTIONS. The data feed, of planning data, to CCRS is to feed downstream systems that get data from CCRS; primarily AMS which needs the PPG and some other information. CCRS plan information will become the conduit to keep those systems up to date.

It should be noted, however, that users will still see the message that informs them to update CCRS upon modification or ending of a Program Choice or PPG, as this message will not be suppressed at this time; however, the deletion of this message from user view will be a technical fix that has been included in Build 18.9.

### ***An Update on the CIN/PID Interface Application...***

We have completed an inventory of the users that access the CIN/PID application and have determined that the application is currently accessed on a very limited basis; therefore we are going to archive it and remove the Icon from the CITRIX logon page within the next month.

### ***NYS OFT HSEN nyseWebstar is Moving...***

nyseWebstar is moving to a new URL beginning Friday morning, January 26, 2007. The new URL is: <https://Webstar.of.state.nyenet>. All favorites, shortcut links or links on other web pages that point to the old Webstar URL <https://Webstar1.of.state.nyenet> should be updated to the new Webstar URL prior to Friday, January 26, 2007.

### ***Quick Tip...***

#### ***The Use of the Ampersand (or the '&' symbol)...***

Setting up a new agency in either FAD or the Resource Directory? If you are, we caution you in the use of the ampersand symbol (&) at the end of the agency name in the resource name field. At present, if an agency/facility enters the ampersand symbol (&) at the end of resource name field in the Resource Directory, a system error occurs on our end, and we are not able to generate correspondence to the intended agency. This issue

is scheduled to be fixed in a future Build; however, until we have implemented the fix, we ask agencies/facilities not to use this symbol at the end of the resource name field in the Resource Directory.

### ***In The Next Few Weeks Keep Your Eye Out For...***

The Build 18.9 training schedule and updated versions of the Build 18.9 Job Aids.

### ***New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...***

The following document(s) were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:

- The CONNECTIONS Weekly
- Build 18.9 Functionality Letter
- Field Assessment of CONNECTIONS ~ Final Report
- Gartner Review of the CONNECTIONS AAPDU
- OCFS Data Warehouse News and Notes for January
- Updated Build 18.9 FSS interface between CONNECTIONS and WMS
- Build 18.9 Business Process Redesign Manual

### ***Weekly System Maintenance...***

#### ***CONNECTIONS Application Downtime...***

- ***Friday, 1/19/06*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***Wednesday, 1/24/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- ***Friday 1/26/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM