

## ~ **The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY** ~

*February 23 ~ March 2, 2007*



### ***Daylight Saving Time (DST) Change...***

***\*\* Please note the additional 2 hour window of downtime for Friday, 3/2 beginning at 3:00AM – completing by 7:00AM.***

As you are aware, in August 2005, the United States Congress passed the Energy Policy Act, which changes the start and end dates of Daylight Saving Time (DST). This law goes into effect this year. Because of this change, IT related businesses around the country will be patching software and hardware in preparation for the changes in Daylight Saving Time. Likewise, the Office for Technology (OFT) has begun patching software and hardware, and as a result some PC's and servers are at different phases in the patching process. Depending on the progress of the patching process, individuals in the NYSeMail environment may see calendar entries with inconsistent starting and ending times. The timeframe most likely to be impacted is from March 11<sup>th</sup> through April 1st.

### ***Recommended Action***

OFT is suggesting that, as a best practice, NYSeMail calendar users state the actual meeting starting time at the beginning of the subject field for each meeting notice to help eliminate any confusion.

### ***New Build 18.9 Info To Know...***

#### ***Build 18.9 Preview Info...***

We are pleased to announce the availability of the Preview application for Build 18.9! The Preview application will be available, statewide, on March 5<sup>th</sup>, and provides users with an opportunity to *practice* using the new Build 18.9 functionality on their own workload. Please note that the Preview database is a “snapshot” of the database and data that is entered is *not saved* in the production environment (which is the “live” CONNECTIONS database) but *is saved* in the Preview database for the time that Preview is available (which is prior to the implementation of the Build).

#### ***Just a few notes about using Preview...***

So that CONNECTIONS users experience full use of the Build 18.9 functionality within the Preview environment, it is critical that any changes to a user's Business Function Profile are completed *prior* to March 2<sup>nd</sup>, as this is when the “snapshot” of the Preview environment will be taken. It should be noted that

agency security administrators *can* apply new Business Functions directly in the Preview environment; however, any Business Function changes within the Preview environment must also then be re-applied to the user's Business Function Profile in production.

In order for users who are "new" to CONNECTIONS (such as Health Coordinators) to be able to take full advantage of the Preview environment, it is critical that they be **set-up** in the system (which includes: arranging for an NT account (an NT ID), PID as well as a CONNECTIONS ID) *and* be given the appropriate Business Functions, prior to March 2<sup>nd</sup>, or they will not be able to access the Preview environment.

For your reference, there will be a Preview Use Packet issued shortly that includes exercises that execute new functionality.

### ***Build 18.9 Health Services Impact Analysis Is Available...***

The Build 18.9 Health Services Impact Analysis is available and posted to the CONNECTIONS website on the Implementation page. This document provides a brief description of current function/process and identifies "what remains the same", "what is new or changes", implications/considerations, how program is impacted and provides recommendations to users as a result of the implementation of the Build.

### ***Build 18.9 Highlights...***

Just a quick note that the Build 18.9 Highlights, a document that summarizes the significant modifications, changes and enhancements in the Build will be released toward the end of next week and posted to the CONNECTIONS website.

### ***An Updated Version of the CONNECTIONS Build 18.9 FAQ's is Available...***

In order to maintain a current log of questions and answers related to Build 18.9, the original version of this document has been updated and posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website on both the Home and FAQ page. Please note that the new "Q & A's" are date stamped for your convenience.

### ***Build 18.9 Training Info...***

***\*\*Please note that the post-Build implementation classes are now posted to STARS.***

A note about the new trainings offered...the *same* training will be offered both pre and post Build implementation. Please note that only foster care and health specialist staff from local districts and voluntary agencies that are implementing Build 18.9 functionality on March 23<sup>rd</sup> should register for pre-implementation training. For those staff that will not have had an opportunity to receive training prior to the Build, please note that there will be post-Build (after March 23<sup>rd</sup>) training for approximately six to eight weeks after implementation. All other staff should register for the post-Build implementation classes that will be held

after March 23<sup>rd</sup>. There is a commitment to train all staff who wish to receive training. There is a commitment to train all staff who wish to receive training. The new trainings are titled:

- *Build 18.9 Hands-On Training for Caseworkers*
- *Build 18.9 Hands-On Training for Supervisors, Managers, Resource Users and Senior Staff*
- *Build 18.9 Hands-On Training for Health Services Specialists.*

In addition to this training, there will be a CD, *Recording Health Services in CONNECTIONS*, available that will provide instruction (with interactivity) that is intended to be used at an individual's own pace and space. It should be noted that the CDs are in the process of being mailed to districts and agencies. The training schedule for each of these courses is posted in the Statewide Training Automated Registration System (STARS). The Internet address for the STARS website is <http://stars.bsc-cdhs.org>. Further descriptions of the trainings are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website on the Training page. Please note that pre-registration for all courses is required. If you have any questions about these courses please contact the SUNY Training Strategies Group by calling, toll free, 1-877-451-4835.

### ***CONNECTIONS Training Database Application Downtime...***

In order to provide necessary Build 18.9 updates to the CONNECTIONS training database, the training application will be unavailable from Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30PM through the weekend. The training database will be available for training on Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>.

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

Please note that Part II, Chapter C of the Business Process Redesign Manual has been updated with the current workflow diagrams that include new timelines and the HIV tab information. The updated version is posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Implementation page. We ask that you discard any hard copies of the previous version of the manual and replace with the version that includes the updated Chapter. This manual is intended to be used to support the change in business processes associated with Build 18.9. Please contact your CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation representative if you require support, they will assist you in using the manual and can demonstrate the new functionality using the Build 18.9 prototype!

### ***State and National Criminal History Record Checks For Foster & Adoptive Parents...***

***The following information was communicated through an Administrative Memo ~ 07-OCFS-ADM-01 to local district Commissioners...***

The purpose of this ADM is to provide updated and comprehensive instructions and guidance to authorized agencies about the implementation of state and national criminal history record checks in accordance with Section 378-a (2) of

the Social Services Law (SSL). This update includes the provisions recently enacted by Chapter 668 of the Laws of 2006 and regulations filed by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) on an emergency basis. Both Chapter 668 and the regulations took effect on January 11, 2007. With this release, OCFS is canceling the ADM numbered: 00-OCFS-ADM-04 (dated December 7, 2000). The most recent ADM (07-OCFS-ADM-01) incorporates the information previously found in 00-OCFS-ADM-04 where that information has not been superseded by the provisions of Chapter 668 and implementing regulations. The current release contains both new and revised information.

Please note that with the release of this ADM, the Interim Procedures dated January 11, 2007 are no longer in effect. The Interim Instructions, contained in a letter dated January 25, 2007 to adoption agencies, specific to prospective adoptive parents interested in adopting from China, are also no longer in effect. Anyone who submitted two fingerprint cards during this interim period need take no further action. It is important to note that this means effective February 7, 2007, only the DCJS fingerprint card should be submitted to OCFS. The blue FBI card is no longer needed. OCFS will scan in the DCJS card and electronically transmit it to DCJS; DCJS will then electronically forward the same images to the FBI. OCFS expects the turnaround time for results will now be approximately one week from both of these agencies.

**CONNECTIONS application implications, please note:**

- *Until further notice DO NOT generate the Notice Regarding Fingerprinting Requirements from CONNECTIONS (FAD) on or after January 11, 2007, as it is not up-to-date. Use only the Notice Regarding Fingerprinting Requirements found in this ADM in Attachment 1a. You will be advised when the CONNECTIONS system has been updated.*
- *Until further notice DO NOT generate the Denial / Revocation Letter / Notice of Results of Fingerprinting / Criminal Record Found from CONNECTIONS (FAD) on or after January 11, 2007, as it is not up-to-date. Use only the Denial / Revocation Letter found in this ADM in Attachment 6. You will be advised when the CONNECTIONS system has been updated.*

A copy of this ADM can be accessed via the following URL:  
<http://ocfs.state.nynet/policies/external/OCFS2007>.

***OCFS Data Warehouse ~ New Reports...  
Pre-defined Reports with Information on Safety Assessments, Risk  
Assessments and Staff Contacts for CPS Staff..***

The Data Warehouse Team is pleased to announce the release of several pre-defined reports with information on Safety Assessments, Risk Assessments, and Staff Contacts for CPS cases. The reports are refreshed monthly and should be run for completed months only. Please note that ad hoc reporting is not available with this data.

A list and description of the pre-defined reports:

- *Safety Assessment Trend*: Provides a monthly tally of the number and percent of Safety Assessments that were approved on time and those that were approved late.
- *Safety Assessments Overdue*: Provides a detailed list of Safety Assessments that were approved more than seven days after the Intake Start Date for a particular month and year.
- *Risk Assessment Profile*: Shows the relationship between Risk Assessment ratings, CPS report determinations, and the decision to open CPS cases for protective and/or preventive services.
- *Manager Reviews* [for ACS]: Allows CPS supervisors and managers to identify the degree of compliance with NYC regulations concerning supervisor and manager reviews.
- *First Contacts*: Allows CPS staff to identify how quickly first contacts are being made during a particular month and year.
- *Total Contacts*: Allows CPS staff to identify how quickly (all) contacts are being made during a particular month and year.

Instructions to access the reports:

1. Login to the PowerPlay/Impromptu environment of the OCFS Data Warehouse.
2. At the welcome screen, double-click on the "Abuse and Neglect" folder.
3. Double-click on the "Pre-Defined User Reports" folder.
4. Double-click on the Impromptu file (.imr) that you want to view to open the report.
5. Click on the OK button at the message: "This report is locked by another user or is read only. A copy will be made."
6. If the Cognos Common Logon dialog box displays, enter your HSEN ID and Data Warehouse Password, and click the Log On button.

For more information on these reports, view the report write-ups (.doc) in the Abuse and Neglect folder or, contact the Data Warehouse Team at [data.warehouse@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:data.warehouse@ocfs.state.ny.us).

### ***Just A Note About the Citrix Client Upgrade...***

On Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup> a "new" Citrix PN Agent Client will be deployed to all CONNECTIONS workstations. This deployment will be transparent to users and you will not see anything different on your PCs when you access the CONNECTIONS application. The reason for this upgrade is to take advantage of some printing and session reliability features that will become available to users once OCFS IT upgrades the Citrix servers, an activity that is currently scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. It should be noted that this upgrade is part of the overall Citrix Upgrade Project that OCFS IT is currently engaged in.

### ***A Security Tip...***

***Please note that this tip is taken from the February Cyber Tips Newsletter drafted by NYS CSCIC (NYS Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination).***

Many computer users, especially those who travel for business, rely on laptops and PDAs because they are small and easily transported. But while these characteristics make them popular and convenient, they are also easily lost or ideal target for thieves. Therefore, it is important to make sure you secure your portable devices to protect both the device and the information contained on the device.

#### ***Steps to take before you leave the office***

- **Password-protect your portable device** - Make sure that you have to enter a strong password to log in to your device. If possible use a “power-on” password. This prevents someone from booting up your laptop with a different Operating System on a CD, floppy disk, or flash drive.
- **Have your laptop configured to boot from the hard drive first** - By forcing your laptop to boot from the hard drive first, it prevents someone from rebooting your laptop from another drive e.g. floppy drive, CD, flash drive.
- **Install and maintain firewall and anti-virus software** – Protect portable devices from unauthorized access and malicious code the same way you protect your computer when at work. Install antivirus and firewall software and keep them updated.
- **Be sure all critical information is backed up** – Portable devices should not be the only place important information is stored.
- **Remove information that is not needed** – Don’t carry around sensitive and personal information on your laptop or other portable device that is not necessary to you or your work.

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

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

- Updated Version of the CONNECTIONS Build 18.9 FAQ’s
- Build 18.9 Health Services Impact Analysis document
- Business Functions Guidelines for Build 18.9
- The CONNECTIONS Weekly

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

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

***\*\* Please note the additional 2 hour window of downtime for Friday, 3/2 beginning at 3:00AM.***

- ***Wednesday, 2/28/07*** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM

- **\*\*Friday 3/2/07** from 3:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **Wednesday, 3/7/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM