

**~ The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY ~**  
*March 30 ~ April 6, 2007*



***Build 18.9 Implementation Date...***  
***Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>***

Don't forget, the implementation of Build 18.9 will be Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. We are pleased to report that the system performance issues that were experienced in testing the Build prior to release have been fixed. The system downtime will be from 6:00 PM, Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> through midnight, a downtime window of six hours.

***Build 18.9 Tools...***

• ***Build 18.9 Release Notes and Highlights Document***

The Build 18.9 Release Notes, a document that identifies the specific enhancements, fixes and modifications in the Build was forwarded to CONNECTIONS Implementation, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators, Directors of Service, Resource Users and other key agency staff. The Build Release Notes, as well as the Highlights document, are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet on both the Home and Implementation pages. Please note that a revised version of the Release Notes was posted to the intranet earlier today. The two revisions are noted in the document and reflect a change in language related to SIRs 2972 (Security/unit hierarchy structure) and 4066 (CID).

• ***CONNECTIONS Build 18.9 Questions & Answers***

This document was created as an on-going log of those 'frequently asked questions', with accompanying answers, about Build 18.9. The document will be updated throughout the implementation of the Build and new questions are identified as such, so you won't have to search the document for the most recent questions!

• ***Other Build 18.9 Tools That You Can Use***

Please note that all of these documents can be found on the CONNECTIONS intranet website. The Tip Sheets and Job Aids are posted to the Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips page and the Impact Analysis documents are posted to the

Implementation page. You can also just type in the name in the 'Search' feature to find them on the site.

***Tip Sheets***

- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet – Designating Health Responsibility
- CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet – Permanency Hearing Report

***Job Aids***

- CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid – Critical Improvements
- CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid – Education
- CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid – Health Services
- CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid – Permanency Hearing Report

***Impact Analysis Documents***

- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Health
- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Security
- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Permanency Hearing Report
- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Family Assessment & Service Plan
- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Education
- Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ FAD - Adoption Subsidy Homes
- **Updated Version** Build 18.9 Impact Analysis ~ Interface Between CONNECTIONS & WMS

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

• ***CONNECTIONS Second Quarter Training Classes***

Just a note, that the CONNECTIONS training classes for the second quarter of this year are currently available for registration through STARS.

• ***Final Versions of the Build 18.9 Job Aids and the Companion Revision Documents***

As you may have noted, the *final* versions of the Build 18.9 Job Aids have been posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet. We initially posted the four job aids (CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid Permanency Hearing Reports, CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid Critical Improvements, CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid Education and CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9 Job Aid Health Services) in draft so that users would be able to get a flavor for the new Build functionality, as well as to allow them to be used in concert with Guest testing and the Preview application. Please note that the final versions of the job aids are different than the draft versions, as we have made revisions to the draft versions based on user feedback. The companion Revisions documents describe the changes that have been made from the draft versions of the Job Aids.

***Build 18.9 Implementation Support...***

As you are aware in the implementation of previous Builds, CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation staff have played a key support role both pre and post Build implementation. This support will remain constant throughout the implementation of Build 18.9. We have already begun to work in concert with

both district and agency staff, and will continue to do so throughout the weeks' post-implementation. It will be through this collaborative effort that we will maintain communication, answer questions, and provide support to key implementation staff in both districts and agencies, including Resource Users, in the weeks' following implementation. The focus of the CONNECTIONS regional staff's involvement during this time will be to work with district and agency staff to improve the agency's capacity to support staff in their use of the CONNECTIONS Case Management System, as it relates to their specific job function. Our goal is to provide you with the resources, within your own agency, to support this and future Build implementations.

It is our plan to contact all districts and agencies within the first two weeks of implementation either through an on-site visit, or through telephone contact. CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation staff will work with both local district and voluntary agency Implementation Coordinators, Resource Users, and supervisory staff to answer questions; provide project/Build updates; assess performance; provide recommendations for effective use of the new functionality, and observe individual staff if they have been identified as experiencing problems. CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation staff will work in collaboration with Regional Office Program staff to address any program issues encountered during their implementation support work.

The following new initiatives have been developed to support your agency's staff in the ongoing use of CONNECTIONS.

▪ **Resource User Support**

Resource Users and/or supervisors, in both districts and agencies, with extensive CONNECTIONS application knowledge, have been integral to the successful implementation of previous CONNECTIONS Builds. As a support to these important groups, a trainer from the SUNY Training Strategies Group will be assigned to facilitate the Resource Users Groups statewide. As part of this support, regionally-based Resource User meetings will be continued after the release of Build 18.9. Some of their first agenda items will be to cover questions related to the new functionality.

▪ **CONNECTIONS Ticket Triage Unit Support**

This unit currently functions as a centralized support to the Enterprise Helpdesk, responding to user application need at the individual level. It is our plan to staff this unit so that the team members are able to respond to questions directly posed from key designated district and agency staff (e.g. Resource Users, Implementation Coordinators, and Supervisors), through the use of an e-mail mailbox, rather than the current practice of having the user phone their issue into the Enterprise Helpdesk.

Again, we want to stress the importance of your ability to mobilize key staff, within your agency, to assume the role of application support personnel. We currently have the capacity to support your efforts in this regard through the involvement of the SUNY training facilitator and we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity.

## ***Removal of the CCRS Plan Cues from the CCRS Caseload Report...***

As you are aware, effective February 5<sup>th</sup> districts were no longer required (or able) to enter assessment service plan information in CCRS. CONNECTIONS was deemed as the system of record for information previously entered via the CCRS assessment service plan grid. Information previously required to update the assessment service plan grid in CCRS will be fed to CCRS from the FASP (post approval) entered in CONNECTIONS. This will occur nightly via a batch process. (For a more detailed explanation please refer to the Connections Weekly Updates for January 19 and 26, 2007; see: [http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/.](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/))

The CCRS **plan** cues that appear on the Monthly CCRS District/Agency Caseload report will be suppressed effective the March 31<sup>st</sup> run of the CCRS caseload report. District/Agencies will still need to update movement, legal and adoption activities in CCRS and the monthly CCRS District/Agency caseload report will continue to provide cues for **legal**, **adoption** and **movement** activities.

## ***OCFS Data Warehouse News***

### ***• OCFS Data Warehouse News & Notes***

Just a note to let you know that the March version of the *OCFS Data Warehouse News & Notes* is available and posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site on the Data Warehouse page.

### ***• OCFS Data Warehouse Reports***

The Data Warehouse Team is pleased to announce that the following predefined reports have been expanded to include FASPs coming due within 90 days:

- FASPs Due Detail organized by Worker
- FASPs Due Detail organized by Stage ID

In addition, those with a Report Studio license can use the WDFASP Admin package to create reports that include FASPs coming due more than 60 days in the future. (Previous ad hoc reporting was limited to the next 60 days.) Please contact the Data Warehouse Team at [data.warehouse@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:data.warehouse@ocfs.state.ny.us) with any questions.

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

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

- CONNECTIONS Build 18.9 Release Notes – revised version
- The CONNECTIONS Weekly

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

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

***\*\*Please note the additional window of downtime on March 30<sup>th</sup> for the implementation of Build 18.9.***

- **Friday, 3/30/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **\*\*Friday, 3/30/07** from 6:00 PM – midnight (Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>)
- **Wednesday, 4/4/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **Friday, 4/7/07** from 5:00AM – 7:00PM