



# ..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

*for the week of October 17 - 24, 2008*

*Developing a more caseworker centric system*

**CONNECTIONS Intranet site:** <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>

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## *"Info to Know" for Caseworkers*



### *Post-Implementation Information on the Q3-08 Quarterly Improvement Plan (CONNECTIONS Build 18.10)*

On Friday, October 10, 2008, OCFS implemented the third Quarterly Improvement Plan of this year, Q3-08. Q3-08 included important enhancements to the CONNECTIONS application that support programmatic changes, as well as several system improvements. Two major programmatic changes that were included in Q3-08 are:

- ❖ a redesigned Safety Assessment tool, which is the result of extensive work with a statewide team of users who partnered with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services; and
- ❖ improved wording of risk factors in the Risk Assessment Profile to clarify the circumstances that contribute to risk of future abuse/maltreatment.

Q3-08 also includes system support for districts participating in the Family Assessment Response initiative. The other enhancements included in Q3-08 are recommendations from the Child Welfare Information System Transformation Business Team. These recommended enhancements are based on a collaborative effort on the part of OCFS, and local district and voluntary agency casework and supervisory staff. For a comprehensive list of all of the system modifications included in this quarterly improvement plan please refer to the *Q3-08 Improvement Plan Release Notes*. This document provides an in-depth description of the improvements, modifications, enhancements (SIRS), and impacts that are included in this Quarterly Improvement Plan. The Release Notes are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site and are accessible via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Build%2018.10%20Q3-08%20Release%20Notes%20final.pdf>

### **Q3-08 Tools**

The following are a list of tools to aid in implementing the Q3-08 system improvements.

- An update to online HELP (within the CONNECTIONS application - also available within the Preview environment)
- The *Q3-08 Highlights*  
[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/build%2018.10%20Q3\\_08\\_Highlights\\_FINAL\\_9\\_15\\_08%20-v3.pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/build%2018.10%20Q3_08_Highlights_FINAL_9_15_08%20-v3.pdf)
- The *Q3-08 Improvement Plan Release Notes*  
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Build%2018.10%20Q3-08%20Release%20Notes%20final.pdf>
- The Q3-08 Impact Analysis document entitled: *CONNECTIONS Q3-08 (Build 18.10) Impact Analysis - Safety Assessment, Risk Assessment Profile, FAD and Other System Changes*  
[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Build%2018.10%20Q3-08%20%20Impact%20Analysis--Final-9-19-08%20\(3\).pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Build%2018.10%20Q3-08%20%20Impact%20Analysis--Final-9-19-08%20(3).pdf)
- A job aid entitled: *Q3-08 (Build 18.10) Job Aid*

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/build18/Build%2018-10%20Job%20Aid%20v5%200.pdf>

- A CBT refresher on Risk and Safety Assessments (*in development*)
- An updated Safety/Risk Field Guide (*in development*)
- An Informational Letter about the Family Assessment Response (FAR) Initiative (for non-participating districts) (*in development*)
- A Family Assessment Response Job Aid (for participating districts) entitled: *CONNECTIONS Family Assessment Response Job Aid for Participating Districts*  
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Family%20Assess%20Resp%20%20Job%20Aid%2010%208%2008.pdf>
- Teleconference entitled: *Changes to Safety and Risk Assessments to Reduce Repeat Maltreatment*  
Viewing is available at both [www.TrainingSpace.org](http://www.TrainingSpace.org) (contact your Staff Development Coordinator to register for Training Space) and the CONNECTIONS Intranet: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/training/>.



## ***UPDATED Business Function Guidelines for Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies***

Please note that the Business Functions Guidelines for both local districts and voluntary agencies were recently updated to include new Business Functions introduced in the previous quarterly improvements and have been posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet.

Business Function Guidelines for Local Districts:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/security/BFP%20Guidelines%20District%208-08.pdf>

Business Function Guidelines for Voluntary Agencies:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/security/BFP%20Guidelines%20Vol%20Agency%208-08.pdf>



## ***A NEW ADM and Job Aid on Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILP)***

***Updated - The SILP Administrative Directive (ADM)***

The SILP ADM, and all necessary attachments for agency SILP operation, have been posted to the OCFS Intranet site and can be accessed by clicking on the link below:

[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS\\_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-07%20Standards%20and%20Procedures%20for%20Approval%20of%20Supervised%20Independent%20Living%20Programs.pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-07%20Standards%20and%20Procedures%20for%20Approval%20of%20Supervised%20Independent%20Living%20Programs.pdf)

The attachments include:

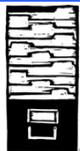
- CONNECTIONS step by step Agency guide
- Form 4884. Fire/safety checklist guidelines an agency can use
- Sample approval letter to Agencies from OCFS for SILP operation
- Form 2656. Specific to SILP's for Agency fiscal information
- Form 2657. Requires the Agency to notify OCFS within 10 business days of a SILP opening, closing, transfer or recertification
- Form 4883. Agency checklist to assist Agencies in completing all OCFS requirement.

The purpose of the Administrative Directive (ADM) is to inform social services districts, voluntary authorized agencies and Indian tribes (with a State/Tribal agreement) of the newly enacted standards and procedures for the approval of an authorized agency by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to operate a supervised independent living program (SILP programs) for foster children. The directive addresses both the transition of existing supervised independent living units certified by OCFS to supervised independent living units certified by approved SILP programs operated by authorized agencies, and the establishment of new SILP programs and units.

### ***The Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) Job Aid***

The SILP Job Aid is a quick guide to recording a new supervised independent living program, and maintaining existing ones, in CONNECTIONS. The *Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) Job Aid* is posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet site and can be accessed via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/S%20I%20LP%20Job%20Aid%20%209%2008-2.pdf>



### ***OCFS Data Warehouse NEWS - An UPDATED Predefined User Reports List***

An UPDATED copy of the OCFS Data Warehouse Predefined User Reports List has been posted to the CONNECTIONS Intranet site on the Data Warehouse page. The document can also be accessed by clicking on the link below.

[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/OCFS%20DW%20-%20Predefined%20Reports%20\(9-24-08\).pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/OCFS%20DW%20-%20Predefined%20Reports%20(9-24-08).pdf)



### ***Regulations Regarding Criminal History Record Review of Applicants to be Certified or Approved Foster or Adoptive Parents***

Please note: This piece was in last week's edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

For your information: Regulations regarding criminal history record reviews of applicants to be certified or approved foster or adoptive parents, or currently certified or approved foster or

adoptive parents were filed on an emergency basis on September 30, 2008 and will appear in the October 15, 2008 State Register. The regulations were effective as of October 1, 2008.

The regulations implement Chapter 623 of the Laws of 2008. The regulations reflect amendments to federal and state statutory standards relating to situations where such person has been convicted of a mandatory disqualifying crime. The regulations eliminate the category of presumptive disqualifying crime.

For more information about the regulations, click on the link below.

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/legal/Regulatory/er/>

Also consult 08-OCFS-ADM-06

[http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/policies/external/OCFS\\_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-06%20Criminal%20History%20Record%20Checks%20and%20Mandatory%20Disqualifying%20Crimes%20\(Foster%20and%20Adoptive%20Parents\).pdf](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/policies/external/OCFS_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-06%20Criminal%20History%20Record%20Checks%20and%20Mandatory%20Disqualifying%20Crimes%20(Foster%20and%20Adoptive%20Parents).pdf)



### **A *NEW* ADM 08-OCFS-ADM-06**

**Criminal History Record Checks and Mandatory Disqualifying Crimes  
(Foster and Adoptive Parents)**

**Please note:** This piece was in last week's edition of the *CONNECTIONS NEWS*.

The purpose of this ADM is to notify social services districts, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, voluntary authorized agencies and in-state and out-of-state adoption agencies of the provisions of Chapter 623 of the Laws of 2008 that amended section 378-a (2) of the Social Services Law (SSL) regarding criminal history record checks for foster and adoptive parents. Effective October 1, 2008, certain felony crimes committed by applicants to be foster or adoptive parents will **mandatorily disqualify** them from becoming foster or adoptive parents. Furthermore, if already certified or approved foster or adoptive parents are convicted of these crimes after October 1, 2008, they must have their certification or approval **revoked**. Homes fully certified or approved prior to 10/1/08 with a presumptive disqualifier can remain open providing there is no conviction for a mandatory disqualifier after 10/1/08. The category of presumptive disqualifying crimes is eliminated as of 10/1/08 by Chapter 623 of the Laws of 2008.

[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS\\_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-06%20Criminal%20History%20Record%20Checks%20and%20Mandatory%20Disqualifying%20Crimes%20\(Foster%20and%20Adoptive%20Parents\).pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/OCFS_2008/ADMs/08-OCFS-ADM-06%20Criminal%20History%20Record%20Checks%20and%20Mandatory%20Disqualifying%20Crimes%20(Foster%20and%20Adoptive%20Parents).pdf)

This ADM is to be used in conjunction with 07-OCFS-ADM-01 [State and National Criminal History Record Checks (for Foster/Adoptive Parents)] issued on February 7, 2007, in order to have complete up-to-date guidance on the subject of criminal history record checks for foster and adoptive parents. 07-OCFS-ADM-01 remains in effect except for the provisions regarding presumptive disqualifying crimes.

Please note that attached to the ADM are:

- Attachment 1a - NOTICE REGARDING FINGERPRINTING REQUIREMENTS (English and Spanish); and
- Attachment 2a - DENIAL / REVOCATION LETTER / NOTICE OF RESULTS OF FINGERPRINTING / CRIMINAL RECORD FOUND (English and Spanish).

Once Q3-08 is implemented, these documents will be available directly from CONNECTIONS/FAD.



### ***UPDATED - AFCARS Info - Data on AFCARS and Casework Contacts for Children in Care***

Timeframes for reporting AFCARS data to the federal government are coming due! We advise that you continue to update the AFCARS information on children in foster care. **Note that the end date for inclusion of the information for purposes of federal reporting will be extended until October 22, 2008.**

Please also note that the data for the Children Missing Clinical Diagnosis has been refreshed. The report 'as of' date has been changed to 10/08/08. For further information please refer to last week's edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

Help on navigation for entering AFCARS can be found in the AFCARS job aid entitled: *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.*

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/JA%20AFCARS%20Job%20Aid%20v1%200%203%2008.pdf>

The following reports are also available to identify which children do not currently have diagnosis information recorded in the Clinical Appointment tab that meets the qualifications of AFCARS information.

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/dwreports.asp>

For more information related to these activities please contact your CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Specialist.

### ***General "Info to Know"***



***General Information System (GIS) Message - (08-#013)  
Services Systems Case Processing Forms Available On-line  
(Dated 10/16/08)***

**Please note that the following information is for local districts only.**

The following GIS message was sent to local district Directors of Service and WMS Coordinators with suggested distribution to local district Caseworkers, Data Entry Operators and Casework Supervisors.

This is a reminder that the following Services Systems case processing forms (CCRS and WMS) are available from the OCFS intranet web site at the following address:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/admin/forms/Services%20Systems/>

- [LDSS-3188 Services Document Transmittal](#)
- [LDSS-3313 Services Activity Log](#)
- [LDSS-3316 CCRS Supplemental Information](#)
- [OCFS-LDSS-3468 CCRS Adoption Input](#)

Please print and duplicate these forms locally to meet your re-supply needs. ***OCFS no longer maintains an inventory of these forms for Local District re-supply.***

Please contact OCFS IT Operations at 1-800-342-3727 with any questions. GIS messages are available in Public Folders following the path below:

*All Public Folders/dfa.state.ny.us/OCFS/TSU/ \*\*\*Services systems Reference Documents/ GIS (system change notices)*



***General Information System (GIS) Message - (08-#012)***  
***CCRS Transfers and Respite Services***  
***Dated 10/10/08***

**Please note that the following information is for local districts only.**

The following GIS message was sent to local district Directors of Service with suggested distribution to local district Caseworkers, Data Entry Operators and Casework Supervisors.

The purpose of this message is to advise local districts that children in foster care, for whom Respite Services are paid (Purchase of Service 8A - Planned Respite Services for Foster Families or 8B - Crisis Respite Services for Foster Families), should not be reported to CCRS as "transferred" (M981 - Intra-Agency Transfer or M982 - Inter-Agency Transfer).

M981 and M982 transfers are used to report changes in the child's extended placement circumstances and are not applicable to the short term stays represented by Respite Services payments. Their use in this context inappropriately inflates statistical data regarding foster care placement. Transfers are to reflect a change in Foster Care payment (Purchase of Service code 61-Regular Service and Maintenance) from one

provider to another.

In a typical respite scenario, Foster Care payment would be authorized to a certified or approved FC provider. Districts **may choose** to afford “respite” to the FC provider by authorizing temporary/short term placement with and payment to a Respite provider, via authorization in WMS of POS 8A or 8B, **with no interruption in payment to the FC provider**. This circumstance does not represent a transfer.

Alternatively, when simultaneous payment to both the FC and Respite provider is **not desired**, entry of an **Absence** (M950) to CCRS will effectively cease payment to a FC provider without modifying the POS 61 line in WMS. A Respite provider may be paid during this period through authorization of POS 8A or 8B for the appropriate dates of service. **Do not enter an Absence if simultaneous payment to both providers is intended.**

Policy related questions regarding this message should be directed to Michelle Rafael (518 474-4352). For system related questions, call OCFS-IT Customer Support (800-342-3727).

GIS messages are available in Public Folders at the following path:

[All Public Folders/dfa.state.ny.us/OCFS/TSU/ \\*\\*\\*Services systems Reference Documents/ GIS \(system change notices\)](#)



### *A Reminder About the Foster Care and Adoption Individual Categorical Codes in MA Cases*

Please note that this piece is for local districts only and that a General Information System (GIS) message had been written on this subject - GIS 08-#002 dated February 15, 2008.

On 2/15/08 GIS 08-#002 was issued advising local districts of the creation of new WMS Medicaid Individual Category Codes (ICC) for foster and adopted children. These codes, in addition to already existing category codes, should be used by local districts when opening a Medicaid case for foster children - case type 13 or 20 - or when opening a Medicaid adoption subsidy case. The chart below includes both new and existing individual category codes. The use of these codes will help to identify children in foster care that are in receipt of Medicaid.

<b><u>Foster Care</u></b>	
Non-IV-E Foster Care	77 (new code)
IV-E Foster Care	78 (new code)
SSI Blind Foster Care	79 (new code)
SSI Disabled Foster Care	80 (new code)
NYS Non-IV-E Foster Care Residing Outside of NYS	81 (new code)
Non-NYS IV-E Foster Care Residing in NYS	32 (code already exists)

<u>Adoption</u>	
Non-IV-E Adoption	33 (code already exists)
IV-E Adoption	74 (new code)
NYS Non-IV-E Adoption Residing Outside of NYS	76 (new code)
Non-NYS IV-E Adoption Residing in NYS	34 (code already exists)
Non-NYS Non-IV-E Adoption Residing in NYS	75 (new code)



## ***NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet***

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

- The CONNECTIONS NEWS <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>
- Teleconference Video: *Changes to Safety and Risk Assessments to Reduce Repeat Maltreatment*

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/training/>

- Business Function Guidelines for Local Districts

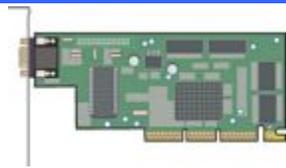
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/security/BFP%20Guidelines%20District%208-08.pdf>

- Business Function Guidelines for Voluntary Agencies

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/security/BFP%20Guidelines%20Vol%20Agency%208-08.pdf>

- UPDATED - OCFS Data Warehouse Predefined Reports List

[http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/OCFS%20DW%20-%20Predefined%20Reports%20\(9-24-08\).pdf](http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/OCFS%20DW%20-%20Predefined%20Reports%20(9-24-08).pdf)



## ***Weekly System Maintenance***

Due to regularly scheduled system maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on...

- [Wednesday, 10/22/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- [Friday, 10/24/08](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM



Office of  
Children & Family  
Services

Gladys Carrión, Esq.  
Commissioner