



..CONNECTIONS NEWS..

for the week of April 16 - 23, 2010

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

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"Info to Know" for Caseworkers



Need a Training ID? Contact..

Training IDs give you access to the training database - which mirrors the CONNECTIONS database yet, is an environment where you can "test" both new and existing functionality. If you run into an issue where you find that you need a training ID you can contact Kelly Farmer. Kelly's email address is: kfarmer@pdp.albany.edu and she would be happy to assist you.



UPDATED INFO - Information Security Message

**** Please note that the bolded text is a change from message that was in the CONNECTIONS NEWS dated April 9, 2010.**

Everyone acknowledges that rapid changes in technologies are making casework in the field easier. Confidentiality of information must remain a first priority regardless of the technology used.

NO OCFS confidential information should be kept on Flash or Thumb drives. In an emergency, if it becomes absolutely necessary for confidential data to be kept on flash drives or any other mobile device, the device MUST be encrypted. There also must be a documented justification for putting the confidential data on a flash or thumb drive, and it must be removed once the need has passed.

It is each employee's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of the information they are responsible for and to adhere to OCFS policy regarding safeguarding that information.

Your assistance is appreciated. Any questions or concerns can be directed to the OCFS acceptable use mailbox at: ocfs.sm.committee.acceptable-use.



AFCARS Update

Please note that this piece was in the last edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

Timeframes for reporting AFCARS data to the federal government are coming due! Districts and voluntary agencies have until **April 28th** to complete entry of October 2009 - March 2010 AFCARS information.

- AFCARS information includes CONNECTIONS and CCRS data:
CONNECTIONS Placement Information Tab,
CONNECTIONS Removal Information Tab and
CONNECTIONS Diagnosis on the Clinical Appointment window
and, CCRS Placement and Discharge data. Timely data entry of CCRS Placement and Discharge activities is essential for AFCARS compliance, as well as continuity between CCRS and CONNECTIONS data.

For CCR cases:

The AFCARS Adoption Information window is accessed from the Adoption Finalization window.

The CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet for Recording AFCARS Data can be found on the CONNECTIONS intranet on the Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tip Sheets page, or via the

following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/Tip%20sheets/Recording%20AFCARS%20Data%20v4.pdf>



The Open Caseload Inquiry (OCI) Report - SharePoint Reporting Services

We are pleased to announce that the rollout of The Open Caseload Inquiry (OCI) Report - SharePoint Reporting Services has been successfully completed across the state for both local districts and voluntary agencies. For further details about the OCI report please refer to the info below.

A Bit of Information About the OCI...

The Open Caseload Inquiry, or OCI as it is known, is a caseworker specific report that gives prompts to let you know when work is coming due or is overdue. This report is available to both district and voluntary agency caseworkers with a role in a stage. The OCI report helps a caseworker manage their workload in order to meet regulatory and policy requirements. It should be noted that the OCI report is available to caseworkers now, but with a smaller cue set and through a different method of access.

A Bit of Information About SharePoint Reporting Services...

This quarterly release is the *first* to use new architecture to add enhanced reporting capabilities and new technology for distribution and control. SharePoint is a product offered by Microsoft to provide a mechanism to standardize the development of Websites, portals, and reports. SharePoint will allow new reports to be developed and deployed to the user community much faster than the current technology allows.

"Highlights"

More details about this exciting initiative can be found in the "Highlights" document titled: *A CONNECTIONS Quarterly Improvement - Q4-09 - SharePoint Reporting Services - The Open Caseload Inquiry (OCI) Report "Highlights"* which is attached below. The "Highlights" document is also posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet.

Job Aid

Further detail about how to access the OCI report, descriptions of the various windows that the report involves more in-depth summaries of the various cues - both static and new, and information about the Report Summary section and the report cues by stage, can be found in the job aid titled: *CONNECTIONS Job Aid SharePoint Open Caseload Inquiry (OCI) Worker Report*. The job aid is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet and can be accessed via the following link:

<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/OCI%20Job%20Aid%20%2017%2010.pdf>

General "Info to Know"

INF *Informational Letter - Casework Contacts: Best Practice Guidelines*

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has just issued the following new Informational Letter (INF), which you can access on the OCFS intranet website with the link below:

10-OCFS-INF-02 Casework Contacts: Best Practice Guidelines

The purpose of this INF is to provide social services districts and voluntary authorized agencies with a set of best practice guidelines for making and documenting required casework contacts between caseworkers and foster children.

You can access this and other OCFS policies on its intranet website with this link:
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/policies/external/>



UPDATED INFO... "Technical" or Logistical Issues With LDAP Accounts Got You Down - HELP!!!! Is On The Way...

**** Please note that the information below is a revised version of the piece that was in the CONNECTIONS NEWS dated March 26, 2010.**

We have partnered with the OCFS/ IT LAN Management team and they have set up two mailboxes for you to use for any issues related to LDAP accounts. If you are in a New York City based agency (including ACS), or an agency that primarily serves New York City clients, send any issues (e.g., account lock outs, password resets, etc.) to the **ocfs.dl.ldap.nyc** mailbox. If you are in any district or voluntary agency outside of New York City (or not serving primarily NYC clients), email the following mailbox: **ocfs.dl.ldap.upstate**. In either case, the folks that monitor these mailboxes will readily provide any assistance that you may need related to LDAP accounts. If you have a problem after normal working hours, you can always call the Enterprise Help Line at: 1-800-697-1323.

So there you have it - anything that you need to ask about LDAP accounts can be answered by sending your questions to either one of these two mailboxes!! Please pass

this info along in your agency!!! And "thank you" to our LAN Management Team for their assistance with this venture!!!!



Office 2007 Upgrade Info

Please note that this piece was in the last edition of the CONNECTIONS NEWS.

Over the upcoming summer, the OCFS Division of Information Technology (IT) will be upgrading all OCFS workstations (PC's and laptops) from Microsoft Office 2003, to Microsoft Office 2007. This will include Microsoft Word, Excel, and Access.

All groups within OCFS IT have been working together to ensure a smooth upgrade. We have compiled an inventory of all OCFS IT Applications, Access Databases, and Excel Spreadsheets that are managed or supported by IT and will be affected by the upgrade. We have completed extensive testing of all known items that may interact with the newer version of Microsoft Office.

Because Office 2007 has many new looks and features, IT has coordinated with the Bureau of Training to have training classes begin around the times of deployment. There will also be time after the deployment for further trainings. Please look for these notices. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the upgrade to Microsoft Office 2007, please send an email to: ocfs.sm.it.office2007

Upgrade Schedule:

The time frames for the upgrade are as follows:

Pilot A - 40 N. Pearl St., Albany – the evening of June 1, 2010.

Pilot B - 52 Washington St., Rensselaer – the evening of June 12, 2010.

And then...all users within **Region 4, which is located between Delaware, Otsego, Green, Columbia, Rensselaer, Washington, Essex, Clinton, Franklin, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery counties**, will receive the upgrade on June 23, 2010. The upgrade should occur automatically, after normal business hours.

All laptops should be brought into the office and left on overnight during your time schedules. If this can not be done, the laptop should pick up the new install the next time the device is connected to the network. If this is done at a later date, the install may take quite a while and will tie up the device, so please be prepared. If any device has not received the upgrade within a few weeks of your scheduled dates, please send an email to the mailbox listed below, with a contact number and the serial number of the device, and IT will contact you.

Further communications will be sent as we get closer to rolling out to other regions.

Questions?...

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the upgrade to Microsoft Office 2007, please <mailto:ocfs.sm.it.office2007>.



NEW Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet

- ...CONNECTIONS NEWS... <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>



Weekly System Maintenance

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

- [Wednesday, 4/21/10](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM
- [Friday, 4/23/10](#) from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM



Office of
Children & Family
Services
Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner