

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



To: CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators, Security Coordinators, Keyusers, Directors of Services, CONNECTIONS Project Team
Date: December 31, 2004
Re: Activities for the week of 12/31/04-1/7/05

1. Teleconference ~ CONNECTIONS Case and Financial Management Confidentiality

There will be a teleconference on January 18, 2005, provided by the NYSOCFS, NYS OCFS/Bureau of Training and SUNY Training Strategies Group, on the topic of CONNECTIONS Case and Financial Management Confidentiality. The goal of the teleconference is to help both local district and voluntary agency staff gain a better understanding of the current standards of confidentiality, as they will apply to electronic financial and case management when Build 18 is implemented. The teleconference will provide helpful information regarding access to, and sharing of, information, external communication vs. electronic case records, progress notes, the caseworker's role in CPS investigations, and how computer security systems support confidentiality.

Further information regarding the specifics of the teleconference will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

2. Children In Care by Location, Agency and District ~ Excel Spreadsheet

This notification is to inform you that an Excel spreadsheet that highlights information related to children in care as of 9/30/04, as identified by *District with Custody, Agency Where Placed, Agency Where Placed Name, Agency Location, Facility Type, Facility Location and Child Count*, is available to both local districts and voluntary agencies. In order to ascertain a copy of this document staff from either the district or agency should contact their CONNECTIONS Regional Field Representative.

3. **OCFS Informational Letter (INF) on Phased Implementation for the New Case Management System in CONNECTIONS Build 18**

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to advise administrators and program staff of the respective period or “wave” of implementation to which each Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) or agency is assigned, as well as provide information necessary for the successful implementation of CONNECTIONS Build 18 and the new case practice that is supported in the Case Management system. The INF will also provide guidance regarding completion of the Uniform Case Record during the transition period that occurs from the initial wave of implementation until full statewide implementation. The INF is located on the OCFS Intranet. The address of the OCFS Intranet is: <http://sdssnet5/ocfs/>, under the heading General Resources (on the left-hand side of the page) click on Policies - External then locate the INF and click on it. For your convenience a direct link to the document is posted below.

[04-OCFS-INF-10 Phased Implementation for the New Case Management System in CONNECTIONS Build 18](#)

4. **CONNECTIONS Case Management (Build 18) Training Schedule Information**

- ***Revised Training Schedule for CONNECTIONS Case Management Wave 4***

Please note that the training schedule for CONNECTIONS Case Management Wave 4 has been revised. The revised schedule was forwarded, earlier today, to local district and voluntary agency Implementation, Security and Back-up Security and Staff Development Coordinators, as well as, local district Director’s of Services and voluntary agency Executive Directors. A copy of the document is attached below. The revised schedule is also posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet website on both the Training Info & Schedule and Implementation pages.



- ***Memo and Training Schedule for CONNECTIONS Case Management Waves 5 and 6***

The Memo and Training schedule for CONNECTIONS Case Management Waves 5 and 6 was forwarded, earlier this week to local district and voluntary agency Implementation, Security and Back-up Security and Staff Development Coordinators, as well as, local district Director’s of Services and voluntary agency Executive Directors. Copies of the aforementioned documents are attached below. These documents are also is also posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet website on both the Training Info & Schedule and Implementation pages.

Memo / Wave 5 Training Schedule / Wave 6 Training Schedule



5. CONNECTIONS Case Management Build 18 Training Course Descriptions

The attached document contains descriptions of the various training courses, offered through the SUNY Training Strategies Group, related to CONNECTIONS Case Management Build 18 training. This document is also posted on the CONNECTIONS intranet website on the Training Info & Schedule page.

6. Network Issues

As you may be aware, several sites experienced network related issues on Monday, December 27, 2004. There were multiple causes identified dependent on each users site. It should be noted that the causes of this problem have since been resolved. Sites/agencies who experience *new* problems with access to the network and/or the CONNECTIONS Application should continue to call the NYS OFT Enterprise Help Desk (1-800-697-1323).

Many users also have experienced slowness in response or system freezing, both within the CONNECTIONS Application, as well as within other desktop applications such as, Outlook, WORD and Excel. This slowness in response, or freezes, are referred to as "latency" problems and are most often associated with network problems. OCFS Management is currently in dialogue with OFT, Citrix and Microsoft representatives to diagnose the root cause of these instances. Currently, no estimated time of resolution is available. However, in order to assist in diagnosing this issue, we ask that you contact the NYS OFT Enterprise Help Desk immediately with all additional instances of slowness and/or latency, both within, as well as outside, the CONNECTIONS Application. Please note that it is very important that you identify that you are experiencing slowness or latency with the CONNECTIONS Application, or with any other desktop application.

Your continued cooperation in reporting all instances of slowness or latency is essential to our permanent resolution of this issue.

7. Build 18 Fail-Over Test

In conjunction with OFT, OCFS Technical Support has scheduled the Server Clustering/Fail-over tests listed below. The testing will require downtime of the CONNECTIONS Production and Training environments, as well as the OCFS Production Data Warehouse environment. These

tests are in support of Build 18 server configuration changes of the CONNECTIONS Production and Training application/database servers, which will go into effect during Build 18 deployment scheduled the weekend of February 5, 2005. The purpose of these tests is to ensure that in the event of a hardware failure, the CONNECTIONS Production and Training applications will still be able to function utilizing the designated backup database/application server.

Fail-over test dates:

- **Sunday, 1/9/05 from 1:00 AM – 7:00 AM**
- **Friday, 1/14/05 from 4:00 AM – 7:00 AM** (extends the standing maintenance window by 1 hour)
- **Friday, 1/21/05 from 4:00AM – 7:00 AM** (extends the standing maintenance window by 1 hour)

8. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 12/31/04 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

Wednesday, 1/5/05 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

Friday, 1/7/05 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

9. Microsoft Exchange Mail Servers

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance on MS Exchange E-mail 5.0 servers, all Exchange E-mail 5.0 servers will be unavailable on:

Sunday, 12/31/04 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM