

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



Memo

To: Implementation Coordinators

From: CONNECTIONS Communications

CC: LAN Administrators, Keyusers, OCFS -Directors of Services,
CONNECTIONS Project Team

Date: August 1, 2002

Re: DRAFT Weekly System Update--08/02/2002 Week's Activities

1. Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey

On Wednesday 7/24/02 we sent the CONNECTIONS Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey/Memo to Commissioners, Directors of Services, Local District & Voluntary Agency CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators, LAN Administrators and a limited number of Voluntary Agency Executive Directors (where email addresses and Executive Directors names are known). Also attached to that correspondence was the CONNECTIONS Charter which describes the CONNECTIONS functionality that is planned for the next few years. If you have not read the Charter, please take some time to do so before completing/submitting the Survey.

As we informed you in the memo, the Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey is an on-line survey. The completion of this survey is extremely important and will be used by the CONNECTIONS Project to assist in planning for the future. **Districts and Voluntary Agencies should designate one person to complete and submit one Survey per district or agency.** The completed survey should represent the entire district or agency. ****For New York City ACS****, Management Information Systems is coordinating this effort. The completion/submission of this Survey must be coordinated through MIS. Any questions should be directed to Dan Sedlis, Chris Flynn or Henry Wells.

Please Note: The Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey Memo is a Word 2000 document. If the person designated to complete this survey is unable to open the document or is unable to access the link within the memo,

please contact us immediately so that we can make arrangements to provide you with technical assistance or provide this information in another format.

CONNECTIONS CIAB sites will not be able to access the survey by clicking on the link that is contained in the memo. After completing the regular dial-in procedures, please launch Internet Explorer (found in Program Manager) and copy the following link:

<http://172.28.23.128/onlinesurvey/survey.asp>

Paste the link into the URL address area on the Web Browser and press the Enter key. This will open the survey and allow the person designated to complete the survey to complete and submit it.

Also please make note of the following clarification: In the Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey Memo we made reference to specific dates whereby Districts/Agencies can update and complete survey. To clarify, Districts and Agencies will have until **8/21/02** to submit a completed survey. Between 7/24/02 and 8/21/02 Districts and Voluntary Agencies will be able to retrieve and update a previously submitted survey. After 8/21/02, Districts/Agencies will no longer be able to update a completed survey. If additional changes become necessary after 8/21/02, you will need to contact the CONNECTIONS Communication Team.

2. **Voluntary Agency NIS Projects**

Network Integration Services (NIS) is an ongoing project coordinated with the NYS Office for Technology's Network Architecture Bureau intended to assist Local Districts, Voluntary Agencies and State Agencies with the integration of State and Local Networks. The **main** objective of the Voluntary Agency NIS initiative is to allow Voluntary Agency staff to access the CONNECTIONS application from Voluntary Agency PCs.

In order to achieve this, a number of changes will need to take place within the existing infrastructures. Although there will be standards set up for integration of networks, each agency's network will be analyzed and a solution will be developed that best meets the agency's and the State's needs.

Beginning Tuesday, 8/6/02 Customer Support Services (DFA-IT) will have a Voluntary Agency NIS Guide available that contains NIS submission procedures, implementation information and an online survey that is submitted electronically to Customer Support Services. All Voluntary Agencies that currently have active association with State will have access to the NIS information on the DFA-IT (Customer Support Services) Website. If you wish to access the NIS information, please visit the CSS Website <http://sdssnet5/hsasc/lisc/>

3. CONNECTIONS Build 15.1

On Friday, July 26th, 2002, CONNECTIONS Build 15.1 Highlights and Training Support Information was sent to CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators, Directors of Services and Staff Development Coordinators. CONNECTIONS Build 15.1 is scheduled for release on the weekend of September 6, 2002.

The above referenced documents provide an overview of Build 15.1 and a description of training and implementation supports available for district and agency staff. Lab based training is being offered in two areas: Vacancy Control and Local Data Maintenance. Training is being offered from August 19 – September 6, 2002. To register for training please pay attention to the following information:

- Upstate Districts, please register for the Build 15.1 training using the Announcement/Schedule that was included last week with the above referenced CONNECTIONS Build 15.1 Highlights and Training Supports Information. The Registration and Schedule Information is posted on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website and in the Public Folders (provide path).
- For NYC, ACS staff should contact Sandra Neville (212) 341-2665 to register for training.
- For Vacancy Control Training DFCS staff should contact Sydney McSweeney at 212-676-6942. OPA staff should contact Jose Banez at 646-935-1736.

In addition to the Lab based training, three Job Aids will be distributed in hard copy during the weeks of 8/5 and 8/12. We encourage you to make use of these supports to prepare for changes in the Application. Additional materials regarding Build 15.1 (Preview Application, Release Notes and Schedule) will be sent over the next few weeks.

If you have any questions about the Build 15.1 items referenced in the above referenced documents, please feel free to contact the CONNECTIONS Communication Team by phone or e-mail.

4. CONNECTIONS Training

In preparation for the Build 15.1 enhanced training database, the CONNECTIONS Training Database will be unavailable effective Monday, 8/12/02. Neither Lab-based training nor Training Database Access (using the CONNECTIONS Training database from district/agency workstations) will be available. Beginning Monday morning, 8/19/02, the Build 15.1 enhanced training database will be enabled for Build 15.1 lab based training activities. Access will also be available from individual workstations for those with the appropriate training ID's and password.

5. **Post Build 15 Survey**

This notice is a reminder that the Build 15 Communication, Training and Implementation Training Survey that was sent to CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators and Directors of Services on July 22 are due by **Monday, August 5th**.

Your feedback is important to us. The information that you provide will be used to shape the strategy that the CONNECTIONS Project will use to implement future CONNECTIONS Builds. If you have not yet responded to the survey, we would encourage you to do so.

Please forward the completed survey, through Exchange Mail, to **Gerry Magnes** (Gerry.Magnes@dfa.state.ny.us) by **Monday, August 5th, 2002**.

6. **CONNECTIONS Desktop PC Replacement Project**

Several weeks ago we announced that CONNECTIONS received approval from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services to replace the remaining 25% of the CONNECTIONS baseline desktop personal computers. Communication materials are currently being developed to assist Local Districts and Voluntary Agencies with the next phase of the CONNECTIONS Desktop PC Replacement Project. We anticipate sending out those materials the week of 8/12/02. Rollout of the new personal computers is expected to begin in early September 2002.

Please Note: The above referenced desktop pc replacement project does not include supplemental equipment, CIABs, laptops, printers or servers.

7. **FAD Issues on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website**

****Reminder**** As referenced in prior CONNECTIONS Weekly Updates, the Communication Team has set up an area on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website to address any FAD functionality that may have been impacted with the implementation of Build 15. Most of the identified FAD problems were corrected in the Build 15.02 patch. If you have not visited the Intranet Website, we would encourage FAD workers to do so <http://sdssnet5/ocfs/connect/>. The CONNECTIONS Communication Team continues to provide current information regarding FAD issues on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website.

8. **CONNECTIONS System Down Time**

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 08/02/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Friday, 08/09/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am
Friday, 08/16/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

9. Microsoft Exchange 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, 08/04/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am
Sunday, 08/11/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am
Sunday, 08/18/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am