

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



Memo

To: Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators, Keyusers, OCFS -Directors of Services,
CONNECTIONS Project Team
Date: August 16, 2002
Re: Weekly System Update--08/16/2002 Week's Activities

1. Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey

On Wednesday 7/24/02, the CONNECTIONS Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey and related reference materials were forwarded to all local districts and voluntary agencies. Since that time, some districts/agencies have reported difficulties accessing the survey. To address these difficulties have provided a new URL address that can be used to access the survey. The address is:

<http://172.28.22.37/onlinesurvey/survey.asp>

Also, we are currently working to support access to the survey through using the CONNECTIONS Intranet Site. Additional information will be sent regarding this access as soon as possible.

- In New York City ACS, Management Information Systems is coordinating the completion/submission of the survey. Any questions should be directed to Dan Sedlis, Chris Flynn or Henry Wells.
- CIAB sites will need to dial in and launch the Internet Explorer (found in Program Manager) in order to access the survey. After launching the Internet Explorer, the URL address <http://172.28.22.37/onlinesurvey/survey.asp> can then be entered (or copied and pasted) in the URL address area on the Web browser.

Again, we want to stress the importance of this survey. 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. Survey results will be used by the CONNECTIONS Project to assist in planning for the future.

A completed survey is due by 8/21/02. Until 8/21/02 you will be able to retrieve and update a previously submitted survey. If additional changes

become necessary after 8/21/02, or if you need assistance completing the survey please contact the CONNECTIONS Communications Team.

2. CONNECTIONS Desktop PC Replacement Project

As referenced over the last few weeks, we announced that we would be sending communication regarding Phase II of the CONNECTIONS Desktop PC Replacement Project. On Thursday 8/15/02, communication materials regarding Phase II of the Desktop PC Replacement Project were sent to Commissioners, CONNECTIONS Local District and Voluntary Agency Implementation Coordinators, Directors of Services, and a limited number of Voluntary Agency Executive Directors (where email addresses and Executive Directors names were known). Rollout of the new personal computers is expected to begin in the Albany Region (Region 4) October 1, 2002. The materials referenced above included the following:

- Letter from Zack Zambri, CONNECTIONS Project Director, dated 8/15/02
- Regional desktop pc reconciliation spreadsheets
- Instructions for completing spreadsheets
- New PC Specs

Please keep in mind that the reconciliation spreadsheets are time sensitive and require targeted response dates. In addition, please notify Dave Kislowksi at OCFS regarding any discrepancies regarding pc information contained on the reconciliation spreadsheets. His telephone number is 518-473-4770.

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

3. CONNECTIONS Build 15.1

A). Preview Application

CONNECTIONS Build 15.1 Preview Application will be available in all local districts and voluntary agencies beginning Monday, August 19, 2002. The Preview Application provides local district and voluntary agency staff an opportunity to review the Build 15.1 version of CONNECTIONS in advance of the Build, and the ability to practice using the Application in the context of your own case data. The Preview Application can be accessed locally to supplement Build 15.1 lab based training.

The Preview Application will remain available until the Build 15.1 "live" date, scheduled for the weekend of September 6, 2002. We encourage local districts and voluntary agencies to use the "Preview Application". Please take some time to review the August 13 Preview Memo that provides important information regarding "how to access" the Preview

Application. If you have any problems accessing the "Preview Application", please contact the New York State OFT Enterprise Help Desk at 1-800-NYS-1323.

B). Training

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.

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 were 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. 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 access to the CONNECTIONS application from Voluntary Agency PCs.

For information regarding NIS, please visit the DFA-IT Customer Support Command Center Website at <http://sdssnet5/hsasc/lisc/>. To view NIS

procedures and Online NIS Form and Survey, click on the NIS Form and Information Box. All completed NIS requests/surveys must be submitted electronically to COMCTRUP.

5. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

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

Friday, 08/23/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

6. 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, 08/18/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am

Sunday, 08/25/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am