

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE

Memo

To: CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators/Security Coordinators, Keyusers, OCFS -Directors of Services, CONNECTIONS Project Team
Date: September 04, 2003
Re: Activities for the week of September 5, 2003 – September 12, 2003

1. Recent Power Outages and Virus Remediation Efforts/Impact to CONNECTIONS Application

As reported in last week's CONNECTIONS Weekly Update, on Wednesday 8/27 and Thursday 8/28, Voluntary Agency Executive Directors and LDSS Commissioners were sent a communication regarding the recent Blaster and Welchia Worm attacks which have severely impacted the operation of the State Human Services Network (HSEN). This communication included a letter from Larry Brown, Deputy Commissioner, OCFS Division of Development and Prevention Services, and also included updates from the New York State Office for Technology (OFT).

As you know, the recent connectivity difficulties to our HSEN Network that were caused by the power outage of 8/14 and the Blaster and Welchia Worm Virus have had a negative effect on all or most of our systems and programs. Due to the aforementioned issues (extended downtimes of our network, and the virus remediation efforts), many districts/agencies have been unable to follow statutory guidelines and timeframes for documenting in the computer systems when required activities occurred. Once districts are confirmed/certified as reconnected to the network and resumption of normal operations have occurred, the State would remind districts/agencies that with respect to CPS records and Foster and Adoptive Home Certification records in CONNECTIONS, the system is designed to allow posting the actual safety assessment and investigation conclusion event dates, as well as foster and adoptive home certification dates, even if those activities occurred at a point in time when the system was unavailable. If there have been instances where an agency/district foster home certification has lapsed and the home was closed, FAD workers should follow procedures for re-opening homes as specified in CONNECTIONS FAD Step-by-Step Guide, Module 17.

If there are any questions around the aforementioned advisory, please contact your Regional Office CONNECTIONS Implementation Staff.

2. **NIS Sharepoint**

OCFS IT/CONNECTIONS and OFT are pleased to announce that an NIS sharepoint has been identified that all NIS agencies may start using beginning **Friday, September 5th, 2003**. IT staff at NIS agencies or sites that have a need to update software (CONNECTIONS or Network related) are instructed to contact OCFS IT Operations for instructions on how to access the NIS sharepoint. Cathy Vallee, who works for the OCFS IT Operations Unit has been designated as the contact person for this initiative. Please feel free to contact Cathy via email, Cathy.Vallee@dfa.state.ny.us on or shortly before September 5th.

For those who are not familiar with Network Integration Services (NIS), 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. Questions related to NIS should be forwarded to OFT Customer Relations. For information regarding NIS, please visit the OFT Customer Relations Command Center at <http://sdssnet5/crcc/>. 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.

3. **OCI Management Reports Postponement (CPS Only)**

Due to the recent blackout (power outage) and virus remediation efforts, a decision has been made to postpone the OCI Management Reports that were scheduled to run on Friday night, 9/5/03. This postponed will impact the following reports:

- ❑ Open Case Inquiry Investigations Monthly Management Report
- ❑ Open Case Inquiry Investigations Monthly Management Summary Report
- ❑ Open Case Inquiry Investigations Statewide Total Report

This decision to postpone the reports will allow districts additional time to document completion of safety assessments and investigation conclusions which otherwise would appear as being overdue on the OCI reports. The aforementioned OCI Reports will be re-scheduled for next Friday, 9/12/03

4. **CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project (CIAB Sites Only)**

The plans for the CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project will become finalized within the next few weeks. An announcement and materials will be forthcoming.

5. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 9/05/2003 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Tuesday, 9/09/2003 from 5:45 am - 6:30 am

Friday, 9/012/2003 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, 9/07/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am

Sunday, 9/14/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am