

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



Memo

To: Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators, Keyusers, OCFS -Directors of Services,
CONNECTIONS Project Team
Date: October 3, 2002
Re: Activities for the week of 10/04/02 – 10/11/2002

1. **Upcoming Changes on CONNECTIONS Workstations**

A). New screen resolution in Citrix – We are pleased to announce that in the next few weeks, the CONNECTIONS Project will be implementing a screen resolution change to 95% on workstations when users are in a Citrix Session. A common complaint that has been heard by our CONNECTIONS Implementation Staff from districts/agencies over the last year is that once users were in a Citrix session, users were finding it difficult to access other desktop programs, i.e. Exchange/Outlook Email. This ease of use improvement will help users navigate between the Citrix session and other desktop functions. When users log into a CONNECTIONS Citrix Session, they will see two START buttons; one will be the Citrix session and below that will be the user's PC toolbar. Additional materials regarding the resolution change will be provided over the next few weeks.

B). Upgrade to Citrix XP – Users can expect to see major improvements and enhancements to the Citrix ICA client in the very near future. We are upgrading our current version of Citrix (Metaframe 1.8) to ICA Client version 6.30.1050. The major benefit of this upgrade will be that the effect of “disconnects” or “outages” will be minimized. As you know, with our current Citrix client, when a connection to a server is broken, users receive a message that informs them that a Citrix Server is unavailable and requires the user to log-on to a new Citrix session. When this

happens, work in progress is temporarily lost and often requires a call to the Help Desk for retrieval. With implementation of the new Citrix client, when a connection to a server is broken, users will have a new feature called "Auto Client Reconnect". "Auto Client Reconnect" means that when the Citrix client detects that its connection to a server is broken, it will begin a "re-connect" sequence. The Citrix client will then attempt to re-connect three times and then stops if re-connection fails. Additionally, when connectivity is broken, the Citrix session will be in a disconnected state and your Citrix session will stay "alive" on the Citrix server for 15 minutes. The benefit of being in a "disconnected" state is that if the Network becomes available within that 15 minutes interval, when you are logged back into Citrix, you will be reconnected to your session in the exact place you left off prior to the timeout or network interruption.

The time-frame and schedule for implementation of the Citrix Upgrade is being finalized. Training materials and procedures for staff will be available to districts and agencies in the next few weeks.

2. CONNECTIONS Build 15.1.01

CONNECTIONS Build 15.1.01 has been scheduled for Friday evening, October 25th between the hours of 6pm and 11pm. Build 15.1.01 Release Notes and specifics regarding the schedule for CONNECTIONS Build 15.1.01 will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. Staff will not be able to access the CONNECTIONS Application during this time. CONNECTIONS Downtime Procedures will be implemented for the transmission of CPS Reports between the SCR, Local Districts and ECS during this timeframe. Network Exchange Email will be available during this time period.

3. CONNECTIONS-IN-A-BOX (CIAB) Reconciliation Project

On Wednesday, 10/02/02, communication materials regarding the return of CIAB devices that were initially distributed as part of the baseline allocation in 1996 were sent to targeted CONNECTIONS Local District and Voluntary Agency Implementation Coordinators. The materials referenced above included the following:

- Letter from Zack Zambri, CONNECTIONS Project Director, dated 10/02/02
- CIAB reconciliation spreadsheet
- Instructions for completing spreadsheet

Please keep in mind that the reconciliation spreadsheets are time sensitive and require targeted response dates. In addition, please notify Bill Bombardier at OCFS regarding any discrepancies regarding CIAB information contained on the reconciliation spreadsheets. His telephone number is 518-473-5845 and email address is Bill.Bombardier@dfa.state.ny.us.

For reference information, the CONNECTIONS CIAB Reconciliation materials are posted in Public Folders. The path to these materials is as follows: Statewide>CONNECTIONS>Alerts and Notices

4. Case Management Staffing and Equipment Survey Update
*****Reminder*** The submission date for the return of the surveys has been extended to the end of October.**

As highlighted over the last several weeks, the information we receive from case management staff and equipment surveys will be used to shape the Project's over-all plans for the future. Therefore, it remains important for districts and voluntary agencies to submit completed case management surveys as soon as possible.

As previously mentioned, we have received completed case management surveys from almost all local districts. Many voluntary agencies, however, have not yet responded to the survey. We would like to thank those districts and agencies that submitted completed surveys. For any districts and voluntary agencies that have not yet submitted completed surveys, we again would encourage you to do so as soon as possible. The link to the survey is as follows:

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

If you need assistance completing the survey please contact your Regional Office CONNECTIONS Implementation Staff member. OCFS CONNECTIONS Regional Office Implementation staff are listed below.

ARO – Joann Bisogno, 518-486-7216

BRO - Mary Arnone, 716-847-3028

NYCRO - Mike Prendergast, 212-383-1768, Earl Thomas, 212-383-1854, Sharone Jones, 212-383-1872

RRO - Cynthia Brookins, 716-238-8562

SRO - Cliff Pelton, 315-423-5596

YRO - Andrea Straker 914-377-2081

- In New York City ACS, Management Information Systems is coordinating the completion/submission of the survey. Any questions should be directed to Dan Sedlis 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 can then be entered (or copied and pasted) in the URL address area on the Web browser.

5. Desktop PC Replacement Project (the remaining 25%)

Please note that the original dates for the rollout have shifted and rollout of the new personal computers is expected to begin in the Albany Region (Region 4) in November 2002. At the present time, our primary focus for PC replacement will be on the Albany, Syracuse and Rochester Regions (Region 4, 5, and 6). Please keep in mind that districts/agencies that are scheduled for December through January 2003 do not need to submit reconciliation spreadsheets at the present time. For reconciliation spreadsheet due dates for the rest of the state please refer to the Implementation Schedule below.

Implementation Plan

- Region 4 (Albany) - Region 4 targeted to commence in November 2002. Reconciliation spreadsheet must have been returned by September 13, 2002.
- Region 3 (Syracuse) - Region 3 targeted to commence November 2002. Reconciliation spreadsheet must have been returned by September 25, 2002.
- Region 2 (Rochester) - Region 2 targeted to commence November 2002. Reconciliation spreadsheet must be returned by October 17, 2002.
- Region 1 (Buffalo) – Region 1 targeted to commence December 2002. Reconciliation spreadsheet must be returned by November 8, 2002.
- Region 5 (Yonkers) – Region 5 targeted to commence December 2002. Reconciliation spreadsheet must be returned by December 2, 2002.
- Region 6 (NYC) – Region 6 targeted to commence January 2003. Reconciliation spreadsheet must be returned by December 23, 2002.

All completed reconciliation spreadsheets must be in Excel format. When completing district/agency spreadsheets, please **do not** send the entire regional spreadsheet to Dave Kislowski. Please copy and paste your district/agency information into a new Excel spreadsheet and then send that information to Dave Kislowski. **Reconciliation spreadsheets in any other format will not be accepted.**

Instructions for copying/pasting your district/agency information in a new Excel spreadsheet are as follows:

- Highlight all sections that relate to your district/agency.
- Select “Copy” from the Edit Menu Item.

- Click the “Start” button and select “Programs” and then select Microsoft Excel.
- After the new Excel spreadsheet opens, place your cursor into the first open field on the spreadsheet.
- Select “Paste” from the Edit Menu Item.
- Complete a “File, Save As” to your local C Drive.
- Save it to Data, Word.
- Name the file and Save as Type “Microsoft Excel Workbook”.
- Click the Save button.
- Click the “File” menu item and select “Send To” Mail Recipient as Attachment.
- Send to Dave Kislowski at the following address:
Mailto: Dave.Kislowski@dfa.state.ny.us

For reference information, the CONNECTIONS 25% Desktop PC Replacement communication materials that were sent on Thursday August 15th, 2002 are posted in Public Folders. The path to these materials is as follows:

Statewide>CONNECTIONS>Desktop PC Replacement>25%

Please keep in mind that the reconciliation spreadsheets are time sensitive and require targeted response dates. In addition, please notify Dave Kislowski at OCFS about 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.

6. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 10/04/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Friday, 10/11/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

7. 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, 10/06/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am

Sunday, 10/13/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am