

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: October 31, 2003

Re: Activities for the week of October 31, 2003~November 7, 2003

1. **CONNECTIONS Communication Team News**

The CONNECTIONS Communication Team is bidding adieu to one member and welcoming another. We would like to wish Patrick Jones success in his new position with NYS OCFS IT in technical operations, and welcome Nancy O'Hara. Nancy has worked with the CONNECTIONS project for three years in the Implementation Unit and will be a wonderful addition to Communications.

2. **CONNECTIONS Build 16 Training Date Clarification**

This notice is just to remind you that the CONNECTIONS Build 16 Training and Implementation Support Memo and the Build 16 training schedule and registration forms were sent to the field last week. As a clarification, the identified Build 16 training start date is Wednesday, November 12th.

For reference purposes the documents mentioned above are also posted on the CONNECTIONS website on the Home page and Training Info and Schedule page.

It should also be noted that a *revised* version of the CONNECTIONS Build 16 training schedule has been posted on the website as well. The schedule is posted on both the Home page and the Training Info and Schedule page.

3. **CONNECTIONS Case Management Issue Brief**

Local districts and contracted child welfare agencies will soon begin the task of planning for the new CONNECTIONS Case and Financial Management system that will be implemented with CONNECTIONS Build's 16, 18, and 19. In this endeavor, both local districts and contracted child welfare agencies will reach a number of decision points. In order to understand these decision points, the CONNECTIONS Implementation Management Team is introducing a tool entitled the CONNECTIONS Case Management Issue Brief. The Issue Brief is intended to both assist administrators in their understanding of the choices they have and help them to make decisions that will work best for their staff and the families that they serve.

The CONNECTIONS Case Management Issue Brief is a standardized series of documents. Each Issue Brief will present a different decision point (issue), provide background information and lay out the costs and benefits of alternative courses of action. Each Issue Brief will contain a recommendation however; districts and agencies have the discretion to select another decision.

The first Issue Brief to be released concerns the conversion of WMS cases to CONNECTIONS cases and will be of most interest to local district staff. This Issue Brief will address whether a district should require the inclusion of the WMS Services Case number in the CPS Investigation Conclusion. It will be forwarded to LDSS Directors of Service and Implementation Coordinators, and will also be posted to the CONNECTIONS web site soon. Future Briefs will be distributed to districts and contracted child welfare agencies as appropriate, and all the Issue Briefs will be posted to the website.

The CONNECTIONS Implementation Team appreciates the efforts child welfare administrators and their staff will be making to implement forthcoming practice and system changes. We hope that the Issue Brief series, and other tools, will facilitate the successful completion of your work.

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

The 2003 CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project is moving forward. The rollout of the new CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Windows 2000 workstations is as follows:

- Region II (the Rochester Region) - rollout of new CIABs completed
- Region I (the Buffalo Region) - rollout of new CIABs completed
- Region III (the Syracuse Region) - rollout began the week of October 27, 2003

- Region IV (the Albany Region) - scheduled to begin the week of November 17, 2003
- Region V (the Yonkers Region) – November 2003
- Region VI (the NYC Region) - December 2003

Targeted communication regarding the 2003 CIAB Replacement Project was sent to agency systems coordinators and contact persons for the Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse and Albany Regions. Targeted communication will be sent in advance of remaining region's implementation. If any CIAB sites in the Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse or Albany Regions have not received communication materials regarding the CIAB Replacement Project, please contact Patrick Jones by phone (518) 473-4770 or email at Patrick.Jones@dfa.state.ny.us immediately, so that arrangements can be made to provide you with the necessary information.

For Yonkers and NYC Regions, communication materials are expected to be sent in the very near future, however, in the interim we would like to bring to your attention to a critical task that we recommend that IT Staff or Security Coordinators complete in order to assist OCFS/CONNECTIONS and the Office for Technology (OFT) in the CIAB workstation replacement process. Prior to your regions implementation, the OFT Coordination Center will be calling district/agency site contacts approximately two weeks prior to your district/agency implementation date to schedule a date for our vendor (IBM) to install and replace your new equipment. In addition to scheduling the date for installation, staff from the OFT Coordination Center will also be asking for a list of NT Log-on ID's of any staff who will be using the new Windows 2000 CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box workstations at your site. As an early preparatory task, we encourage security coordinators, or other identified site contacts, to take the time to collect all appropriate NT ID's of staff. This will facilitate the installation and log-on process to the new Windows 2000 CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) workstations into the HSEN domain. Please check the NT ID's of all staff who will be using the new CIAB devices and make sure the NT accounts are still active.

In our experience thus far, with CIAB installation in the Rochester Region, we found that when IBM installed the new CIAB devices and attempted to assist users with logging on to the new workstations, there were several instances wherein the NT Log-on ID was no longer valid or the account was deleted due to inactivity. We recommend that Security Coordinators begin the process of collecting the NT Log-on ID's of staff and verifying that the accounts are still active. If the accounts are no longer active, the Security Coordinator at each site should immediately create new accounts for staff using WEBSTAR. If there is not a designated Security Administrator at your site who has rights to administer new accounts, please contact your OCFS CONNECTIONS Regional Office

Representative so that they may provide you with the necessary instructions and procedures for designating a Security Administrator.

5. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 10/31/2003 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Wednesday, 11/05/2003 from 5:45 am - 6:30 am

Friday, 11/07/2003 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

6. 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, 11/02/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am

Sunday, 11/09/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am