

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: December 12, 2002

Re: Activities for the week of 12/13/02 – 12/20/02

1. Internet Explorer Upgrade/128-bit Encryption

CONNECTIONS Windows 2000 Workstations will receive an upgrade to Internet Explorer to version 5.5 and SP2 128-bit encryption. These changes improve security on Internet Explorer. This upgrade has been scheduled for distribution this upcoming weekend beginning Friday, December 13th. This distribution will be completed via a WinInstall package distribution. The schedule for this distribution is as follows:

- Distribution for CONNECTIONS Windows 2000 Workstation begins Friday evening, December 13th at 6pm.
- IE Upgrade and 128 Encryption will be in production beginning Monday, December 16th at 8am.

*****Important***** Please make sure to alert staff to leave their workstations **“powered on”** so the workstations can receive the WinInstall package distribution. Users should log off the system with the “ctrl+alt+delete” message visible on the monitor. **Do not “power off” or shut down your workstation.**

Please Note: This distribution only applies to the CONNECTIONS Windows 2000 75% Replacement Computers that were distributed over the last year. The *state image* for the new CONNECTIONS Windows

2000 25% replacement computers **includes** the upgraded Internet Explorer and 128-bit encryption.

2. **Desktop PC Replacement Project (the remaining 25%)**

***All districts/agencies in **Region 5 (Yonkers) and Region 6 (NYC)** should send in their site reconciliation spreadsheets immediately. These must be submitted electronically to David Kislowksi at David.Kislowksi@dfa.state.ny.us. All completed reconciliation spreadsheets must be in Excel format. When completing district/agency spreadsheets, please do not send the entire regional spreadsheet. Please copy and paste your district/agency information into a new Excel spreadsheet. Reconciliation spreadsheets in any other format will not be accepted.

PC Roll-Out Schedule

- ❑ Region 4 (Albany) November 15 - November 22, 2002 (**Completed**)
- ❑ Region 3 (Syracuse) December 2 - December 6, 2002 (**Completed**)
- ❑ Region 2 (Rochester) December 9 - December 13, 2002 (**In Process**)
- ❑ Region 1 (Buffalo) December 16 – December 20, 2002
- ❑ Region 5 (Yonkers) – PC Rollout is scheduled for early January, 2003
- ❑ Region 6 (NYC) – PC Rollout is scheduled for mid January, 2003

****Important Note**:** As referenced above, we expect the PC Rollout to be completed in Regions 1-4 by December 20, 2002. Any districts or voluntary agencies in Regions 1-4 that have not submitted their Site Desktop PC Replacement Spreadsheets will not be scheduled for the CONNECTIONS 25% Desktop PC Replacement and Installation in the 1st round of dates listed above. Sites that don't send in the completed spreadsheets will be pushed to the end of the schedule after December 20th.

****Reminder to Regions 1-4 LAN Admins**** To prepare for the delivery of the new PC's, we would like to remind LAN Administrators that there are several tasks and best practice guidelines that local district and voluntary agency LAN Administrators and Information Technology Staff should follow to facilitate the desktop PC replacement process. These tasks and best practices are outlined in the Desktop PC Replacement Preparation Materials located on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website on the Implementation Page and in the Public Folders: All Public Folders>Statewide>CONNECTIONS>Desktop PC Replacement Project.

In addition to the "Best Practices" and "Desktop PC Replacement" materials, there are several companion reference documents, which provide either, helpful information and recommended time frames for preparing to migrate to your new CONNECTIONS workstation, or specific procedures for copying data from your current CONNECTIONS

workstations to your new CONNECTIONS workstations. These procedures have been developed to assist a variety of staff with different skill sets, however, depending on local practice, they may be used primarily by LAN Administrators or IT Staff.

If you need to take action on any of these preparatory activities, we urge you to do so as soon as possible. Old computers will be removed and the files purged on the day of installation.

The Command Center will contact Districts/Agencies involved in the desktop PC rollout approximately two weeks prior to your scheduled implementation date. At that time, the Command Center will send a follow-up letter to site contacts. This letter will contain instructions and stickers that will need to be placed on the computers that have been targeted for replacement. The stickers should be placed on the upper left hand corner of the monitor connected to the device being replaced.

Please Note: The above referenced Desktop PC Replacement Project does not include supplemental equipment, CIABs, laptops, printers or servers.

3. New CONNECTIONS Training Course

Attached to the cover email, you will find the training announcement and registration form for a new **CONNECTIONS Security** course. This course is intended specifically for new security coordinators, however, given the vast changes to CONNECTIONS Security over the last several months, we feel that many experienced security coordinators and backup security coordinators will benefit from this course. For details regarding this course, please refer to the attached announcement (PDF). If you have questions about this training opportunity, please contact SUNY Training Strategies Group, toll-free at 1-877-451-4835. The training announcement and registration form are now posted on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website on the Security Page. **Please Note:** Voluntary Agencies and Upstate Local Districts can register for this course by choosing one of the following three methods:

- Call SUNY TSG at 1-877-451-4835, or
- After printing and completing the registration form, fax to 518-472-5127, or
- Mail the completed form to: SUNY Training Strategies Group, CONNECTIONS Training Project, State University Plaza, Albany, NY 12246-0001

The registration form (attached) and also found on the Intranet Website cannot be completed or submitted “online”.

4. Case and Financial Management Phase II Workgroup

For any individuals who may have missed the December 6th workgroup recruitment notice that was sent to CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators, and Directors of Services, the CONNECTIONS Project is establishing a new Case and Financial Management Phase II Workgroup to participate in upcoming Project activities.

The purpose of the Case and Financial Management Phase II Workgroup will be to provide input into the requirements, design, testing, training, and change management strategies for CONNECTIONS Phase II development and implementation of a services case.

Attached to the cover email is a description of the Case and Financial Management Phase II Workgroup, including purpose, focus, structure, anticipated frequency of meetings and expertise of participants involved.

For any staff who are interested in participating in this workgroup, please complete the attached response form (page 2 of the attachment) and e-mail it to Dennis Lassi, as directed on the form, or fax to (518) 473-2348. NYC/ACS staff interested in participating in this workgroup should initially contact Henry Wells.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the CONNECTIONS Communications Team or Dennis Lassi at 518-474-1382.

5. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 12/13/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Friday, 12/20/2002 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Please note additional System maintenance has been scheduled for **Saturday, 12/14/2002 from 7:00 pm – 12:00 am**. The CONNECTIONS Application will not be available during this time. All CONNECTIONS users must be logged off the CONNECTIONS Application by **6:45 pm**. Downtime Procedures will be implemented for transmission of CPS Reports between the SCR, ECS and Local Districts during this timeframe. Network Exchange Email will be available during this time period.

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, 12/15/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am
Sunday, 12/22/2002 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am