

CONNECTIONS WEEKLY SYSTEM UPDATE



To: CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
From: CONNECTIONS Communications
CC: LAN Administrators/Security Coordinators, Keyusers,
OCFS~Directors of Services, CONNECTIONS Project
Team
Date: December 5, 2003
Re: Activities for the week of 12/5/03 ~ 12/12/03

1. CONNECTIONS Build 16

CONNECTIONS Build 16 is scheduled for release the evening of Friday, December 12, 2003. The CONNECTIONS Application will be brought down on Friday evening, December 12th beginning at 6:00PM. In advance of the Build, we recommend that all CONNECTIONS users be logged off the CONNECTIONS Application by 5:45PM on Friday evening (December 12th). Local staff will **not** be able to access the CONNECTIONS Application between 6:00 PM (December 12th) and 12:30AM (December 13th). During this time frame, CONNECTIONS downtime procedures will be implemented for the transmission of CPS Reports between the SCR, ECS and local districts. Network Exchange/Outlook e-mail will be available during this time period.

We anticipate the CONNECTIONS Build 16 Application will be available approximately 12:30AM, Saturday, December 13, 2003. The CONNECTIONS Build 16 Schedule Memo and Release Notes will be sent on Friday, December 5th. For reference, all Build 16 materials are posted on the CONNECTIONS Intranet website on the Home page under the "What's New" section and on the "Implementation" page under the section Build Information. Build 16 materials are also posted in the Public Folders: Public Folders > All Public Folders > Statewide > CONNECTIONS > Build 16 Implementation Information.

In conjunction with the release of Build 16, the revised Uniform Case Record (UCR) templates will be distributed to users. Further details regarding the distribution plan will be provided within the next week. The OCFS has issued an Administrative Directive Memo (ADM) related to the programmatic impacts of Build 16 and the revised templates.

2. Requirement to Keep PC's Powered On

*****Reminder *****As we all have become increasingly aware, every so often our Network is confronted with new computer virus attacks. To address computer virus attacks, the Office for Technology has implemented filtering techniques and other strategies (distribution of security patches) to assist in the prevention of computer virus infections.

In order for the NYS Office For Technology (OFT) to continue to successfully protect our Network, and minimize further risk of infection, it is essential that all state and local PCs that are connected to the state Human Services Network (also known as HSN and HSEN) **be powered on 24 hours/day, 7 days/week**. This helps to facilitate software delivery of security patches and anti-virus updates as needed. This is critical to the day-to-day business of the entire Human Services Network.

Staff may turn their monitors off, but the processing component of the PC must remain on at all times. Servers should never be turned off without first contacting OFT staff. **Do not "power off" or shut down your workstation.** For CONNECTIONS Windows 2000 workstations, when users "log off" they should do so in the following manner:

- ❑ Select "shut down" from the Start menu;
- ❑ Select either "**log off**" or "**re-start**" (This ends your session leaving the computer running on full power. The "ctrl+alt+delete" message will be visible on the monitor).

3. Build 16 Readiness Checklist for Implementation Coordinators

As a reminder, the CONNECTIONS Build 16 Readiness Checklist ~ CPS Enhancements is available on the CONNECTIONS Intranet website on both the Home page under "What's New" and the Implementation page under "Build 16 Information".

The checklist is a tool, designed to aid local districts in their preparation for the implementation of Build 16. It is recommended that both Implementation Coordinators, as well as Implementation Teams, review their district's readiness in symmetry with the items identified on the checklist and begin to take any necessary actions to prepare for a smooth transition into the Build 16 environment.

4. OFT Workstation Policy – Workstation Lockdown

On Monday, December 1, 2003 the New York State Office for Technology (OFT) implemented a new policy to automatically lock workstations after a period of fifteen (15) minutes of inactivity. **The policy will be applied to all computer workstations that authenticate through the HSEN domain.** This policy is in response to the Information Security Policies document released by the New York State Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination. It is intended to increase security on

the network by helping to prevent unauthorized access to workstations when staff are away from their desks.

In order to help CONNECTIONS users understand what the implementation of this policy will mean and the actions that will have to be taken in response to it, we are providing the information below.

What You Should Know About The New Policy

- As long as you are working on your workstation, pressing keys on the keyboard or moving the mouse, nothing will change.
- If you stop pressing the keys or moving the mouse for a time period longer than 15 minutes, your screen will blank out or, your screen saver will be activated. When you press a key, you will have to re-enter your user name and password to unlock the workstation. This will most likely occur when you are engaged in long telephone conversations, when you leave your desk to go to meetings, or leave your desk to take your lunch break.

You will see a screen that looks something like this:



If it does not already appear, you will have to enter your User ID (i.e. NYS123, AB0200, etc.) in the box next to “User name:”. You will then have to enter your password in the box next to “Password:”. Then click on the “OK” button and your desktop will reopen. Any Applications, documents, spreadsheets, mail notes, etc. that you had open when the workstation locked will still be open when you unlock the workstation. It should be noted that in an environment where there are shared workstations, re-booting will unlock the workstation and allow another user to sign on.

- You may force the workstation to lock if you know you will be away from your desk by pressing the CONTROL-ALT-DELETE keys simultaneously.
The following screen will then appear:



Please note that when you select “Lock Computer”, no one can use your desktop until it has been unlocked with your password.

- You cannot override this policy by changing the settings on the workstation. The OFT policy will override any changes that you may make. Please note that all OFT workstation policies are updated routinely on the workstation.
- You should still logout of the workstation before you go home for the day to insure that your files are properly backed up. While the new policy prevents unauthorized access, it does not close any open files and open files are not backed up. Outlook must be closed for the personal folders to be backed up.

Citrix and the New Policy

The new policy does not change existing Citrix features, such as the Fifteen Minute Disconnected State/Stay Alive Feature, the Auto-Reconnect Feature and the Two-Minute Idle Time Warning. The only notable item in regard to Citrix would be that with the implementation of this new policy, the Two-Minute Idle time warning (which is displayed after 28 minutes of inactivity) will not be visible by the user once the workstation lockdown occurs (a period of 15 minutes of inactivity). Once the user presses a key and re-enters their user name and password to unlock the workstation, any Applications, documents, spreadsheets, mail notes, etc. that were open when the workstation locked, will still be open. If the Two Minute Warning is in process at the time you unlock the workstation the user will still have the opportunity to click OK to prevent the Citrix Session from Timing Out. As is with the current Citrix functionality, if a user’s session is timed out and the user logs back into Citrix within 15 minutes, they will be re-connected to the session in the exact place they left prior to the server disconnect or network interruption.

If you have any questions about this policy or, need further assistance, please contact your CONNECTIONS Regional Field Support Staff.

5. CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project

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) ~ completed
- Region I (the Buffalo Region) ~ completed
- Region III (the Syracuse Region) ~ completed
- Region IV (the Albany Region) ~ completed
- Region V (the Yonkers Region) ~ began 12/1/03
- Region VI (the NYC Region) ~ scheduled for mid-December 2003

Targeted communication regarding the 2003 CIAB Replacement Project has been sent to agency systems coordinators and contact persons for districts/agencies located in the Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, Yonkers and NYC regions. If there remain any CONNECTIONS CIAB sites in New York State that have not received communication materials regarding the 2003 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.

Early Preparation Activities: ***Reminder***, 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 collect all appropriate NT ID's of staff. This will facilitate the installation and log-on process of the new Windows 2000 CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) 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, there have been numerous instances of NT Log-on ID accounts no longer being valid due to inactivity. We recommend that Security Coordinators begin the process of collecting the NT Log-on ID's of staff and verify 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 Field Representative so that they may provide you with the necessary instructions and procedures for designating a Security Administrator.

As a matter of good practice, is it important that all users, especially CIAB users, dial-in to the network and log-on at least one time each week. The new CIABs workstations authenticate through the HSEN domain, therefore, any long-term in-activity in dialing in and logging on to the Network will result in the workstation and NT Log-on ID being rendered inactive in the HSEN domain structure.

6. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 12/5/03 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM

Wednesday, 12/10/03 from 5:45 AM - 6:30 AM

Friday, 12/12/03 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM*

(*Please note the additional downtime scheduled for the Build 16 implementation noted in item #1 of this Weekly.)

7. 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, 12/7/03 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM

Sunday, 12/14/03 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM