

# 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:** February 26, 2004  
**Re:** Activities for the week of 2/27/04 – 3/5/04

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## 1. **CONNECTIONS Proposed Regulations**

As was announced earlier this week on the CONNECTIONS website, the Office of Children and Family Services has now posted a set of proposed regulations amending 18 NYCRR 428, 441 and adding a new section 466. Accompanying explanatory documents have also been posted. The proposed regulations principally address implementing CONNECTIONS, documenting child welfare related actions and activities in CONNECTIONS, internal and external confidentiality standards and record retention requirements. The proposed regulations will appear in the State Register on March 3, 2004. The comment period begins on that date and will end on April 19, 2004.

We recommend that you visit the CONNECTIONS website to view the proposed regulations and accompanying documents. This information may be found on the both the Home page and the Implementation page of the site.

## 2. **Restructured Basic and Advanced Data Warehouse Classes**

Both the Basic and Advanced Data Warehouse training classes have been restructured to meet the needs of the expanding population of users. This announcement and memo was forwarded to Staff Development Coordinators, Implementation Coordinators and Directors of Services on Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. The memo is posted on the CONNECTIONS website on the Home page under the What's New section.

## 3. **Build 17 Training Information and Highlights Document**

The Build 17 training schedule will be forthcoming within the next week. The training will be delivered after the implementation of Build 17, which is scheduled for rollout on Friday evening, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Build training will begin in early April.

The Build 17 Highlights/Overview document will also be available next week.

#### **4. Building Blocks CBT Announcement**

The CONNECTIONS Training team announced earlier this week that the new Building Blocks CBT has been completed. This CBT is designed for new CONNECTIONS users and provides basic navigation and Windows information. For further information on the Building Blocks CBT please visit the CONNECTIONS website on the Home page, the announcement is posted under the What's New section.

#### **5. Records Retention Purge Program**

As local districts may be aware, the Records Retention Program run has experienced technical difficulties within the preceding few weeks. We have attempted to apprise you of the ongoing issues, as they were experienced. The program has run in sporadic increments and some reports were visible to the districts, however, the full program run has not been completed. We expect that the run will be completed by the beginning of next week and we will notify you when the program has run completely. We thank you for your patience as we work diligently to remediate this issue.

#### **6. Build 16 Post Implementation Survey**

As you are aware, a copy of the CONNECTIONS Build 16 Post Implementation Survey was forwarded to local district Implementation Coordinators and Directors of Services. As in previous Builds, this survey was developed to give each district an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the communication, training and implementation strategies that were followed to support Build 16. The information that is provided will be used to shape the strategy that the CONNECTIONS Project will use to implement future Builds. We ask that you complete one survey form for each local district and submit the survey to Gerry Magnes, from the CONNECTIONS Training Team.

#### **7. Risk Assessment Profile and the WEBRAP Icon Information**

Effective with the implementation of Build 16 the weekend of December 12, 2003, the new Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) was integrated into the Child Protective Record Summary. For all CPS investigations with an Intake date after the implementation of Build 16, the new RAP is required to be completed in the CONNECTIONS Application.

For all investigations with an Intake date prior to the implementation of Build 16, the completion of the RAP has been supported in the Web-based Application since March 2003. In response to requests from local department of social services to provide additional time for all Web-based Risk Assessment Profiles to be completed, ***we have extended local district access to the Web-based Application through the WEBRAP icon through Thursday, April 15, 2004.***

***Therefore, as of April 16, 2004, the WEBRAP icon will be removed from the web server and will no longer be visible to local district staff on their computers. All copies of WEBRAP that you wish to retain should be printed and placed in the case folder.***

This provides for the 60-day requirement to complete the investigation determination for any report received by December 15, 2003, plus an additional 60 days, beyond the due date for the determination, for staff to complete a Risk Assessment Profile.

## **8. Update on the CONNECTIONS Case and Financial Management-District/Agency Profile**

We believe that we have resolved the initial issues that districts and agencies experienced accessing the Profile. We would ask that if any district or agency is currently having difficulties accessing the Profile, or are experiencing any difficulties navigating within the Profile, that they contact their CONNECTIONS Regional Field Support staff person. We will continue to address each issue as it is presented and we thank you for your participation in this effort.

As a reminder, any changes made to any page in the District/Agency Profile will not be saved until either the "Submit Updates" or the "Insert New or Submit Updates" button is pressed. The "Submit Updates" button appears at the bottom of each page, except the Contract Relationships and Program Sites pages, where the "Insert New or Submit Updates" button is located at the bottom of the page. Each time any page of the Profile is modified the user must press one of these buttons in order to activate the modifications that were made to the pages.

The information that we will gather, with your help, will be critical as we move forward so we ask that you please update/complete the Profile as soon as possible. The Profile can be found on the CONNECTIONS Intranet on the Implementation page.

## **9. CONNECTIONS Case and Financial Management Implementation Informational Letter (INF)**

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to provide an update of the progress that OCFS has made toward the full implementation of the CONNECTIONS system, as well as provide information on related planning and preparation activities that will take place over the next three years. During this period, CONNECTIONS will be expanded to include case and financial management, and data reporting functions in a manner that promotes the effective integration of the system with casework practice and business functions.

The Informational Letter can be accessed via the address below:  
[http://sdssnet5/ocfs/policies/external/OCFS\\_2004/](http://sdssnet5/ocfs/policies/external/OCFS_2004/).

**10. CONNECTIONS System Down Time**

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

*Friday, 2/27/04 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM*

*Wednesday, 3/3/04 from 5:45 AM - 6:30 AM*

*Friday, 3/5/04 from 5:00 AM - 7:00 AM*

**11. 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, 2/29/04 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM*

*Sunday, 3/7/04 from 1:00 AM - 6:00 AM*