

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: July 31, 2003

Re: Activities for the week of August 1, 2003 – August 8, 2003

1. **CONNECTIONS Build 15.4**

CONNECTIONS Build 15.4 is scheduled for release over the weekend of August 8th, 2003. To implement Build 15.4, the CONNECTIONS Application will be taken down for approximately 5 hours beginning at 6 PM on Friday, August 8th, 2003. We anticipate the CONNECTIONS Application being available on Friday 8/8/03 at 11:59 PM.

The CONNECTIONS Build 15.4 Highlights/Overview document was sent Wednesday, July 16th, 2003 to CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators, Directors of Services, Staff Development Coordinators and others. For reference, the Build 15.4 Highlights/Overview document is posted on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website on the Home page under the “What’s New” section; posting dated July 16th. The document is also posted in Public Folders > All Public Folders > Statewide > CONNECTIONS > Build 15.4.

As referenced in the Build 15.4 Overview document, the only training support developed for Build 15.4, is the System Build 15.4 Job Aid titled “Changes to Vacancy Control, Case List and Case Composition”. Hard copies of this job aid will be sent to Staff Development Coordinators, Implementation Coordinators and Directors of Services beginning August 1st, 2003. If you wish to obtain copies of the job aid prior to the mailing, you can do so by visiting the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website. The CONNECTIONS Build 15.4 Job Aid is currently posted on the website on the Home page, under the “What’s New” section (July 25th posting date), as well as on the Desk/Job Aids page. For those of you who prefer to use the Public Folders, the Build 15.4 Job Aid is currently posted in the Public Folders > All Public Folders > Statewide > CONNECTIONS > Build 15.4.

It should be noted that the Build 15.4 Release Notes and final schedule information are scheduled to be sent early next week.

2. NT Accounts/Expired Passwords

The CONNECTIONS Security Coordinator and Implementation Coordinator for each district and agency play a vital role in the overall communication between the CONNECTIONS Project and local district/agency staff, as well as in the facilitation of worker's and supervisor's use of the CONNECTIONS Application. The Implementation Coordinator serves as a point of contact between CONNECTIONS Project staff and the local district/agency for announcements concerning new Builds, new initiatives, project updates, workgroups and committees, and technical considerations. With regard to Security Coordinators, worker's access to, and ability to enter and update casework information depends on the proper assignment and maintenance of security permissions and functionalities. The assignment and maintenance of those permissions and functionalities is the job of the CONNECTIONS Security Coordinator.

A current check of NT accounts for CONNECTIONS Security Coordinators and Implementation Coordinators indicates that a substantial number of the above referenced staff have disabled accounts or accounts that have not been accessed in a long period of time. Such account inactivity critically hampers our ability to provide targeted and timely communication on a wide range of important CONNECTIONS announcements and activities regarding security and other technical considerations.

We think that it is very critical to remind you of the importance of keeping both the NT Login IDs and passwords updated. If the password is not updated in a timely manner, the NT Logon ID no longer becomes useable and is ultimately disabled. The CONNECTIONS Project relies on district/agency Security and Implementation Coordinators to share and disseminate all CONNECTIONS communication information to staff. These roles are essential to the success of the use of the CONNECTIONS Application within districts/agencies. Your cooperation is appreciated in this effort.

On behalf of Jo Shrader, OCFS CONNECTIONS Information Officer, we have been asked to remind CONNECTIONS Security Coordinators and Implementation Coordinators of the importance of fulfilling their obligation to receive and disseminate the information that we are sending. If either the Implementation or Security Coordinator are no longer employed at the district/agency we ask that you designate another individual to serve in the position.

Within the next few weeks you should expect to receive further information related to this issue.

We thank you, in advance, for your cooperation in this important issue.

3. Recent Postings on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website

Over the last several weeks, several important items have been posted on the CONNECTIONS Intranet Website (Home page under the “What’s New” section). The postings are as follows:

- *July 14th, 2003*: Frequently Asked Questions Regarding QuickPAD IR Devices
- *July 16th, 2003*: Build 15.4 Highlights Document;
- *July 25th, 2003*: CONNECTIONS Build 15.4 System Job Aid
- *July 29th, 2003*: OCFS Data Warehouse Report Library Listing
- *July 30th, 2003*: OCFS Data Warehouse News and Notes – July 03

Please take some time to visit the CONNECTIONS Website so that you can view these latest postings.

4. CONNECTIONS Security Data Fix

As referenced over the last several weeks, the data fix to delete units with no staff and/or only a conversion “Person” in them was run on Monday, July 28th, 2003. This data fix to remove or consolidate units will now make it easier to manage units in CONNECTIONS.

Please call your CONNECTIONS Regional Office Implementation Representative if you have questions about the data fix.

5. District/Agency Moves/Site Closures

We would like to remind districts/agencies of procedures regarding site moves or closures. If there is an upcoming site move or a site closure, districts/agencies must complete the OCFS CONNECTIONS Supplemental Equipment Request Form and send it to the mailbox “COMCTRUP”. This form is located in the Public Folder called *Command Center*. Local district and voluntary agencies should complete the above referenced form and email it to the mailbox, “COMCTRUP”. This form should be completed by the local district Commissioner or, his/her designee or, the voluntary agency Executive Director or, his/her designee. In addition to completing this form, districts/agencies must also notify the NYS OFT (Office for Technology) via email to the mailbox, “OFTSRU”.

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

The plans for the CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project will become finalized within the next few weeks. An announcement and materials will be forthcoming.

As reported in the CONNECTIONS Weekly Update over the last several weeks, as a preparatory replacement project task, CONNECTIONS Project staff began contacting CIAB sites to conduct a CIAB telephone survey beginning the week of June 23rd, 2003. Thus far, staff has completed surveys in Regions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany and Yonkers). The focus of the remaining telephone surveys will be in the NYC Region.

For those districts/agencies that have already completed the CIAB phone survey, the CONNECTIONS Project extends its appreciation. For sites that have yet to be contacted, we again would encourage IT Staff or LAN Administrators to take the time to gather all your site CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box workstation serial numbers and be prepared to discuss and reconcile the equipment during the telephone survey phase of the replacement project. Any additional instructions will be provided during, and following, the survey.

The information gathered in this survey is extremely important and will help to assist the overall project in the CIAB workstation reconciliation process, as well as to provide us with other important information regarding site contacts, and site infrastructure information.

Please Note: The 2003 CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CIAB) Replacement Project only involves the CONNECTIONS-In-A-Box (CONNPC1 Models) that were distributed in 1999 as part of the NYS OCFS Y2K readiness plan. The CONNPC1 CIAB workstations replaced the baseline DW2 model workstations that were rolled out for the implementation of CONNECTIONS in 1996.

7. CONNECTIONS System Down Time

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance CONNECTIONS will be unavailable on:

Friday, 8/1/2003 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am
Tuesday, 8/5/2003 from 5:45 am - 6:30 am
Friday, 8/8/2003 from 5:00 am - 7:00 am

Please make note of the additional downtime (referenced in Item 1) for CONNECTIONS Build 15.4.

8. 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, 8/3/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am

Sunday, 8/10/2003 from 1:00 am - 6:00 am