



# CONNECTIONS Security Tip Sheet

*CONNECTIONS security is a complex topic. There are many options for granting access to the confidential information workers need to perform their assigned duties. While CONNECTIONS Security is designed to be flexible so that each organization can tailor its security strategies to meet its own unique needs, it is important that workers be assigned the minimum access required to complete their job duties and that access be re-voked as soon as it is no longer needed. This tip sheet is intended as an overview of Organizational Hierarchy and Agency Access – two powerful settings for granting access to groups of workers, supervisors, and administrators. For additional security assistance or questions, contact a member of your Regional CONNECTIONS Implementation Team or the OCFS Information Security Office ([Acceptible.Use@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Acceptible.Use@ocfs.ny.gov)).*

Organizational Hierarchy and Agency Access settings are designed to allow groups of workers to view and/or maintain information in cases in which they do not have a direct role. These settings may be used to confer access vertically within the organization and/or horizontally across various groupings of staff.



**Access via Organizational Hierarchy and Agency Access applies only to FSI and FSS stages. It cannot be used to grant access to CPS, FAR or FAD stages.**

**The use of Organizational Hierarchy and/or Agency Access settings is optional; not all districts or agencies will find use of this strategy necessary or advantageous.**

Because of the powerful nature of these settings and the potential to open confidential information to a wide swath of staff, the business functions required to grant such access can only be assigned to an agency's Security Coordinator by OCFS.

- MAINT ORG HIER
- MAINT AGY ACC

The same is true for the view only versions of these functions which allow one to see, but not change, the settings in the Organizational Hierarchy and Agency Access windows.

- VIEW ORG HIER
- VIEW AGY ACC

**Requests to add or remove these business functions must be submitted by the agency's Implementation Coordinator on the Add or Remove Maintain Agency Access or Maintain Organizational Hierarchy form.**



This form is available on the Security page of the both the CONNECTIONS intranet and internet sites.

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/connect/security/>

### What is Agency Access?

Agency Access settings allow an authorized user (typically the Security Coordinator) with the MAINT AGY ACC business function – and the additional business functions listed below - to create vertical and/or horizontal lines of access across various groupings of staff.

This very powerful, broad-brush approach allows View, Maintain, or no access to be granted to staff:

- designated as case assignable (MAINT STAFF)
- designated as Unit Approvers (MAINT UNIT)
- in a Direct Supervisory Line based on a hierarchy created among the organization's units (MAINT ORG HIER)

The settings possible through Agency Access are shown in the following chart:

Case Assignable Staff	All Within District	Provides access to all FSI and FSS stages in the district/agency
	All Within Unit	Provides access to all FSI and FSS stages in the same unit
	All Within Same Job Type	Provides access to all FSI and FSS stages that are of the same Job Type as the staff person
Unit Approver	All Within District	Will provide access to all FSI and FSS stages in the district/agency for all Unit Approvers
	All Within Same Unit Spec	Will provide access to all FSI and FSS stages within the same unit specialization for all Unit Approvers
Direct Supervisory Line	All Staff	Provides access to all FSI and FSS stages within a direct supervisory line for all staff, regardless of Job Type
	All Non-Clerical Staff	Provides access to all FSI and FSS stages within a direct supervisory line for all staff with a Non-Clerical Job Type.

Agency Access settings can be used singly or in combination. When used in combination, they are capable of granting extraordinarily wide access to confidential information for large groups of workers.



**Extreme caution should be used when employing these settings to insure that workers are not given access beyond that required by their job duties.**

**One click of a radio button in the Agency Access window can dramatically alter access to large groups of staff:**

Agency: C08      Office Type: Vol Agen

Case Assignable Staff

All Within District       View       Maintain       None

All Within Unit       View       Maintain       None

All Within Same Job Type       View       Maintain       None

Unit Approver

All Within District       View       Maintain       None

All Within Same Unit Spec       View       Maintain       None

Direct Supervisory Line

All Staff       View       Maintain       None

All Non-Clerical Staff       View       Maintain       None



**Security Reminder: It is against federal and state laws and regulations not only to re-disclose confidential information, but even to access information for which the user has no legitimate business need.**

See the May 2012 Confidentiality Memo on the Security page of the CONNECTIONS website for additional information.



<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/connect/security/Confidentiality%20Memo-%20Districts-%20Agencies%20and%20State%20Partners%205-2012.pdf>

### Agency Access via Job Types

Workers marked as Case Assignable (those to whom a stage can be assigned) may be assigned one or more “job types” on the Staff Security window. This is an OPTIONAL setting that permits staff with the same job type to access each other’s FSI and FSS workloads.

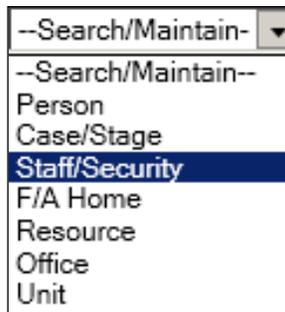


**Caution! JOB TYPES ARE NOT JOB TITLES!**

**Do not assign any Job Type to staff unless your agency has purposely decided to use this form of security!**

## To Assign a Job Type:

- Using the Search/Maintain drop-down menu, choose **Staff/Security**.
- Enter the name of the worker and/or site in the appropriate field(s) and click the **Search** button.
  - Navigation Hint:** Smaller districts and agencies may find it easier to just click the **Search** button to return all workers.
- Highlight the worker's name.
- Click the **Security** tab.
- Click to add a checkmark in the checkbox(s) of the Job type(s) you wish to assign.



**Note:** The actual name of the job type is less important than being sure each group has a unique job type assigned to them.



**Caution!** Setting the *All Within Same Job Type* radio button to View or to Maintain in the Agency Access window will grant case assignable staff who have the same designated job type access to the FSI and FSS stages of all other case assignable staff who have that same job type.



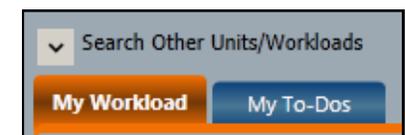
- Click the **Modify** button
- Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.

## An Example of Job Type Access

The workers in a foster care unit provide weekend coverage for one another and need to access each other's workloads as a regular part of their coverage duties.

Each worker in this unit would need to be assigned:

- the same job type (Use a different Job Type for each group of workers to whom job type access is being granted)
- the UNIT SUM ACC business function and
- a role in the unit higher than that of the Unit Approver. (e.g., if the Unit Approver has the role of Supervisor, the workers must be given the role of Maintainer or Manager).



Workers would use the Search Other Units/Workloads button to navigate to the workload of their coworker and the desired FSS or FSI stage.



See the CONNECTIONS Security Tip Sheet, *Accessing Someone Else's Workload & To-Do's* for more information on navigating to the workload of someone else.

<http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>

## Agency Access via Unit Specialization Access

The Unit Specialization setting on the Agency Access window allows Unit Approvers in units that have the same designated specialization as their own to access FSI and FSS stages in those other units.



Using the All Within Same Unit Specialization setting to create access for one group of units that share a specialization opens the same level of access (View or Maintain) to all groups of units that share a specialization with one or more units.

By default, the specialization of each new unit created in CONNECTIONS is “Conversion.” As part of a unit’s initial set up, the Security Coordinator should change the specialization to match the actual function of the unit (requires the MAINT UNIT business function).

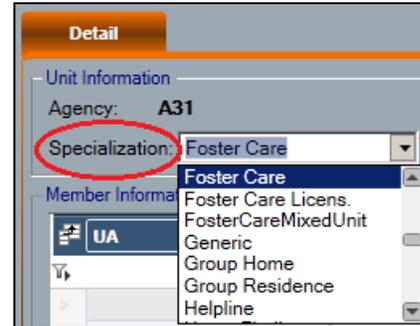
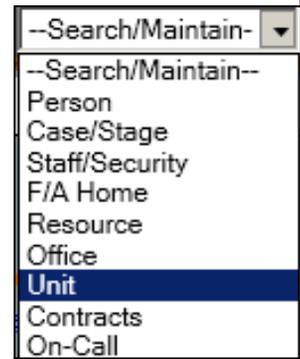
Unit	Unit Approver	Specialization
411	Marks, Natalie	Conversion
414	Covington, Cynthia	Conversion
416	Marks, Natalie	Conversion
417	Covington, Cynthia	Conversion
418	Fletcher, William	Conversion
422	Covington, Cynthia	Conversion
425	Edreira, Anna Mar	Conversion
428	Fletcher, William	Conversion

Just as with other specializations, Unit Approvers in units with the specialization of “Conversion” will be granted access to the FSI and FSS stages in all other such units if the “All Within Same Unit Spec.” radio button is set to View or Maintain.

**Reminder:** Temporary units (e.g., N01), which also have a default specialization of “Conversion” should be deleted once staff have been assigned to permanent units

## To Change a Unit’s Specialization:

1. Select “Unit” from the Search/Maintain drop-down menu.
2. Locate and highlight the desired unit. This may require scrolling if your agency is large.



3. Use the Specialization drop-down menu to select the desired type.
4. Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.

## An Example of Unit Specialization Access

A district has six Foster Care units. Supervisors in each unit regularly cover for one another, approving FASPs and reviewing PHRs. To meet this business need, each Supervisor requires access to all the Foster Care units in the district.

To achieve this using Agency Access settings:

- Each of the 6 Foster Care Units should to be assigned the same specialization (e.g., Foster Care). No other group of units in the district should be assigned the same specialization.
- Each supervisor will need the UNIT SUM ACC business function. (Typically, Supervisors have already been given this business function to access the workloads of workers within their own unit.)

To access one of the other Foster Care units, a Supervisor would use the *Search Other Units/Workloads* path starting from their own workload window.



See the CONNECTIONS Security Tip Sheet, *Accessing Someone Else’s Workload & To-Do’s* for more information on this navigational path.

<http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>

**To Create Similar Access Without the Use of Agency Access Settings (can be used with CPS, FAR, FAD and services units):**

- Be sure each Supervisor is assigned the UNIT SUM ACC business function.
- Out-assign the Supervisors to each other's units with a role higher than that of the Unit Approver. For instance, if the Unit Approver has the role of Supervisor, the out-assigned supervisors must be given the role of Maintainer or Manager.

Each out-assigned supervisor would use the *Search Other Units/Workloads* path to access the other units.

**Agency Access via Direct Supervisory Staff for Non-Clerical Staff**

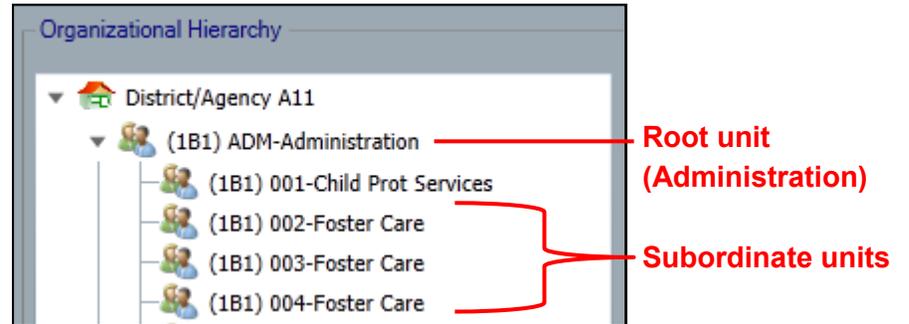
Job Types are categorized as either Clerical or Non-Clerical. When using the Direct Supervisory Line Agency Access, staff assigned Clerical job types can be excluded from access to the FSI and FSS stages on workloads of workers below them in the hierarchy of the organization. The Job Types classified as Clerical are as follows:

Clerical Job Types	
LDSS Job Types	Voluntary Agency Job Types
Accounting Clerk	Accounting Clerk
Clerical Staff	Clerical Staff
Commissioner's Staff	Legal/Court Support Staff
Legal/Court Support Staff	Support Staff
Support Staff	

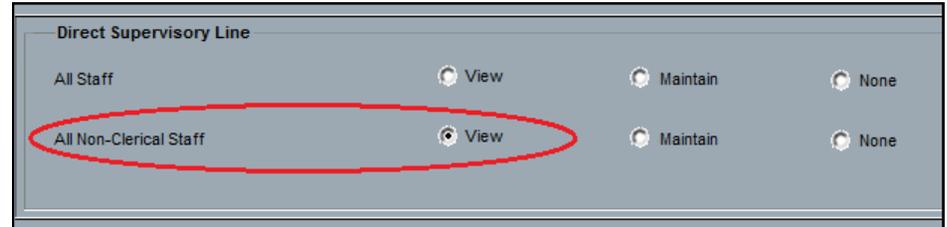
**An Example of Direct Supervisory Line Access**

A district's administrators, all assigned to the same Administrative unit, want to be able to view all the FSI and FSS stages in their organization but do not want clerical staff assigned to their unit to have the same access.

- The Security Coordinator, using the MAINT ORG HIER business function would create a hierarchy in which the units carrying FSI and FSS stages are subordinate to the Administrators' unit.



- Using the MAINT AGY ACC business function, the Security Coordinator would set Agency Access to View for All Non-Clerical staff in the Direct Supervisor Line section.



**What is Organizational Hierarchy?**

Organizational Hierarchy allows an authorized user (typically the Security Coordinator) with the MAINT ORG HIER business function to create a hierarchy of units within their agency. Similar to the folder structure in Internet Explorer, units can be positioned above or below other units.

This structure, in combination with the *Direct Supervisory Line* setting available through the Agency Access window (requires the MAINT AGY ACC business function), allows the granting of view or maintain access to workers in units above other units in the hierarchy.

With these settings, anyone in the organization in a direct supervisory line above a worker with a role in Family Service Intakes or a Family Services Stage can access those stages to either modify or view cases.

**NOTE** – Users will also need to be assigned the UNIT SUM ACCESS Business Function in order to access the workloads of other staff via Organizational Hierarchy settings.

Security Coordinators may find it helpful to be assigned the VIEW ORG HIER (View Organizational Hierarchy) business function, as this offers the opportunity to clearly see unit details such as the Unit Approver, in- and out-assigned workers, and everyone’s role within the unit. You can easily click from one unit to another and can screen print the results – which is helpful when trying to compare unit composition and the hierarchy of roles within a unit.

**Hint:** See the CONNECTIONS Security Tip Sheet “Working with Units” for more information on unit structure.

<http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>

2. Locate and highlight the unit whose membership you wish to see. This may require scrolling if your agency is large.

**To** District/Agency: \* Office Type: \*

**Change Organizational Hierarchy:**

1. Click on a unit and, with the mouse button still depressed, drag it on top of the unit to which you wish to make it subordinate.
2. Release the mouse button.
3. Click the **Save** or **Save & Close** button.



**IMPORTANT!** Because of the complex nature of Organizational Hierarchy and Agency Access settings, Security Coordinators are strongly advised to document their agency’s security strategy and the reasons that various settings were chosen. This information is invaluable in helping successive Security Coordinators understand why their agency’s security settings are structured in a particular manner.

District/Agency: \* Office Type: \*

Organizational Hierarchy

- District/Agency A07
  - (0A7) 001-Child Prot Services
  - (0A7) 002-Legal
  - (0A7) 003-Other
  - (0A7) 005-Family Reunification
  - (0A7) 007-Child Prot Services
  - (0A7) 008-Support

Employee Data

Name	In/Out	Role
Augustyniak, Laurie	OUT	Manager
Banfield, Mindy	OUT	Maintainer
Chandonait-Cleary, Elizabeth	OUT	Maintainer
Coats, Karen	OUT	Maintainer
Cooper, Kelly	IN	Maintainer
Coughlin, Kelly	IN	Worker



**To Access the Organizational Hierarchy window:**

1. Select “Org. Hierarchy” from the **Search/ Maintain** drop-down menu.

The District/Agency and Office Type fields will default to your district/agency and type in the Organizational Hierarchy window.

--Search/Maintain--

- Search/Maintain--
- Person
- Case/Stage
- Staff/Security
- F/A Home
- Resource
- Office
- Unit
- Contracts
- On-Call
- Org. Hierarchy**
- Agency Access
- Business Functions

**Resources**

- CONNECTIONS Job Aids and Tip Sheets:  
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>
- CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff:  
<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/contact.asp>
- CONNECTIONS Application Help Mailbox:  
[ocfs.sm.conn\\_app@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us)  
(NOTE: address contains an underline)
- CONNECTIONS Communications Mailbox:  
[connections@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:connections@ocfs.ny.gov)

ITS Enterprise Service Desk 1-800-697-1323