

CONNECTIONS Build Bulletin

Build 1, 2023

Scheduled Implementation Date: January 4, 2023

CONNECTIONS Build 1, 2023 contains system changes to support implementation of additional provisions of the Family First Prevention Service Act (FFPSA). It also contains changes to Activities coding, introduces the system generation of Vendor IDs, and changes what constitutes a new “stay” for children in QRTP settings who return from an absence. Additional guidance will be forthcoming from OCFS for the FFPSA changes marked with an asterisk (*) in the table of contents below.

Questions? Please contact your OCFS Regional Office staff with questions regarding programmatic changes or your Regional CONNECTIONS Implementation Team with any questions related to system navigation.

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Resource Directory

FFPSA – New Service Type in the Resource Directory

Family First Legislation contains provisions for new Prevention Services, including Evidence Based Preventive Services.

Districts or Voluntary Agencies who wish to create or use an FFPSA Evidence Based Program must apply to their Regional Office and complete a required Attestation Form to do so. The new Resource will be created in CONNECTIONS by OCFS staff once all approvals have been granted. Detailed instructions for this process will be forthcoming from OCFS in the near future.

To support this new process, a new service type, **FFPSA – EBP** (Family First Prevention Services Act – Evidence Based Program), has been added to the *Services by Area* tab in the Resource Directory under the Category of Preventive. **This designation can only be used by select state workers when adding a new FFPSA Evidence Based Preventive Program to the CONNECTIONS Resource Directory.**

Vendor ID

FFPSA – Preventative Program Vendor ID Creation Process

Family First Preventive providers, which **can only be added to the Resource Directory in CONNECTIONS by state staff**, will be manually assigned a Vendor ID (VID) with a unique eight-character convention to support Federal reporting purposes.

The first five characters represent the EBP (Evidence Based Program) and the last three are the agency code of the agency providing the service.

Resource Name	VID	Resource ID
Brighter Times Mst	MST04C08	21107203

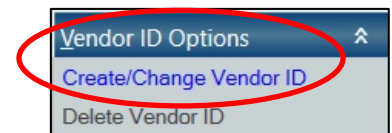
Diagram illustrating the Vendor ID (VID) structure: MST04C08. The first five characters (MST04) represent the Program, and the last three characters (C08) represent the Agency.

Automated Generation of Vendor IDs

To eliminate the creation of duplicate VIDs and the outdated process of manually entering and tracking them, **unique Vendor IDs (VIDs) will now be automatically generated by CONNECTIONS** for all new Agency, Facility, Provider and School Resource Types (except for the FFPSA-EBP providers noted above). *This includes all Foster Homes, Adoption Subsidy stages, KinGAP Subsidy stages and Supervised Settings created by local district or voluntary agency workers.*

IMPORTANT!
With the advent of system generated VIDs, local districts will no longer be able to use local naming conventions that incorporate letters or other number sequences. All VIDs going forward will only contain 8 system generated numbers. Established VIDs will not be affected. This may require changes in some local business processes.

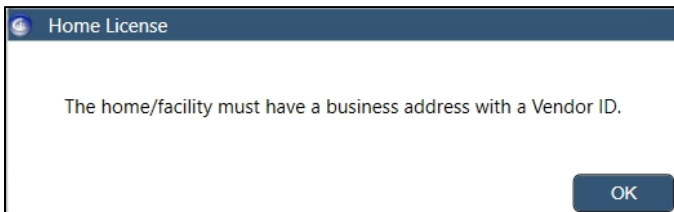
A new link, "Create/Change Vendor ID", enables when a business address is designated in one of 3 places:



- in the **Resource Directory** when creating a new Resource (LDSS and State staff only)
 - by checking the “Use as Business” checkbox in the Detail tab
 - by entering a Business Address in the Address tab
- in the **F/A Home Search** window when creating a new Foster Home or Supervised Setting (LDSS & VA staff)
 - by checking the “Use as Business” checkbox in the Detail tab
 - by entering a Business Address
- in the **Home Demographics** window from a stage on the assigned worker’s workload (LDSS and VA staff).
 - by checking the “Use as Business” checkbox on the Current Home Demographics window
 - by entering a Business Address in the Address tab

Reminder: You must use “Business”, not “Bus-Bill” or “Bus-Mail” as the address type to enable the Create/Change Vendor ID link.

When the setting of “Congregate” has been chosen (e.g., a Supervised Setting), the Type code prefills as the first three numbers of the VID.



It is recommended that a VID be assigned just prior to saving and submitting for final approval.

A business address must be present, and a VID must be generated before the status of “Accepted” can be saved for a FAD home.

The “Create/Change Vendor ID” link can also be used to generate a new VID for an existing resource, such as when a foster home transfers from **one agency to another** or from an **agency to a district**. In these situations, the **receiving** agency/district should change the VID as the last step of the transfer. The [CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet - Foster Home Transfer Procedures](#) will be updated shortly to reflect these changes.

The “Delete Vendor ID” link can be used to remove a current VID but should *never* be done for FAD Resources. It is used for non-FAD Resources only.

PLEASE NOTE: If the current VID is deleted or changed, the number is “retired” and can never be reused. *You cannot change a VID and change it back to its previous value.*

FFPSA - Care Day Clock Notifications for LDSS Workers

A change has been made so that **ALL** LDSS workers with an assigned role in the stage will receive emailed care day clock reminders. To receive reminders, the worker must have entered their email address in the Email tab of the Staff/Security window in CONNECTIONS.



The screenshot shows a web interface with several tabs: Detail, Address, Phone, Skills, Security, Designees, Email (selected), and Notifications. The 'Email' tab is active, and the 'Email (Local Part):' field is highlighted with a red oval. The email address '@gateway-longview.org' is visible in the field. Below the field, the 'Email Address:' is also shown as '@gateway-longview.org'. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'Save & Close', 'Save', and 'Reset'.

All assigned LDSS workers will now receive monthly care day clock reminder emails containing consecutive and nonconsecutive care day reports. These were previously suppressed when the youth was absent from care or on trial discharge.

FFPSA – Revision to the Over 14 Day Absence Rule

Until this build, a new “stay” would begin whenever a child placed in a QRTP setting returned from an absence of **14 or more days**, even if they returned to the same program (VID). Upon their return, the consecutive care day clock would reset and trigger the need for a new 30-day QI assessment and a 60-day court review. A change has been made to reduce the need for repeated QI assessments and court reviews.

Now, a child placed in a QRTP setting who has been absent (M950) or on trial discharge (M970) and returns to the **SAME** program (VID) within **90 days**, is no longer considered to be entering a new stay. The *consecutive* care day clock does **NOT** reset. The non-consecutive care day clock is unaffected.

Only an absence of 90 or more days will trigger the need for a new 30-day QI assessment and a 60-day court review.

Reminder: If the child returns to a **DIFFERENT** program (VID), this is considered a new stay and all the current QRTP program entry requirements still apply (30-day QI assessment, 60-day court review).

IMPORTANT!

Changes to previously entered Activity codes can affect IV-E eligibility for an entire QRTP stay!

Do NOT invalidate and re-enter movement codes for any child in a QRTP setting without first contacting both the Family First mailbox (FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov) and your Regional Office to understand how making any changes will impact the Long Stayer Review date.

Activities Changes

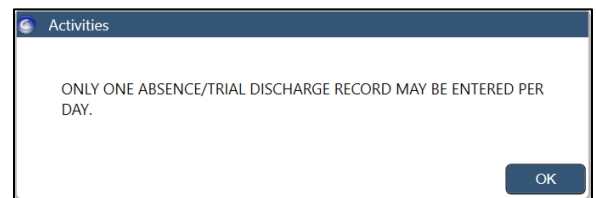
Limit Movement Code Entry to Once Daily

To prevent BICS “stacking” issues that result when the same type of code is entered more than once on the same day, only one of the following Movement codes may be entered in Activities each calendar day:

- M950 – Child Begins Absence
- M960 – Child Ends Absence
- M970 – Child on Trial Discharge
- M980 – Child Returned from Trial Discharge

While correcting Activities sequences may require entries over the course of several days, this will eliminate many of the billing problems that previously resulted.

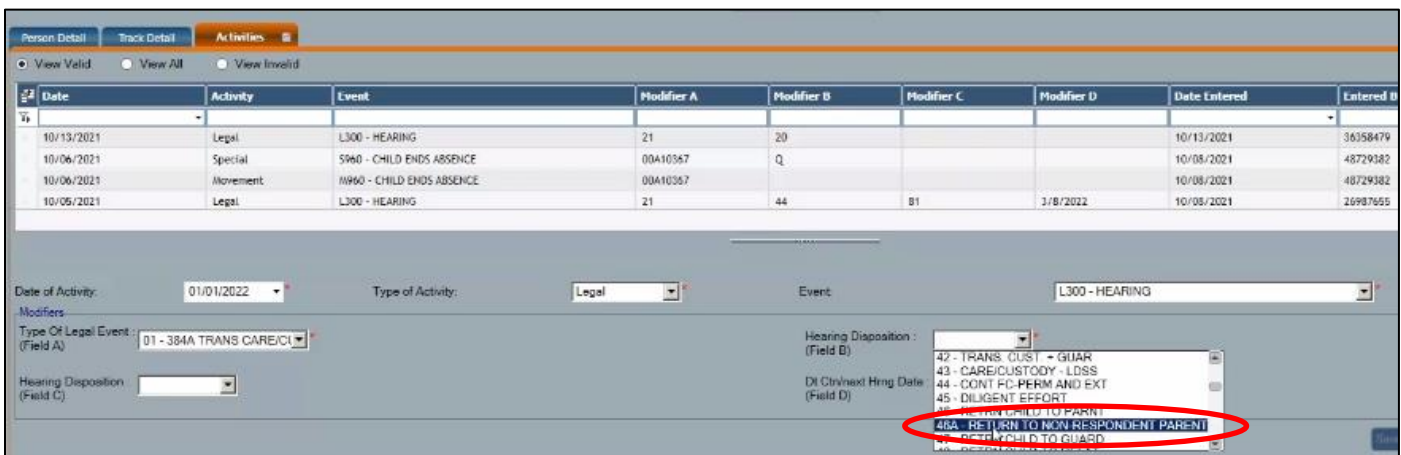
If the worker attempts to enter more than one of the identified movement codes, they will receive a pop-up reminder.



Create New Modifier B and C Activities for Return to Non-Respondent Parent

The requirement to clearly document when a child is returned to a *non-respondent* parent is now better supported in Activities.

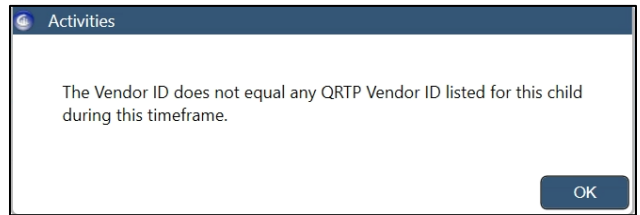
New Modifier B and Modifier C values of **46A - Return to Non-Respondent Parent** have been added for both L300–Hearing and L500–Appeal entries, allowing workers to clearly specify to whom a child is returned.



FFPSA – Permit Entry of Q030 with an Activity Date Less than the QRTP S Code Date

In Activities, workers can now record that a QRTP assessment was completed up to 30 calendar days **PRIOR** to the child's entry into a QRTP program. All other existing edits for the Q030 entry remain the same.

System edits prevent the entry of a Q030 more than 30 days prior to the child's entry into a QRTP program. If attempted, this message will display:



FFPSA – Ability to Identify when a Legal Hearing was Requested

A new Modifier A, **31-QRTP 60-DAY COURT REVIEW**, has been added for an L100 – PETITION FILED event. This allows workers to accurately identify when the request for the 60 Day Court Review was filed with the court.



The screenshot shows the 'Activities' form with the following fields:

- Date of Activity: 05/19/2022
- Type of Activity: Legal
- Event: L100 - PETITION FILED
- Modifiers section:
 - Type Of Legal Event (Field A): Open dropdown menu showing options: 24 - ART6-REST PRTNL RGTS, 25 - KINGAP AGREEMENT, 26 - KINGAP HEARING, 27 - ART10-C DEST CHILD, 29 - 756A EXTENSION, 30 - 756A EXTENSION WITH EXCEPTION, and 31 - QRTP 60-DAY COURT REVIEW (highlighted with a red circle).
 - Docket No. (Field C):
 - Court Code (Field B):
 - Next Hearing Date (Field D):



Office of Children
and Family Services

CONNECTIONS Job Aids and Tip Sheets:
<https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp>