CONNECTIONS

System Build 18.9.6
Job Aid

Functionality for all Users of CONNECTIONS

Revised 4/7/2008

CONNECTIONS Training Project

This material was developed by Professional Development Program, Rockefeller College, University at Albany under a training and administrative services agreement with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

CONNECTIONS –System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

This Job Aid is intended for all CONNECTIONS users. It provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes being introduced with Build 18.9.6.

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, several important changes will improve the CONNECTIONS system. It should be noted that many of the enhancements included in this Build originated from a collaborative effort on the part of OCFS, local district and voluntary agency casework and supervisory staff, who were members of the Functional Improvement Team (FIT). Specifically, this Job Aid contains information about enhancements in the following functional areas:

- Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD)
- Out of State SCR Check Window
- Family Assessment and Service Plans (FASPs), including the Service Plan Review
- Life Skills Assessment Comments Window
- Health Services
- Permanency
- Progress Notes
- Security

Any visible identifying data
in this Job Aid is simulated.

This Job Aid assumes familiarity with the
CONNECTIONS System.

This Job Aid is available online on the CONNECTIONS intranet site:

OCFS.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides.asp

The CONNECTIONS intranet site also contains information about CONNECTIONS training.

Foster and Adoptive Home Development (FAD)

Fingerprint Letters

On January 11, 2007, foster boarding home and adoption regulations were amended on an emergency basis to require FBI fingerprint checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and those persons age 18 and over residing in a FAD home prior to the home's initial certification/approval or if an individual 18 years of age or older is added to an existing home, prior to reauthorization. The regulations became effective as final regulations on October 10, 2007. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, a revised notice letter (English and Spanish) and a revised denial/revocation letter (English and Spanish) are supported in CONNECTIONS. The foster or adoptive caseworker is responsible for providing applicants with the notice that they and all people age 18 or older residing in the home must be fingerprinted and sending the denial/revocation letter, as appropriate. In addition, the Acknowledgement and Consent Form for Fingerprinting and Disclosure of Criminal History Record Information form is available in CONNECTIONS for use **only** by voluntary authorized agencies. This consent form only pertains to the FBI criminal history record check and is required for New York State to comply with current FBI limitations on the dissemination of criminal history record information to non-public agencies. The signed consent form is to be submitted with the fingerprint cards.

CONNECTIONS provides the ability for caseworkers to generate, print and store these letters in the database. An event is also created when a letter is generated for the stage. Stage and person specific information is system filled, as appropriate, in these letters.

> There is space at the top of the letters for your agency's letterhead. Be sure to print the letter on agency letterhead.

Menu commands are enabled for FAD cases with a setting type of Adoptive or Foster Home. Any worker with a role in the stage or access to the workload may generate the letters from the *Person List* window.

Step by Step:
Generating and Printing the FAD Fingerprints Notice, Denial/Revocation and Consent Letters

1. On the *Assigned Workload*, select the home for which you need to send a letter.
   *The **Tasks…** button enables*.
2. Click on the **Tasks…** button.
   The Task List displays.
3. On the *Task List,* select the **Maintain Person** task.
4. Click on the **List…** button.
   The Person List displays.
5. Click on the **Reports** menu and the appropriate letter.
6. Click on the **OK** button in response to the following message*:*
   "The report has been launched. Check Report List Window."
   Letters remain unopened on the Report List for seven days before being purged.
7. Click on the **RPRTS** (Reports) button on the far right side of the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
   The Report List displays.

8 Confirm that the **Status** column reads "Done" for the letter you want to view. If it does not read "Done," click on the **Refresh** button at the bottom of the window.

9 Click on the letter to select it.
*The **Open** button enables.*

10 Click on the **Open** button.
*The **FAD Fingerprint Letter** displays as a Microsoft Word document.*

11 To print the letter, click on the **File** menu and select **Print**.
The Microsoft Word Print dialog box displays.

12 Click on the **OK** button to print.

13 To close the letter, click on the **File** menu and select **Close**.
The Report List displays.

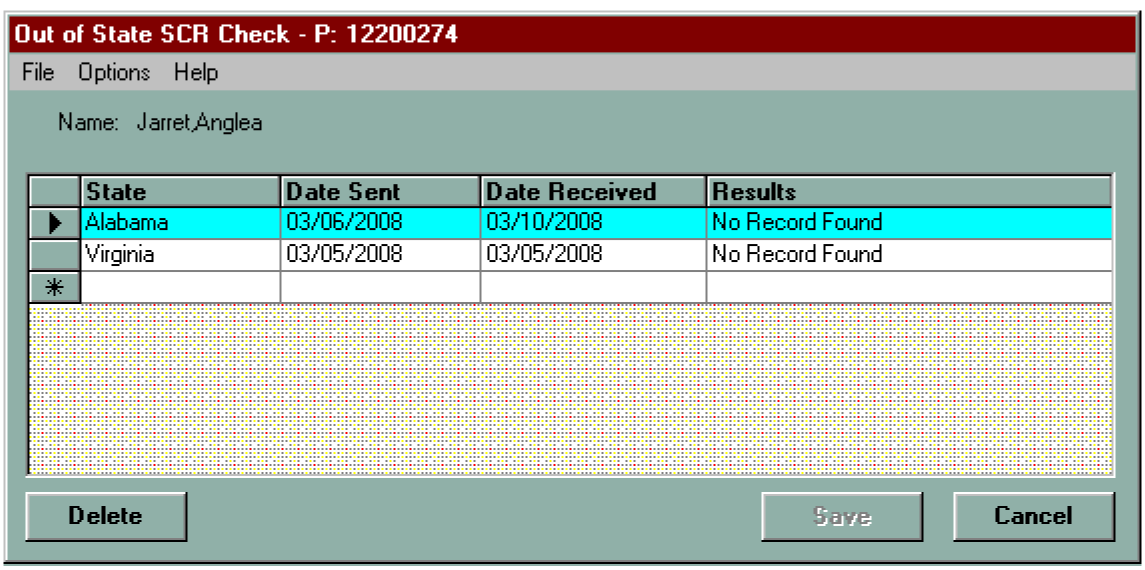
14 To close the *Report List*, click on the **Close** button.
The Person List displays.

Out of State FBI Background Checks

The Out of State SCR Check Window

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Out of State SCR Check window provides workers with a location for recording information pertaining to out-of-state child abuse and neglect background checks performed on prospective foster or adoptive parents (or other persons in the home 18 years of age). Such a background check is required for all prospective foster or adoptive parents (or any other persons 18 years or older in the home) via the child abuse and neglect registry in each state they have resided in the five years prior to application. The definition of "state" includes: the District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa.

To display the *Out of State SCR Check* window, select a person by clicking his or her name in the upper grid of the **Household Member Detail** tab located on the *Foster and Adoptive Home Record Summary* window and click the **O/O/S SCR Check** button.



Step-by-Step:
Accessing the Out of State SCR Check Window

1 Click on the **WORK** button on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The Assigned Workload displays.

2 Select a FAD home and click on the **Tasks…** button.
The Task List displays three tasks that can open the FRS window.

3 Select the **Home Study** task to open the FRS.

4 Click on the corresponding button.
For example, if you select the ***Home Study*** *task you would click on the* ***New*** *or* ***Use Prior*** *button.*

5 Click on the **New**, **Detail** or **Use Prior** button (**Detail** is enabled when there is an in-process FRS).
The FRS displays.

6 Click on the **Household Member Detail** tab.

7 Click on the **O/O/S SCR Check** button.
The Out of State SCR Check window displays.

Multiple records may be added prior to saving.

In the *Out of State SCR Check* window, workers must record the state to which the request was sent and the date it was sent for the person listed at the top of the window. Once a response is received, the results and the date the results were received must be entered.

Once information has been saved in the *Out of State SCR Check* window, a system-generated check mark displays in O/O/S SCR Check check box in the **Household Member Detail** tab.

The grid consists of the following columns:

State The **State** drop-down contains a list of the state or location to which the request will be sent. This drop-down field will include the following states in addition to all states:

- District of Columbia
- Puerto Rico
- United States Virgin Islands
- Guam
- American Samoa

Requests to multiple states may be sent and are listed separately.

The State of New York will not be listed since a New York State (In-state) SCR background check is performed on the Household Member Detail tab of the FRS.

Date Sent The date on which the request for the SCR background check was sent to another state. This field is required and displays in the following format mm/dd/yyyy.

Date The date on which the response to the request was received. The date recorded cannot precede the Date Sent entry and cannot be

Received a future date. The following message displays if the Date received precedes the Date Sent:

"Date Received cannot precede the Date Sent."

This field is required and displays in the following format mm/dd/yyyy.

Results This column contains the following options:

- No Record Found
- Record Received
- Unable to Release

The window contains the following buttons:

Delete This button deletes the selected row on the grid after saving the record to the window.

Save Clicking on the **Save** button saves any modifications made in the *Out of State SCR Check* window and closes the window. This button is enabled once a modification is made in the window. The following message displays when saving a row with an incomplete **State** or **Date Sent** field:

"State and Date sent are required"

When you record the Date Received you must also record the Results or the following message displays:

"Date Received and Results are required"

Cancel Clicking on the **Cancel** button displays the following message:

"*Do you want to cancel? Unsaved data and/or narrative(s) will be lost.*"

- Click on the **Yes** button to discard all changes made since the last save.
- Click on the **No** button to remain on the window without discarding the changes.

This button is always enabled upon entering the window.

Step-by-Step:
Recording Out of State SCR Check

1 Click on the **State** drop-down to the desired state.
*The **Save** button enables*.

2 Click in the **Date Sent** field and record the date the request was sent.

3 Click in the **Date Received** field and record the date the result was received.

4 Click in the **Results** field and record the appropriate result.

5 Click on the **Save** button to store your comments.
*The following message displays: "Changes have been saved." T*he *Household Member Detail window displays*.

Where am I?

Assigned Workload > Tasks > FAD stage > Home Study task > Household Member tab > O/O/S Check button

FA License Window

Certification or approval of a foster home includes recording all required licensing information on the *F/A Home License* window. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, an Out of State SCR Check check box displays on the *Home License* window. The checkbox initially defaults to being checked to indicate that the home is not currently awaiting results. The check box will only appear unchecked if an Out of State SCR Check date sent is recorded and there is no corresponding date received. When the check box is unchecked, CONNECTIONS prevents initial certification or reauthorization of a home until date received/results are recorded. The home may be opened in "Emergency" status pending receipt of the results.

FAD Events and Alerts

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, FAD workers and their supervisors will be notified when a CPS Investigation involving a person listed in an assigned FAD stage has been completed. The worker will not receive information regarding the outcome of the investigation, but may contact the CPS worker for more information.

The following alert is sent to the Foster Home licensor and his or her supervisor in FAD:

"CPS Investigation Complete for stage id <stage id>."

Additionally, upon approval of the determination, an Event will be created on the Foster Home FAD stage: *"CPS Investigation Complete for stage id <stage id>."*

Family Service Stage

Prior to Build 18.9.6, when two Family Services Stages are merged workers were not able to print Progress Notes for the closed stage. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Merge Case Batch will be updated to assign a new case number to the closed case. This change will provide workers the ability to print Progress notes.

Prior to the implementation of Build 18.9.6, a supervisor received an error message when navigating from an Approval To-Do to the FSS Closure window if the worker who submitted the closure for approval is end-dated. The approver no longer receives an error message when navigating to the FSS Closure window when the worker who submitted the FSS closure for approval is end-dated before the approval is completed.

Family Assessment and Service Plans (FASPs)

Historical Access

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, a worker with an historical role in an FSS can view all of the FASPs associated with the case that existed before the worker's assignment ended via the *Event List*.

Life Skills Assessment

The Life Skills Assessment is a checklist which should be completed after the worker has completed/reviewed a recent separate comprehensive life skills assessment of the youth. Based on this comprehensive assessment and the worker's knowledge of the youth's abilities and needs, the **Life Skills Assessment** sub-node will support the worker's assessment of the knowledge and capability a child has regarding specific life skills and enable them to determine whether further instruction in individual areas is necessary for the youth to acquire, enhance or maintain those skills. The Life Skills Assessment aids workers in developing the appropriate service plan for the child.

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Life Assessment Skills information will not display in the Foster Care Issues (FCI) and Non-LDSS Custody sections for children with end-dated program choices of Placement or Non-LDSS Custody.

The Life Skills Assessment Comments Window

The *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window has been added with the implementation of Build 18.9.6. This window provides the worker who is associated with a child, and the case planner, a place to record narratives supporting the decisions made in each section of the Life Skills Assessment. The comments are to contain specific examples of individual behavior or functioning that supports the selected response for a specific scale. Additionally, the worker can record comments for one or all children on the *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window.

The *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window is comprised of a header, footer and multiple fields. The header contains the **File**, **Options** and **Help** menus. The footer contains various buttons. This window is accessible from the *Life Skills Assessment* window via the **Comments** button. All workers with a role in the stage can view the Life Skills Assessment and any related comments.

Step-by-Step:
Accessing the Life Skills Assessment Comments Window

1 Click on the **WORK** button on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The Assigned Workload displays.

2 Select the FSS stage and click on the **Tasks…** button.
The FSS displays.

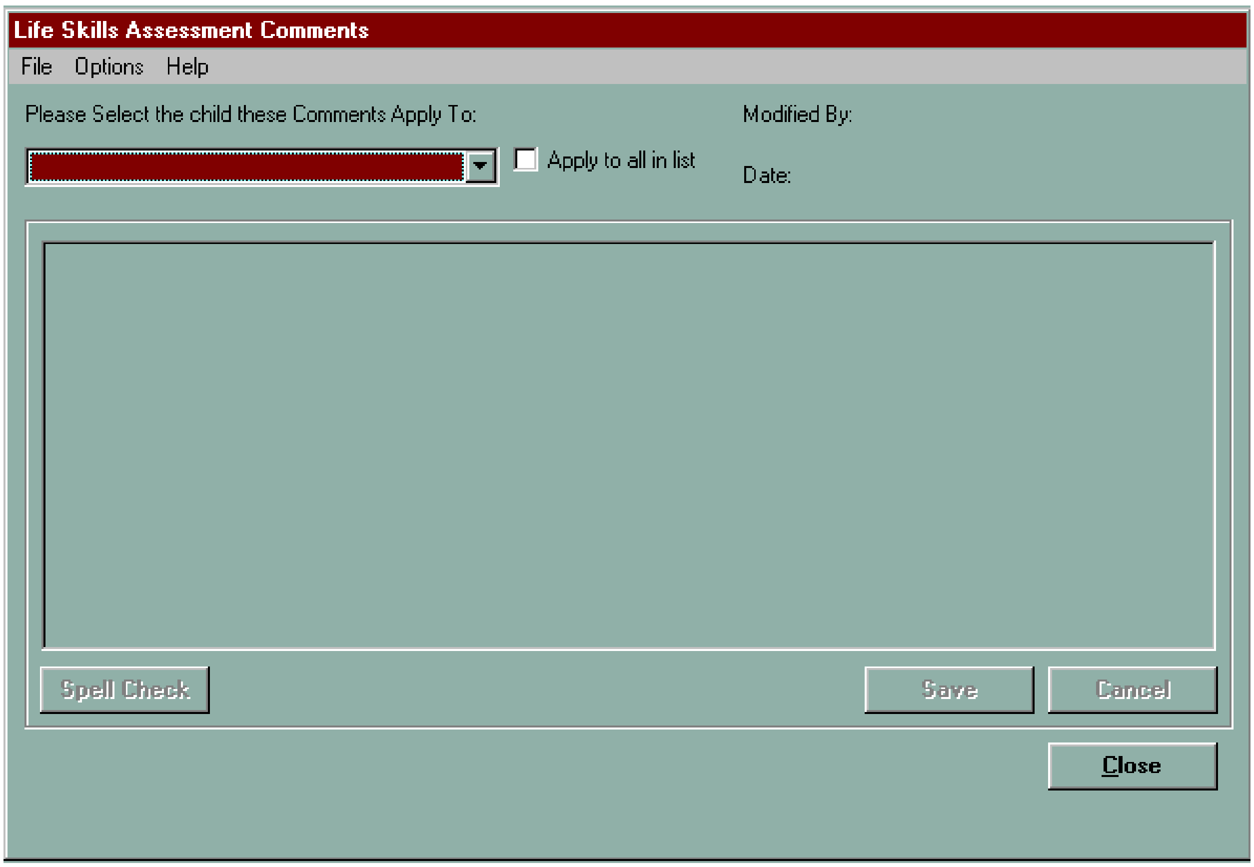
3 Click on the **Family Assessment and Service Plan** tab.
The Family Assessment and Service Plan window displays, with the FASP Tree (containing FASP types and corresponding nodes) on the left side of the window.

4 Click on the '**+**' next to the in process FASP.
The corresponding nodes and sub-nodes display.

5 Click on the '**+**' next to the Foster Care Issues node.
The Foster Care Issues node expands.

6 Click on the **Life Skills Assessment** sub-node.
The Life Skills Assessment window displays.

7 Click on the **Comments** buttons.
The Life Skills Assessment Comments window displays.



The *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window contains the following fields:

Please Select the Child These Comments Apply To	The Select Child drop-down field allows the worker to select the child for whom comments are being recorded. The Comments field is disabled until the worker selects a child from the list (or until the worker selects the **Apply to all in list** checkbox).
Apply To All In List	The *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window contains the **Apply to all in list** checkbox, which enables the worker to record one

checkbox comment and apply it to all children in the *Life Skills Assessment* window.

The checkbox enables only when:

- the worker is the case planner or has been associated to all tracked children in the list
- all existing comments apply to all children in the list, or no comments exist for any of the children in the list

Modified By The **Modified By** field displays the name of the worker who last modified a comment on the window.

Date The **Date** field displays the date the worker last saved information on the window.

Comments The **Comments** field enables when a child has been selected in the Select Child drop-down, or when the **Apply to all in list** checkbox has been selected. This field is modifiable if the worker is the case planner or has been associated to all tracked children in the list.

Comments are to contain specific examples of individual behavior or functioning that supports the selected response.

The window contains the following buttons:

Spell Check Click on the **Spell Check** button to spell check the text entered in the comments field. This button is enabled once a modification is made to the window.

Save Clicking on the **Save** button saves any modifications made in the *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window. This button is enabled once a modification is made in the window.

Cancel Clicking on the **Cancel** button displays the following message:

"*Do you want to cancel? Unsaved data and/or narrative(s) will be lost.*"

- Click on the **Yes** button to discard all changes made since the last save.
- Click on the **No** button to remain on the window without discarding the changes.

This button is enabled once a modification is made in the *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window.

Close The **Close** button closes the *Life Skills Assessment Comments* window. If you have not already saved, the following message displays:

"*Do you want to exit? Unsaved data and/or* *narratives will be lost.*"

- If you click the **Yes** button, the window closes without saving any changes.
- If you click the **No** button, the message box closes and all changes remain pending.

Step-by-Step:
Recording Life Skills Assessment Comments

Where am I?

Assigned Workload > Tasks > Family Assessment and Service Plan tab > Foster Care Issues sub-node > Life Skills Assessment sub-node >Comments button

1 Select a child from the **Select Child** drop-down field.
*If only one child exists, only that child displays and the **Select Child** field is disabled. If multiple children exist, the **Apply to All in list** checkbox displays and you can select it to apply the comments to all of the children. You may only select **Apply to All in list** if you are the Case Planner or have been associated to all of the tracked children.*

2 Record your comments for the child(ren) in the **Comments** field.
*The **Spell Check** and **Save** buttons enable.*

3 Click on the **Spell Check** button to check your text.

4 Click on the **Save** button to store your comments.

5 Click on the **Close** button to return to the *Life Skills Assessment* window.

Changes to the Outcome and Activity (O&A) Block

The *Service Plan* window contains the Outcome and Activity (O&A) Index. This term is used to describe a cluster of problem/concern statements that specify the behavior, the underlying condition or circumstance that needs to change, the services that will support that change, and statements of the desired result/outcome of that change. Outcome and Activity Blocks are carried forward from previous FASPs.

Prior to the implementation of Build 18.9.6, O & A blocks with a status of Discontinued or End-Closing Stage did not print in the current FASP. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the O& A Blocks that were updated to a status of Discontinued or End-Closing Stage in the current FASP will print when the FASP is printed.

The following additional changes were made to the FASP with the implementation of Build 18.9.6:

- The effective date for a selected program choice can be back dated to the last approved FASP.
- When a Program Choice of Placement has been end dated, the Placement Information section in the Stage Composition of the FASP report no longer populates.
- When a child has a Program Choice of Non-LDSS Custody, completion of Placement and Planning Issues “Record Return Home” tab is not required and will not appear on the *Check FASP Detail* window. If a worker saves information on the tab, then the “Record Return Home” tab will appear in the Check FASP Detail list to determine completeness.
- Prior to the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the status review column in the Visitation Plan Sub-Node for Non-LDSS custody cases did not reflect updates being completed upon saving. Now, when information is recorded on the **Visiting Plan Review** tab a status of “Complete”, displays regardless of the type of custody.
- Information recorded and saved for the sub-categories on the Programmatic Eligibility window will now display when a worker re-enters the window.

Health Services

Biological Family Health Information window

This *Biological Family Health Information* window provides for recording additional health information about the family that is pertinent to the child. No information concerning HIV/AIDS on family members is to be recorded here. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the following message displays when no parents are recorded on the Family Relationship Matrix or multiple mothers or fathers are found and the “no primary caretaker exists” checkbox has not been checked:

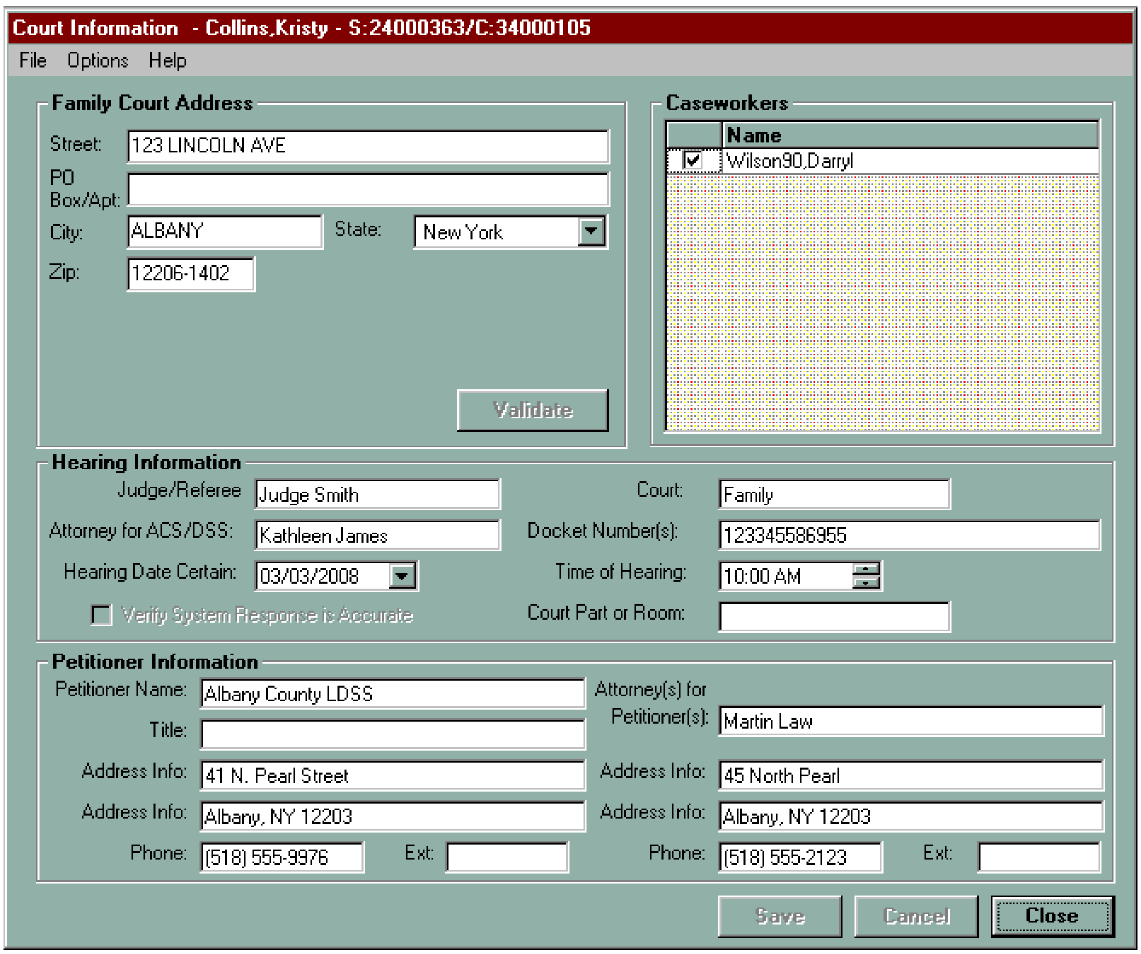
> *“No active mother or father exists. Mother/Father column cannot be generated.”*

Permanency

Court Information Window

The *Court Information* window is the location in CONNECTIONS for recording the court information that populates the Notices and Statement. All fields (with the exception of the Court Part or Room field and the Petitioner Information section) must be completed in order to generate a Permanency Hearing Notice and Statement. Once all required fields are complete and saved, the Complete checkbox on the Permanency Hearing Notices and Statements window is automatically populated.

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Petitioner Information section was added to the *Court Information* window. The Petitioner Information section is used to record information about the Petitioner and the Petitioner's attorney.



The Petitioner Information section contains the following recordable fields:

Petitioner Name The name of the petitioner.

Attorney(s) for Petitioner(s) The name of the petitioner's attorney.

Title The Title of the petitioner.

Address Info The street address of the petitioner.

Address Info The street address of the petitioner's attorney.

Address Info The City, State and ZIP Code associated with the address of the petitioner.

Address Info The City, State and ZIP Code associated with the address of the petitioner's attorney.

Phone The telephone number of the petitioner.

Ext The extension associated to the petitioner's telephone number.

Phone The telephone number of the petitioner's attorney.

Ext The extension associated to the attorney's telephone number.

Step-by-Step: Recording Petitioner Information

> **Where am I?**
>
> *Assigned Workload > Tasks > Permanency tab > Notices & Statement Button > Court Information button*

1. Record the Petitioner's name and title in the Petitioner Name and Title fields, respectively.
2. Record the primary, and if applicable, secondary street addresses of the Petitioner in the Address Info fields.
3. Record the Petitioner's phone number and extension in the Phone and Ext fields, respectively.
4. Record the name of the Petitioner's attorney in the Attorney(s) for Petitioner(s) field.
5. Record the primary, and if applicable, secondary street addresses of the Petitioner's attorney in the Address Info fields.
6. Record the Petitioner's attorney's phone number and extension in the Phone and Ext fields, respectively.
7. Click on the **Save** button.

Child Protective Case Summary

Investigation Conclusion

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the following additional changes were made to the Investigation Conclusion: New closure reasons have been added to Day Care/ Foster Care Child Protective investigations to correct FSIs being created in error for these investigations. When concluding a Day Care/ Foster Care Child Protective investigation the Indicated and Unfounded Open Closure reasons disable and the following closure reasons display:

- Corrective Action Required
- No Corrective Action Required
- Unable to Contact/Moved Out of Jurisdiction

Prior to the implementation of Build 18.9.6, information recorded in all sections of the *Investigation Conclusion Narrative* template were unprotected and modifiable. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the *Investigation Conclusion Narrative* is a protected document; caseworkers are to record conclusion information in selected unprotected sections.

Progress Notes

Searching for a Progress Note

Progress notes are recorded and maintained for all child protective services investigations and all child welfare services cases, providing documentation of all worker activities in an objective and behaviorally specific way. Progress notes document the timely activities of casework staff and the information acquired during these activities.

The Type, Method of Contact, Author and Narrative fields are required for any note. Depending on the criteria selected for Type and Method of Contact, other fields (i.e. Purpose) may also be required.

With the Implementation of Build 18.9.6 the following new **Type** values have been added to progress notes:

- Notice
- Approval

(Notice/Approval remains available as a single value)

- Other Casework Activity

The following new **Purpose** values have been added to progress notes:

Under the Progress Note Type of Approval, the purposes are:

- LDSS Exec Level Approval
- VA Exec Level Approval

Under the Progress Note Type of Other Casework Activity the purposes are:

- Cross Reference
- Case Closing
- Transfer

Voluntary agency workers will not be able to view Child Protective Record Summary Progress Notes with the Type of “Other Casework Activity” and Purpose of “Cross Reference.”

Additional Updates

In addition to including “American Samoa” in the drop down of states for Out of State SCR Checks, the data value has been added to the Person Detail drop-down list to be used when recording addresses.

Spell and Grammar Checker

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Spell Checker has been improved and new text features Grammar Checker and Thesaurus has been added to the text tool bar. Spell check will verify the spelling of words and underline misspelled words. The worker selects the correctly spelled word from the list of spellings for the word.

Clicking on the **Grammar Check** button provides for checking the grammatical wording of the text. Clicking on the Thesaurus buttons provide workers with a listing of synonyms for the word that the cursor is currently on. These buttons display on all narrative windows and tabs with the text tool feature. This update also adds commonly used words to the custom dictionary. Misspelled words will remain underlined until corrected. Plurals will no longer display as misspelled.

When workers access a window or tab containing the **Text Control** tool, they can use formatting functions (similar to those available in Microsoft Word) for the text recorded in the narrative field.

The Spell and Grammar Check has also been added to the Permanency Hearing Report. However, because the permanency hearing report is a template, the text tool works somewhat differently. A Caseworker must highlight the text in the enterable field and activate the spell/grammar check. Spell/Grammar check will not work if areas other than enterable fields have been highlighted. In the Permanency Hearing Report you can only spell/grammar check one section at time.

Two separate toolbars display at the top of the narrative field. The first toolbar contains buttons for performing the following functions:

Print	This option allows workers to print the narrative.
Print Preview	This allows the text to be viewed on screen, as it will appear when printed.
Spell Check	Workers can conduct a Spell Check of the text recorded. Workers cannot add items to the dictionary. Spell check is available for the entire document or for a highlighted section within the document.
Copy	Select text to be copied to a clipboard; the clipboard clears when tab/window closes.
Cut	This option allows selected text to be removed and placed on the clipboard.
Paste	Text that was saved to the clipboard (via copy or cut) can be pasted within the text area.
Find	This option enables workers to search the narrative for specific words or phrases.
Find and Replace	This option enables workers to search the narrative for a specific word or phrase and replace it with another word or phrase.

Grammar Check	Workers can conduct a Grammar Check of the text recorded.

The second toolbar contains standard text formatting buttons:

Bold	Selected text is bolded.
Italics	Selected text is italicized.
Underline	Selected text is underlined.
Align Left	This allows left alignment of text.
Align Right	This allows right alignment of text.
Center	This allows center alignment of text.
Justify	This allows full justification of text.
Numbering	This function formats selected text as a numbered list.
Bullets	This function formats selected text as a bulleted list.
Zoom	The view of the text size can be changed from 10% to 400% as it is being typed into the text section. The text will return to the standard Times Roman 12pt once the window or tab has been saved.

Security

The Unit Specializations displays the primary function of a unit (e.g. Intake or Adoption). With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, this field will be updated. The following table contains updated Unit Specializations:

Build 18.9.6 - Unit Specialization Codes	
Code	**Decode**
ADL	Adolescent
AOB	Agency Operated Boarding Home
AST	Initial Assessment
CRI	Crisis Residence
DAS	PINS-Diagnostic Program
DRC	Diagnostic Reception
EDN	Educational Neglect
FCM	FosterCareMixedUnit
GHO	Group Home
GPR	Group Residence
INP	Intensive Preventive
JJI	JuvenileJusticeInitiative
MAT	Maternity Residence
MCH	Mother Child
PNS	PINS-Long Term Program
RTC	Residential Treatment Center
SLP	Supervised Independent Living Program

The following additional changes were made to Security with the implementation of Build 18.9.6:

- For the Health Module, for closed stages, workers in districts other than that of the Case Manager or Case Planner (Case Workers or CPS Worker / Monitor) assigned at the time of stage closure with the VIEW HEALTH Business Function may view health for the children for whom their agency was designated. The data will be filtered to return only those records entered prior to the end of responsibility of the agency. This also applies to workers that were end dated prior to the closing of the stage.
- The Education module will contain a new Business Function called ENTER EDUCATION. The Security Attribute for this Business Function will be listed as an option on the *Security Profile Maintenance* window but will not be available to use until the Business Function is added in a future build.
- CPS stages not classified as Indicated, Unfounded, Under Investigation, or Administrative Review (ARI) can be accessed by workers with the Access All Cases Business Function. This now includes stages classified as Additional Information.
- A voluntary agency worker who is able to maintain FAD and has a role in the Family Services Stage can **not** access FAD homes via their implied role.

Service Plan Reviews

With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, the Service Plan Review Notification Letter has been updated to include valid phone numbers for Case Managers.

Support Tools

Online Help

CONNECTIONS Online Help provides descriptions for various windows, as well as step-by-step instructions for common tasks. You can access Online Help at any time, from any window in CONNECTIONS by clicking on the **Help** menu or pressing the **F1** key on your keyboard.

The **Contents**, **Index** and **Search** tabs in Online Help allow you to search for and navigate to the topic(s) you need help on.

Step-by-Step:
Accessing Online Help

1 Click on the **Help** menu on the CONNECTIONS Toolbar.
The following list of commands displays:

Contents	*A table of contents for the help facility with links to major sections.*
How Do I?	*Step-by-instructions to help you complete tasks using CONNECTIONS.*
Window Descriptions	*Descriptions of windows in CONNECTIONS, along with information on various fields.*
DSS Policy	*Online OCFS policy handbooks (under revision).*
Help On This Window	*Window description help for the window you are on.*
Help for Help	*Instructions on how to use the help functionality.*
About CONNECTIONS	*Information about the current CONNECTIONS version and build.*

2 Click on a command from the **Help** menu.
*The window related to your selection displays. In some cases, you will need to make another selection in that window to obtain instructions. At the top of each window you will see additional buttons and menus. Use the **Search** button to search for specific information in the Help function and use the **Back** button to return to windows you have just visited in Help. The **Glossary** button opens a list of important CONNECTIONS terms and the **Print** button allows you to print Help information.*

3 When you are done reviewing information in Help, close each *Help* window by clicking on the **Close** button (☒) in the top right corner of the window.
The system returns to the window you were using when you accessed Help.

Enterprise Help Desk

The New York State Office for Technology (NYS OFT) Enterprise Help Desk staff is available to answer basic questions related to your equipment or to solve problems you are having with the CONNECTIONS application. If they cannot solve your problem, they will record your information and forward it to others who can.

Your agency may have procedures in place for contacting the Enterprise Help Desk. Check with your supervisor before you call.

The Enterprise Help Desk is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The telephone number is:

1-800-NYS-1323
(1-800-697-1323)

When you call the Enterprise Help Desk with a problem, you will be given a ticket number to use for tracking your issue and its resolution. Keep a record of this number; you will need it for any follow-up conversations with the Enterprise Help Desk.

OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

A variety of training-related materials are available from the OCFS CONNECTIONS intranet site (*http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/*). The intranet site contains a wealth of information related to various aspects of CONNECTIONS, including training schedules, Alerts and Notices, Step-by-Step Guides (including the *CONNECTIONS Case Management Step-By-Step Guide*), Job Aids and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Release Notes – a complete list of the modifications, enhancements, fixes and impacts in the Build – is also available from the CONNECTIONS intranet site.

Step-by-Step:
Accessing the OCFS CONNECTIONS Intranet Site

1. From your local desktop, double-click on the **Internet Explorer** icon.
2. If the browser does not display the OCFS intranet site automatically, enter *http://ocfs.state.nyenet* into the browser's address line and press the **Enter** key on your keyboard.
   The OCFS intranet home page displays.
3. Click on the **CONNECTIONS** link.
   The CONNECTIONS home page displays.
4. Click on a topic to access information. For access to various Step-by-Step Guides and Job Aids, click on the **Step-by-Step/Job Aids/Tips** link. For access to Release Notes for a Build, click on the **Implementation** link.
5. To close Internet Explorer, click on the **File** menu and select **Close**.