THE CONNECTIONS WEEKLY
March 7 - 14, 2008

Build 18.9.6 Info You Should Know…
Just a Reminder About the Implementation of Build 18.9.6…

As you know, CONNECTIONS Build 18.9.6 will be rolled-out on Friday, March 7th. The application will not be available from 6:00PM, Friday through midnight on Saturday, a window of 6 hours. In the event that you are working in the application Friday, early evening, we ask that you sign out of the application by 5:45 PM.

Questions about what's in the Build? Please refer to the CONNECTIONS Build 18.9.6 Release Notes that were forwarded to Directors of Services, Implementation Coordinators, Security and Back-up Security Coordinators, as well as other key folks at both local districts and voluntary agencies, on Friday, February 22nd. The Build Release Notes, which are posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website on both the Home and the Implementation pages, identify the specific content of the Build. As you are aware, the focus of this Build is on most of the remaining, short term FIT recommendations, additional user requests and system support for mission critical tasks and legislation.

And…another quick reminder, Preview will still be available after the Build roll-out, just in case you want to "practice" or train staff using the new functionality!

Resource Information for Build 18.9.6 – Two NEW Job Aids…
- *The CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid – Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS)*
- *The Bridges to Health System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid*

In support of the introduction of the new functionality that will be implemented in Build 18.9.6, the Professional Development Program, Rockefeller College, University of Albany developed two NEW job aids – the *CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid – Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) and the Bridges to Health System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid.* For your reference, these resource tools are posted to the Training page of the CONNECTIONS intranet. *The CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid – Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS)* provides a detailed overview of the CONNECTIONS system changes being introduced with Build 18.9.6 and specifically information about updates to the Tracked Children Detail and Finalize Adoption windows that accommodate the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). *The Bridges to Health System*

Build 18.9.6 Job Aid details the CONNECTIONS system changes being introduced with Build 18.9.6 – specifically information about Bridges to Health (B2H). The job aid contains information about accessing B2H functionality, viewing, recording and modifying B2H information and generating the B2H Waiver Services Projected Budget Report.

Also, to be released shortly, is a job aid that reviews the other enhancements that are being released in this Build. This job aid will identify the area of the application affected and describe the efficiency offered by the new functionality. We encourage you to take a look at these resources as references as you navigate through the new functionality. And…we'll keep you posted about when the third job aid will be released as well!

An Impact Analysis: Entering AFCARS Data in CONNECTIONS...

The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) consists of a number of data elements that states are required to report to the federal government on a semi annual basis. With the implementation of Build 18.9.6, OCFS will be able to capture data pertaining to: conditions associated with the child's removal; foster home composition; and a child's adoption. An Impact Analysis titled **_Entering Data Required for AFCARS_** discusses what stays the same, what is new or changing and the implications/considerations of additional required documentation. The Impact Analysis also includes a mapping document of the AFCARS elements. For your reference, the impact analysis document is available on the CONNECTIONS intranet site on both the Home and Implementation page.

AFCARS and CCRS - How Do They Intersect???
AFCARS Information - Health Report

Please be aware that the information used to report the AFCARS elements to the Federal government is taken from multiple systems, *but* the original population is determined by the children who are listed in the CCRS system as having an open track with a program choice of *placement*. These children are the population that is listed on the Health Report titled 'Children In Care With No Clinical Diagnosis'. If you review the Health Report and believe that a child is listed incorrectly, please review the status of the child in CCRS and make certain that the child <u>does not</u> have an open track with a program choice of *placement*.

CONNECTIONS Build 18.9.6 / FAD...
Child Abuse and Maltreatment Information Maintained by a Child Abuse and Maltreatment Registry Administered in Other States

We are just letting you know that a communication was sent to Directors of Services and local district and voluntary agency Implementation Coordinators yesterday and the purpose of the communication was to remind you that, with the implementation of the upcoming Build - Build 18.9.6 - which will be rolled out this Friday, March 7th, the following requirements are supported in FAD: recording inquiries to child abuse and maltreatment registries outside of New York State for prospective foster or adoptive parents and other persons age 18 or over who reside in the home of the applicants, who have resided in another state within the past five years of the application for certification or approval; and recording the results of the inquiries.

OCFS promulgated regulations on this subject to comply with the federal **Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006**. Please note that the regulations took

effect on October 1, 2006, and the Notice appeared in the <u>State Register</u> on October 18, 2006.

The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act requires that whenever a person applies for certification or approval as a foster or adoptive parent, or any other person over the age of 18 who resides in the home of such applicant resided in another state or states in the five years preceding the application for certification or approval, the licensing or approving agency must request child abuse and maltreatment information maintained by the child abuse and maltreatment registry administered in the previous state(s) of residence.

For your reference, here are the citations on the regulations by topic:
- *For foster parent certification/approval:*
  - 18 NYCRR 443.2 (b) (5), (6), (7), (8), and (15)
  - 18 NYCRR 443.2 (f) (11) and (14)
  - 18 NYCRR 443.2 (i)
  - 18 NYCRR 443.7 (e)
  - 18 NYCRR 443.10 (b) (1) and (c) (1)
- *For adoptive parent approval:*
  - 18 NYCRR 421.11 (g) (2)
  - 18 NYCRR 421.15 (c) (7)
  - 18 NYCRR 421.16 (p)
  - 18 NYCRR 421.19 (e) (4) (*v*)

The following link: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/policy-issues/State_Child_Abuse_Registries.pdf contains contact information in other states for the purpose of compliance with the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. The list was prepared by the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning at Hunter College School of Social Work. It is not complete but may be updated over time.

The attachment below is an additional list of contact information in other states. It includes all states, but was not prepared for the purposes of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act.

State hotlines.doc
(70 KB)

Please Note: Clarification was recently issued by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the definition of "state" for the purpose of conducting out-of-state state central register checks on persons required to have such checks and who have lived in a state other than New York State within the previous five years prior to application. The definition of "state" includes: <u>*the District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa.*</u>

Bridges to Health (B2H) – What Is It? Where Do I Go to Find More Info???

In previous Weekly's we have described the Home and Community Based Waiver program – Bridges to Health (B2H), but now we have included information about this program directly on the CONNECTIONS intranet site on the Home and Implementation

pages. The following list highlights the information that you will find about B2H on the CONNECTIONS intranet site:

- WMS Medicaid Eligibility Fact Sheet
- Upstate - B2H CONNECTIONS/WMS System Instructions
- Instructions for Input of B2H Waiver in WMS Restriction/Exception Subsystem
- B2H Restriction/Exception Instructions
- Restriction/Exception Error Messages

Please note that the Downstate - B2H CONX/WMS System Instructions are forthcoming.

It should be noted that this information is also posted to the OCFS internet site: http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/. Just click on the *Bridges to Health* button on the left hand side of the page within the *Providers & Staff* box and….there is also a job aid titled: *The Bridges to Health System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid,* for your reference as well (see a description of the job aid included in this Weekly in the piece above titled: **Build 18.9.6 Info You should Know**).

A Bit More About the Portable Information Technology Pilot Program – Report to the Governor and Legislature – March 2008…

The OCFS report to the Governor and State Legislature on the portable technology demonstration project is available for all to read on the CONNECTIONS intranet website.   The report is posted to both the CONNECTIONS home page (under the dated heading of March 5, 2008) and the Remote Access page (under the heading, Portable Information Technology Demonstration Project).

A bit of background on the project - the NYS Legislature added funding to the 2006-07 Budget for OCFS to pilot the use of portable technology by child protective services (CPS) caseworkers in NYC/ACS, Monroe County DHS and Westchester County DSS. Based on positive pilot results, the Legislature funded OCFS in the 2007-08 Budget to proceed with a demonstration phase of the project, during which OCFS added 23 local districts to the project. Based on first year findings, the demonstration project focused primarily on providing participating CPS workers with laptop or tablet PCs. The OCFS-funded laptop/tablets contained built in WiFi wireless cards. The participating local districts were responsible for obtaining cellular broadband service. Also as part of this project, OCFS worked with the state Office of Court Administration to install WiFi service in those areas of court facilities that CPS caseworkers would have opportunity to use the portable devices while awaiting court appearances.

The evaluation of the demonstration project was conducted by the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), University at Albany/SUNY. Due to tight time constraints for conducting the field test and submitting the report, it was necessary to assess the use of the portable devices immediately after they were provided to the caseworkers, allowing no time for them to master the use of the devices and wireless access. Nonetheless CTG concluded that portable technology provided a useful tool for CPS work and cited evidence of improved productivity in terms of the volume of work produced.   The findings regarding the timeliness of task completion were somewhat less positive, however, it appears that these measures may have been affected by a concentration on catching up on overdue

work. CTG reported that the participating CPS caseworkers perceived that the use of the portable devices helped them to stay more on top of their work which reduced job stress and increased job satisfaction. OCFS will look for opportunities to analyze data from the participating districts at a later time to determine if, with more experience, workers will achieve even higher levels of improvements than were noted in this report.

Changes to BICS Screens…

Please note that the information below pertains to local districts only and was forwarded in a communication, from Nancy Pare, to SSPS Liaisons on Tuesday, March 4, 2008.

The following changes to the BICS Menu and Inquiry Screens were migrated to Production this past weekend (2/29/08 - 3/2/08) for the Vendor Receivable (VR) Pilot.

We ask, however, that you disregard these changes until the state-wide rollout of Vendor Receivable. At that time, you will receive Vendor Receivable training and a Vendor Receivable Processing Guide, that will make these changes meaningful to you. In the meantime, you will see the changes but please ignore them with regards to Vendor Receivable.

The following identify the changes that were implemented:
1. LDMIP Menu (LDMENU) - 2 New Selections:
    21 VENDOR RECEIVABLE (VR) ENTRY
    27 VENDOR RECEIVABLE (VR) INQUIRY
2. Vendor Payment History Inquiry (LVO220):
    INTERCEPT AMOUNT
    INTERCEPT PERCENTAGE
    INTERCEPT TAKEN
3. Checks Issued to Vendor Inquiry (LVO300):
    TOT-REF
    AR
4. General Voucher Inquiry (LVO240):
    INTERCEPT TAKEN
5. Voucher Listing By Check Number Inquiry (LVO270):
    INTERCEPT TAKEN
6. Services Inquiry - Issued Checks List Inquiry (LSVPS2):
    VR/AR
    AR RE
7. Services Inquiry - Check Detail Inquiry (LSVPS3):
    VR/AR
    REFUND-IND
    TOT-REF-AMT
8. Case Record of Assistance Inquiry (LSVPSH):
    CR/CLAIM-NUM

General Information Systems (GIS) Messages…
GIS 08 - #003 - Dated February 28, 2008 - Use of Social Security Numbers in MA Cases Involving Adopted Children
(Please note that this piece was included in the Weekly dated 2/29/08.)
The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to advise social services districts how to maintain the Social Security Number (SSN) to protect confidential information on adopted children.

On April 19, 2007, the New York State Department of Health issued GIS 07 MA/010 clarifying Social Security Number (SSN) requirements as a condition of Medicaid eligibility for children. Federal law requires that all applicants for Medicaid, including foster and adopted children, furnish their SSN as a condition of eligibility.

In those cases where an adopted child is <u>not</u> issued a new SSN following finalization of the adoption, social services districts may have been entering the adopted child's original (pre-adoption) SSN on the Welfare Management System (WMS). This entry may create a link to the adopted child's birth family and/or pre-adoptive case. **Therefore, social services districts are advised that an adopted child's original** (pre-adoption) **SSN must <u>not</u> be entered on WMS. A copy of the SSN is to be maintained in the hard copy sealed case record and the Medicaid case record.** Case information on an adopted child is considered part of the confidential adoption record and must be protected to prevent exposure of any identifying information to anyone other than the worker authorized by law to access such information.

In those cases where an adopted child <u>is</u> issued a "new" SSN, that number <u>may be</u> entered on WMS. Adoption staff should work with Non Services staff to make sure that a copy of the adopted child's SSN is obtained and recorded as part of the Non-Services case record including, if the adopted child is eligible, the Medicaid case.

With the June, 18, 2007 WMS migration, edits associated with a SSN Code value '2' – SSN Applied For – and a blank SSN, have been revised. Specifically, a SSN Code value of '2' is no longer valid with Recert (06) transactions and an error (1205 'SSN REQ FOR THIS TRANSACTION') is generated. Social services districts are instructed to continue to use SSN Code value '2' for adopted children and <u>override</u> this error. SSN Code '4' – Not Applied For – should not be used. This edit applies only to Case Type 20 (MA-Only) and Case Type 24 (FHP). Please consult with your WMS Coordinator regarding specific instructions. OCFS is currently working with DOH to address this issue.

Social services districts are also advised that a CIN Consolidation should never be completed to consolidate an adopted child's 'new' CIN with their original (pre-adoption) CIN. Please refer to GIS 08-#001 – WMS Client Identification Number (CIN) Consolidation Process – for further information.

As you are aware, all GIS messages are available in the Public Folders by following the path identified below.
All Public Folders/dfa.state.ny.us/OCFS/TSU/ ***Services systems Reference Documents/ GIS (system change notices)

New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet…
The following document(s) were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:
- *The CONNECTIONS System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid - Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) and*
- *The Bridges to Health System Build 18.9.6 Job Aid*
- *WMS Medicaid Eligibility Fact Sheet*
- *Upstate - B2H CONNECTIONS/WMS System Instructions*
- *Instructions for Input of B2H Waiver in WMS Restriction/Exception Subsystem*

- *B2H Restriction/Exception Instructions*
- *Restriction/Exception Error Messages*
- *The Portable Information Technology Pilot Program – Report to the Governor and Legislature – March 2008*
- *The CONNECTIONS Weekly for the week of February 29, 2008*

Weekly System Maintenance…

Due to regularly scheduled system maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on…

Due to implementation of Build 18.9.6, the CONNECTIONS application will not be available on:

- <u>Friday, 3/7/08</u> from 6:00 PM – 12:00 AM, Saturday, March 8th (a window of six hours)
- <u>Wednesday 3/12/08</u> from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- <u>Friday, 3/14/08</u> from 4:00 AM***** – 7:00 AM
     * Please note the additional one hour of downtime.