



CONNECTIONS Technical Bulletin

New CONNECTIONS Build: FLAG Approval Process and Sex Trafficking Screening Updates

The next build to the CONNECTIONS application is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, December 1st**, in the normal morning maintenance window, and will include the implementation of a formal FLAG approval process in FAR stages, as well as minor updates to the Sex Trafficking Screening window.

The Family Led Assessment Guide (FLAG) module of the Family Assessment Response (FAR) stage in CONNECTIONS currently does *not* require a formal supervisory approval process and instead is simply marked as final upon completion by the worker. This often leads to errors, as caseworkers unintentionally complete the FLAG on the wrong family, or else mark it as final when additional modifications are needed. In response to a request from the field highlighting these issues, the FLAG will now be submitted to a supervisor for approval before it becomes finalized, similar to all other submit/approve processes in the application.

Additionally, the build will incorporate minor edits to the Sex Trafficking Screening window in all CONNECTIONS stages, including the following:

- The “Quick Screening” type has been changed to “Rapid Screening.”
- The Sex Trafficking Screening window currently asks, “Was Child Ever in Care?” Following build implementation, if the response is “Yes,” a second prompt will enable: “In reference to the most recent episode of care, did the trafficking occur:” with the option to choose either “Prior to,” “During,” “Both,” or “After” via radio button.

If you have any questions about these upcoming changes, please do not hesitate to reach out to your regional CONNECTIONS Implementation Specialist, or email CONNECTIONS Triage at ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov.

Records Retention Tentatively Scheduled for Weekend of December 1st

The next quarterly Records Retention cycle is tentatively scheduled to take place over the weekend of December 1st.

The records retention quarterly cycle leads to the expungement of Child Protective electronic and hard copy case records pursuant to NYS Social Services law, which specifies the precise periods that case material must be retained and when it is required to delete case records.

Each district has identified individual recipients of the following two reports:

- 1) The *To Be Expunged* report notifies districts when cases are slated for expungement so that they may review to be certain that expungement is appropriate.
- 2) The *Expungement* report identifies cases that have been removed from CONNECTIONS, signaling that hard copies of CPS records for the case must also be destroyed.

A tip sheet that outlines district tasks in more detail is available on the [Intranet](#) and [Internet](#).

To determine the recipients of the two records retention reports in your district, contact the CONNECTIONS Application Help mailbox at ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov.

November 17—December 1

Weekly System Maintenance

Due to regularly scheduled maintenance, the CONNECTIONS application will be unavailable on:

- **Friday, November 17, from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m.**
- **Wednesday, November 22, from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m.**
- **Friday, November 24, from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m.**
- **Wednesday, November 29, from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m.**
- **Friday, December 1, from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m.**