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Informational Letter

Transmittal:	04-OCFS-INF-10
To:	Local District Commissioners Executive Directors of Voluntary Agencies
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Strategic Planning and Policy Development
Date:	December 21, 2004
Subject:	Phased Implementation for the New Case Management System in CONNECTIONS Build 18
Suggested Distribution:	Directors of Services, Voluntary Authorized Foster Care Agency Program Directors, Preventive Services Agency Executive Directors, CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Regional Office Directors
Attachments:	Att. I CONNECTIONS Build 18 Phased Implementation Schedule

I. Purpose

The extensive scope of the new Case Management system in CONNECTIONS Build 18 requires essential training for approximately 18,000 casework and supervisory staff throughout the State, deliberative planning by districts and agencies in collaboration with the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), and essential State and local resources to support its successful implementation. In order to support the most effective strategy for successful implementation, it is necessary to establish a phased or incremental implementation approach. The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to advise administrators and program staff of the respective period or “wave” of implementation to which each Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) or agency is assigned, and to provide information necessary for the successful implementation of CONNECTIONS Build 18 and new case practice supported in the Case Management system. It will also provide guidance regarding completion of the Uniform Case Record during the transition period that occurs from the initial wave of implementation until full statewide implementation.

II. Background

Incremental implementation of the Case Management system in CONNECTIONS, known as Build 18, for all child protective and child welfare staff will occur across the state over a twelve-month period. Fourteen “waves” of implementation for local departments of social services (LDSS), contract preventive agencies, and voluntary authorized foster care agencies (VA) will begin with a field test on December 14, 2004. Full implementation for each “wave” will then begin every two to four weeks from February 2005 through November 2005. Statewide implementation begins in the central New York region on February 7, 2005, and will be fully completed statewide with the implementation of New York City (NYC) by the end of 2005.

The attached schedule identifies the “wave” that each district or VA is assigned. Preventive agencies upstate and on Long Island will be implemented at the same time and “wave” as the district in which the preventive agency administrative office is located. Preventive agencies in NYC will be implemented with their respective Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) Office of Case Management Services.

All VAs contract with multiple districts and serve multiple families from across the state. In most circumstances, the majority of children and families a VA serves are from the district or immediate region in which the VA is located. The assignment of each VA to a wave of implementation has been coordinated by geographic region as designated in the attached schedule. However, some VAs have multiple community-based service centers or offices across the State, in addition to serving children from across the state in one residential campus. In these circumstances, districts that have custody of a child and the VA that is serving the child in a residential foster care setting may be implemented at different times. In order to support a more effective transition to the full integration of cases and deployment of the CONNECTIONS system, OCFS will provide guidance to address this period of time between the initial implementation and full implementation of Build 18 by all districts, preventive agencies, and VAs. The goal is to minimize the disruption for both districts and agencies and clarify the requirements associated with compliance for case planning during this period of transition from the existing NYS paper documentation system to the new Case Management system in CONNECTIONS.

III. Program Implications

In order to address these implementation issues; provide essential training to all LDSS, preventive and VA staff; and support the continuity of case planning and transition from the current documentation system to the new Build 18 Case Management system, OCFS has identified certain criteria for establishing an **effective date of implementation**. All program and policy changes and requirements associated with the implementation of Build 18 will be further identified in a forthcoming Administrative Directive, “Case Management Changes Associated with CONNECTIONS Build 18.”

Effective date of implementation is based upon an analysis of the following criteria:

1. The district/borough in which the preventive or VA central administrative office is located;

2. For NYC based VAs and contract preventive agencies, the unique ACS Office of Case Management Services Unit to which the agency is associated;
3. Allocation of training resources;
4. Completion of scheduled “wave” training by all district or agency staff. (This includes a minimum of 2 days of Case Management Policy/Practice Training for all Child Protective and Child Welfare staff, 1½ days of CONNECTIONS System Training for Child Protective staff, and 2½ days of CONNECTIONS System Training for Child Welfare staff. This training is essential for all caseworker and supervisory staff prior to implementation.);
5. For some exceptional VAs that provide services throughout the state, an evaluation of the number of children served from each district and an assessment that supports the most effective implementation for that agency was completed. Implementation for those unique VAs may occur at times that are not concurrent with the district/borough in which the agency is geographically located;
6. The VA serving the children and family and the district that has custody of the child are both implemented;
7. All open services cases assigned to each district will be converted on day 1 of the “wave” to which each district is assigned. For VAs that are serving children from these districts, the new Family Services Stage associated with that child in CONNECTIONS will appear on their workload. Until training is completed, staff should not begin to complete work in the new case management system supported in CONNECTIONS.

Requirements:

1. **Effective date of implementation** is defined as the date by which the LDSS, VA and preventive agency will be required to complete case documentation in the CONNECTIONS system as identified in regulation/policy directives.
2. This documentation includes all case management information formerly known as the Uniform Case Record (UCR) and progress notes, in addition to other information identified by OCFS as a requirement to be maintained in the CONNECTIONS system.
3. Individual case implementation for children in foster care requires that both the VA responsible for the care of the child and the local district with custody of the child have been implemented.

Example A: Child is in Erie County custody, placed in Hillside Children’s Center
~~☞~~ Erie County is in Wave 5 with an effective date of implementation of April 2005.
~~☞~~ Hillside Children’s Center is in Wave 4 with an effective date of implementation of March 2005.

Answer: Hillside is responsible for documentation of all Erie County cases in CONNECTIONS effective April 2005.

Example B: Two children are placed at St. Anne’s. One child is in Monroe County custody and one child is in Dutchess County custody.
~~☞~~ Monroe County is in Wave 4 with an effective date of implementation of March 2005.
~~☞~~ St. Anne’s is in Wave 7 and has an effective date of implementation of April 2005.

~~///~~ Dutchess County is in Wave 8 with an effective date of implementation of May 2005.

Answer: St. Anne's is responsible for documentation of all Monroe County cases in CONNECTIONS effective April 2005.

St. Anne's is responsible for documentation of all Dutchess County cases in CONNECTIONS effective May 2005.

Example C: Three children are in Onondaga County custody placed in 3 different residential settings: Elmcrest Children's Center, Parson's Child, and Family Center and Children's Home of Kingston.

~~///~~ Onondaga County is in Wave 2 with an effective date of implementation of February 2005.

~~///~~ Elmcrest is also in Wave 2 with an effective date of implementation of February 2005.

~~///~~ Parsons is in Wave 7 with an effective date of implementation of April 2005.

~~///~~ Children's Home of Kingston is in Wave 8 with an effective date of implementation of May 2005.

Answer: Onondaga County will have children placed in Elmcrest supported in CONNECTIONS in February 2005; children placed in Parsons supported in CONNECTIONS in April 2005; and children placed in Children's Home of Kingston supported in CONNECTIONS in May 2005.

4. For those districts that have children served by VAs where the central administration office is in NYC, the effective date of implementation for those VAs will correlate with the date of implementation for the respective NYC ACS case management office.

Example: A child from Westchester County is placed with Jewish Child Care Association (JCCA).

~~///~~ Westchester County is in Wave 9 with an effective implementation date of July 2005.

~~///~~ JCCA is in Wave 12 with an effective implementation date of September 2005.

Answer: JCCA will be officially responsible for all work in CONNECTIONS for all children, including the children placed by Westchester County, as of September 2005.

5. For those VAs that support satellite offices or residential programs in more than one district, there is an option to begin to implement the new Case Management system in CONNECTIONS for specific children being served in satellite programs or remote campuses at an earlier date than reflected in the respective wave assignment. This is a decision that must be made in conjunction with your respective Regional Office Director. In order to begin to utilize the new Case Management system in CONNECTIONS, staff must be fully trained and the VA central administration must be prepared to support staff as they begin implementation. This includes modification to processes and procedures at both the remote location and central administration that will support successful implementation.

6. Until the district with custody of the child and the VA caring for the child attain their **effective date of implementation**, the VA will continue to complete and submit the existing UCR Templates to the district as identified by current contract requirements and procedures.
7. For districts and agencies that are using the new Preview Training Application for Case Management - Build 18 in CONNECTIONS to support effective implementation, each new Family Assessment and Service Plan that is fully completed and printed for individual cases from the Preview Application may be deemed comparable to, and substituted for, the existing UCR templates.
8. For all UCR's with a due date that occurs within **30 days after the effective date of implementation**, staff may continue to complete the existing UCR templates.
9. The Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) may be due during this transition period. The case planner is the person who must submit the Family Assessment and Service Plan for approval. During the transition period, when new **Family Services stages involving foster care placements** are created in CONNECTIONS by an implemented LDSS, the LDSS should retain the role of case planner, at a minimum, until the VA has been implemented. At that time, LDSS may assign the role of case planner and/or caseworker to the VA.
10. At the time of conversion, the OCFS legacy system will assign open child welfare services cases to the individual "workloads" of both LDSS and VA staff based on their respective roles as identified in WMS/CCRS. Access to information in converted cases will occur with the effective date of implementation, or "wave" date for the LDSS who is the case manager. It is very important that the LDSS does not un-assign VA staff from their current case planning role prior to implementation. If LDSS does un-assign a VA staff, the VA staff member will not be able to view their workload in CONNECTIONS to evaluate the accurate assignment of cases to them, complete any general tasks related to their workload, or access important information regarding the families and children they serve during this time period.

For further information, please contact your respective Regional Office Director at the following address:

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Nancy W. Martinez s/s

Issued By:

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Attachment I**CONNECTIONS Build 18 Phased Implementation Schedule**

Wave / Day 1	District	Program / Agency Name	Code
Field Test	Oswego	Catholic Charities of Syracuse/Oswego	C02
12/13/04		Liberty Resources	IMK
		Oswego County Opportunities Inc.	C25
1 and 2	Cayuga	Catholic Charities of Syracuse/Oswego	C02
2/7/05	Onondaga	Liberty Resources	IMK
	Tompkins	Oswego County Opportunities Inc.	C25
	Cortland	Berkshire Farm	P33
	Oswego	George Junior Republic, Inc.	W15
		Tompkins County YAP	SF4
		Catholic Charities of Syracuse/Cortland	C21
		Cayuga Home For Children	W03
		Toomey Residential & Comm Svcs.	C06
		Elmcrest Children's Center	C08
		Arise Child & Family Svcs.	C15
		Salvation Army Syracuse	C17
		Cayuga Counseling Services	W02
		Partnership for Results	
		Youth Advocacy Program	
3	Chemung	Catholic Charities Broome County	C01
2/21/05	Steuben	Children's Home Wyoming Conf.	C14
	Broome	YAP of Broome County	SF4
	Chenango	Catholic Charities Southern Tier	I84
	Madison	Glove House, Inc	W05
	Tioga	Catholic Charities Chenango	C18
	Schuyler	KidsPeace of NY	W47
	Seneca	Kinship Family & Youth Services	W11
	Yates	New Life Homes/Snell Farms	W18
	Livingston	Family Service Society	S22
	Ontario		
4	Monroe	Strong Memorial Hospital	S01
3/7/05	Wayne	Lifetime Assistance Inc.	IT2
		Family Service of Rochester	S08
		Monroe County Office of Probation	SD8
		Rochester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	SD9
		Mt. Hope Family Center	SG6
		Catholic Family Center	W01
		Crestwood Children's Center	W04
		Hillside Children's Center	W09
		St Joseph's Villa Of Rochester	W14
		Ibero-American Action League	W32
		Urban League Of Rochester	W33
5	Erie	Charlee Catt Community Action	T34
3/21/05		Gustavus Adolphus	T11

		Buffalo Urban League	Q90
		Community Services for Dev Disabled	SF8
		Transitional Services Inc.	IIA
		Baker Victory	T01
		Catholic Charities Buffalo	T03
		Child & Family Services Erie	T07
		Gateway/Longview	T10
		Hopevale Inc.	T12
		Compass House	T23
		Native American Community Services	T24
		St Augustine's Center, Inc.	T25
		Community Missions, Inc.	T41
		KidsPeace Nat Ctrs Kids Crisis	T27
6	Allegany	New Directions	T20
4/4/05	Cattaraugus	St. Francis Academy	M03
	Chautauqua	Mountain Lake Children's Residence	M48
	Genesee	New York School For Blind	IND
	Niagara	Children's Home Jefferson County	C07
	Orleans	Comm Mission Niagara Frontier	T41
	Wyoming	House Of The Good Shepherd	C12
	Herkimer	Upstate Home For Children	905
	Jefferson	Carver Foster Care Prevention	SD4
	Lewis	Child Program and Family Resource Center	
	Oneida	Hispanic Outreach Services	SD5
	St. Lawrence	Neighborhood Center	SF1
	Clinton	Saint Francis Academy	M03
	Essex	Victim Assistance Center of Watertown	
	Franklin		
	Hamilton		
	Montgomery		
	Otsego		
	St Regis		
	Herkimer		
7	Albany	Center For The Disabled	IIL
4/18/05	Fulton	Parsons Child & Family Center	M04
	Rensselaer	La Salle School, Inc.	M16
	Saratoga	St. Anne Institute	M20
	Schenectady	St. Catherine's Ctr. Children	M21
	Warren	St. Colman's Home	M22
	Washington	Equinox, Inc.	M27
		Community Maternity Services	M28
		Center For Family & Youth	M46
		Trinity Institute	S78
		Big Brothers/Big Sisters	SD2
		Rehab Support Svs. - Compeer for Kids	
		Vanderheyden Hall	M24
		Transitional Svs. Kaydeross	C45
		Charlton School	M11
		Catholic Fam & Comm Svs. Saratoga	M33
		Schenectady Comm Action Pgm.	M31
		Northeast Parent and Child Soc	M40

8	Columbia	Columbia Greene MH Association	
5/16/05	Delaware	Anderson School	901
	Greene	Children's Home Poughkeepsie	F02
	Schoharie	Community Living Opportunities	F10
	Dutchess	Astor Home For Children	N14
	Orange	Occupations/Family Counseling, Inc.	
	Putnam	Mcquade Children's Services	F03
	Rockland	Summit Children's Resdnce Ctr.	R13
	Sullivan	Family Of Woodstock	C11
	Ulster	Children's Home Of Kingston	F01
		Mental Health Assn/Ulster	IJC
		St John Bosco	IVA
		St Cabrini Home, Inc.	N13
9	Westchester	Broadhurst-Center Corporation	I45
6/6/05		Four Winds Katonah	II5
		Family Service Of Westchester	R01
		Julia Dyckman Andrus Memorial	R14
		Yonkers Residential Center	R21
		The Lexington Center for Recovery	
		Urban League	SA7
10	Nassau	Nassau County Probation	D37
7/6/05	Suffolk	Regina Maternity Services Corp.	R12
		Family & Children's Association	R15
		Leadership Training Institute	R22
		Nassau Coalition on Child Abuse and Neglect	SG7
		Maryhaven School	904
		Hope For Youth, Inc.	R06
		Timothy Hill Children's Ranch	R24
		Lake Grove School	R30
		LI Adolescent & Family Services	R36
		Madonna Heights Services (St. Chris -Ott)	U10
		Awixa Home Inc.	U70
11	ACS	Manhattan Office of Field Services	072
8/8/05		Manhattan Family Preservation Program	072
		Office of Confidential Investigation	072
		ACM CES/Intake/MILS/Transfer	ACM
		DCCS Intake/MILS/Transfer	DCCS
		OCACM CES/Intake/MILS/Transfer	OCM
		Management Information Systems	MIS
		Voluntary Agencies IT	VA
		New Alternatives for Children, Inc.	700
		St. Vincent's Services	B04
		St. Christopher-Otilie	B06
		Jewish Child Care Association	J10
		Jewish Board of Family and Children Services	J70
		Cardinal McCloskey	N01
		New York Foundling Hospital / St. Agatha	N03
		St. Dominic's Home	N05
		Catholic Guardian Society - NY	N07

		St. Cabrini	N13
		Astor Home	N14
		Good Shepherd Services	N40
		St. Christopher Inc.	P11
		Children's Village	P12
		Inwood House, New York City	P23
		Ohel Children's Home and Family Services Inc.	U11
12	ACS	Heart Share Human Services of New York	B05
9/26/05		MercyFirst (formerly Angel Guardian/St. Mary's)	B07
		St. John's Residence for Boys	B09
		Boys Harbor, Inc.	I43
		East Harlem Council for Community Improvement	IQQ
		Catholic Home Bureau	N04
		Pius XII School	N06
		Forestdale, Inc.	P01
		Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service	P02
		Graham-Windham Services to Families and Children	P04
		Society For Seaman's Services	P14
		Edwin Gould Services for Children	P15
		Lakeside Family and Children Services	P16
		Salvation Army Social Services for Children	P18
		Episcopal Social Services	P27
		Builders for the Family and Youth of the Diocese of Brooklyn	S09
		Day Care Council of New York, Inc.	S27
		Family Consultation Service Diocese of Long Island	S33
		Hellenic American Neighborhood Action Committee In	S42
		Lower East Side Family Union	S45
		New York Urban League	S51
		Protestant Board of Guardians Youth Guardian Service	S54
		Puerto Rican Family Institute	S57
		Harlem Children's Zone, Inc. (formerly Rheedlen Foundation)	S60
		Steinway Child and Family Services, Inc.	S63
		Staten Island Mental Health Society	S66
		Highbridge Community Life Center	S70
		Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center	S72
		Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service	S74
		Dominican Sisters Family Life Program	S80
		Kingsbridge Heights Community Center	S81
		SCAN New York	S82
		Partnership with Children (formerly The Big Sisters Inc.)	S84
		Child Development Support Corporation	S85
		Community Counseling & Mediation	S86
		Chinese-American Planning Council	S88
		Women's Prison Assoc. & Home Inc.	S91
		St. Lukes-Roosevelt Hospital - First Step Program	S94
		Visiting Nurse Services, Harlem Hospital	S95
		Brooklyn Community Counseling and Mediation	S96
		Queens Child Guidance Center	S97
		Southern Queens Park Association	S98
		Fordham-Tremont Community Mental Health Center	S99
		Neighborhood Youth & Family Services	SA1
		Family Support Systems Unlimited, Inc.	SA4

		Alianza Dominicana, Inc.	SB3
		Northside Center for Child Development Inc.	SB5
		Flatbush Haitian Center, Inc.	SB6
		United Activities Unlimited, Inc.	SC5
		Sesame Flyers (formerly New Perspective Carnarsie)	SC6
		Cypress Hills Local Development Corp.	SC7
		Church Avenue Merchant's Block Association	SC8
		Chinatown YMCA Family Support Program	SC9
		Citizens Advice Bureau	SI1
		Big Brothers & Sisters of New York City	SI2
		Pathways for Youth, Inc.	SI3
		New World Communities	SI4
		North Manhattan Perinatal Partnership	SI5
		Arab-American Family Support Center	SI6
		New York City Mission Society	SI7
		Dominican Women's Development Center	SI8
		The Center for Children and Families Inc. / Safe Space	U12
		Brooklyn SPCC	U13
		Green Chimney's	U15
		Martin DePorres Group Homes	U17
		Coalition for Hispanic Family Services	U30
		Concord Family Services/Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund	U31
		Association to Benefit Children/Variety House	U61
13	ACS	Brooklyn Division of Child Protection / FPP	071
10/24/05		Queens Division of Child Protection / FPP	073
		Little Flower Children's Services	B08
		Lincoln Hall	N11
		Rosalie Hall	N23
		Sheltering Arms Children's Services	P03
		Abbott House	P10
		Leake and Watts	P13
		Lutheran Social Services of Metropolitan New York Inc.	P31
		Community Mediation Services, Inc.	S96
		The Valley Inc.	SC1
		Children's Aid Society	U02
		Harlem-Dowling Westside Center for Children and Family Services	U14
		Miracle Makers	U53
14	ACS	Bronx Division of Child Protection / FPP	070
11/21/05		Staten Island Division of Child Protection / FPP	074
		Pre-Placement	072
		Bronx Direct Foster Care Services	800
		Brooklyn Direct Foster Care Services	801
		Queens Direct Foster Care Services	802
		Direct Care Adoption	850
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Bronx	811
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Queens/Manhattan	812
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Brooklyn	813
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Crossroads	814
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Ashford Brooklyn	815
		Direct Congregate Care Services-Transitional Centers	816

		Agency Program Assistance	APA
		Accountability Review Panel (ARP)	DLS
		Parent Recruitment Evaluation and Permanency	PREP
		Office of Management Research and Evaluation	OMR
		Office of Quality Improvement	QI
		Third Party Review	TPR