



CONNECTIONS Build Bulletin

CONNECTIONS Build: Family Services Stage—Phase 4 Implemented

The Family Services Stage (FSS): Phase 4 build was implemented in the CONNECTIONS application on Friday, June 10th. The build included the modernization of the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP), and the Service Plan Review (SPR), as well as new functionality to support The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act.

Identified Issues

Minor issues identified since implementation, as well as anticipated fixes and workarounds, where applicable, are outlined below:

- *Service Plan Review Specialty Path*— The specialty path allowing users with the appropriate credentials to access the Service Plan Review is currently not working correctly. This will be fixed in an upcoming build.
- *Case Summary Viewed by Voluntary Agency Workers*— The Case Summary window from an FSS consists of three tabs: Assignments, Stage To-Do's, and Stage Events. Currently, Voluntary Agency staff accessing the Case Summary hyperlink from their workload are only able to view the Stage Events tab. This will be corrected in an upcoming build. As a workaround, Voluntary Agency staff should access the Stage Summary Event from the event list and then navigate to Case Summary — this path displays the assignments appropriately.
- *Age of Child on the Bill of Rights Window within a Plan Amendment* — On the Bill of Rights window within a FASP (including types INI, COMP, or Reassessment), the child's age is displayed and calculated as of the due date of the FASP. However, a Plan Amendment has no due date, and as such, the Bill of Rights window should display the children with their current age. Currently, the window incorrectly displays the child's age as of the due date of the last FASP. This will be corrected in an upcoming build — ensuring that the Bill of Rights window in a Plan Amendment only displays the child's current age.
- *Sex Trafficking Screening in an INV/FAR Stage* — If a child turns 18 during the course of an open investigation (eighteenth birthday occurs *after* the date of Intake), a Sex Trafficking Screening is still required. Currently, the Sex Trafficking Screening window only populates with children who are under 18 as of the current date. A fix will be implemented to ensure that the Sex Trafficking Screening window populates with all children who were under eighteen *at the time of the associated Intake*. Until the fix is implemented, any stages in which this scenario is occurring, and which is preventing staff from submitting their stages for closure, should be reported to the CONNECTIONS Triage Unit, at ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov.

Each of the above outlined issues is tentatively scheduled for correction on Friday, June 24th, during the normal morning maintenance window.

Overview

The Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) and Service Plan Review (SPR) of the Family Services Stage (FSS) was updated to a modernized user interface, consistent with other modernized CONNECTIONS modules such as Child Protective Services (CPS) Investigation (INV) and Family Services Intake (FSI) stages. Modernization replaced most buttons and drop-down menus with links in the left navigation panel and improved general navigation and window layout, but overall functionality and processes, as well as security access rules, remains essentially the same.

Additionally, new edits to the **CPS Safety Assessment**, accessible in INV, Family Assessment Response (FAR), and FSS stages, ensures that the Safety Decision and Safety Factors are consistent.

The FSS Phase 4 build also introduced **new edits and windows to support The Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act**, including:

- *INV and FAR Conclusion edits* — Added to verify that all persons under the age of 18 with an appropriate role in the case have a valid Sex Trafficking Screening recorded since the date of Intake.
- *FASP Submission edits* — Added to prevent a FASP from being submitted unless there is a valid Sex Trafficking Screening recorded for all tracked children as of the due date of the FASP.
- *Tracked Child: APPLA* — The age requirement for Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement (APPLA) changed to 16 and older. Additionally, there is new documentation requirements for APPLA.
- *Essential Documents* — There is a new Essential Documents tab in the Tracked Children Detail window, to track the status of the essential documents collected for a child in foster care.
- *Missing Child* — A new window accessed from the Workload within INV, FAR, and FSS stages with type CWS and CCR, includes questions addressing the date of absence, reporting requirements, the child's reason for absence, experience while missing, and any other contributing factors.
- *Bill of Rights* — A new window accessed from within the FASP ensures that all children with a Program Choice of Placement who will be age 14 years or older by the due date of the FASP have been provided with the required Bill of Rights.

Support Documentation and Assistance

Support documentation has been made available to assist staff. These items include:

- An **Impact Analysis** that summarizes the new features and impacts for district and agency management to consider, is now available on both the [Intranet](#) and [Internet](#).
- A **Job Aid**, which provides an overview of the modernized and new windows in CONNECTIONS, as well as step-by-step instructions for certain tasks, is available on both the [Intranet](#) and [Internet](#).
- If you have **questions** related to the build or the CONNECTIONS application in general, please reach out to your regional Implementation Specialist ([Intranet](#) / [Internet](#)). Alternatively, issues can be sent to the CONNECTIONS Triage Mailbox at ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov or a ticket can be created with the ITS Enterprise Service Desk, at 1-800-697-1323.