



CONNECTIONS Build Bulletin

Build 3 2021: December 10, 2021

CONNECTIONS Build 3 2021 is currently scheduled for deployment on Friday, December 10, 2021. This build contains system modifications to implement Part R of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022, often referred to as “SCR Reform Legislation,” which becomes effective on January 1, 2022, as well as more changes related to the federal and state Family First Preventive Services Act (FFPSA, or Family First) legislation. Most notable is a change which allows voluntary agency and LDSS staff to open, maintain, and approve supervised settings in FAD.

This build also impacts systems interfacing with CONNECTIONS used by the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) and other state staff, including the Advanced Integrated Management System (AIMS), Fair Hearing Administrative Review Management system (FHARM), and Special Hearings Information System (SHIS). In addition, this build adds a new Uploads category.

Please note that any administrative documents referenced below can be found by searching the document name on the OCFS Intranet site (<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/>).

SCR Reform Modifications

New Value for Substantiated Not R&R

SCR Reform Legislation dictates that an indicated report of child **maltreatment** shall be deemed not relevant and reasonably related (Not R&R) to employment eight years after the date of indication. Please note that this change does not apply to indicated reports of child abuse. (Previously, an indicated report could only be designated Not R&R as part of an administrative appeal challenging the indicated report.) This impacts persons receiving a database check pursuant to Social Services Law (SSL) section 424-a for employment or licensure in certain fields working with children or vulnerable adults. The existence of reports that are deemed Not R&R cannot be disclosed as part of an SCR database check under the section of law referenced above.

With this change, CONNECTIONS will automatically calculate substantiated allegations to be Not R&R after eight years if the report is maltreatment only. Once the report is deemed Not R&R by operation of law, it cannot be changed back to be considered R&R. This systems change will also allow OCFS staff entering administrative review or fair hearing decisions to enter R&R information into the other systems they use which interface with CONNECTIONS. The information will then be reflected in CONNECTIONS. This new designation will display on the Allegations screen for closed investigation (INV) stages, open or closed ARI stages, and on multiple output reports within CONNECTIONS.

Please note that this change impacts state staff processing clearances and has no impact on the business processes of any other CONNECTIONS users.

MA/AB Child	Child ID	Allegation	Alleged Subject	Subject ID	UnSub/Sub	Not RAR	Stage
Jones, Michael	87654321	PDRG	Jones, Kelly	12345678	SUB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	INT

Addition of Article 10 Proceedings Questions to CONNECTIONS

As part of SCR Reform, the outcome of Article 10 (abuse/neglect) proceedings in Family Court will dictate the decision of an administrative review in relation to the same subject and allegations. As a result, new fields have been added to CONNECTIONS to capture Article 10 information on substantiated allegations.

When an allegation is marked as substantiated on the Allegations window, a new, required question, "Has an Article 10 been Filed?" displays. "Yes" or "No" must be selected from a corresponding dropdown.

The screenshot shows a software interface with two dropdown menus. The first dropdown is labeled "Has an Article 10 been Filed?" and has "Yes" selected. The second dropdown is labeled "Resolution of Article 10 Filing:" and has "Pending" selected. A list of options is visible below the second dropdown, including "Pending", "Withdrawn with Prejudice", "Withdrawn without Prejudice", "Finding of Abuse or Maltreatment Made", "Dismissed", "ACOD", and "Suspended Judgment".

If the selected response is "Yes," a second required field, "Resolution of Article 10 Filing" displays. Available selections are:

- Pending
- Withdrawn with Prejudice
- Withdrawn without Prejudice
- Finding of Abuse or Maltreatment Made
- Dismissed
- ACOD
- Suspended Judgment
- Other

Article 10 information must be entered for each allegation marked as Substantiated before you can save & close the window.

To allow LDSS to update Article 10 information after the CPS stage is closed, the new fields are also available in Local Data Maintenance (LDM), and through an open ARI stage.

To facilitate LDSS access to the open ARI stage, a new, navigable To-Do will be created whenever an ARI stage is opened. The To-Do will be sent to the historical primary worker of the INV stage, and the historical primary worker's supervisor. Navigating the To-Do will bring the historical primary worker or supervisor to a read-only view of the Allegations window for the closed INV stage, with modify ability to the Article 10 information components only.

The timely entering of Article 10 information is critical as it impacts any administrative review and fair hearing taking place regarding these investigations.

A Tip Sheet, **Adding Article 10 Information in CONNECTIONS**, is forthcoming and will be available within the CONNECTIONS Helpful Info tab as well as on the OCFS CONNECTIONS website.

SCR Reform-Fair Preponderance Language in CONNECTIONS and AIMS

Letters

SCR Reform Legislation changes the standard of evidence to substantiate an allegation in a CPS investigation from “some credible evidence” to “a fair preponderance of evidence.” Due to this change, new language was needed in all 14 versions of the “notice” letters in CONNECTIONS (shown below). Twenty-eight (28) AIMS letters were also updated to comply with the new standard and six new AIMS letters were created. Changes to incorporate more plain language were incorporated in all 48 letters.

Letter Name	Versions
Notice of Existence-Subject	familial (English), familial (Spanish), non-familial (English)
Notice of Indication-Subject	familial (English), familial (Spanish), non-familial (English)
Notice of Existence-Other person named	familial (English), familial (Spanish), non-familial (English)
Notice of Indication-Other person named	familial (English), familial (Spanish), non-familial (English)
Notice of Existence-notification re: your child	Non-familial
Notice of Indication-notification re: your child	Non-familial

AIMS letters will be implemented on January 1, 2022. New CONNECTIONS letters will appear using the existing links/process for generating these letters for any investigation of an intake report received on January 1, 2022 or later. For intake reports received prior to that date, the “old” letters will continue to generate.

SCR Reform-New Unfounded Letters

As a result of SCR Reform Legislation, changes were also made to the Unfounded letter, including changes to include more plain language. Unfounded letters are generated automatically, shortly after a CPS investigation is unfounded and are approved and mailed by the SCR. Following the same logic as the “notice” letters above, unfounded investigations with an intake date prior to January 1, 2022 will generate the “old” Unfounded letter, whereas unfounded investigations with an intake date on or after January 1, 2022 will generate the “new” Unfounded letter.

*For more information on this change, including a mandated training for CPS staff, see **21-OCFS-ADM-26-Change in Standard of Evidence for Child Protective Services Investigations**.*

Family First Modifications

Facility Type and Program Type Name Changes from Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) to Supervised Setting

Issue Date: 12/1/2021

The facility type “Supervised Ind Living Program” has been changed on the Licensing Information window of CONNECTIONS FAD stages to “Supervised Setting.”

New York State has established three types of Supervised Setting Programs (SSPs):

- Community Sites, which could include apartments, room rentals, shared housing, residing with kin
- College-Owned Housing, which includes dormitories and college-owned houses and apartments
- Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILPs)

The program type of “Cong. Care Only - Supervised Independent Living Program” will be decommissioned. A new program type of “Cong. Care Only - Supervised Setting” will be available for use. The newly named facility type and new program type are available for ALL supervised setting options, not just SILPs.

Further guidance will be provided in the near future by OCFS via Administrative Directives (ADMs) and Job Aids.

Allow Voluntary Agency (VA) and Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) Staff to Open and Maintain Supervised Settings

Prior to this build, only state and VA staff could open, maintain, and approve congregate resources with a facility type of Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILPs). Additionally, VA staff were not allowed to apply the program type of “Cong. Care Only - Supervised Setting.” With the changes in this build, VA and LDSS staff will be given the ability to open, maintain, and approve congregate resources with a facility type of “Supervised Setting” and apply the program type “Cong. Care Only - Supervised Setting.”

Please note that while both LDSS and VAs can create Supervised Settings, there is currently no mechanism for LDSS to issue payments to these resources due to limitations in the BICS system. For payment purposes, LDSSs may wish to have their VA partners manage Supervised Settings until this issue is resolved.

Uploads

New Uploads Subcategory for Plan of Safe Care

In the Uploads module, a new subcategory, “Plan of Safe Care,” has been added under the CARA category.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Photo/Doc Detail" with the following fields and values:

Worker:		Date Created:	12/22/2017
Stage ID:		Type:	Photo
Category:	CARA		*
Sub-Category:	Plan of Safe Care		*
Comments:	Plan of Safe Care Safety Form Other		

Issue Date: 12/1/2021

Plans of Safe Care should be uploaded and linked to the relevant Parent's Drug/Alcohol Misuse (PDRG) allegation.

CR Reform Modifications-Notable Changes to Other Systems

New Value for Substantiated Not R&R

AIMS

- A new Not R&R column will be added to person and case summary grids.

FHARM

- State staff, including the Appeals Processing Team (APT) as well as Bureau of Special Hearings (BSH) staff, will have the ability to enter Not R&R Administrative Review and Fair Hearing decisions, respectively. The Not R&R designation will be reflected in CONNECTIONS as shown above.

Addition of Article 10 Proceedings

FHARM

- Article 10 information from CONNECTIONS as described above, will also be displayed in FHARM to alert APT and BSH staff of pending or completed Article 10 proceedings, which will impact the final decision.
- An Article 10 indicator will be added for Requests and Hearing Records with Article 10 information, and the Article 10 indicator will be sent to the Special Hearings Information System (SHIS).
- An Article 10 Resolution Completed checkbox will be added for ARI Stages with Article 10 information. When the Article 10 Resolution Completed checkbox is checked, an update will be sent to CONNECTIONS, and the checkbox will be displayed on the ARI window in CONNECTIONS.

The CONNECTIONS Team is here to help!

Resources

- As always, **CONNECTIONS Implementation Staff** will be available to offer on-site support as necessary. A Contact list of each district and agency's assigned implementation specialist can be found on the CONNECTIONS [Intranet](#) and [Internet](#) pages.
- **ITS Service Desk—844-891-1786 or fixit@its.ny.gov**



Intranet: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/>
Internet: <http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect>

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