



New York State  
Office of  
Children &  
Family  
Services

December 16, 2011

Dear Director of Services/Staff Development  
Coordinator/Implementation Coordinator:

Commissioners and Executive Directors were notified that the next phase of the CONNECTIONS Transformation, the introduction of the new Permanency Hearing Report (PHR), will be implemented during the first quarter of 2012. We now have established a date for this implementation—February 13, 2012. The entire state will be implemented on that one day.

Andrew M. Cuomo  
*Governor*

Gladys Carrión, Esq.  
*Commissioner*

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As you may be aware, the PHR was partially integrated into CONNECTIONS in March 2007. Although a significant improvement over the earlier standalone templates, OCFS received considerable input from users regarding the need to provide more automated support to compile the report. Much of the content of the report will remain the same, however, questions have been added to reflect recent statutory changes and several questions have been revised for clarity. With the assistance of workgroups of users and attorneys from throughout the State, OCFS has developed several ease of use enhancements that will result in a more useful and readable PHR. Improvements include:

- Narratives and other data inputted into the new windows will be available for reuse in subsequent PHRs (“new using”).
- A new launch option, **Launch PHR - New Using**, will enable pre-filling information from a previous PHR that was produced using the new windows.
- It will no longer be necessary to repeatedly enter Court Information, Docket Information and Adoption Checklist data for each PHR.
- The new PHR will only present age- and PPG-appropriate questions.
- “Sticky Notes” will be able to be attached to draft PHRs to facilitate communication between reviewers and those preparing the PHR.
- Users will be able to print the entire report or just one section.
- A Check PHR Detail window will alert preparers to any missing components and list them on a single window.
- Caseworkers will be able to submit a PHR for review to their supervisor or other CONNECTIONS user, inside or outside their organization. Supervisors and attorneys representing local districts will be able to review and comment on a draft PHR on-line.



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The local district will have the option to include space for an attorney signature on the Verification Page.

OCFS will be providing support for the implementation in the following ways:

- **Training**—Two and a half hour training sessions will be available from January 9<sup>th</sup> through February 10<sup>th</sup>. Districts and agencies will be able to choose between attending regional classes in computer labs with instructors or instructor-led iLinc sessions taken over the internet from one's desktop. In addition, electronic exercises to reinforce the training will be available online through the OCFS website and an activities booklet for use in conjunction with the training data base will also be provided. Lastly, a Quick Start Guide will offer basic documentation to help caseworkers to get started in using the Permanency Hearing Report. Here is a link to the training schedule: <http://stars.bsc-cdhs.org/>
- **Business Process Review**—Districts and Voluntary Agencies will need to consider whether to add space for an additional signature on the Verification Page. In addition, Districts and Voluntary Agencies will need to determine whether the Submit for Review process will replace current "off line" review procedures. If DSS attorneys will review the draft PHR on-line, it must be determined whether the attorneys will require access to CONNECTIONS and training. OCFS regional staff will provide business process analysis support to assist districts and agencies in making these determinations. An Impact Analysis (see attached below) also has been prepared to assist local management in considering possible business process options offered by the PHR.



Impact  
Analysis-PHR\_Final\_1

- **Implementation Support**—Regional Staff have already begun regional and local meetings orienting management level staff to the challenges and choices available to local districts and agencies as they implement the redesigned PHR. Regional OCFS staff will also be available on site to assist line staff and supervisors in the use of the PHR once it has been implemented. Attached below is an implementation checklist which should provide a useful guide for districts and agencies as they prepare to implement the PHR build.



PHR  
Implementation Readiness

- **Questions** — If you have any questions, you can contact your CONNECTIONS Regional Office representative. Refer to the attached document below for a listing of the Regional Representatives.



CONNECTIONS  
Regional Office Staff-

Sincerely,

**/S/ LMV 12/16/11**

Laura M. Velez  
Deputy Commissioner  
Child Welfare and Community Services

**/S/ WET 12/16/11**

William E. Travis, Jr,  
CIO/Deputy Commissioner  
Information Technology

cc: Local Commissioners  
Executive Directors