



November 28, 2011

Dear Commissioner/VA Executive Director:

Re: Permanency Hearing Report Roll Out

**New York State
Office of
Children &
Family
Services**

www.ocfs.state.ny.us

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY
12144-2834

We are pleased to inform you about the next phase of the CONNECTIONS Transformation – the introduction of the new Permanency Hearing Report (PHR). 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. Family court judges, court referees and attorneys provided input on the PHR format and legal requirements. With the assistance of users from throughout the State, OCFS has developed several ease of use enhancements that will result in a more useful and readable PHR.

The PHR will be released to the field during the first quarter of 2012. 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. An important new feature will be the ability for supervisors and attorneys representing local districts to review and comment on a draft PHR on-line. We believe this feature will help address the existing problem of potential mismatches between what is provided to the court and what is stored in the system. To achieve this improvement, your staff may need to re-engineer current PHR review and submission processes. OCFS will provide the tools and technical assistance to support you in this effort.

In the next few weeks, please encourage your staff to plan for the implementation by;

- Being alert to announcements from OCFS/CONNECTIONS concerning the new PHR.
- Attending regional meetings to receive an orientation to the new windows and OCFS implementation and training plans.
- Participating in a survey to document current business processes used to review and submit the PHR and taking advantage of on-site assistance to help make these processes more efficient.
- Engaging DSS attorneys for their input into potential changes to business processes and identifying any needs for training and support.
- Enrolling in the instructor-led training (via classroom or iLinc) that will be offered.
- Exploring the tools posted on the CONNECTIONS internet, including Impact Analysis, User Guide, Readiness Checklist as well as others.
- Practice using the training database and/or new web-based tool.

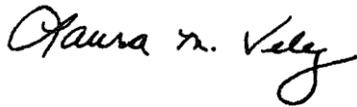


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Throughout this process, OCFS regional implementation staff will be available for on-site technical assistance. If you have any questions specific to the implementation and/or training, please contact your CONNECTIONS regional implementation coordinator or Jack Nabozny, Manager of Implementation and Operational Support, at 518-402-3078 or Jack.Nabozny@ocfs.state.ny.us.

Thank you for your continued support while we partner to transform the delivery of child welfare services.

Sincerely,



Laura M. Velez
Deputy Commissioner
Child Welfare and Community Services



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

cc: William Gettman, Executive Deputy Commissioner