

## CONNECTIONS to VDI and MFA FAQ

### Contents

Rollout Schedule .....	1
Installing VMware .....	2
Access Methods .....	3
Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) and RSA Tokens .....	5
Working within the CONNECTIONS VDI Environment .....	8
Training and Support .....	8

**NOTE:** New and updated content since the last update is highlighted.

### Rollout Schedule

**1. Q. When is my county/voluntary agency expected to begin accessing CONNECTIONS through VMware/VDI?**

**A.** As of March 2021, the pilot-period has concluded, and statewide rollout will now occur in two, regionally controlled, phases:

•**1st phase** - Users who can connect using the VMware Horizon Client (versions 5.5.0 or 5.5.1) can transition to VDI based on the regional schedule below. We ask for all agencies to strive to meet the target end dates, as the end date for Citrix will be determined after the second rollout phase and we will need you to confirm that all users are able to access CONNECTIONS through VDI.

*Rollout Schedule -1st phase - VMware Horizon Client users:*

<b>Region</b>	<b>Target Start Date</b> <i>(Begin transitioning district/agency staff to VDI access)</i>	<b>Target End Date</b> <i>(complete district/agency access via VDI)</i>
Albany Region & Syracuse Region	3/15/21	3/26/21
Rochester Region & Buffalo Region	3/22/21	4/2/21
Westchester Region	3/29/21	4/16/21
New York City Region	4/5/21	4/23/21
SCR Staff	4/5/21	4/23/21

		<p>•<b>2nd phase</b> - Users who <u>cannot</u> use the VMware client due to having a local VDI desktop or thin client, and who are unable to toggle between two VDI sessions, must access CONNECTIONS through the <b>VDI URL access method</b>. Users accessing via URL will need to use Integrated Printing functionality to print (guideline now available on the CONNECTIONS website). <b>There are currently known copy/paste issues via URL access that are being actively worked on.</b> The second phase rollout dates will be determined once a resolution to the copy/paste issue has been tested and confirmed.</p> <p><i>All counties and VAs are being tracked for 1st phase or 2nd phase of this rollout (or hybrid, if you have staff on both methods). Your implementation team lead will have contacted you for this information. If you have not provided it yet, please do so as soon as possible!</i></p>
2.	<p><b>Q. The rollout schedule is based on region, but my voluntary agency has sites in more than one region. When should we begin accessing CONNECTIONS through VMware/VDI?</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> Voluntary agencies with multiple sites were asked by their implementation specialists if they wanted to move all sites with the region of the administering agency (all at once), or with the region of each individual site, based on their Lan Admin support model. If no response was received, your implementation specialist will make the determination and will provide guidance at the appropriate time.</p> <p>Keep in mind that users do not need to be “turned on” for VDI access, so the site codes don’t matter for this rollout. The key for when users switch over to VDI access will be based on when they get the CONNECTIONS server URL to connect to.</p>	
<h2 style="color: #4F81BD;">Installing VMware</h2>		
3.	<p><b>Q. What are technical details for installing VMware?</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> A step-by-step guideline for installing and configuring VMware is available on the “CONNECTIONS Move to VMware and MFA” section of the CONNECTIONS website at <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/</a> (internet) or <a href="http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/">http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/</a> (intranet).</p> <p>VMware is a free software that can be downloaded on any operating system and device. You must have administrative rights to your machine to download it. If you are on the state network, your PC may already have VMWare installed. The state has also pushed VMware to all OCFS devices, beginning on 12/7.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Q. What is the minimum supported version of the VMware Horizon Client?</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> All versions of VMware up through version 5.5.1 are supported. Version 5.5.1 is the recommended version. Higher versions of VMware are not supported by ITS, and further, will break critical functionality in CONNECTIONS, like the ability to print.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Q. What options do I have for installing VMware on my county or voluntary agency PCs?</b></p> <p><b>A.</b> The following options are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Manual Installation (Counties and VAs)</b> Guidelines for installing the VMware Horizon client (without CONNECTIONS server access), titled “ITS CTO-Installing and Configuring VMWare Horizon Client” has been added to the ‘CONNECTIONS move to VMWare and MFA’ section of the CONNECTIONS website at <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/</a> (internet) or <a href="http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/">http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/</a> (intranet). These instructions can be followed</li> </ul>	

	<p>for installation on work and personal/home computers/devices. The individual doing the installation must have administrative rights on the computer/device.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>.BAT "batch" Installation (Counties and VAs)</b></p> <p>ITS can provide a .BAT script for Lan Admins to install the client unattended for staff. It can be used to install the client by copying the .BAT file and the .EXE to the appropriate PC and running it, and that will take care of completing the install without having to do anything else. If sites have the ability to push out the client to multiple machines at ones, they can utilize the .BAT to be run on each of their machines. The one thing to keep in mind with the .BAT is that whoever is using it will still need to download the install .EXE from the VMWare Horizon Site, as is depicted in the instructions (see #1 above). The way the .BAT is written, the install .EXE and the .BAT must be in the same directory for it to work. <i>Please note that while the ITS CONNECTIONS team has provided the .BAT file to assist in sites' push of the client to their machines, our team does not have the expertise to provide any additional assistance or troubleshooting. (We recommend that you network with each other as needed!)</i></p> <p>The .BAT script was sent to all Voluntary Agency Lan Admins on 1/12/21. Any counties that are interested in receiving the .BAT file should send an email to <a href="mailto:connections@ocfs.ny.gov">connections@ocfs.ny.gov</a> with the subject "BAT file request."</p> </li> <li> <p><b>VMware Client Push (County Network PCs Only)</b></p> <p>ITS can utilize the Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM) to push and install the client to any machines they can hit on a county network, so the user will only have to configure the client with the appropriate server to connect to the CONNECTIONS VDI Server when their rollout begins. This option was successfully used for piloting Nassau county, and <b>can be requested by other counties.</b> County LAN admins should request that a SCCM VMware push be scheduled by sending an email to <a href="mailto:connections@ocfs.ny.gov">connections@ocfs.ny.gov</a> with the subject "SCCM push request." Pushes will be scheduled every other weekend, depending on when the county makes the request. Please keep in mind that the manual installation guideline (see #1 above) will need to be used for the one-off machines that do not get the push successfully, personal/home devices, etc.</p> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE</b> that these installations will put the VMware Horizon Client on the users' devices, but will NOT provide access to CONNECTIONS through VDI. Users will need to put in the CONNECTIONS Server name one time in their VMware Horizon Client (server name is now available in the Installation and Configuration Guidelines on the CONNECTIONS website) .</p>
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## Access Methods

6.	<p><b>Q. Will the Citrix Receiver continue to operate, even if unsupported?</b></p> <p>A. Citrix will be available for guaranteed fallback support throughout the pilot and phased implementation of VDI/RDS. After statewide implementation is complete, Citrix will no longer be used.</p>
7.	<p><b>Q. Will CONNECTIONS still be available through the Internet?</b></p> <p>A. There will be a new URL to access CONNECTIONS via the Internet. The URL will be provided when your agency/district begins rollout. The URL will no longer be <a href="https://connections.ocfs.ny.gov">https://connections.ocfs.ny.gov</a></p>

8.	Q.	<b>Will CONNECTIONS still be available on iPads via the Citrix application?</b>
	A.	CONNECTIONS will be available on iPads via the VMware application, and will no longer be accessible via Citrix. Like Citrix, VMware is a free application that can be downloaded onto iPads to access CONNECTIONS.
9.	Q.	<b>Will an iOS method of accessing CONNECTIONS remain when VDI is implemented?</b>
	A.	CONNECTIONS can be accessed from both iOS and Android devices by downloading the VMware Horizon Client onto the device and connecting to the appropriate server, as described in the (forthcoming) Installation Guidelines. ITS does not support access issues from either iOS or Android devices.
10.	Q.	<b>What if my county does not have sufficient bandwidth capability to support VMware VDI access?</b>
	A.	Accessing CONNECTIONS via the VMware Horizon Client, instead of through the Citrix Client, is considered a one-for-one technology replacement. If you are able to access CONNECTIONS through Citrix today on your current bandwidth, you should be able to access CONNECTIONS via VDI.
11.	Q.	<b>Will the new VDI interface take the user directly into the CONNECTIONS environment, or is there a Windows 10 VDI desktop in between?</b>
	A.	Once VMware is installed on your PC, you will need to connect to the specific CONNECTIONS application server via a to-be provided URL. When the CONNECTIONS URL is set up, it will be saved on your VMware desktop as an icon to click on to access CONNECTIONS when needed. More details will be provided in the Installation Guidelines closer to your district's implementation date.
12.	Q.	<b>Will users whose devices are connected to the SVC domain/State network need to use RSA tokens to access CONNECTIONS via VDI?</b>
	A.	No –If you are already on the state network, you should not be prompted to enter your RSA token when accessing CONNECTIONS via VDI.
13.	Q.	<b>Will users who are connected via Pulse Secure Client SSLVPN and have already authenticated with RSA need to authenticate a second time to access CONNECTIONS via VDI?</b>
	A.	No. if you use Pulse Secure to remote into a machine already on the SVC/State network, you should not need to reenter the RSA token information.
14.	Q.	<b>If I use VDI currently to access my desktop, how will I access CONNECTIONS?</b>
	A.	<p>In this scenario, either two separate VDI sessions should be used, or CONNECTIONS should be accessed via the URL path. Please refer to the below access descriptions for more detail.</p> <p><i>Scenario 1: User uses VMware Horizon Client (VDI) or a Thin Client on a PC to access their desktop. Now they also need access to CONNECTIONS. This user has two options:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On your PC of origin (home laptop/PC), both your desktop server and the CONNECTIONS server should be mapped in VMware. You will need to open two different sessions of VMware Horizon client: one for your desktop, and one for CONNECTIONS. VMware allows you separate instances open simultaneously, and the ability to toggle between the two sessions.</li> <li>Alternatively, if toggling between two different sessions proves cumbersome or otherwise unrealistic, you can access CONNECTIONS via the URL path by opening a Chrome browser and inputting the CONNECTIONS URL. Note, to print from the URL, you will need to use Integrated Printing functionality. Guidelines for both URL access and Integrated Printing are now available on CONNECTIONS website.</li> </ul>

		<p><b>There are known copy/paste issues with the URL path that are actively being worked on, with a resolution pending.</b></p> <p><b>Scenario 2: Users uses SSLVPN/MRA to access their work PC. Now user would like to access CONNECTIONS. This user has several options:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On your PC of origin (home laptop/PC), open VMware Horizon Client and connect to the CONNECTIONS server to begin a VDI session; toggle back and forth between VDI session and SSLVPN/MRA session as necessary.</li> <li>• From within your SSLVPN session, open VMware on your work desktop, and connect to the CONNECTIONS server to begin a VDI session. No “toggle” would be necessary – just minimizing VDI session to complete work on your desktop.</li> <li>• From within your SSLVPN session, open the Chrome browser and navigate to CONNECTIONS via the URL. Note, to print from the URL, you will need to use Integrated Printing functionality. Guidelines for both URL access and Integrated Printing are now available on CONNECTIONS website.</li> </ul> <p><b>There are known copy/paste issues with the URL path that are actively being worked on, with a resolution pending.</b></p>
15	Q.	Our CPS unit maintains an SVC and CONNECTIONS account for a 'fictitious' worker who is only used for receiving reports from the SCR. DSS staff rotate responsibility for logging in with the account and monitoring reports. Will there be the ability with VDI for workers to continue being able to log in as another user, or will VDI authenticate to CONNECTIONS based on the account associated with the RSA token being used?
	A.	The RSA token and the credentials provided to access CONNECTIONS are independent accounts. You can continue to access CONNECTIONS as another user by entering your own RSA passcode, if prompted, and then entering the SVC ID/password for your desired CONNECTIONS account. Unlike Citrix, VMWare will request a username and password for a CONNECTIONS account each time it is accessed. Similarly, CONNECTIONS Training accounts will also be accessed this way through VMware.
16	Q.	<b>Will there be enough VDI sessions for all CONNECTIONS users to access this way?</b>
	A.	OCFS and ITS worked together as part of initial requirements gathering for this project to provide the VDI team with a comprehensive list of active and current CONNECTIONS users. Before the new CONNECTIONS RDS was even made available for pilot, this requirement was met – there should be no issues at all with concurrent users.
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) and RSA Tokens</h2>		
17.	Q.	<b>What type of Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) can be used to access CONNECTIONS?</b>
	A.	NYS requires the use of RSA SecurID as its Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) technology. A soft or hard RSA token may be used.
18.	Q.	<b>In September, the VDI Team told us that RSA tokens would not be required. The newest communication indicates that an RSA token will be required. Please clarify.</b>
	A.	An earlier iteration of the VDI project planned to move off of Citrix with no RSA tokens needed as a phase 1. Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) was to be implemented separately, as a phase 2.

		However, the decision was made in mid-November that, due to security concerns, MFA will be incorporated with VDI Implementation in a single phase – which is what is now underway.
19.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>Are there any guidelines or instructions that walk me through the process of requesting an RSA token?</b>
	A.	<p>Yes – There is a comprehensive RSA Token Request guideline, as well as an MFA FAQ document, both of which are posted on the “CONNECTIONS Move to VMware and MFA” section of the CONNECTIONS website at <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/</a> (internet) or <a href="http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/">http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/</a> (intranet).</p> <p>The <b>RSA Token Request</b> guideline has been updated as of 1/13/21 to reflect frequently asked questions pertinent to this project, i.e., “Do I need a DFA email to request a token?” (Pages 5-6), “What are my shipping options for a hard token while working remotely” (Page 8), etc.</p>
20.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>My county already uses RSA tokens to access other state applications (i.e., email, VDI, MRA, state agency databases). Will we need to request an additional token to be used exclusively for accessing CONNECTIONS via VDI?</b>
	A.	<p>A: No – If you already have an RSA token to access state applications, you can use the same RSA token to access CONNECTIONS via VMware.</p> <p>Note: We were recently made aware that some other state agency tokens may not be working to access CONNECTIONS in all cases. An update will be provided after this is further investigated.</p>
21.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>If I need to request many tokens for my district, is there a way to submit a bulk request?</b>
	A.	At this time, all token requests need to be made individually through the My Token website. Different distribution strategies were discussed internally, but because so many employees continue to work from home and assumedly would need hard tokens delivered to their own address, it was decided that users should continue to use the individual request method outlined in the RSA guideline documents.
22.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>If a token is required, will there be an option available for RSA authentication that will not require a State Office 365 mailbox be created for each user?</b>
	A.	<p>A state email is not required; only a State User ID is required to request an RSA token.</p> <p>When a user without a state email address requests a token via <a href="https://mytoken.ny.gov">https://mytoken.ny.gov</a>, the following steps should be followed.</p> <p>Enter your email. If you do not have a state-issued email address, this field will need to be completed with one of the six choices below. If one does not work, please try each choice until one does. If none work, stop here and email <a href="mailto:hs.crm@its.ny.gov">hs.crm@its.ny.gov</a> for further assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="mailto:userid@ext.ny.gov">userid@ext.ny.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="mailto:userid@dfa.state.ny.us">userid@dfa.state.ny.us</a></li> <li>• <a href="mailto:Firstname.lastname@dfa.state.ny.us">Firstname.lastname@dfa.state.ny.us</a></li> <li>• <a href="mailto:userid@hsen.ny.gov">userid@hsen.ny.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="mailto:Firstname.Lastname@hsen.ny.gov">Firstname.Lastname@hsen.ny.gov</a></li> <li>• <a href="mailto:Firstname.Lastname@ext.ny.gov">Firstname.Lastname@ext.ny.gov</a></li> </ul>
23.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>How do I request a token if I do not have access to my state/DFA email?</b>
	A.	If you do not have access to your state-issued/DFA email, the following steps should be taken, depending on whether you are requesting a soft or hard token.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For <b>soft tokens</b>, if you do not have access to the email on file, after requesting your token, you can log back onto the mytoken.ny.gov self-service console and activate your soft token via the website. Note – you should still take care to update your AD email to an accessible account, via the steps below, but this does not bar you from activating a soft token.</li> <li>• For <b>hard tokens</b>, if, upon reviewing your profile in the mytoken.ny.gov self-service console, you can confirm you do not have access to the email address on file, you should contact your LAN Admin prior to requesting a hard token and ask that they update your email address on your account. Your email should be updated to an accessible account before you request a hard token, as the confirmation email will be needed to activate your hard token once you receive it.</li> </ul> <p>The RSA Token Request Guidelines have now been updated to reflect the above.</p>
24.	<p><b>Q. With many staff currently working from home due to the pandemic, will hard tokens be mailed to a person’s office site or can the hard token be sent to an alternate address?</b></p> <p>A. When you request an RSA hard token, a physical mailing address is required. Often, this will default to your agency or district address, but it can be modified to your home address if that is your preferred mailing address. The RSA Request User Guides are being updated to emphasize this function.</p>	
25.	<p><b>Q. If all of my district's/agency's staff already has RSA tokens, what other steps need to be taken?</b></p> <p>A. If you have verified that all of your agency's staff already have working RSA tokens, then you will only need to install VMware on staff PCs and connect to the CONNECTIONS server, closer to your identified rollout date. VMware Installation and Configuration instructions will be provided.</p>	
26.	<p><b>Q. I have tokens for staff who have left my agency. What do I do with them? What about tokens that have expired?</b></p> <p>A. Tokens that have expired or are no longer needed should be returned, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSA Hard Tokens which have expired or are no longer needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any agency or individual using interagency mail should send any returning tokens to: Dawn DeZago, 1 Empire State Plaza, Albany NY 12208</li> <li>○ Any agency or individual not using interagency mail should send any returning tokens to: Dawn DeZago, P.O. Box 2062, Albany NY 12220</li> </ul> </li> <li>• RSA Soft Tokens which have expired or are no longer needed:</li> </ul> <p>An email should be sent to <a href="mailto:RSA@its.ny.gov">mailto:RSA@its.ny.gov</a> letting the RSA Admins know so they can un-assign the software token in the admin console.</p> <p>Note that tokens assigned to staff no longer with an agency cannot be repurposed for new staff – they must be returned, and a new token issued, per the above.</p>	
27.	<p><b>Q. Are there emergency hard tokens available if I don’t receive my token in time? Can I order extra tokens to serve as emergency or surplus tokens for my district or agency?</b></p> <p>There are no emergency hard tokens for this scenario. An emergency/temporary soft token can be generated when a hard token is temporarily misplaced (or a soft token is unavailable) by logging into your My Token account and clicking the “Troubleshoot” hyperlink. Following the steps here will provide a temporary passcode via the My Token website, called an Emergency Access Tokencode, which is valid for 48 hours.</p>	

		Surplus tokens cannot be ordered, as each individual token must correspond to an agency or district user at initial set-up.
28.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>Can a soft token be downloaded to a PC or laptop?</b>
	A.	Currently, soft tokens can <i>only</i> be downloaded to a mobile device, such as a phone or tablet. Searching “RSA Token” in the app store, regardless of operating system, should return the correct app to download.
<b>Working within the CONNECTIONS VDI Environment</b>		
29.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>Will my printers be mapped and available when accessing CONNECTIONS in VDI?</b>
	A.	Yes – All of your printers should be available to you when accessing CONNECTIONS in VDI. The only time this will not work is if you're remoting into a computer at your work location via SSL VPN while working from home -- in this scenario only, printers will not be mapped.
30.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>I've installed VMware on my PC, but when I access CONNECTIONS, my printers are not mapped. How do I fix this?</b>
		If, upon first accessing CONNECTIONS from VMware, you realize your printers are not mapped, you should first verify that you've downloaded the appropriate version of VMware. For CONNECTIONS use, Version 5.5.1 or lower is required – critical functionality, like printing, will not work with later versions.  You should also verify your access method. If you are accessing CONNECTIONS through the VMware Horizon Client installed on your PC, mapped printers should pass through seamlessly. But if you are accessing CONNECTIONS directly through the URL on a browser, you will need to use Integrated Printing functionality. A new guideline, on the CONNECTIONS website, walks users through the steps for printing from the URL.  Remember, a ticket can be opened with the NYS Service Desk for any printing issues that cannot be resolved internally.
31.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>How will staff take their notes that they may type in Microsoft Word from their Local Desktop to CONNECTIONS in VDI? What about copying and pasting content out of CONNECTIONS?</b>
	A.	Just as in Citrix, text typed in Microsoft Word can be copied and pasted into CONNECTIONS via the VMware desktop. VMware also supports the ability to copy text out of CONNECTIONS as well – copy/paste should remain bidirectional, as it is currently.
32.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>In Citrix, improperly logging off of CONNECTIONS would sometimes cause issues for users. Is there a special way to sign out of the CONNECTIONS VDI session? Will Ctrl F1 still work?</b>
	A.	Ctrl F1 does not work within the VMware session, but there are several other sign off options that will be distributed when your agency/district begins rollout. Any sign off option can be used except clicking the red X in the upper righthand corner of the session window –this is an improper sign off and should be avoided.  A guideline to assist users with proper log off is now available on the CONNECTIONS websites.
<b>Training and Support</b>		
33.	<b>Q.</b>	<b>Is there any training available on how to install VMware, connect to the CONNECTIONS server, and use my RSA token to access CONNECTIONS?</b>
	A.	Small recorded WebEx training on specific tasks related to accessing CONNECTIONS through VDI are being planned, with the intent to make available once implementation begins, depending on the nature and frequency of issues reported.



34.	<b>Q. Will there be any documentation provided to users regarding how to authenticate VDI and CONNECTIONS, how to unlock or reset a token, etc.?</b>
A.	<p>A detailed Installation Guideline (see below links) provides the step-by-step process of downloading VMware and connecting to the CONNECTIONS desktop.</p> <p>Additionally - the RSA Request User Guide, as well as the MFA FAQ document, provide comprehensive information on RSA tokens - including how to unlock and reset a token.</p> <p><b>Other helpful guidelines include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessing CONNECTIONS via URL (March 2021)</li><li>• Integrated Printing via CONNECTIONS URL (March 2021)</li><li>• VMware Client Resolution Guidelines for iPad (March 2021)</li><li>• CONNCETIONS Screen Size Workarounds (February 2021)</li><li>• Graceful CONNECTIONS Log-Off from VDI (January 2021)</li></ul> <p>These documents are posted on the CONNECTIONS webpage <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/</a> (internet) or <a href="http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/">http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/imp/</a> (intranet).</p>