NEW YORK STATE | **Office of Children and Family Services**

CONNECTIONS Build Bulletin

Updates to FAD Home Study and Document Templates

The next build to the CONNECTIONS application is tentatively scheduled for Friday July 13th, in the normal morning maintenance window, and will include the implementation of a new Home Study template, as well as updated templates for several other CONNECTIONS documents.

OCFS updates to the Foster/Adoptive Home Certification and Approval process will result in the following changes in CONNECTIONS, specifically altering the Home Study package in the application:

- When completing an agency transfer, initial home study, or interim home study, the MAPP/GPS "Home Study" and "Other Options" in the "Home Study" window will no longer be available for users to use for completing the "Home Study Narratives." Users will select the "Narrative" link in the Navigation pane.

- When the "Narrative" link in the navigation pane is chosen, the user will be provided with the Final Assessment and Determination template. This template is divided into five sections: I. Regulatory Requirements, II. Assessment of Home Study Components, III. Changes (Interim Home Study), IV. Agency Determination, and V. Family Comments, which together, summarize the application packet completed outside of CONNECTIONS.

- Users will no longer be presented with the "Use Prior" option for "Home Studies" or "Annual Reauthorizations".

- The user must complete the entire foster/adoptive family Final Assessment and Determination for each new application. If an interim home study is being completed as the result of a change as outlined, then only sections III-V of the Foster-Adoptive Family Final Assessment and Determination must be completed.

Note that any Home Study in process prior to the implementation date will remain unchanged. Only Home Studies (either initial or interim) launched after implementation will open the new Final Assessment and Determination document and follow the new procedure as outlined above.

These changes are in support of Administrative Directive 18-OCFS-ADM-07, the purpose of which outlines the new tools that must be used to support the foster/adoptive home certification and approval process. The ADM is posted on the OCFS Policy Directives page of both the Intranet and Internet.

Additionally, several other documents workers complete within CONNECTIONS will update to new templates in text control, rather than Microsoft Word. The look and feel of these documents may be slightly altered by this change, but the questions within will not change (excluding any requested changes made to district-specific Local Protocol documents). Template updates include:

- Annual Reauthorization
- FAD Closure Report
- Delaware County Local Protocol
- Suffolk County Local Protocol
- ACS Local Protocol
- 24 Hour Fatality Report
- 30 Day Fatality Report
- FAD Safety Assessment

As always, please send any questions or issues to either the CONNECTIONS Triage Unit at ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.ny.gov, or your local Implementation Specialist, a list of whom are available on the CONNECTIONS Intranet and Internet sites.