



CONNECTIONS Build Bulletin

Effective October 18th LDSSs and VAs are required to use the Placement Module for matching youth with foster care resources.

More Placement Module Features are Coming!

The CONNECTIONS team is pleased to share the rollout of **Phase 3 of the Placement Module, introducing new searching and matching functionality in CONNECTIONS.** The Placement Module is designed to assist local department of social services (LDSSs) and authorized voluntary agencies (VAs) in finding appropriate foster care placements efficiently and quickly. Additionally, management staff may analyze the information gathered in this module to identify placement population trends, program strengths and weaknesses, and project foster home recruitment needs.

Placement Phase 3 is scheduled for implementation on Friday, October 18th, during the normal morning maintenance window.

Expect the Following Enhancements:

Placement Phase 3 adds **search and match functionality** to the Placement Module in CONNECTIONS, which allows for a pool of appropriate placement options to be provided for children entering foster care or moving to a new placement. Additionally, workers will send referrals for desired resources and fully record the child's placement into foster care within the Placement Module.

Placement Phase 3 will result in **changes to the entry of "Movement Codes" (M codes) in the Activities Module** of CONNX. The values M910 Child Placed, M981 Intra Agency Transfer, and M982 Inter Agency Transfer will no longer be displayed in the "Event" dropdown list. These will be system-generated records initiated from the Placement Module. There will no longer be the ability for a LDSS to manually enter these Movement Codes in the Activities Module. However, workers must still save the prefilled recorded into Activities.

There will be a new grid called the **Pending Activities Date Entry grid**, which will be visible only to workers with the "Maintain Activities" business function. The status column will remain in "Pending" until four requirements are met. These requirements are:

- 1) a WMS case exists for the current stage of child(ren) needing placement
- 2) a verified Client Identification Number (CIN) exists for the Person Identifier (PID) of the tracked child
- 3) an Open Track record exists for the selected child
- 4) the "Verification Status" from the *Verify Placements* window equals "Placement Verified," generated by the placement requests from which the record was created

When all four of these requirements are met, the "Pending" status will change to "Navigate." Upon selecting the "Navigate" link from the grid, the new record will display in the *Activities* Search Window with the following values prefilled:

- Date of Activity
- Type of Activity
- Event
- Facility Modifier(s)
- Reason for Transfer (when applicable)
- Out of County/Borough Reason (when applicable)
- Type of Placement



Below are brief descriptions of new windows included in the Placement Module, Phases 1-3

- **Child Characteristics Window** —This allows the caseworker to record characteristics for children who are the subject(s) of a placement search. Characteristics recorded on the "Characteristics" subtab (implemented in Phase 1) are displayed for children within the selected stage.
- **Matching Factors - Child** —This process allows users to compare the characteristics of a selected resource returned from the Placement Resource Search Process to the characteristics identified for each child included in the Placement Search Request.
- **Matching Factors - Resource** —This process allows users to compare the combined characteristics of the child(ren) selected in the Placement Request to the characteristics of one, two, or three resources selected from the Placement Resource Search Result or Referral Detail window.
- **Notifications Tab** —The Notifications tab will be used to select which notifications a staff member receives. This tab is modifiable if the employee is in active status and the local part of the employee's email address has been recorded. Only those in the worker's LDSS/VA with the "Maint Security" business function can modify this window (most often the security coordinator).
- **Placement Window** —This window serves as a central location for child-specific information related to placement needs at the time of a placement request. (Placement requests will be functional with Phase 3.) This window is intended to assist workers in making decisions about placements for children. It is most valuable for those who work with children in foster care and children entering placement, and their supervisors.
- **Prior Placements - Child Window (View-Only Window)** —Displays prior foster care placements for the selected child as recorded on the Activities Window.
- **Placement Evaluation Window** —This window allows for the entry of additional information with regard to a selected child in need of foster care placement. The data recorded on this window is used to document and communicate detailed information about a child's needs beyond what is captured for the purpose of resource matching. Workers may use this information to make more informed decisions when determining the best placement for a child. The data recorded on this window is informational only and has no bearing on the search and match process, nor does it replace any data collected for the children and families in the Family Services Stage (FSS).
- **Priority Criteria Window** —This displays a summary of characteristics selected for all children included in the placement request. The data is taken from information recorded on the Child Characteristics window or the Characteristics subtab of the Person List window. Workers will have the ability to designate any, all, or none of the selected characteristics as "Required" in the search parameters. All active characteristics for the child(ren) in the request will default to optional.
- **Prior Placements -Resource Window (View-Only Window)** —Displays all prior placements for the selected child at a specific resource as recorded on the Activities window.
- **Placement Dashboard Window** —This enables workers to modify, view and monitor all placement requests for cases within their jurisdiction.
- **Placement Resource Roster Window** —This displays a view-only list of children placed in a selected resource, with a selected agency, or within a selected LDSS, along with their associated characteristics. Workers will be able to filter and sort by any column. With the exception of child characteristics sorting, any filters applied will carry over to the printed report. The information that displays is based on state, regional, LDSS, or VA worker job function. The "Place Dash" business function is required to access this window.
- **Place Child** —This process records the placement action and the date the action occurred for the children in the request.
- **Placement Resource Search Results Window** —Combines data collected at the child level and the resource level. The search process will compile the needs of the children as entered by the worker, the requested services and necessary vacancies. The system will then match that criteria to the corresponding real-time resource data and deliver a result set to assist the worker in choosing the best placement resource on a case-by-case basis. To ensure equality within resource distribution, this process will monitor the frequency of placement referrals to VAs by LDSSs. The system will choose (1) those resources that meet the required search parameters, (2) whose characteristics are most closely aligned with the optional criteria selected and (3) whose agency is next in line to receive a referral.
- **Resource Availability Report** —This report will provide workers with on-line and printed offline access to resource vacancy information to be used for after-hours foster care placement needs.
- **Resource Characteristics** —This process will allow persons with the business function of "Resource Administrator" to record characteristics of the resource as they pertain to foster care placement. Prior to implementation of the Placement Module, Resource Administrators will collect current characteristics for existing resources to be used in the matching process.
- **Referral Detail** —This process allows for viewing or maintenance of referrals for each placement request. Workers on the receiving end of the referral request are able to respond that the referral for their resource is either 'Accepted' or 'Declined.' District workers or voluntary agency workers who initiate the placement request and send referral requests will be able to monitor the referral responses.
- **Resource Summary Report** —This report will display the current state of the resource and the characteristics and a history of how they have changed.
- **Special Restrictions Window** —Displays any extraordinary placement needs that apply to a child. The information displayed on this window does not restrict the available resources for a child to be placed; however, it does alert the worker to potential conflicts between children already in the home and children needing placement.
- **Verify Placements** —This process allows for a summary view of all individual children recently placed by, or at, a specific district or agency. Workers may use this process to verify that children did or did not arrive at the destination resource, after they have been placed from within the Placement Module.

Additional Information

Effective with the release of the Placement Module, LDSSs and VAs are encouraged to develop business processes to support the new Placement Module functionality in CONNX.

The table below provides a listing of placement-related tasks and suggested performers. Actual processes implemented by LDSSs/VAs may vary from those identified in the table.

Task Description	District Performer	VA Performer
Assign Placement BF's	CNNX Security Coordinator	CNNX Security Coordinator
Enter Staff eMails	CNNX Security Coordinator/Worker	CNNX Security Coordinator / Worker
Select Notifications	CNNX Security Coordinator / Worker	CNNX Security Coordinator / Worker
Enter/Update Contract Headers	District Contract Admins	n/a
Enter/Update Child Characteristics	FC/CPS/Ongoing Preventive Workers	CP / CW
Enter/Update Special Restrictions	FC/CPS/Ongoing Preventive Workers	CP / CW
Create/Modify Resource	FAD Workers or Supervisors	FAD Workers or Supervisors
Enter/Update Resource Characteristics	FAD Workers or Supervisors	FAD Workers or Supervisors
Initiate Placement Request	FC/CPS/Preventive Units	Foster Care Supervisor
Send Referral	FAD Units	HF/FAD Unit
Receive and Process Referral	FAD Units	Intake or FC Administrator
Place Child	CPS/FC/ FAD Workers	Intake / FC Admin/ FAD
Verify Placement	Foster Care Worker	FAD/FC Administrator
Update Activities	Data Entry / CM /Administrators	Data Entry Worker
Close Placement Request	Foster Care / FAD Workers	FAD/ FC Administrator
Perform Placement Evaluation	Case Manager	CP / CW
Execute a Direct Placement (Known Resource/Relative/CTH/ORRUAC)	FAD Units	FAD Unit
Close Resource to Intake	FAD Supervisor/ Administrator	FAD Administrator

Placement Module Resources:

CONNECTIONS Website: <https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/>

- ◆ Preparing for the Placement Window in CONNECTIONS: Phase 1 Quick Start Guide
- ◆ Preparing for the Placement Window in CONNECTIONS: Phase 2 Quick Start Guide
- ◆ Placement Frequently Asked Questions

Training w/ the Professional Development Program

- ◆ Completing the Placement Module in CONNECTIONS Classroom Training
- ◆ Initiating Placements (WebEx)
- ◆ Preparing for the Placement Window in CONNECTIONS (WebEx)
- ◆ Placement Module Preparation for FAD Workers (WebEx)



Preregistration for all classes is required in the Human Services Learning Center (HSLC) -

<https://www.hslcnys.org>

To locate all CONNECTIONS Trainings scheduled in HSLC, search using the following:

Provider: SUNY Albany – PDP

Content: Systems Connections

Questions regarding these or other CONNECTIONS trainings, feel free to send an email to: CONNECTIONS@albany.edu

CONNECTIONS Job-Aids & Tip Sheets <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/jobaides/jobaides.asp> (intranet) and (internet)

<https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/connect/jobaides/>

- ◆ CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet: Placement Dashboard
- ◆ CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet: Security Business Functions
- ◆ CONNECTIONS Tip Sheet: Initiating the Placement Request in CONNECTIONS
- ◆ Completing the Placement Module in CONNECTIONS Job Aid

CONNECTIONS Build Bulletins and Newsletters <https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/connect/>

Placement Module in CONNECTIONS Administrative Directive (18-OCFS-ADM-13) https://www.ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/ocfs_2018/ADM/18-OCFS-ADM-13.pdf

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**

CONNECTIONS

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