

REISSUANCE

THIS DOCUMENT IS BEING REISSUED TO CORRECT THE INFORMATION NOTICE NUMBER ONLY. THE CONTENT, DATE, AND ATTACHMENTS REMAIN THE SAME.

July 18, 2002

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 02-02
-------------------	---

TO:

- ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE SENIOR STAFF
- ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS
- ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
- ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
- ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
- ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM:

RICHARD C. TRIGG
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Status of Center Information System (CIS) and Outreach & Admissions Student Input System (OASIS)

1. Purpose. To advise the Job Corps community of the status of OASIS and CIS implementation and of the actions being taken to improve software performance, support and usability.
2. Background. The new Web-based OASIS was deployed nationwide to all Outreach staff in January of 2002. The CIS was deployed in phases from January through April of 2002. The implementation of these new systems represents many changes in the way that Job Corps does business, primarily in record keeping.

Problems reported and feedback received from staff who use these systems has been very important during the deployment period of OASIS and CIS. Even though software is thoroughly tested at the Job Corps Data Center (JCDC) before release, it is not always possible to test each different scenario that might occur. We appreciate the assistance of centers and OA contractors in identifying problem areas and patience they have shown while issues are resolved.

Feedback we have received from OASIS and CIS users generally falls into four categories, JCDC support, software problems or "bugs", data correction, and software performance issues. Each of these areas are addressed, in turn, in this document.

3. JCDC Technical Assistance Center (TAC) Support. The JCDC TAC has provided helpdesk support for SPAMIS users for several years. SPAMIS users numbered 2-5 users per center for a total of about 500 users. CIS now has over 10,800 users. This increased number of customers has resulted in a heavier load on customer support than we anticipated.

In response to this increase, the JCDC has recently doubled the number of staff answering the helpdesk phones. Call volume peaks have been analyzed and more coverage can be arranged during those times of day when calls are most frequent. Call hold times have been reduced significantly and are now averaging 8 minutes. To further improve the response time, we suggest that non-critical requests be e-mailed to the helpdesk account (helpdesk@jcdc.jobcorps.org or Helpdesk in the Job Corps Address Book).

The JCDC is also in the process of hiring additional staff and training them to act as operators to answer incoming calls. The new staff are not technicians; however, they will be trained to be familiar with new application screens so that they can collect pertinent information for troubleshooting. In addition, staff will be increased for the Eastern time zone, which has the most system users.

New internal e-mail, fax and letter tracking procedures have also been implemented to improve responsiveness to customer requests. Specific JCDC staff are assigned to answer e-mails and faxes, enter them in tracking tickets, assign them to the appropriate technicians, and contact customers to let them know their ticket number. Future plans include the implementation of a ticket tracking system, which will enable Point of Contacts (POC's) to check the status of pending tickets electronically.

4. Data Correction. Job Corps centers and OA contractors have been submitting numerous requests for corrections to student data. These requests require a significant amount of resources and time to determine the nature of the request in order to identify and resolve the issue(s). There are areas in CIS and OASIS which have been identified as occasionally requiring data correction due to data conversion, OASIS/CIS staggered deployment and application issues. These include: transfers; reinstatements; stopping allotments; bed assignments; and SSN corrections. These issues are being addressed as they are submitted, and the software will be corrected in upcoming releases (see attachments).

Timely data entry can significantly decrease the number of issues that surface. CIS includes various rules and validations that support and enforce Job Corps Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH) and ensure that data input into CIS is valid. Below are several situations where data corrections are necessary and which can be avoided through timely entry of data:

a. Enrollments – Incorrect Interview Date

CIS will not allow the enrollment of an applicant without the record first being entered into OASIS. Early during the OASIS/CIS deployment process, many students were arriving on centers without an OASIS Arrival record. The center or JCDC would contact the OA counselor to request input of a student's record. A problem occurs when the OA counselor does not input the true interview date, but instead, uses the data entry date (today's date) as the interview date. CIS rejects the enrollment of the

applicant if the arrival date is before the interview date and the JCDC must be contacted to change the interview date. Measures have been added to OASIS to encourage the entry of the correct interview date, and this has greatly reduced the requests for this type of data correction.

b. Backdating Enrollments

When a student is enrolled in CIS, an initial evaluation is scheduled 45 days from the date of the enrollment. If the center does not enroll the applicant in CIS within 45 days of arrival, then CIS will not accept the backdated enrollment because the student cannot be scheduled for his/her initial evaluation date since it has already passed. If centers currently have any issues with backdated enrollments, they are encouraged to ensure that a customer ticket has been opened with the JCDC.

c. Enrollments in Error

Effective Monday, June 17, 2002, centers were required to obtain Regional Office approval in writing to request enrollment in error removals from JCDC. If Regional Office approval is denied, then the enrollment in errors will need to be terminated in CIS as fraudulent enrollments as stated in the PRH.

d. GED/HS Diploma Obtained Elsewhere

If, on the student application, the OA counselor incorrectly indicates that the applicant had a GED or High School diploma prior to entering Job Corps, then CIS assumes that the student is ineligible to receive a GED or High School diploma and will not allow the status be changed. CIS shows that the student already has a GED or high school diploma. Centers frequently submit a data correction request for this status to be changed to "Passed GED". The center must furnish JCDC with a faxed copy of the GED results or High School diploma dated within the student's enrollment period in order to make this data correction. (TAC fax: 1-512-393-7396) *Note: Future enhancements will allow the centers to make GED or High School diploma status changes.*

5. Known Software Issues/Planned Releases. There are several software releases which have been sent out or are scheduled in the near future for both OASIS and CIS. The latest CIS release was July 1, 2002 (see attached for details). The primary purpose of this release is to correct some important issues with the application that need to be corrected quickly. The release of a new Travel Module for both CIS and OASIS is scheduled for August 19th is details of the enhancements, corrections and changes in OASIS and CIS can be found in documents attached to this notice. These lists may change slightly due to circumstances and priorities involved with development and testing. Please note that additional releases may be required in order to address any major issues which may be discovered in the interim between scheduled releases.

6. Application Performance. One of the major concerns reported from users of both the CIS and OASIS applications is performance. Performance issues that have been reported usually include the speed of the application response times or maintaining a stable connection. The Data

Center conducts tests and makes changes to optimize software performance on an ongoing basis. Some of these changes include the installation of additional application servers, upgrades to the communications system, and re-writes of some parts of the applications to make them run faster and more efficiently. Usage of CDSS applications is constantly monitored each day by JCDC staff to see how many users are on each system, what impact the utilization has on application performance, and how systems might be configured for the best possible performance.

OASIS users have reported specific performance concerns regarding “time out” errors when attempting to save information. Testing has continued with OASIS performance since its deployment. Since OASIS is a web-based application, it was anticipated that users who dial in through a phone line would experience much slower application performance than those with a high speed internet connection or those connecting through a JC center network. Below are optimal performance times established by testing which can be expected with OASIS:

- Using a dial-up connections at 26.4K, users should be able to enter the minimal information to complete an application within 19 – 20 minutes.
- Using a DSL (High Speed Internet Connection), users should be able to enter the minimal information to complete an application within 16 -18 minutes.
- Using a center network, users should be able to enter the minimal information to complete an application within 14 -15 minutes.

A task group of OA contractors is working now to test OASIS using various environments and from different areas of the country. A task group of CIS users has also been formed and is currently in the process of collecting performance feedback to further identify issues. Their feedback will help us to further improve performance.

7. Action. Addressees are to ensure that a copy of this Notice is provided to the appropriate staff.

8. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

7. Inquiries. If you have questions and comments regarding this Notice, please contact Linda Estep at (512) 393-7212 or EstepL@jcdc.jobcorps.org. Please send inquiries by email to helpdesk@jcdc.jobcorps.org and review the Job Corps Community CDSS Website for additional and updated information.

From outside Job Corps network: <http://deployment.jobcorps.org>
From inside Job Corps network: <http://deployment.jcdcnet.org>

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – CIS July 1st Release
Attachment 2 – CIS August 19th Release
Attachment 3 – OASIS July 15th Release