



## Effort Reporting System FAQs

### Pre Reviewer

- 1. How do I determine which certifiers I need to pre review?**  
The Departmental Coordinator (DC) makes the assignments of certifiers to pre reviewers prior to the effort reporting period.
- 2. When do I know that the pre review process can begin?**  
Your DC should send an email notification is sent to the pre reviewer when ERS is available to begin the effort certification process.
- 3. If a certifier is assigned to me for whom I have no knowledge of their effort, what should I do?**  
Discuss with the DC if this individual was properly assigned to you. If so, 1) you should become familiar with the awards from which the individual was paid and/or to which effort was devoted. (If incorrectly assigned, the DC will assign the certifier to another pre reviewer.) 2) Discuss with the certifier what it is you have determined by the review of the awards and if there are any additional commitments that need to be taken into consideration.
- 4. I am pre reviewing a faculty member's effort form and when I hit "Proceed" I am taken to the University Summary screen. I do not know the percentages to insert. What do I do?**  
If uncertain you can notify the certifier and ask them or leave it blank for the certifier to complete.
- 5. What do I do if the certifier started working on a sponsored project in the last month of the effort reporting period and due to a data entry error it does not appear on the effort report?**  
Click on the "Add Account" tab at the top of the screen. You will be able to enter selection criteria in order to search for the account that you want to add to the effort form.
- 6. I need to make a cost transfer and I am uncertain as to the payroll distribution for the account. Do I have to leave ERS and go into the Payroll system to review the distributions?**  
No you don't. Click on the dollar amount listed in the "Payroll" column for the account in question and you will see the payroll detail for the reporting period.
- 7. How will I know if a cost transfer did not process successfully in the mainframe payroll system?**  
An email will be generated back to whomever created the cost transfer (pre-reviewer or post-reviewer) alerting them that the cost transfer failed the payroll

validation process. In the Reporting section within ERS, you can review the details about the cost transfer error. This report can be found under

### **Custom Reports**

- [Penn Comprehensive Cost Transfer Status Report](#)

Select the Reporting period

Select a Cost Transfer value from the drop-down box:

**Error** = Cost Transfer that failed to process during the weekly payroll cycle.

**Pending** = Cost Transfers that have been stored on the mainframe and are waiting to process through the weekly payroll cycle.

**Reallocated**= Cost Transfer that has successfully processed during the weekly payroll cycle.

**All** = Any Cost Transfer in ERS. This includes Cost Transfers that have been defined on a form, but not yet sent over to the mainframe for processing.

Select the Department

Click on the Continue button to run the report.

**8. I am reviewing an effort form for someone who has a K award from the NIH. The research was conducted on another faculty member's award. Do I add that fund to this effort form?**

No. The "Notes" box on the effort form should be used to indicate the awards for which effort was devoted. It will be necessary to identify the sponsor's award number/description for which the individual devoted effort.

**9. I entered a cost transfer in ERS, when will it process in the Payroll system?**

Cost transfers are exported from ERS to Payroll at different stages. If a cost transfer was done by the Pre Reviewer and no additional changes were made by the Certifier and the Certifier certifies his/her effort form, the cost transfer will be exported from ERS to Payroll and processed in the normal timeframe as is currently utilized. That is, the cost transfer will hit Payroll on the following Monday night as is done if using UMIS.

If a cost transfer was required by the Certifier and then completed by the Post Reviewer the cost transfer will be exported from ERS to Payroll and processed in the normal timeframe as is currently utilized. That is, the cost transfer will hit Payroll on the following Monday night as is done if using UMIS.

All cost transfers done in ERS can be viewed from the ERS Reporting option by clicking on *Penn Comprehensive Cost Transfer Report*. Select Pending from the drop down list to view the pending cost transfers.

Cost transfers are eventually posted to the GL on the following Thursday night as is the current process. Should the cost transfer fail, e.g., frozen fund, the pre/post reviewer will receive an email notification.

**10. Will Salary Management payments always equal effort percentages?**

No. The only time that an effort percentage should exceed the salary paid is when the certifier is required to provide committed cost sharing in the form of a salary cap. All other required salary cost sharing is accomplished via a cost sharing account and will be captured in that account.

**11. How can I get a certifier added to ERS?**

An individual that does not have an existing role in ERS cannot be selected for the role of certifier but can be added to ERS by submitting a request to ERS under HELP TOPICS *Submit ERS Related Issues*.

**12. I am trying to add an account to ERS, why don't I see it?**

If an account string had never been charged before it is not recognized by ERS. In order to accomplish the creation of such an account a request must be submitted to the CA via HELP TOPICS *Submit ERS Related Issues* and must include the entire 26 character account string.

**13. How should I handle anticipated resource accounts?**

Anticipated Resource accounts are not to be used for the purpose of accruing salaries for anticipated sponsored projects. Advance accounts are the proper means for accomplishing the accrual.

If an effort form is generated that includes an anticipated resource account, the department must request an advance account from ORS in order to clear the charges on the anticipated resource account. Once the new advance account is established it must be added to ERS. The adding of this new advance account would require a request made to the CA by clicking HELP TOPICS and completing *Submit ERS Related Issues*.

If an individual is paid on an anticipated resource account and did not receive funding from a sponsored project account an effort form would not be available in ERS. In this case, the department must still request an advance account from ORS and complete a paper form.

**14. An award's final adjustment period ends during the effort reporting cycle and the award is now frozen. How do I do a payroll reallocation?**

Once ERS has been initiated all payroll reallocations (cost transfers) for that reporting period must be done within ERS. In this situation since the account is frozen the normal process/procedure for requesting that an account be "unfrozen" should be followed for your department. Once you are notified that the fund is unfrozen wait until the following business day to complete the cost transfer.

**15. In reviewing an effort report, what date parameters should I use when running an A21E report from Salary Management to review payments?**

Since all salary payments for the effort report form are in ERS (just click on the salary amounts on the Pre-Review screen) there is no reason to run the A-21E Salary Management report. The A-21 system and that report will no longer be available after June 30, 2006.

## **16. Why can't I see salary payments in UMIS and complete a salary reallocation?**

Once ERS is initiated for an effort reporting period all payments become unavailable in UMIS and any required cost transfers must be completed in ERS. Keep in mind all cost transfers must be done in accordance with Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2113.

### **Certifier**

#### **1. Who is a certifier?**

The individual who has been charged and/or devoted effort to a sponsored project and must certify to that effort. A certifier may also be an individual who has a suitable means of verifying the effort of another employee charged to a sponsored project as defined by Sponsored Projects Policy No. 2114.

#### **2. When is my effort report available for certification?**

Your effort report is available once the pre reviewer has completed his/her review of the report.

#### **3. How will I know it is available for certification?**

Once your assigned pre reviewer has completed their review of your effort report and hits "Proceed" an automatic email will be sent notifying you that your effort form is ready for certification.

#### **4. How do I get into ERS to certify?**

Your email notification will contain the ERS URL. Click on that URL and you will be prompted to enter your PennKey and PennKey Password. Once you have successfully authenticated yourself, you will be directed to the ERS application.

#### **5. I go into ERS so rarely that I have forgotten my password. What do I do?**

Contact your Local Support Provider regarding your PennKey & PennKey password.

#### **6. How can I determine if the effort form was changed in pre review?**

An asterisk will appear next to the percentage in the Payroll % column indicating a change.

#### **7. Can I review the changes made by the pre reviewer?**

Yes, by clicking on the Pre Review Details tab.

#### **8. I opened my effort report and I do not agree with the percentages shown. Can I change them?**

Yes, however determine if the pre reviewer made changes and if so, notify the pre reviewer by clicking on Notify at the bottom of the effort report screen. If not, proceed with your changes and the post reviewer will execute those changes.

#### **9. I have six projects that appear on my effort report and I do not know the details such as start and end dates or the sponsor name. Do I have to call my administrator for the information?**

No, if you click on the Sponsored Account number you will see pertinent information regarding that award.

**10. My pre reviewer reviewed the effort report without making any changes. I certified the unchanged report and realized later that I made an error. Can I recertify that report?**

An unchanged effort report can be recertified at any time during the period in which a certifier is permitted to perform his/her certification. This period is 45 working days from the time the report is made available to the pre reviewer. If after the 45 working days, the Central Administrator in ORS must be contacted immediately.

**11. My pre reviewer reviewed the effort form and I have a question regarding the payroll percent. How can I review the payments made to me on the accounts indicated?**

If your mouse rolls over the percentage in question, it will say, "View payroll details". Click on the percentage and you will see the payroll detail for that account.

**12. I am a SOM faculty member and do not have any sponsored projects, why am I receiving an effort report to complete?**

ERS is no different than the previous paper copy system. All UPHS clinical faculty are required to complete the University Funded Summary screen identifying the % of effort for clinical and other activities that apply for the reporting period. In addition, clinical faculty are required to provide the number of *total* hours worked for *all* activities (including sponsored projects if applicable) in the box provided on this screen.

This information is provided to UPHS for Medicare reimbursement purposes.

## **Post Reviewer**

**1. Do all effort reports require post review?**

No, only effort reports that the certifier modified, with the exception of the distribution of the university summary percentages and the average weekly hours

**2. How do I know when to begin the post review process?**

You will receive an email notification generated automatically by ERS when the certifier actually certifies the report.

**3. In reviewing the certifier's changes to the effort report, I believe they may have made an error. What should I do?**

Do not proceed with any cost transfers. Contact the certifier immediately to discuss.

**4. I contacted the certifier to discuss a change that they made and they agree that it should not have occurred. What do I do?**

As long as the changes were not completed in the post review phase, the certifier can adjust their effort report. Instruct the certifier to open their report to correct.

- 5. The certifier and I discussed their effort report and I still do not agree with the changes the certifier has made to their effort report. What should I do?**  
Contact the departmental coordinator and discuss the situation with them in order to get a resolution to the problem.
  
- 6. The 45 working days has passed and I did not complete all of the cost transfers. Does that mean that the cost transfers cannot occur in ERS?**  
Though you are delinquent in completing the effort form, it must be completed in ERS as well as any cost transfers.
  
- 7. I made the cost transfer as requested by the certifier and hit "Proceed". How does the system accept the cost transfer?**  
The cost transfer is sent to the Payroll system and will remain with a status of 'P' for pending until the cost transfer is picked up by the weekly payroll job that runs on Monday evenings.
  
- 8. How will I know if a cost transfer did not process successfully in the Payroll system?**  
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**General**

**1. How can I change the email address for a certifier in ERS?**

The certifier has the capability of entering his/her ERS Profile once they log into ERS. However, changing the email address in ERS will not change the individual's email address in the Penn Community.

**2. An employee was paid retroactively on a grant, and they did not generate an electronic effort form. They now need to certify their effort, how should I proceed?**

If for example, an individual's salary was reallocated to a sponsored project in July for the reporting period ending in June and no other sponsored projects were charged during the reporting period to generate a form, the department must complete a paper effort form. Paper effort forms are available on the ORS website. CAUTION: If the reallocation of the salary is greater than 90 days, it is in violation of the University's policy.

**3. An employee was paid on grants outside of my org, who should certify to their effort?**

The Home ORG is responsible for seeing that the effort form is certified appropriately. However, if the responsible ORG chooses to take this responsibility on from the Home ORG the employee's form can be assigned to the Responsible ORG within ERS by the DC. The DC must communicate this transfer to the Responsible ORG's DC.

If the Home ORG decides to certify the form they should receive verifiable information from the Responsible ORG that the effort was expended. It is recommended that a screen shot of the form be provided to the person having a

suitable means of verification that the work was performed for confirmation. A copy of the communications regarding the effort form must be retained by the Home ORG for audit purposes.

**4. How do I add a certifier's email address?**

It is preferred that the certifier add their own email address by clicking on Profile once they enter ERS. If this preferred method is not used, the DC can click on HELP TOPICS and complete a *Submit ERS Related Issues* request.