



Effort Reporting System FAQs

Pre Reviewer

1. When does the pre-review process begin?

When each effort period opens, it is a best practice for each Departmental Coordinator (DC) to notify PreReviewer(s) after they have completed reviewing effort form assignments to indicate that ERS is available to begin the pre-review process. Check with your respective org ERS DC if no such notification is received within a reasonable time after the period begins.

2. I don't know why I am assigned to PreReview a particular effort report – what should I do?

The DC for each home org in ERS controls effort form assignments. Discuss with the DC whether 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 should assign the certifier to another pre reviewer.] 2) Proceed with completing the pre-review for the effort report, including recording any required over-salary-cap cost share.

3. I am pre-reviewing a faculty member's effort form and when I hit "Proceed" I am taken to the Institutional Summary screen. I do not know the percentages to insert. What do I do?

If uncertain you can notify the faculty member and ask her/him for the information or leave it blank for the certifier to complete. This information is utilized and collected by UPHS.

4. What if the payroll distribution is not correct on an effort report and needs to be reallocated?

Do not complete the pre-review. Go to the [Payroll Reallocations](#) application to make the needed reallocations. Once the reallocations are processed, the revised effort report will automatically be generated in ERS and pre-review can now be completed.

5. 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.

6. I entered a reallocation in the Payroll Reallocations application, when will it be reflected on the effort form?

Payroll reallocations are imported into ERS nightly. Typically, a revised effort

form should generate the day after the payroll reallocation was completed.

7. 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.

8. How can I get a certifier added to ERS?

An individual without a currently existing role in ERS cannot be selected for the role of certifier, but can be added to ERS by submitting a request to ers_help@isc.upenn.edu.

9. How should I handle anticipated resource accounts on effort forms?

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 should clear the charges from the anticipated resource account before completing pre-review. If needed, the department must request an advance account from ORS in order to do this. Once the new advance account is established the department should clear the anticipated resources payroll charges through the Payroll Reallocations application.

Once all anticipated resources account payroll has been cleared on an effort form, the pre-review process can be completed.

10. I finished Pre-Review but I realize I need to change the cost-shared effort?

If the effort report has not yet been certified, the Pre-Reviewer can search for the effort form by name in the search box on the Home screen, then click the MODIFY button in order to make changes on the effort report.

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 the next morning 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. I opened my effort report and I do not agree with the percentages shown. Can I change them?

No, but you may notify the pre reviewer of discrepancies or needed changes by clicking on Notify at the bottom of the effort report screen.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. I am a PSOM 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 Institutional 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.

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 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.

3. 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.