Did you know effort certification occurs twice a year?

- **What is effort certification?** A means of confirming that the effort supported or paid by the sponsor has been performed and effort committed in support of a project (but not paid by the sponsor) has been performed.

- **What is committed effort?** The amount of effort proposed in a grant or other project application that is accepted by a sponsor, regardless of whether salary support is requested for the effort.

- **Who reports effort?** Anyone who works on a federal or non-federal sponsored project must certify effort. This includes faculty, academic staff, university staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral trainees.

- **How is effort reported?** eCRT® (Effort Certification and Reporting Technology. A web-based system available 24/7 from any computer with an internet connection.

- **When do we certify effort?** August 19 and February 19

Please take the time to read this information and if you are uncertain or have questions contact Lenora Trujillo, Lenora.G.Trujillo@uth.tmc.edu, in School of Dentistry Office of Research for guidance.

READ BELOW TO LEARN MORE ↓↓

What is effort?
Effort refers to the proportion of time spent on any single professional activity which is reflected as a percentage of the total professional activity for which an individual is employed by an institution. For individuals working on sponsored research, it includes the time spent working on a sponsored project in which all or part of their salary is directly charged or contributed (cost-shared effort).

Individual effort is expressed as a percentage of the total amount of time spent on work-related activities (teaching, research, service administration, etc.) for which the University compensates an individual. It is always equal to 100%.

Effort is not calculated based on a 40-hour workweek, it is based on the total hours worked in a given week. For example, if a person works 80 hours a week, and spends 20 hours a week on her grant, then her sponsored effort is 25% (20/80=0.25)

What type of effort must be reported?
All employees whose salaries are charged directly, in whole or part, to sponsored projects or are used to meet cost-sharing or matching requirements on sponsored projects and/or have committed effort to sponsored projects, including faculty, professional and non-professional employee.

Sponsored Project Accounts are those accounts involving grants, contracts, gifts, & endowments.
Faculty with joint appointments (e.g., with the university and The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center) will account only for their activity associated with the university.

Use institutional base salary to compute salaries charged to sponsored projects. Institutional base salary is the total guaranteed annual compensation an individual received from the university, whether the individuals time is spent on research, teaching, patient care or other activities. Institutional base salary includes compensation for instruction, patient care, public service, research, and/or other activities. Institutional base salary excludes fringe benefit payments; reimbursed expenses; temporary, supplemental compensation for incidental work; income earned outside of duties to the institution; and any portion of compensation deemed to be at-risk.

Certification in eCRT is not completed for casual/nonpermanent/temporary employees. The submission of a timesheet, signed by the employee & their supervisor who uses a suitable means of verification that the work was performed, is the document of record to substantiate salary charges to sponsored projects. The timesheet includes a certification of effort & fulfills the requirements of OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, 200 CFR §430.

Why is it important to certify efforts?
Effort certification is required by extramural sponsors including the federal government. Failure to comply with the terms & conditions of an award may cause a sponsor to take enforcement action and jeopardizes UTHealth's federal research funding. Multi-million-dollar fines for erroneously certifying effort have been levied against several institutions. In addition, the university's reputation could suffer due to negative publicity, possibly resulting in loss of confidence by current and future stakeholders in the ability of the campus to administer and provide proper stewardship of funds.

What effort is NOT?
Effort is not payroll! It is not just a verification of the salary or payroll distribution. Payroll distributions are the distribution of an individual's salary, while effort reports describe the allocation of an individual's actual time and effort spent for specific projects, whether or not reimbursed by the sponsor. Thus, effort reporting is separate from and can be independent of salary charges. Effort drives payroll. Payroll does not drive effort.

Who can certify an effort report?
All faculty and PI's who receive sponsored project funding or commit effort to any sponsored projects are required to certify their own effort.

Principal investigators are required to certify the effort of postdoctoral trainees, graduate students, and non-PI classified staff funded by their grants. Faculty do not certify other faculty statements. All faculty certify their own effort. Also, all principal investigators (PIs), regardless of their classification, certify their own effort.

Who may NOT certify an effort report?
Postdoctoral trainees, graduate student, & non-PI classified staff should not certify their own effort statement. Please note that department administrators generally cannot certify effort statement. University policy requires faculty to certify for themselves and their project staff. Federal regulations require a certification that the salary charged is reasonable in relation to the effort expended. The regulations further require that the certification be signed by the principal investigator, responsible official or employee, using suitable means of verification. If an active faculty member or PI has a special situation that prevents traditional system certification please your effort coordinator, Lenora Trujillo in the Office of Research