

## APPENDIX VI

### Effort Certification Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What time is included in 100% effort?**

A: 100% effort includes total time conducting University business regardless of actual hours worked. This includes all work conducted while on vacation, after-hours, or off-campus. For example, if an employee works 25 hours on award A and 25 hours on award B, award A receives 50% effort.

**Q: When is it necessary to correct the Effort Certification Statement (ECS)?**

A: It is necessary to correct the Effort Certification Statement when there is a significant change (greater than  $\pm 5\%$ ) between paid effort and actual effort. For example, if an employee's effort for a project was budgeted at 30% and actual effort was only 32%, it would not be necessary to make any changes to the Effort Certification Statement. However, if the actual effort was 25% or lower or 35% or higher the Effort Certification Statement must be adjusted accordingly. Note that changes should be made in ink on the Effort Certification Statement form.

**Q: Who is allowed to sign the Effort Certification Statement?**

A: The Effort Certification Statement should be signed directly by the employee, as the employee clearly has direct knowledge of all of their effort. If the employee is unavailable, or is not aware of the names of the project that he/she expended effort on, the Effort Certification Statement may be signed by the PI, or the employee's direct supervisor or another responsible official in the unit. The person signing must have **first hand** knowledge that the employee's labor is representative of the total work performed.

**Q: What if an employee is no longer employed with the University?**

A: All employees whose salary is charged to sponsored project funds during the reporting period must complete an Effort Certification Statement, regardless of current employment. The PI or the employee's immediate supervisor should complete the Effort Certification Statement on their behalf. Note that it is beneficial to have employees complete an Effort Certification Statement before they leave the University.

**Q: What is cost sharing and how should it be handled on the ECS?**

A: Cost sharing is defined as costs that are incurred for the sponsored projects that are not borne by the sponsor. There are three types of cost sharing, Mandatory, Voluntary Committed and Voluntary Uncommitted. Mandatory cost sharing refers to cost sharing that is required by an externally funded award in writing. Voluntary Committed cost sharing refers to cost sharing that is not explicitly required by such an agreement, but is volunteered by OHSU and is included in the proposal and is recognized in the award document. (Note: It is recognized in the award document with language such as "This award is based on the application submitted...") Voluntary Uncommitted cost sharing is not included in the proposal or award document and is an internal agreement between the PI and the University. Mandatory and Voluntary Committed cost sharing are reported as Committed C/S on the effort statement. Voluntary Uncommitted cost sharing is reported as Uncommitted C/S.

The difference between budgeted and actual effort is considered cost sharing. For example if an employee is budgeted 50% to a department fund and 50% to a research fund, but actually spends 70% of their time on the research activity and 30% on the department activity, the cost sharing would be -20% for the department account and +20% on the research account. All cost sharing must be reflected on the Effort Certification Statement to provide documentation and verification of mandatory cost sharing and to "true up" an employee's effort.

**Q: What if the payroll suspense account shows up on my effort statement?**

A: The Effort Certification Statement reflects ALL accounts that an employee was paid on during the reporting period. Any employee that had salary and OPE paid from the suspense activities clearing account for any period of time will have those percentages reflected on the Effort Certification Statement. If you have an employee that has 0051-87301-88-6582-000-0000-000 "SUSPENSE ACTIVITIES CLEARING" listed on his/her Effort Certification Statement, it will be necessary to follow-up with Payroll to make sure the suspense has been or is handled appropriately. Please use Discoverer query, 'HRDW: Employee Labor Distribution by Work-Date'. Query on Fund '0051' to check if suspense has cleared. If suspense has not cleared, please contact Payroll (503-494-8103) to verify that the form has been received and processed.

If a Payroll Distribution Funding Change Form was submitted, but not processed properly OR if you need to submit a new change form please make sure that a **COPY** of the form gets attached to the effort statement before returning to SPA. Every effort statement requiring adjustments to the listed accounts should be returned to SPA with all appropriate back-up documentation, which justifies the adjustments. Your SPA Fund Analyst can also help determine if reports have already been filed on the OGA Projects.

**Q: How do I handle certifying effort that was expended on an unfamiliar project or employee listed on the statement?**

A: SPA routes all effort statements to the employee's home org. If the employee expended effort on a project not related to that org. then the Departmental Effort Coordinator needs to work with the Departmental Effort Coordinator of the unfamiliar org. to obtain accurate information in the certification process.