What is Effort Certification?

Effort Certification is the institution’s process for reviewing, validating, and certifying the work effort performed by its faculty and staff in support of sponsored projects. A systematic certification process and formal effort report is essential to ensure that we are always prepared to respond to sponsors with the required information. This guide provides the basic steps to access and use the web-based system.
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General Information

Effort Reporting is a critical compliance issue. Signed Effort Reports are considered legal documents in which an individual attests to the accuracy of the effort spent on sponsored projects. Effort reporting is a federally-mandated process by which the salary charged to a sponsored project is certified as being reasonable in relation to the effort expended on that project. Sponsors use these reports to confirm that effort expended by an individual working on the project supported what the sponsor paid.

One of the most common audit findings is that effort reports are certified by individuals with insufficient knowledge of the work performed. Both the Pre-Reviewers (with mandatory review authority) and Certifiers must have direct knowledge and a suitable means of verifying the work performed on the sponsored project.

The employees closest to the effort should certify their own effort reports. However, employees may not always be aware of what project they are working on and from what fund source they are being paid. Therefore, the Principal Investigator (PI), or someone authorized by the PI, will have the option to act as an alternate certifier in place of the employee, such as for all graduate students working on a sponsored project.

Effort Certification has three stages known as Periods: Pre-Review Period, Certify Period, and Post-Review Period. You will be working with effort reports mostly during the first two periods. As the PI or someone authorized by the PI, you will need to “approve” the effort reports by completing a mandatory action called “review” for employees paid on sponsored projects for which you are responsible. Also, you may act as an Alternate Certifier with the optional action of certifying effort reports in place of the employees, such as for all graduate students. Time sheets suffice for hourly students effort reports. Finally, you will need to certify your own effort reports if you were paid or cost sharing on sponsored projects.

It is not recommended that a PI, or anyone else, act as an Alternate Certifier for other faculty or professional staff members working on their projects. Faculty or professional staff members should always make every effort to certify their own effort reports.

As a Pre-Reviewer or Alternate Certifier you will not only have your own effort reports to certify (if paid or cost sharing on sponsored projects), but you will also act as the pre-reviewer and optional alternate certifier of effort reports for those employees paid on sponsored projects for which you are responsible.
Routing Queue Roles

Roles (Actions) in the Effort Reporting Process

Roles (also referred to as Actions) in the effort reporting process will be assigned by grant rather than by fund. Many grants have multiple funds with multiple PIs and Co-PIs, but the roles will be assigned for the entire grant rather than by the individual funds within the grant. All relevant personnel will be assigned to one or more of the following roles:

- **Pre-Reviewer/(FYI)-Acknowledge**: This role has the ability to view the effort report, but no action is required. An acknowledge button will be available. The user may optionally click the Acknowledge button to indicate that they have looked at the report, but only if they do so before all the required review actions have been completed by the Pre-Reviewers. This role will be assigned as needed.

- **Pre-Reviewer/Review**: This role is assigned to a person designated to review generated effort reports prior to the report being certified. This role will generally be assigned to the PI on each grant. An employee may be paid on multiple grants which may then have multiple pre-reviewers. All Pre-Reviewers are required to complete the review process before certification can take place. To complete the process, after reviewing the employee’s effort report, each Pre-Reviewer will click the Review button on the employee’s individual effort report.

- **Certifier/Certify**: This role is automatically assigned by the system to the employee named on the effort report, because the responsible employee closest to the effort should certify his or her own effort. Faculty and professional staff are encouraged to certify their own effort reports. The certify action cannot be completed until all Pre-Reviewers have completed their Review action. The certification is then complete when one person, either the employee or one of the Alternate Certifiers (as defined below), clicks the Certify button on the employee’s individual effort report.

- **Alternate Certifier/Certify**: This role is assigned to someone who is allowed to certify the effort report in place of the employee. Students may not always be aware of the fund sources from which they are paid. Therefore, the PI, Co-PI, or other responsible official, using suitable means of verification that the work was performed, can certify the employee’s effort in place of the employee. The certification is completed by the first person to click the Certify button.

- **Post-Reviewer/(FYI)-Acknowledge**: This role has the ability to view the effort report, but no action is required. The users may optionally click the Acknowledge button to indicate that they have looked at the report, but only if they do so before the Post-Reviewer has locked the effort report.

- **Post-Reviewer/Review**: This role is assigned to an individual in the Sponsored Programs Office for the purpose of viewing effort reports and for locking effort reports after they have been certified. Once an effort report is locked, no further updates or changes can be made to the report. The Post-Review action is completed when the Post-Reviewer clicks on the Review button.

**Overview of Roles and Actions**

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Instruction Overview

This page contains brief instructions. Continue to the following pages for screenshots and details.

The web-based effort certification process may appear to be quite involved at first. As you become familiar with navigating the system and you know everything is correct on the effort reports, there are only a few steps to get in and organized, and then only a few additional clicks per employee.

Log In:
1. Log into SNAP as you would for Time Sheet Entry. Opens with ‘Employee’ Tab active.
2. Under Employment Details, click on Employee Self-Service, and then Effort Certification.

Reviewing or Certifying Your Own Effort Reports:
3. The Certify My Effort screen will be displayed listing only your Effort Reports.
4. If no effort reports are displayed this indicates that you were not paid or cost sharing on any sponsored project.
7. If changes are needed, click on the Request Changes button.
8. Click the Certify button to display the Certification Statement if no changes are needed.
9. Click on the I Agree button to certify.
10. Click the Close icon to exit the report or go back to Certify My Effort.

Searching for Other Effort Reports in Your Routing Queue:
11. To review or certify other effort reports under your projects click on Review or Certify Reports.
12. Click on Advanced Search, Select Attribute, and then select Chart of Accounts Code.
13. Click in the box, type in capital ‘S’.
14. Then click on Select Attribute and select Status
   a. Then select Awaiting Refresh and click Go (This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Awaiting Refresh. Awaiting Refresh displays as the status if HR/Budget/Payroll made any type of change to the dollar amount, fund number, fringe benefit, etc. Click the Update Report button on the right hand side of the screen for the changes to be updated on the effort report.)
   b. Then select Under Review and click Go (This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Under Review. On-line effort reports must be reviewed by all individuals as shown on the routing queue before the effort report can be certified by the employee or by the PI if the effort report is for a student.)
   c. Then select Awaiting Certification and click Go (This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Awaiting Certification. On-line effort reports must be certified by the employee or by the PI if the effort report is for a student.)
15. Sort your list by double-clicking on the Column Headings to see those by Period Code to see by pay period, Last Name to see in alphabetic order, etc.
16. Double-click the employee line to view the Effort Report of that employee.
17. Review the employee’s Effort Report.
18. Click the Review button if no changes are needed.
19. If changes are needed click on the Request Changes button.
20. Click the Certify and then I Agree button, if applicable.
21. Click the Close icon to exit the report or go back to Review or Certify Reports list and repeat steps 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21 for the remaining employees.

To exit the Effort Certification module and remain in SNAP, click the Back to Employee tab or to exit Effort Certification, click Sign Out.
Access Banner Effort Certification

Login to SNAP

You may use any computer to login to SNAP.
SNAP Portal – http://SNAP.sdbor.edu
Once you reach this page enter your user name and password.

Effort Certification System

After you have logged into SNAP, you should be on your Employee tab which should look similar to the following:
Within the “Employment Details” channel, click on Employee Self-Service as shown below:

This will take you to an employee screen that should look similar to the following and then click on “Effort Certification”:
Effort Certification Tab

When opening Banner Effort Certification, the **Effort Certification Tab** (1 as shown below) is displayed. Please ignore the Labor Redistribution Tab (2 as shown below), as it is not being implemented at this time. The user will be in Certify My Effort (3 as shown below) view. The Certify My Effort view **lists all the effort reports created for you as an employee.** If no reports are displayed this indicates that you were not paid or cost sharing on any Sponsored Projects and therefore you are not required to certify an Effort Report for yourself as an employee.

Searching for Other Effort Reports in Your Queue

To access reports to be pre-reviewed or to participate as the alternate certifier, click on the **Review or Certify Reports** link. Next, click on the **Advanced Search** button.

This will open a new subsection with a drop down menu titled **Select Attribute.** Click on the down arrow beside Select Attribute and choose **Chart of Account Code.**
After you have chosen **Chart of Account Code**, a new line will appear. Enter the capital letter ‘S’ in the Chart of Account Code line or click on … for pull down list. If using pull down list highlight by clicking the applicable line and then click on select.

Click on the down arrow beside **Select Attribute**, choose **Status**, click on down arrow by **Awaiting Certification**, and choose **Awaiting Refresh**. At this point you can click on ‘Go’. This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Awaiting Refresh. Awaiting Refresh displays as the status if HR/Budget/Payroll made any type of change to the dollar amount, fund number, fringe benefit, etc. You must click the **Update Report** button on the right hand side of the screen for the changes to be updated on the effort report. This step must be completed prior to reviewing and certifying the on-line effort report.
Click on the down arrow beside Select Attribute, choose Status, click on down arrow by Awaiting Certification, and choose Under Review. At this point you can click on ‘Go’. This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Under Review. On-line effort reports must be reviewed by all applicable individuals as shown on the routing queue of the effort report before the effort report can be certified by the employee or by the PI if the effort report is for a student.

Click on the down arrow beside Select Attribute, choose Status, and choose Awaiting Certification. At this point you can click on ‘Go’. This displays all effort reports in your routing queue, except your own, where the status is Awaiting Certification. On-line effort reports must be certified by the employee or by the PI if the effort report is for a student.

NOTE: There are several other options available to you under Select Attribute in order to further refine your search. To see the options available for your selections click on …
See summary of pull down lists:

At this point you can click on ‘Go’ to view an employee listing of all of the available effort reports for which you appear in their individual routing queues.

**Sorting the List in Your Queue**

Sort your list in ascending or descending by clicking on any of the column headings. Clicking on the Status column heading (as in the example below) will sort your list by the Status of the Effort Reports in your queue. To open the report, double-click anywhere on the employee line you wish to view.
State and Status Defined – Search and Filter Effort Reports

The current state and status of each effort report will be displayed in the List Queue and are defined below. During any Period, any authorized user may click on the **Request Changes** button if corrections are needed, unless the report is Completed/Locked. Each time the **Request Changes** button is clicked, the effort report will be on hold, preventing any further action until the corrections have been processed, or the request has been cancelled. Clicking the **Request Changes** button creates a pop-up email in Outlook – see more information in the Additional Information section of this guide.

**STATE:**

- **Unlocked:** All actions take place while the effort report is Unlocked. Changes can be made to the effort report at any time while Unlocked and the effort report can be in any status.

- **Locked:** The effort report must be in Certified status before it can be Locked, indicating that all required actions have been completed. After locking the report, the status will change to Completed, and no more changes can be made to the effort report, unless it is first unlocked by a Superuser.

- **Changes Submitted:** The Request Changes button has been selected, and the effort report is on hold until the changes have been processed, or the Clear Changes button has been selected.

- **Changes Saved:** N/A – this State item is used only with the Labor Redistribution Module, which is not being implemented at this time.

**STATUS:**

- **Under Review:** The effort report is awaiting review by all assigned Pre-Reviewers before certification can take place. One or more individuals may be assigned this role for those who are paid or cost sharing on multiple grants. After all Pre-Reviewers have completed their mandatory review actions, the status will change to Awaiting Certification.

- **Awaiting Refresh:** A payroll action, such as a fund source change (PHAREDS), has been processed. An authorized user must then click the **Update Report** button displayed on the Effort Report Overview sidebar to refresh the report. This brings in the changes, and the effort report will no longer display the original incorrect information. The status will then return to Under Review, so the Pre-Reviewers can complete their actions.

- **Awaiting Certification:** All mandatory review actions have been completed by all the Pre-Reviewers and the report is ready to be certified by the Employee or Alternate Certifier. The status will change to Certified after the effort report has been certified.

- **Certified:** All mandatory review and certify actions have been completed, but the effort report has not been locked.

- **Completed:** When the certified effort report is locked, the status changes to Completed. Locking the report prevents any future changes from being made.

- **Returned for Correction:** N/A – this Status item is used only with the Labor Redistribution Module, which is not being implemented at this time.
View Effort Report – General Information

If there is a report listed, double-click on one of the elements to open the report. After you have double-clicked on one of the elements in the appropriate period, you should see a screen that looks like this (a guide to the numbered items is included below):

1. The **Sponsored** section shows the Fund and the Organization categories, the Effort Category, and the Charge Type and percent Effort you expended on the grant-funded project. If you worked on multiple sponsored projects, there will be multiple lines.

2. The **Non Sponsored** section shows any other Funds from which you have been paid including cost sharing related to a sponsored project. Example: Tuition, General, or Self Support for instruction. The percent effort should equal the amount of time you expended on non-sponsored (non-grant-funded) activities. If your non sponsored activity is paid from multiple funds, you will see multiple lines.

3. The **Effort Report Overview** section includes the **Report Status** tab that shows the reporting period, the dates of review, and a statement on the status of your report. If a change has been requested, the display will show the name of the person who made the request. If the change has been processed, the status will display Awaiting Refresh, and an Update Report button will be displayed. Clicking on the Update Report button will update the report to include the processed changes. The **Dates** tab displays the dates for the three reporting periods of the current effort report. The most important concept regarding dates is that the effort certification be completed within one month as shown under the Certification Period.

4. The **Funding Chart** is a simple pie chart showing the percent effort allocated to different funding sources.
View Effort Report – Pay Period Summary

To view additional details on the effort report, click on the Pay Period Summary located in the left-hand navigation panel.

The Pay Period Summary screen as shown below provides the Organization, Grant, Fund, Effort Type, Payroll Percent, and Effort Period Percent.

To view further detail for period, click on the hyperlink titled Monthly…:

This screen shows the Index, Fund, Organization, Account, Program, Activity, Location (FOAPAL) codes, as well as the Percent pay/effort for each fund from which the employee was paid. Location Codes are used to track cost share; therefore, this screen is where you will see the FOAPAL for the cost share as well as the Percent pay/effort associated with the cost share. Once you have reviewed the information for each pay period, click on the “Close” button to return to the Pay Period Summary Screen.
Pre-Review and/or Certify the Effort

If you approve the effort report as viewed, you can click on the **Review** button as instructed below. However, if the funding or percent allocations are incorrect, do not click the **Review** button, but rather, click the **Request Changes** button and continue with the Request Changes instructions that follow in the Addition Information section of this guide.

Once the **Review** button is clicked the button will change to **Certify**. For those paid on multiple grants, all Pre-Reviewers in the routing queue are required to complete their pre-review action before the **Certify** button will display.

To confirm that you have reviewed and approve the effort, click on the “Review” button.

To certify the effort is correct click “Certify”.

![Diagram showing the process of reviewing and certifying effort reports](image-url)
If you act as an Alternate Certifier in place of the employee, click the **Certify** button to read the actual certification. Faculty and professional staff are encouraged to certify their own effort reports. Clicking on the **I Agree** button acknowledges that you certify the effort report per the statement shown.

Once you have clicked **I Agree**, you will notice the information on the Effort Report Overview sidebar has now changed to Certified – Unlocked where it will remain until the post-review is complete. Then it will show as Completed – Locked.

**NOTE**: Do NOT choose the **Review** or **Certify** buttons if you have not reviewed the report or if you do not agree with the percent allocations or funding. If you have any concerns regarding the accuracy of the report, you should choose the **Request Changes** button until your concerns are addressed.

Click the **Close** icon to exit the report. To exit the Effort Certification module and remain in SNAP, click the **Back to Employee** tab or to exit Effort Certification, click **Sign Out**.
Additional Information

The following pages contain additional instructions on how to:

- Request Changes (PHAREDS)
- View the Routing Queue
- Send an E-Mail from the Routing Queue
- Add a Member to the Routing Queue
- Adding Comments
- Proxy Assignor Defined
- Add or Remove a Proxy
- Act as an Effort Certification Proxy
- View, Print a Hard Copy, or Save an Electronic Copy
- Timed Out of System
- System Goes Down

Request Changes (PHAREDS)

If the effort report is incorrect, click on the Request Changes button to initiate an e-mail. The subject line will automatically populate the name of the person the change is for and the effort report period. Send email to Susan Stelter (Susan.Stelter@sdsmt.edu), copy to SDSMT Sponsored Programs (Sponsored.Programs@sdsmt.edu) for their approval if related to a grant, and to other appropriate individuals. To request a payroll correction you will use the Payroll Correction Request Form (PHAREDS) located on the F drive at F:\admin\Business-Office\Public or contact Susan Stelter at (605) 394-1207 or Susan.Stelter@sdsmt.edu for a copy of the PHAREDS form. Provide complete justification for the requested change. Attach the completed PHAREDS form to the email. The Add New Funding button is not being used at this time.

Requesting Changes will prevent the effort report from being certified until further action takes place. A Clear Changes button becomes available after clicking the Request Changes button, and only the person who requested the changes or a superuser can clear the changes. The Report Status will display as Under Review - Changes Submitted and the name of the person requesting the change. If you determine the report does not require changes, click the Clear Changes button in order to resume the routing process.
Changes will automatically flow through to the effort report once they are processed through the system. You will see a status of **Awaiting Refresh** on the Review or Certify Reports screen once the fund source change is processed.

**NOTE:** It is a time consuming process to reallocate salaries and related benefits after the charges have been incurred. Therefore, if you anticipate your effort will change during the reporting period, you should inform the Budget Office about the change in advance of the pay period or before the 21st of the current pay/effort reporting period.
View the Routing Queue

To view the routing queue for yourself or for the employee you are viewing; click **Routing Queue** on the sidebar. The information displayed includes the queue member’s name, his or her role, and current action to be performed. The data is sorted by the roles or actions to be performed: Pre-Reviewer/Review, Alternate Certifier, Certify, and Post-Reviewer. These are all mandatory actions that must be performed before an effort report reaches the status of Completed – Locked. There is also an Acknowledge (FYI) role that is optional.

The Routing Queue is updated instantly as roles/actions are completed, noting the date and time and by whom the action was completed. As shown in the screen shot below, when each member of the routing queue has completed his or her review/certification, a green check mark will appear. Pending reviews/certifications are indicated by a gold-colored triangle.

Each member of the routing queue should make every effort to perform his or her own actions; but in some circumstances, it may be necessary to assign a Proxy. In that case, the Proxy’s name will appear as the person who completed the action.

If a Superuser completes a mandatory action, the Superuser’s name will appear as the person completing the action for everyone who is required to complete that same action. If the Superuser Certifies the Effort Report, the Superuser’s name will only appear under the Certifier (employee), not under the Alternate Certifiers (optional actions).
Send an E-mail from the Routing Queue

To send an e-mail to any member of the routing queue, click the E-mail link below the member’s name, as shown in the previous screen shot. This will open an e-mail to that person with the subject line “Effort Certification” automatically populated.

Add a Member to the Routing Queue

By system default, any member of the Routing Queue has the capability of adding a new member “on the fly” to the Routing Queue, by clicking the Add Member button. **Only use this feature if you have received instructions from the Office of Sponsored Programs personnel.** This feature will only add a new member to the Routing Queue for the specific Effort Report that is open. Adding a new member “on the fly” will not automatically create a new member to any other current or future Effort Report. Members cannot be deleted from a Routing Queue, except by a process which recreates the effort report and sends it back to the beginning Pre-Review Period.

Remember: Roles (also referred to as Actions) in the effort reporting process will be assigned by grant. Many grants have multiple funds with a PI and multiple Co-PIs, but the roles will be assigned for the entire grant rather than by the individual funds within the grant. The Add Member feature will be very useful when Co-PIs need to be added to the routing queue to review employees paid through their individual project grant funds within the grant.

This opens a new pop-up window where you can select a new member to add to the routing queue. Click on the … at the end of name to select an individual. The system will take into account the current status of the report and limit the available roles based on that information. For example, if the report is Certified, the roles will be limited to Post-Review. The system knows the report is out of the pre-review and certify phases and will not allow the insertion of a pre-reviewer or certifier. Different options follow:
Adding Comments

Any member of the effort reporting routing queue can add comments to an effort report by clicking on the **Comments** link and then clicking on the **Add Comment** button. From any page in the Effort Reporting module you can also click on **More Actions** and select **Add Comment** from the drop down menu. Comments will mostly be used by Budget and Sponsored Programs to document changes made to effort and unlocking an effort report. **Note: Once you add and save comments, you cannot delete or update them.** Comments will be displayed on the Comments page in reverse chronological order, with the most recent appearing first on the list.

Type a comment in the **Add Comment** box that appears and click on the **Save** button.
Proxy Assignor Defined

A user who has assigned Proxies to act on their behalf is called a Proxy Assignor. The Individual must first fill out a Request for Effort Certification Proxy form. Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs (Sponsored.Programs@sdsmt.edu) for a copy of the Effort Certification Proxy form. The proxy form must be signed by both the Proxy Assignor and the Proxy and approved by the Office of Sponsored Programs. The Proxy receives all the Proxy Assignor’s authority and responsibility for Effort Certification Roles and their corresponding Actions.

Add or Remove a Proxy

Each member of the routing queue should make every effort to perform their own actions, but in some circumstances it may be necessary for users to assign a Proxy to act on their behalf. Use the Proxy or Superuser page to add or remove an effort certification proxy. The name of the Proxy will appear on the routing queue as the person who completed the action.

Add a Proxy

To add a Proxy, click on the Add Proxy button (shown above). This opens a new pop-up window. Click on the … to select an individual and then click on the Save button. Your assigned Proxy will now be able to view and act on your behalf in the Effort Certification module. These steps may be repeated to add more than one Proxy.
Remove a Proxy

Use the **Proxy** or **Superuser** page to remove an effort certification proxy. To remove a Proxy, check the **Remove** box in the Update Proxy section of the page (shown above) and then click on the **Save** button.

Act as an Effort Certification Proxy

Use the **Effort Certification Proxy** or **Superuser** page to act as a proxy for another person. An effort certification proxy can act on behalf of another administrator in that person’s absence. To act as a proxy for another person, access the Proxy or Superuser view and select the individual from the **Act as Proxy** drop-down list, the default is Self. Anyone who has designated you as their Proxy will be listed here.

![Proxy or Superuser page](image)

**Note**: When you choose to act as a proxy for another administrator, the lower right sidebar displays whether you are acting as a proxy and for whom.

![Proxy or Superuser sidebar](image)

Click the **Review or Certify Reports** link, and execute a search as you normally would to return a list of effort reports for employees’ who meet the desired search criteria. While the user is acting as a proxy, the Review or Certify page will contain all effort reports where the proxy user is in the queue.
View, Print a Hard Copy, or Save an Electronic Copy of the Effort Report

From any list or effort report view in the Effort Certification module, you can click on **More Actions** and select **Print** from the Drop Down menu to view, print or save a copy of the Effort Report. The report will print or save as it appears in the initial Effort Report view, regardless of which view you are in when you click on **Print**. When you click on **Print**, it will open a new pop-up window with a PDF copy of the Effort Report. This is also a way to view the entire effort report when there are more Funds than what will display on the initial effort report without using the **scroll bar**. From the browser (usually the File menu), you can choose print or save file. This feature may require the use of one or more Adobe programs or browsers, which are usually free downloads.

This feature is for your convenience only. You are not required to print or manually save copies of Effort Reports. These reports will be stored permanently in the Banner system and can be accessible whenever needed for review and audit purposes.
Timed Out of System

If the system times you out the following will display on your screen. The system will not allow you to sign back in on this screen by using your user name and password. You must sign out and go back to the SNAP screen and log back in.

System Goes Down

When the system goes down the following will display on your screen. The system will not allow you to sign back in on this screen by using your user name and password. Because of the number of inquiries the system is restarted twice a day, early morning and around noon. If you receive the below on your screen during that time wait for a few minutes and try again. If you receive the below on your screen at another time please notify the Office of Sponsored Programs.
Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the online effort certification system, contact Sharon Reid at 605-394-1870 or Sharon.Reid@sdsmt.edu, Marsha Kelly 605-394-5149 or Marsha.Kelly@sdsmt.edu, or email SDSMT Sponsored Programs (Sponsored.Programs@sdsmt.edu).

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT