EFFORT REPORTING BEST PRACTICES
Best Practices - ERS: 7 Simplified Steps

1) **SET UP:** Create Saved Searches specific to Dept code, PI and/or FAU. Usually only need to be set up once, depending on the criteria used.

- Two recommended Saved Searches (for “Manage Searches”)
  - By Department code – shows Effort Reports of all personnel with that Dept listed as their Home Dept in EDB as of TODAY
Best Practices - ERS: 7 Simplified Steps

- By Subscribing to PI’s My Projects List – shows all Effort Reports as that PI will view them under his/her PI logon
Best Practices - ERS: 7 Simplified Steps

2) **RELEASE:** Effort Reporting System sends an email notification via ERS listserv that the Quarter’s Effort Reports are available in ERS & ready for certification

   - Fund Managers (FM)/ERS Coordinators (EC) given 45-50 days to have the reports verified and certified by the appropriate person

3) **PREPARATION:** Gather tools required to start ERS verification process:
   - ERS
   - ERS (PAR) Detail Report
   - Current/Approved Budgets (or Progress Report’s Personnel Report) for all Federal contracts & grants
   - Copies of UPAYs, or any other payroll transfer documentation used in your Dept, affecting the ERS Quarter’s payroll.
4) **VERIFICATION:** Every Effort Report should be reviewed & verified by the FM/EC against the ERS Detail Report (Payroll Ledgers which reflects *Paid Effort*) AND current/approved Federal Budget/Progress Report (*Proposed Effort*) for all Key Personnel. *Required for EVERY single Effort Report.*

- **Compare** the Original Payroll % (check View Payroll Detail) in ERS with yellow highlighted column in ERS Detail Report
  - **Confirm** all UPAYs, if applicable, that have *already* been processed have been taken into account. **NOTE:** Payroll only runs 1x month. ERS syncs with the Payroll system every 2 weeks.
  - **Prepare** necessary UPAYs ASAP, if applicable
  - **Edit** Adjusted Payroll % *only* if variance greater than +/- 5%
  - **Add** Adjusted Cost Sharing %, if applicable
  - **Comment** - Once Adjusted Total % reflects the correct %, add a comment to the ERS Comment Log – “Report reviewed & verified by FM Name on 05/05/10.” as well as any other descriptive comment.
  - **Save** changes
5) **REVIEW:** Set up a time *prior to* the Quarter’s ERS certification deadline to sit down with the PI/Certifier to review & explain each individual Effort Report s/he is responsible for completing.

6) **CERTIFICATION:**
   - PI’s *must* self certify. (Names highlighted in yellow in ERS.)
   - Staff members *may* self certify.
   - If possible, a PI may certify all the reports for his/her staff members paid off his/her Federal research projects.

7) **FOLLOW-UP:** The Effort Reporting process is NOT over once all Reports have been certified. FM/EC should log into ERS from time to time to review their list of Saved Searches. Effort Reports may reopen due to late payroll transactions.
Best Practices - Review

1) **Compare Orig Pay % with ERS Detail Report**

2) **Edit Adj Pay % only if variance is greater than +/- 5%**

3) **Add Adj Cost Sharing %, if applicable**

4) **Comment – Add description of what action was taken on Effort Report**

5) **Save**

6) **Meet with Certifier to Review & Explain Adjusted Total % Column prior to certification**
Best Practices – Hints & Tips

◆ Start early!

◆ Good ERS management starts with good fund management/monthly reconciliation.
  ▪ Minimize payroll cost transfers (UPAYs).
  ▪ Check Salary Cap Overpayment/Disallowance Report regularly, if applicable.

◆ Process required UPAYs in a timely manner.
  ▪ Wait for these UPAYs to hit ERS prior to changing the Adj Pay %.

◆ When Effort Reports are initially generated, Orig & Adj Pay % Columns automatically match.
  ▪ If Adj Pay % remains unchanged, it will continue to change to match Orig Pay %.
  ▪ Once Adj Pay % Column is changed & saved, any type of change to Orig Pay % will not automatically update Adj Pay % to match.

◆ Review Saved Searches even during off ERS certification cycles to ensure there are no Open ERS.
  ▪ Certified/Adjustment Required status are still considered Open.
  ▪ Priority during ERS certification cycles is to have that quarter all certified. Once done, work on back logged/overdue ERS, if any.