

This FAQ is designed to guide Illinois Tech faculty, staff, and Principal Investigators through the effort certification process for federally sponsored projects.

Q: What is effort reporting?

A: Effort reporting is a federal mandated requirement to certify the time spent of all individuals who worked on a federal sponsored project. It is a key component to maintaining integrity, transparency and legal compliance in sponsored research. All salaries and wages charged to federally sponsored agreements (including cost sharing) and other university activities constitute effort. Effort allocations are a reasonable representation of work performed.

Q: How is effort certified?

A: Effort is measured in percentages totaling 100% of an individual's compensated effort (grants & non-grant funded) for the semester. Illinois Tech uses the Banner Grant Effort Certification Reporting system which is a self-service tool monitored by Research Administration Services to document effort certification. Principal Investigators can review and certify their own effort and the effort of those who worked on their federal sponsored grants.

Q: When does effort reporting have to be done?

A: Illinois Tech processes effort reports after each semester (Spring/Summer/Fall). The period to complete effort certifications is announced via email communication by Research Administration Services (RAS) with instructions on how to get into the system.

Q: When I try to get to the Grant Effort Certification page, I get an error message "Invalid username/password; Logon denied". How can I proceed?

A: Complete the following steps:

- 1. Log out of the Illinois Tech dashboard and log back in with your credentials.*
- 2. Search for "Grant Effort Certification Reporting" to re-enter the system.*
- 3. If you are still unable to get into the effort certification system, you will need to submit an OTS Support Desk ticket via supportdesk@illinoistech.edu.*

Q: I have a new grant that I have been charging effort to so I expect to find records to certify. I followed the instructions and did not find any reports to certify. Is this a mistake? Should I assume no action is required?

A: Effort certification is required on all federal-sponsored projects (including cost share funding). You first need to make sure you have finance access. Finance access refers to the system permissions needed to view and certify effort reports. New Principal Investigators must complete the [Finance Access Form](#) upon receiving their grant award notification.

Q: When I get into the Effort Certification system, I can see a list of records under “Certify My Effort”. How do I proceed?

A: These are the records for your own effort. Refer to the [Effort Reporting Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

Q: I was able to view and certify my own effort. How can I view the records of others who have worked on my grants that need to be certified?

A: Refer to the [Effort Reporting Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

Q: The effort summary in percentages does not seem accurate. I know how much I requested in dollar amounts last semester. How can I confirm the effort matches the compensation?

A: The effort reporting system extracts payroll data from the University’s payroll system. It translates total compensation received during the semester in allocated effort totaling 100%. It is not unusual to encounter discrepancies. Please do not certify until they are resolved. If you are not sure if the effort allocations are accurate, you can review your grant payroll record to confirm payroll transactions are accurate before certifying.

Q: The effort summary for my own (and/or an individual’s) record is incorrect. I reviewed my grant payroll record and found a discrepancy in the payment amounts from what I requested. How can this be fixed?

A: If you identify an error that needs to be corrected do not select “Request Changes” and “Add New Funding” buttons as they do not update the payroll system. You will need to contact Research Administration Services and your Department/College Administrator. You and your Department/College Administrator will need to prepare a [salary reallocation request](#) (if applicable) to correct the charges in the payroll system to match actual effort. Research Administration Services will collect the completed form for review and submit it to Grants and Contracts Accounting for processing.

Q: There is a record in my queue under "awaiting certification" status. I double click to see the effort report summary but there is no "certify" option. How can I proceed?

A: If a salary reallocation is in process to correct the effort for yourself or someone who was charged on your grant, the system may need additional time to update. Please monitor your queue and try again after receiving an update from Research Administration Services when reports are ready for certification.

Q: I have a student/staff who worked on my grant and another grant with a different PI in the same semester. How can I make sure I only certify the effort for my grant?

A: The system is designed to ensure that each Principal Investigator only certifies the effort allocated to their specific grant.

Q: I am seeing a number of reports for people who I do not supervise. Why am I receiving this? Do I need to do anything?

A: The system is designed to route grant effort reports to Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators. If you have a Co-PI role on a sponsored grant the reports will also appear in your queue. Either one has the access to certify the report. The report should be certified by the individual who can confirm the effort spent on the sponsored project(s).

Q: I recently hired a staff/student this semester. Do I need to do anything?

A: Illinois Tech processes effort reports after each semester (Spring/Summer/Fall). New hire effort reports will be available in the next cycle.

Resources

- [Effort Reporting Guide](#)

Contacts

- Research Administration Services: ras@illinoistech.edu
- OTS Support: supportdesk@illinoistech.edu