

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Effort Certification Policy

NUMBER: 5:24

A. PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with sponsored project effort reporting requirements, which includes the appropriate allocation of time and costs and certification of effort, by each university, its departments, and individual employees.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Annualized Base Amount (ABA):** The maximum amount the employee would receive for the designated position if he/she were to work full-time (1.0 FTE) for the full year (12 months.) Each employee can have only one ABA on the database at a time. For nine-month employees, ABA is 4/3 of the nine-month salary, for example. Any compensation earned outside the base contract is not included in the ABA.
- 2. Certification:** The act of attesting to the effort expended.
- 3. Effort Certification Report:** A report that any employee expending effort on a sponsored project must complete to be in compliance with the federal regulations.
- 4. Principal Investigator (PI):** An individual designated by the sponsor to direct the project or activity being supported by the grant or contract. The principal investigator is responsible and accountable to the grantee and agency for the proper conduct of the project or activity.
- 5. Reasonable/Reasonableness:** As defined in Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.404 and 200.430(b).
- 6. Responsible Official:** The Principal Investigator, department chairperson, or supervisor with knowledge of the work performed by the employee, depending on the circumstances.
- 7. Time and Effort Reporting (TER):** A requirement for overtime eligible and overtime exempt employees who expend effort on sponsored projects for which reimbursement is claimed from the grantor to certify their time.

C. POLICY

Effort allocation and certification is required by the federal government and other awarding agencies.

1. Uniform Guidance 2 CRF 200 Rules and Procedures

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requires an effort reporting system as governed by Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 requiring:

- Be supported by a system of internal control that provides reasonable assurance about the accuracy, allowability, and proper allocation of the charges;
- Charges to Federal awards must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed (2 CFR200.430(i)(1)). In addition, the records must encompass both federally assisted and all other activities compensated by the institution on an integrated basis, i.e. reflect 100% of the employees compensated activities or Institutional Base Salary;
- Be incorporated into the entity's official records.
- Charges for cost sharing or matching requirements must be supported in the same manner as direct charges or personal compensation.

2. BOR Effort Certification Reporting Requirements

The BOR has established Effort Certification Reporting for all employees expending effort on a sponsored project. To comply with the requirements, the Universities have established after the fact Time and Effort Reporting procedures that must show:

- 100 percent of the effort expended in fulfilling the obligations of the employee's university appointment, and
- the percentage distribution of payroll by fund source to each sponsored project.

2.1. The Effort Certification Report listing the major direct personal services cost categories is to be prepared for each individual required to report. The report will also list the employee's total payroll distribution in percentages. The employee or responsible official will be asked to review the percentage payroll distribution including cost share/match provided, make any necessary adjustments, and then certify the report. The effort reporting system provides the principal means for certifying that the salaries and wages charged to sponsored project funds represent a reasonable reflection of effort devoted for the period. If the percentage of distribution is changed appropriate earnings will be adjusted and then certified. Note that a sponsoring agency must approve in writing any change in effort in which key personnel withdraw from a project entirely, are absent for three continuous months, or reduce effort by 25% of the percentage approved in the award. Individual grants or contracts may have more restrictive requirements.

2.2. Total reported effort, which is the time required to complete all ABA university duties, must be reported in terms of 100% regardless of the number of hours spent in any given period. Total effort includes teaching assignments, research or creative activity, clinical practice, and service assignments (including administrative assignments), irrespective of funding source. Thus all teaching, research or other assignments must be captured whether they are funded by federal, state, private, or institutional funds.

- 2.3. Salaries for teaching, administration, university service, clinical activity, institutional governance, and proposal preparation must be accounted for in accordance with ABA.

Full time overtime exempt employees, including faculty are expected to work a minimum of 40 hours per week during their contract period. An average work week is calculated over the reporting period; weekly effort is expected to vary. Please note that the BOR and the federal government recognize that in an academic setting teaching, research, service, and administration are inextricably intermingled. Therefore, one must rely on estimates in which a degree of tolerance is appropriate. This standard does not put faculty or others on a specific time-clock but applies a standard of reasonable, allocable effort.

Request for changes should be made on the Effort Certification for reasonable variances of actual effort expended compared to the percentages listed on the report. After the adjustment to payroll on the appropriate fund source the effort can be certified.

- 2.4. Salaries (including additional duty pay and summer support) and any other allowable compensation related benefits, and indirect costs should be charged to sponsored projects by determining that percentage of a faculty member's average work month devoted to a project and charging no more than that percentage to a sponsored project. Charging less than this percentage is allowable if specifically approved by the institution. Salary caps, such as the NIH salary cap, may apply to some individuals. Effort that is committed to a sponsor and not reimbursed should be classified as cost sharing.

3. Responsibility for Effort Certification Reporting

- 3.1. The Principal Investigator – The PI has responsibility for the fiscal management of a sponsored award including associated effort reporting. Responsibility may be delegated but accountability remains with the PI.
- 3.2. Effort Report Signatory Responsibility – The effort report is to be signed electronically or manually by the employee or a responsible official with knowledge of the work performed by the employee.
- 3.3. Research/Grants Accounting and Grants & Contracts departments are responsible for policy administration and monitoring.

4. Educating Faculty, Staff, and Students Involved in Effort Reporting

Deans and department chairs (or their equivalent) will inform their faculty, administrative staff, other professionals and student employees of the university and BOR policies and procedures for effort reporting and monitor compliance. Guidelines are available on the individual institutions website or internal portal.

5. Frequency of Reporting

Time and effort will be certified monthly which corresponds with the monthly payroll cycle.

FORM/APPENDICES:

The Regents Information System houses the Effort Certification web form.

SOURCE:

BOR August 2010; June 2011; December 2017.