

April 2022 Research Administration Forum Q&A

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Q1: Any chance there is an update to the project that would allow for 3 areas of research admin staff, which would include adding additional DRAs as part of the middle group? Sorry, I can't recall what the project was called but I believe it was only 1 or 2 or 3 that the leadership selected for implementation. I think it was announced sometime in 2021.

A1: Yes, that's right. We are finalizing the project schedule and will have an update/kick-off soon. There has been a lot of interest in the DRA component, but that is not the major thrust of the program. The largest component will be a comprehensive training program for all research administrators. Also, we will look at establishing additional service centers where that would be helpful to faculty.

Q2: I know this is off topic, but maybe in a future RAF, if it could be identified how departments are implementing the newly allowed childcare costs on the training grants? Is this a category noted on the NGA, what documentation we should obtain from the trainee, how it is to be paid out, etc.

A2: Yes, we are planning this topic for the next RAF. Also, there may be some communication about this before the next RAF.

In the meantime here is some guidance on how to request the costs for individual full-time NRSA pre and postdoctoral fellows: <https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2022/02/10/how-are-childcare-costs-for-nrsa-trainees-and-fellows-requested/>

And recently updated NIH FAQs on how to budget / request these costs:

https://grants.nih.gov/faqs#/funding_programs_childcare_costs.htm?anchor=header11809

I met with Mike Sattin (Director, CRU in BFS) and Scott Monatlik (Director, Tax Services in BFS) in March to discuss the best way to process reimbursement of eligible childcare costs incurred by a trainee or a fellow.

For reimbursement process, EFM and BFS reviewed NIH announcements and procedures of other UC campuses and we 1) agreed with other UC campus' interpretation that it is taxable income, and 2) decided that at UCLA it would be best to follow the existing processes how Trainees/Fellows on NIH NRSA grants receive their "stipends." This way, there is no separate process or consideration that need to be developed to properly address different tax implications to different appointment/student groups. Currently Postdoc receives "stipends" through UCPATH and Predoc/Graduate students receives "stipends" through BAR. Department can submit a payment request for allowable childcare cost of the eligible individual through either UCPATH or BAR depending on the individual's appointment/student status.

EFM worked with General Accounting to create a new object code: 3488 (NRSA Childcare Allowance) that can be used for both BAR and UCPATH. It will be exempt from all F&A bases except for B-Total Direct Cost as required by NIH GPS and will have a warning restriction. Making it warning will facilitate an easier reconciliation of \$2,500 of annual limit per an appointee.

Currently, a pending item is configuration of this new object code in UCPATH with an appropriate earn code. BFS Payroll Partners and EFM are working on this last step. Once this gets completed, EFM will send out an announcement to campus to provide guidelines on how to get reimbursed for NRSA childcare allowance.

Q3: Is there an update on the hub and spoke model?

A3: We are finalizing the project schedule and will have an update/kick-off soon. There has been a lot of interest in the DRA component, but that is not the major thrust of the program. The largest component will be a comprehensive training program for all research administrators. Also, we will look at establishing additional service centers where that would be helpful to faculty. Finally, we are looking at identifying specific points of contact in schools and major research departments to serve as a key liaisons with ORA departments.

Extramural Fund Management

Q1: At medicine, even faculty paid under cap is using MCOP. Will this fall under #4?

A1: The MCOP/Salary Cap worksheet is to be used when either an individual has a multiple component of pay and/or the individual's salary is charged to the C&G funds with salary cap restriction. So if an individual has multiple components of pay, it will fall in the category #4, even if the individual's salary is not over the salary cap.

Q2: Will there be departmental/end user input involved in the process?

A2: Yes, the announcement to solicit campus feedback was sent April 20, 2022 to the ORA listserv.

Q3: Will there be visual diagrams of how the new SCT process will look like prior to the Nov 2022 implementation? Would be interested in seeing samples showing how transfers would look like in the new interface.

A3: Based on EFM's understanding, BFS Payroll Partners or SCT Redesign Project Manager will lead campus trainings before the new SCT processes are implemented in UCPath working with UCPath Center and other UC campuses. The training materials may include visual diagrams. EFM has relayed the message to the SCT Redesign Project Manager at UCLA.

Q4: What's being done to address the staffing shortage? A branch of AP or GA literally only has 2 ppl right now- they lost an entire team. It's really impacting our work. It is affecting our ability to process close-outs in a timely manner as invoices are not being paid for months... I know ORA is separate from AP and GA but maybe progress will be made if other departments take it up the ladder too...

A4: I understand. We are aware of the impact of the delays. I recommend you write to Controller Selina Martin and let her know how significantly this is affecting campus operations. And perhaps have your chair or dean endorse your concerns.

Q5: Does anyone have a nice template to send to faculty that concisely explains the ERS and requests the certification.

A5: This is a good idea. EFM is happy to draft something short and share with the campus.

Q6: Question related to the 'report': certified and not-certified: would a 'certified/adjreq'ed' considered as Certified; what about those under 'pre-lim review'?

A6: An effort report with a Certified/AdjustReqd status is included in "Certified" in the ORA Portal metrics for certification rate calculation because it was certified. However, it counted as open in the monthly open/overdue notice sent by EFM to ERS Coordinators because it requires additional actions to address adjustments.

Q7: Is there an update on the status of flagged reports (those reports under preliminary review)?

A7: For latest updates regarding effort reports flagged as "Under Prelim Review", please refer to the slide 13 in the EFM presentation at April 2022 RAF.

Q8: How often ERS is refreshing the system, eg. with a DR done a while ago, but ERS not reflecting it afterwards. How soon can we expect to see this DR coming into ERS?

A8: Great news! Earnings including DRs processed through March 2022 have been loaded to ERS as Fall 21 and Winter 22 effort reports are released. A timeline to load earnings beyond March 2022 has not been finalized but in process.

Q9: Can we allow multiple selection for the search effort report filters?

A9: Yes, search tool in the ORA Portal will allow for multiple filters to be selected

Q10: Can you certify from this page (ORA portal)

A10: No, effort report certification will continue to be done through ERS. ORA portal is to provide the statistics and ways to easily sort the data and it includes the link to ERS in the "About" tab.

Q11: Can you go over which each status color means again for the effort report certifications? Which ones are ready for certification now vs. which ones we should hold off on certifying?

A11: Under the charts tab, a report status has been color coded as follows:

- Green – The report has been certified and no other action is needed.
- Light Green – Report with a Certified/AdjustReqd status indicates a report has been certified but awaiting an adjustment.
- Red – Is 'Open' and awaiting certification.
- Peach – Effort report is affected by one or more UCPATH defects and has been flagged as under preliminary review.

Effort reports flagged with "Prelim Review" are the ones to hold off on certifying. All other effort reports without "Prelim Review" flag are ready for certification. Please visit EFM's website <https://efm.research.ucla.edu/special-instructions-ers-release/> for the latest updates on the status of resolving UCPATH issues.

Q12: I just went into my ERS Report List, and didn't see any difference in the interface. So I'm unclear about where these changes are relative to the standard interface.

A12: Changes discussed account for enhancements made to the Effort Report Certification Status on the ORA Portal (<https://portal.research.ucla.edu/EffortReportingCertification>). No change has been made to the Effort Reporting System (ERS).

Q13: If we have questions about specific effort reports, what information is most helpful for us to share? Employee ID and report period?

A13: Please contact ERS Help Desk (ershelp@research.ucla.edu) with the employee's name, employee ID, report period, and description of the issue for the impacted effort report and EFM will assist

Q14: When I export a list of open certifications using the tool, I see two columns: Emp. Home Department and Account Department. What is the difference between them? Is another FM responsible for employees not in the home department?

A14: The 'Emp. Home Department' indicates the employees HR department where the individual appointment belongs. The 'Account Department' list's the department owning the expense account/project charged in the effort report, and responsible for certification.