Principal Investigator Unable to Certify Effort Reports

This Job Aid provides information to assist the user in requesting "Other Designated Certifier" status when a Principal Investigator (PI) is unable to certify effort reports (i.e. due to death, sabbatical, or field research in a remote location.)

What to Do When a PI is Unable to Certify Effort Reports

Effort that has been directly charged to a federal or federal flow-through fund must be certified to verify that labor charges to sponsored projects are accurate, timely, and reflect the actual level of work performed. Committed cost shared effort (i.e., mandatory and voluntary committed cost sharing) must also be substantiated by effort certification. **Effort reports must be certified by the individual (self-certified) or by someone who has first hand knowledge of the work performed and the benefiting project.**

If a PI is **unable** to certify effort reports (i.e. due to death, on sabbatical, or in a remote location), "Other Designated Certifier" access must be requested to delegate the PI's certification authority to another person. If the PI will not return, is absent more than three months, or has reduced his/her time devoted to the project by 25% or more, please ensure that the Sponsored Projects Office (SPO) has been informed and that a request for revision has been submitted to the sponsoring agency. The new PI or "Designated Certifier" must have first hand knowledge of work performed and the benefiting federally sponsored project(s) in order to certify the effort reports, or he/she must have a suitable means of verification that the work was performed. Administrative staff, including MSOs and HR staff, generally do NOT have the first-hand knowledge of the effort performed and therefore should not certify effort reports.

Submit Request to Delegate PI's Certification Authority

To delegate a PI's certification authority to another person, a written justification must be included in the delegation request. Send an email to cgahelp@berkeley.edu requesting an "**Other Designated Certifier Access Request Form**" fully explaining why the designation is required. Please complete all sections of this form and obtain signature approval at the Dean or Director level. Return the completed, signed form to cgahelp@berkeley.edu. Upon approval, CGA sets up the "Other Designated Certifier" role with specific access privileges. The department ERC is notified when the requested access has been established, and the effort reports belonging to the absent PI can be certified by the designate.

How to Find Effort Reports Requiring Certification

The effort reports for "Other Designated Certifier" status will appear in the PI's "My Projects" list. To locate the effort reports that require certification, the designated certifier can subscribe to the absent PI's "My Projects" list, or they can search the Award tab on the Search Reports page (see Job Aid – Setting Up Searches in ERS.)