Data Collection Site (DCS)  
External Users

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CONTACT US

Document Comments:

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**Troubleshooting support:**
Please contact the eRA Help Desk:

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**Web:** [http://grants.nih.gov/support/](http://grants.nih.gov/support/) (Preferred method of contact)  
**Email:** commons@od.nih.gov (for Commons Support)  
**Email:** helpdesk@od.nih.gov (for IMPAC II Support)  
**Hours:** Mon-Fri, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction ................................................................................................................................. 1
2. Purpose ......................................................................................................................................... 1
3. Scope ............................................................................................................................................. 1
4. Overview ...................................................................................................................................... 2
5. Completing the Special Program Report ............................................................................... 4
   5.1 Accessing the Special Program Report ............................................................................... 4
   5.2 Completing the Special Program Report ............................................................................ 5
6. eMail Notifications ................................................................................................................... 13
   6.1 Special Program Report Due eMail .................................................................................. 13
   6.2 Special Program Report Past Due eMail .......................................................................... 14
7. Error Messages .......................................................................................................................... 15
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Special Program Report Schedule ..................................................................................2

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Status Results - List of Applications Screen Displaying Special Program Report Hyperlink.................................................................................................................................4
Figure 2: Sandy Quarterly Report Displaying Top Section..............................................................5
Figure 3: Report Navigation Section Displaying Hyperlink Report Sections ..............................6
Figure 4: Text Area Field Displaying Question Mark Tip Tool Message ..................................6
Figure 5: Major Goals Changes Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ....................................7
Figure 6: Accomplishments Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ..........................................7
Figure 7: Plans Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ..............................................................8
Figure 8: Challenges and Delays Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report .................................8
Figure 9: Significant Changes Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ......................................9
Figure 10: Special Reporting Requirements Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ..................10
Figure 11: Funding Information Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report ..................................10
Figure 12: Certification Web Page Pop-up Screen ....................................................................11
Figure 13: Report Submitted Confirmation Screen .....................................................................11
Figure 14: Status Information Screen Displaying Sandy Quarterly Report Hyperlink ............12
1 Introduction

The Data Collection Site (DCS) system provides the ability to gather additional data for special programs such as Hurricane Sandy Relief Act. The Sandy Quarterly Report is a pilot case for DCS.

2 Purpose

This user guide provides instructions to Authorized Organization Representative/Signing Official (AOR/SO) and Principal Investigator (PI) users for completing the Special Program Report (i.e. Sandy Quarterly Report) form.

3 Scope

This user guide covers the complete process for completing and submitting the Special Program Report (i.e. Sandy Quarterly Report) form.

This does not include the process for reviewing the required Annual Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Those requirements are described separately at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/rppr/. For more RPPR information, please refer to the RPPR topic in the Commons online help. http://era.nih.gov/erahelp/Commons/.
4 Overview

The Data Collection Site (DCS) system identifies all projects that have a *Special Program Report* (i.e. *Sandy Quarterly Report*) due in 30 days after the quarter end. Please refer to the reporting schedule below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Quarter</th>
<th>Report Due Date</th>
<th>Report Hyperlink Available in Commons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 1 – September 30</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>October 1 – December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1 – December 31</td>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>January 1 - March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1 – March 31</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>April 1 - June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1 – June 30</td>
<td>July 30</td>
<td>July 1 – September 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Special Program Report Schedule*

There are eight quarterly reports for the Sandy Special Program projects unless the project is closed out early in which no quarterly reports are allowed after the closeout. The closeout is defined as the project period end date. The last report due is for the quarter containing the project period end date. The first quarter is the quarter during which the award is funded.

The following email notifications are sent:

1. The system sends an email notification to the project’s PI and the AOR/SO that last submitted the last progress report if available. Otherwise the email notification is sent to the project’s AOR/SO.
   a. If reports for multiple projects are required to be filled out by the same PI, then only one email notification is sent containing the list of projects whose *Special Program Report* is due.
   b. If reports for multiple projects are required to be submitted by the same AOR/SO, then the AOR/SO receives one email notification containing the list of projects whose *Special Program Report* is due.

2. If the *Special Program Report* is not submitted by the due date, a reminder notification is sent to the same recipients to inform them that the report is past due.

These email notifications contain a link to the *Special Program Report* screen for that project. If there are multiple projects, the email notifications contain hyperlinks to all the *Special Program Report* screens for the projects concerned. Please refer to the section titled *eMail Notifications* for more information.

Once the *Special Program Report* is submitted, it cannot be updated or recalled.

In addition to the email notification, a *Special Program Report* hyperlink titled, *Sandy Quarterly Report for Quarter X*, is generated on the *Status Results – List of Applications* screen in the *Action* column in Commons for that specific project. This hyperlink is available the day following the end of the reporting quarter (first day of the next quarter). The hyperlink
remains available until the end of the next quarter. After that time period, the *Special Program Report* can no longer be submitted. Please refer to the section titled *Completing the Special Program Report* for more information.
5 Completing the Special Program Report

Here are the steps to complete the *Special Program Report* (i.e. *Sandy Quarterly Report*).

5.1 Accessing the Special Program Report

The *Sandy Quarterly Report* screen can be accessed via the email Notification or via the *Status Results – List of Applications* screen in Commons.

Perform EITHER ONE of the following two options:

1. From the email Notification, click on the *Grant Number* hyperlink. The Commons *Login* screen appears.
   a. Log into the Commons system.
2. Log into Commons and navigate to the *Status Results – List of Applications* screen.
   a. Click on the *Sandy Quarterly Report for Quarter X* hyperlink for the appropriate project.

Figure 1: Status Results - List of Applications/Grants Screen Displaying Special Program Report Hyperlink
For either option, the *Sandy Quarterly Report* screen appears.

![Figure 2: Sandy Quarterly Report Displaying Top Section](image)

**5.2 Completing the Special Program Report**

At the top of the *Sandy Quarterly Report* form screen are the following fields: the **Grant #:**; the **Title:** and the **PI Name:**. The report has the following sections:

- **Reporting Period** – Read Only
- **Major Goals Changes**
- **Accomplishments**
- **Plans**
- **Challenges and Delays**
- **Significant Changes**
- **Special Reporting Requirements**

To navigate to the appropriate section on the report screen, click the appropriate hyperlink on the screen.
Figure 3: Report Navigation Section Displaying Hyperlink Report Sections

NOTE: All text area fields have a question mark icon which display a tool tip when the field is hovered over. The tool tip displays the following message:

Data fields and text entry boxes only support ASCII characters: Greek letters, mathematical equations, images, and so-called “rich” text (including bold, italic, underline, superscript, subscript, strikethrough, etc.) are not permitted. Although you may enter non-ASCII characters in text fields, upon submission of the report a PDF of the report is generated and the non-ASCII characters will not appear correctly.

Figure 4: Text Area Field Displaying Question Mark Tip Tool Message

NOTE: The character limit for these text area fields is 8,000.

Complete the following sections on the Sandy Quarterly Report form as follows:

1. Major Goals Changes
2. Accomplishments

2. Accomplishments

Figure 5: Major Goals Changes Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report

Figure 6: Accomplishments Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report
3. Plans

*What do you plan to do for the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?*

Describe briefly what you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals and objectives.

Remember that significant changes in objectives and scope require prior approval of the agency (e.g., NIH Grants Policy Statement, 8.1.2.). Include any important modifications to the original plans. Provide a scientific justification for any changes involving research with human subjects or vertebrate animals. A detailed description of such changes must be provided under Changes.

Enter response below. (NIH recommended length is up to 1 page. Limit is 8000 characters or approximately 3 pages).

![Comments Section for Accomplishments](image)

Total remaining allowed limit is 7964 characters.

Figure 7: Plans Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report

4. Challenges and Delays

*Actual or anticipated challenges or delays and actions or plans to resolve them?*

Describe challenges or delays encountered during the reporting period and actions or plans to resolve them.

Describe only significant challenges that may impede the research (e.g., accrual of patients, hiring of personnel, need for resources or research tools) and emphasize their resolution.

(NIH recommended length is up to 1 page. Limit is 8000 characters or approximately 3 pages).

![Comments Section for Actual or Anticipated challenges](image)

Total remaining allowed limit is 7947 characters.

Figure 8: Challenges and Delays Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report
5. **Significant Changes**

![Significant Changes Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report](image_url)

*Figure 9: Significant Changes Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report*
6. **Special Reporting Requirements**

![Special Notice of Award and Funding Opportunity Announcement Reporting Requirements](image1)

**Figure 10: Special Reporting Requirements Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report**

7. For the **Funding Information**
   a. Complete the mandatory **Federal share of expenditures** and the **Federal share of un-liquidated obligations** fields.

**NOTE:** The **Unobligated balance of Federal Funds** field is calculated by subtracting expenditures and un-liquidated obligation amounts from the **Total Federal funds authorized** field.

![Funding Information Table](image2)

**Figure 11: Funding Information Section of the Sandy Quarterly Report**
8. To save the changes, click the **Save** button.
9. If the report is complete, click the **Submit** button.

**NOTE:** The AOR/SO or the PD/PI with delegated authority can submit the report.

When the **Submit** button is clicked, the system displays a certify compliance pop-up screen.

![Figure 12: Certification Web Page Pop-up Screen](image)

10. Click the **OK** button to submit the report or click the **Cancel** button to cancel submitting the report.

Once the *Sandy Quarterly Report* is submitted and the PDF of the report is generated, a confirmation screen is displayed with the message that the report is submitted and a **Grant Folder** hyperlink to the *Commons PI View – Status Information* screen where the PDF of the report can be downloaded.

To log out, click the **Logout** hyperlink in the upper right corner of the screen.

![Figure 13: Report Submitted Confirmation Screen](image)
Figure 14: Status Information Screen Displaying Sandy Quarterly Report Hyperlink

**NOTE:** The *Sandy Quarterly Report* PDF can also be viewed by clicking on the appropriate project number hyperlink on the *Status Result – List of Applications/Grants* screen. When the project number hyperlink is clicked, the system displays *Commons PI View – Status Information* screen.
6 eMail Notifications

6.1 Special Program Report Due eMail

From: eraNotifications@mail.nih.gov
Sent: <Date Time>
To: [SO_PI_EMAIL_ADDR_QUARTERLY_REPORT_DUE_30 DAYS_REMINDER]
Subject: NIH Automated Email: Hurricane Sandy Quarterly Report(s) Reminder Due by
[Sandy Reminder Receipt Due Date]
eMail Content: [DoNotReplyWarning]

The quarterly report(s) for NIH Grant(s) which number(s) is(are) listed below are due by
[SANDY_REMINDER_RECEIPT_DUE_DATE]:

[GRANT NUMBER LINK TO THE REPORT SCREEN]

... The next quarterly report for the above-referenced awards is due [QUARTERLY REPORT DUE DATE]. The due date for quarterly reports for Hurricane Sandy grants awarded under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act (DRAA) authorities is 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter (e.g., if the budget period for the award begins 11/30, the first due date is 01/30 and 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter thereafter). If the due date falls on a weekend or Federal holiday the due date is automatically extended to the next business day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Start Date Reporting Quarter</th>
<th>First Report Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 1 through September 30</td>
<td>October 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1 through December 31</td>
<td>January 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1 through March 31</td>
<td>April 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1 through June 30</td>
<td>July 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All grants will require up to 8 Quarterly Reports; the project must be completed and all funds expended within the 24 month award period (i.e., by the end of the 8th quarter). Quarterly reports are due per the above schedule regardless of the amount of time between the budget start date and the report due date. Please note that, grants with less than 30 days in the reporting period should still provide the quarterly report but may include “zero” values if no meaningful work has yet to be accomplished or funds expended. If a report containing zero values is necessary, the grantee should provide an explanation in the quarterly report under section “What was Accomplished Under these Goals”.

Questions regarding the eRA Commons should be addressed to:
eRA Commons Help Desk
Web:  http://era.nih.gov/help/ (Preferred method of contact)
Toll-free: 1-866-504-9552
Phone: 301-402-7469
TTY: 301-451-5939
Hours: Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time

Location and Instructions for Quarterly Reports can be found at the [INSERT HYPERLINK] page.

Please submit the quarterly report by the due date noted above. If you have already submitted the quarterly report, disregard this notice.

6.2 Special Program Report Past Due eMail

From: eraNotifications@mail.nih.gov
Sent: <Date Time>
To: [SO_PI_EMAIL_ADDR_QUARTERLY_REPORT_REMINDER_LATE]
Subject: NIH Automated Email: Hurricane Sandy Quarterly Report(s) Not Received by Due Date
eMail Content: [DoNotReplyWarning]

The quarterly report for award(s) listed below is(are) past due.

The quarterly report for NIH Grant(s) which number(s) is(are) listed below was(were) due on [QUARTERLY_REPORT_REMINDER_RECEIPT_DUE_DATE]. The quarterly report(s) is(are) now late and must be submitted (in the next reporting period). Failure to submit all quarterly reports (including those that come in late) may result in enforcement actions.

[GRANT NUMBER LINK TO THE REPORT SCREEN]

... Instructions for quarterly reports can be found at the [INSERT LINK].

If you have already submitted the quarterly report, please disregard this notice.

Thank you.
7 Error Messages

The system determines that access to the hyperlink is not a valid *Sandy Quarterly Report* hyperlink.

*The link you’re trying to access is not a valid Sandy Quarterly Report.*

The system determines that the user is not authorized to access the *Sandy Quarterly Report* hyperlink.

*You're not authorized to access this report.*

The system determines that the user is accessing a *Sandy Quarterly Report* hyperlink that past due or expired.

*The report you're trying to access is past due and is no longer available for submission, contact your IC Grants Management Specialist.*

The system determines that not all the mandatory fields have been completed when the *Sandy Quarterly Report* is submitted.

*Please fill out all the mandatory fields.*

The system determines that the user is trying to access the hyperlink for a submitted *Sandy Quarterly Report*.

*The report you're trying to access has been submitted and is no longer available for editing. You can access the PDF of the report in the through the grant folder or by clicking here [link to the PDF of the report]. Contact your IC Grants Management Specialist.*