eBERF Frequently Asked Questions

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General Questions

1. Who can I reimburse with the eBERF?

eBERF can only be used to reimburse UM employees, so as long as the individual is receiving a paycheck from the University of Miami, you can use eBERF to reimburse them. This includes full time, part time, casual workers, temporary, and student employees, as well as all faculty members.

2. How do I reimburse non-employees?

If the individual is not receiving a paycheck from the University of Miami, then they are considered a non-employee. This includes UM students (who don't have an active assignment), visiting professors, consultants, recruits, patients, and JMH residents.

For the time being, you should continue to use paper BERFs to reimburse non-employees. Once the paper BERF is phased out, non-employee reimbursements will be processed through the eCheck system found in UMeNET.

For more information on the paper BERF, click here: http://www.miami.edu/finance/index.php/accounts_payable/disbursements_office/berf/.

3. Why isn't the system recognizing my account number?

This means your account number has not been activated into the eBERF system. Usually a Disbursements Account Approval Form is needed to activate an account. For clarification, contact 305-284-6787.

4. How do I know when to mark an expense as Paid By Employee or Paid By University?

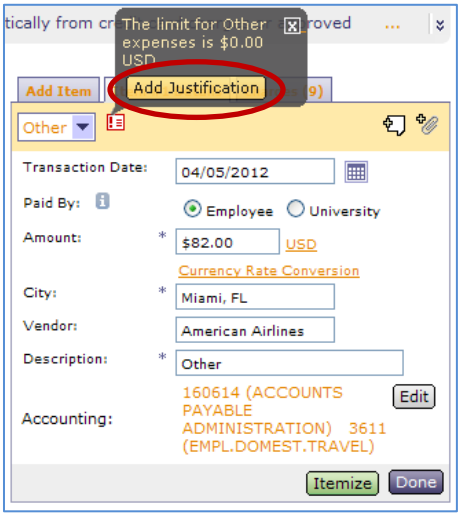
The Paid By field on each expense type will determine whether the person will receive a reimbursement for the specific expense.

- **Paid By Employee** should be selected when the expense was paid for by the employee and they need to be reimbursed for the expense. For example: An employee paid for parking fees and tolls when traveling on business that need to be reimbursed.
- **Paid By University** should only be selected when the expense was originally paid for by the University of Miami and the employee should not receive a reimbursement for the expense. For example: An employee attended a conference and the registration fees were paid for using the PCard before the conference took place.

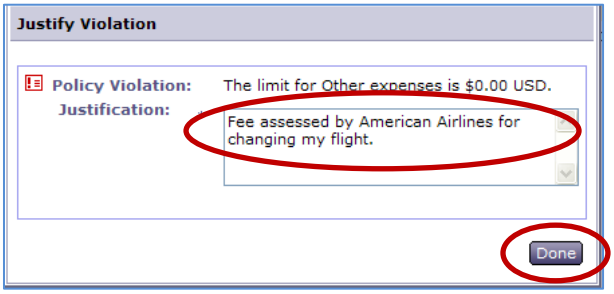
5. Can I still submit an eBERF even when it contains Policy Violations?

No. After completing an expense and clicking the Done button, the system will scan the document for any Policy Violations. If one is found, a Policy Violation box will be generated. You won't be able to submit the eBERF until the justification is entered.

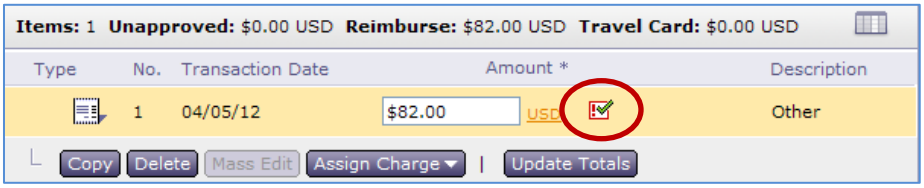
1. Click the **Add Justification** button.



2. Enter your justification for the violation. Then click the **Done** button.

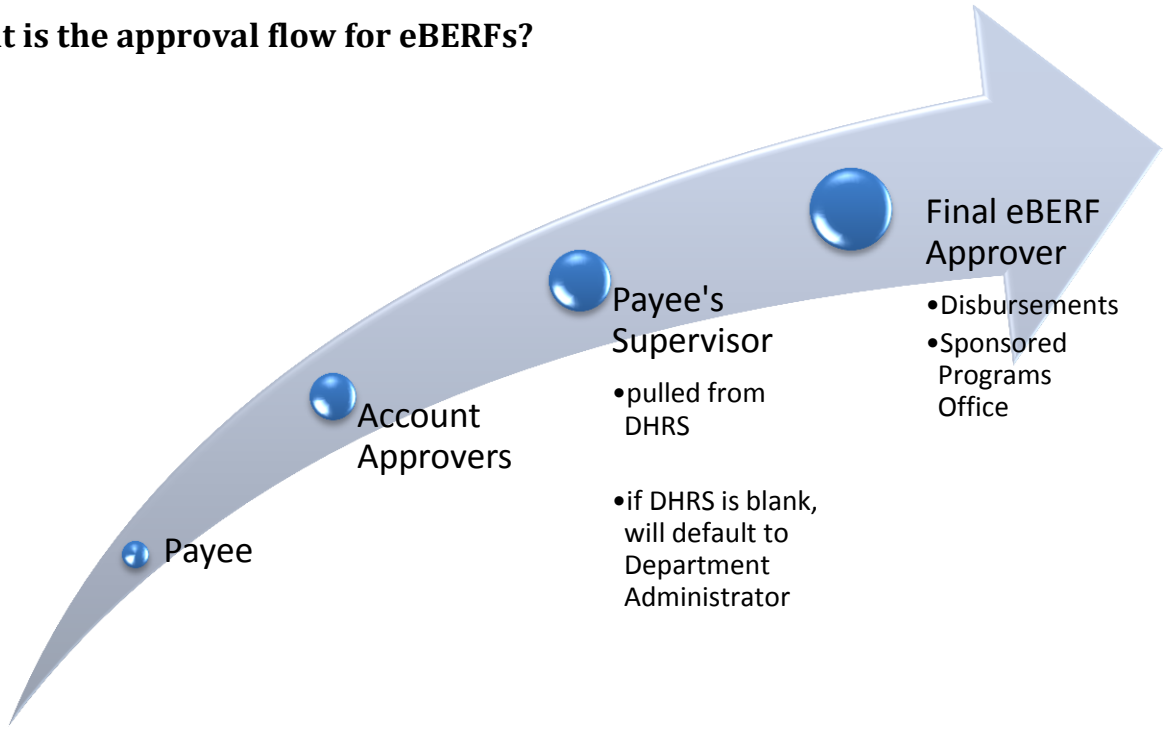


3. The Policy Violation window will disappear and a **green check** appears next to the expense in the Expense Table.



Approval Flow

6. What is the approval flow for eBERFs?

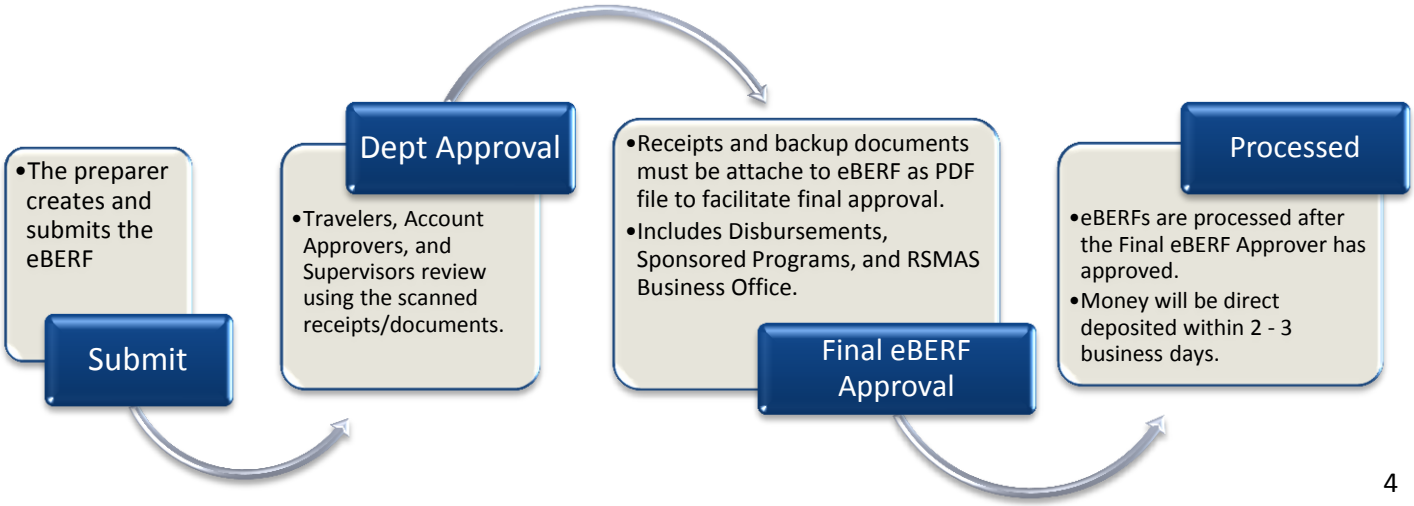


7. The "Supervisor" approver is incorrect. How do I update this information?

Please contact your department's HR representative to update an employee's DHRS supervisor. After this DHRS change is made, it will take 48 hours for it to be corrected in the eBERF.

Note: The person listed in the Supervisor field of DHRS is also the person responsible for completing the employee's yearly performance appraisal.

8. When will my reimbursement be processed?



9. Who needs to approve an eBERF?

In accordance with the Travel & Business Expense and Electronic Travel & Business Expense policies (D015 and D015E), the exact approval flow will vary depending on many things including: eBERF preparer, Payee, accounts and object codes charged, and eBERF amount. The following approvers will need to approve if the below conditions are met:

Approver	Approval Conditions
Payee	If the eBERF is created on their behalf
Account Signers	Always
Payee's Supervisor	Always
Payeer's Department Administrator	If the supervisor listed in DHRS is inactive or blank
Vice President	If the airfare travel class is Business or First Class or if the overall eBERF amount is $50,000 or more
Controller's Office	If the following object codes are charged: 3749, 3750, 3751, 3752
Disbursements	Final Approver if all expenses are charged to non-sponsored accounts
Sponsored Programs	Final Approver if any expenses are charged to a sponsored account

10. What do I need to do to approve an eBERF?

For instructions on how to approve an eBERF, select the following link and click on the link titled **Approving an eBERF**: http://www.miami.edu/finance/index.php/accounts_payable/disbursements_office/eberf/.

Note: All first time UMeNet (ARIBA) users will need to set up their UMeNET Profile (Invalid Fields section).

11. How do I change the amount for an expense before I approve the eBERF?

For instructions on how to use the Adjust and Reject buttons located next to each expense on the approval screen, select the following link and click on the link titled **Adjust/Reject Expenses in eBERF**: http://www.miami.edu/finance/index.php/accounts_payable/disbursements_office/eberf/.

12. What's wrong with my UMeNET access? When I login I get a screen that says "Invalid Fields".

This message appears for all first time UMeNET users. The system needs you to complete your UMeNET profile before you can continue. For instructions on how to complete your UMeNET profile, click here and click on the link titled UMeNET Profile Invalid Fields:

http://www.miami.edu/finance/index.php/accounts_payable/disbursements_office/eberf/. You can also contact the Gables IT Help Desk at 305-284-6565 option 1 for assistance.

Once you complete this onetime profile setup, you will always go to the UMeNET Dashboard after logging in to UMeNET.

Receipt Requirements

13. What backup documentation is required for my expenses?

Please see the appropriate section of the Business Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy (D015E) for more information. Should you need further clarification, please contact the appropriate Final eBERF Approver:

Final eBERF Approver	Phone Number
Disbursements	305-284-3564
Gables Sponsored Programs	305-284-2665
Medical Sponsored Programs	305-243-3825
RSMAS Sponsored Programs	305-421-4800

14. Do I need to take any special consideration with my attachments?

Requests will not be approved unless all required backup documents are legible and attached to the eCheck/eBERF request. In order to produce the highest quality images, PDF is the preferred file type. However users can also attach the following types: Microsoft Office 2010+ (docx, xlsx), tiff, txt, jpeg, jpg, and gif.

NOTE: A filter has been added to Ariba that will not accept attachments that are outside the acceptable list of file attachment types listed above.

15. What do I do with the original backup documentation?

Effective, August 12, 2013, central offices will no longer collect original (hardcopy) backup documentation for eCheck or eBERF requests. They will be approving documents using the scanned attachments included in the request.

Someone in the department will need to retain original documents until the eCheck/eBERF is fully approved, in the event the attached files are incomplete or unreadable. Please consult with your business officer regarding the process your school, college, or unit intends to follow. The paper originals can then be appropriately destroyed, given that the official University record supporting these transactions will be the electronic image.

NOTE: The Controller's Office is not dictating how this piece will work and is providing flexibility to individual schools to define this school level process in a way that works for them given geography and staff. In some cases it may be the preparer and in others cases the dean's business office.

Advanced Purchases

16. What is an Advanced Purchase?

An Advanced Purchase is any airfare or hotel expense that is brought into an eBERF and reimbursed before the trip is completed. An Advanced Purchase can be incurred on the Travel Card or on an employee's personal credit card.

The Advanced Purchase option in the eBERF system is only available for two expense items: Airfare and Hotel.

17. Why does UM track Advanced Airfare and Hotel Purchases?

Though other expenses can be added to an eBERF before the trip is taken, UM only systematically tracks advanced airfare and hotel expenses. Because the expense is a pre-trip reimbursement, the University tracks it to make sure the trip was taken and the Advanced Purchase was used. In some cases when a trip is not taken, the department may ask for the advanced funds to be refunded by the employee to the University.

18. What is the Advanced Purchase process, from start to finish?

With Advanced Purchases we actually need 2 eBERFs submitted:

1. Before the trip to request the Advanced Airfare or Hotel Purchase.

   Outcome

   - Departmental account is charged
   - Amount is paid
     - If Paid By Employee, the amount will be reimbursed to the employee
     - If Paid By Travel Card, the amount will be sent to US Bank
2. After the trip, (1) reconcile the Advanced Purchase and (2) request reimbursement for the other applicable trip expenses.

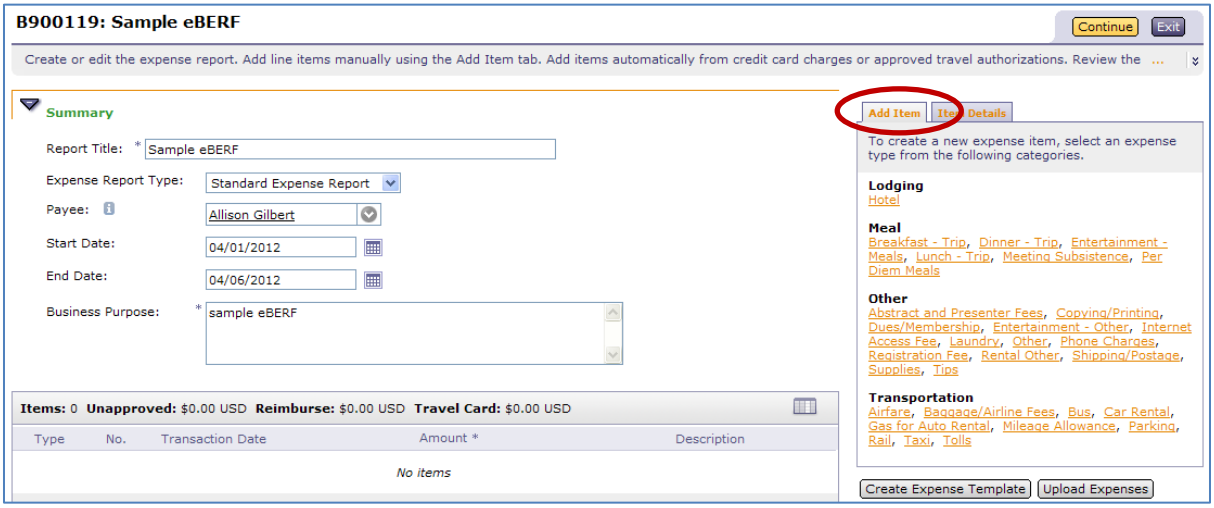
   Outcome

   - The selected Advanced Purchase is cleared.
   - The Advanced Purchase Warning message won't appear on future eBERFs.
   - The other expenses entered will be charged to the departmental account and either (1) reimbursed to the employee or (2) paid to U.S. Bank.

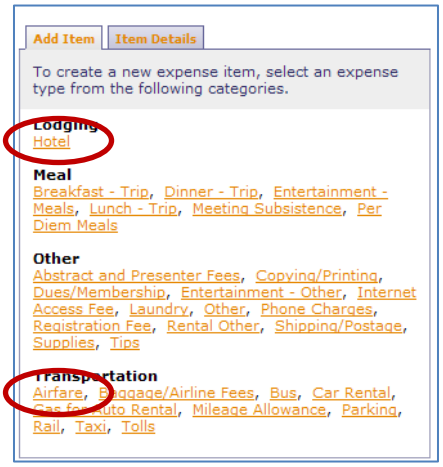
19. How do I request an Advanced Purchase?

To request an Advanced Purchase:

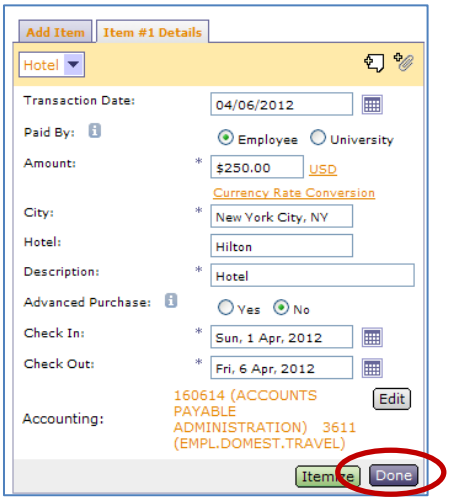
1. Once you have opened an eBERF and entered the Summary information, Click the **Add Items** tab.



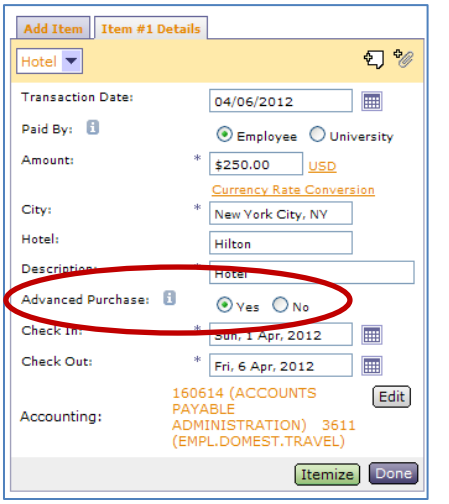
2. Select either **Airfare** or **Hotel**, depending on the situation.



3. Complete the required fields for the expense, i.e. transaction date, amount, etc.

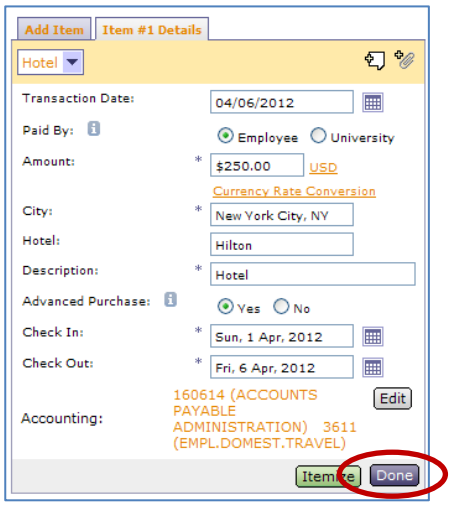


4. Change the **Advanced Purchase** field to **Yes**.



***Note**: Anytime an expense is marked "Yes" to being an Advanced Purchase (even if it's in error), the system will treat the expense as an advance. You will be required to follow the Reconciliation process mentioned below.*

5. Once all the required expense information is entered, click **Done**.

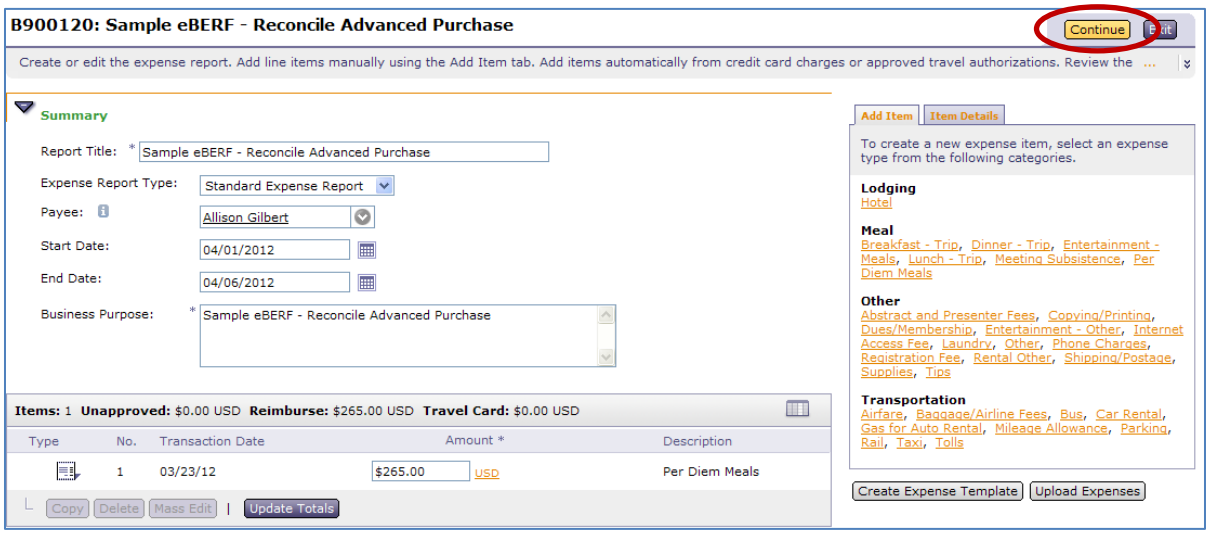


Once this eBERF is fully approved, the amount will be charged to the departmental account listed in the Accounting section and the reimbursement will be processed.

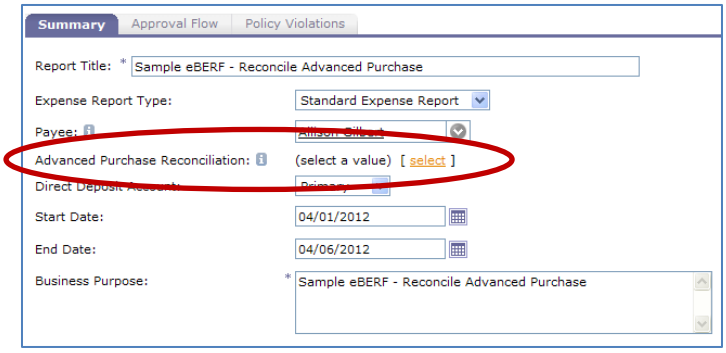
20. How to I reconcile an Advanced Purchase?

To reconcile an Advanced Purchase:

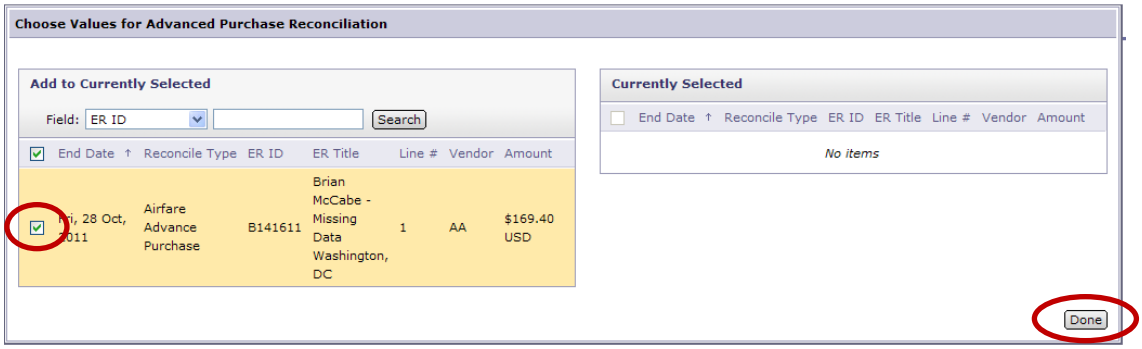
1. Complete all of the eBERF expense information. Then click **Continue**.



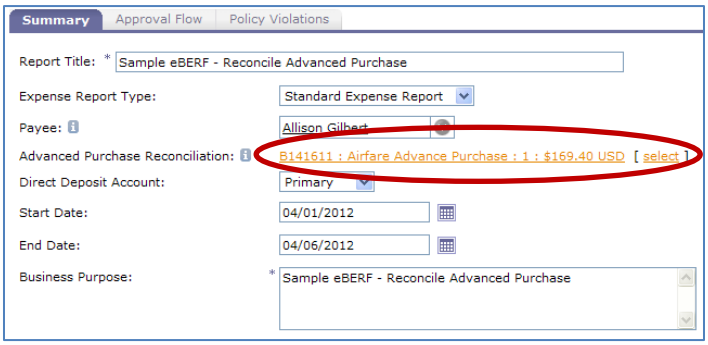
2. Click the **select** option for the Advanced Purchase Reconciliation field.



3. Check the box to the left of each of the advances that need to be reconciled. Then click **Done**.

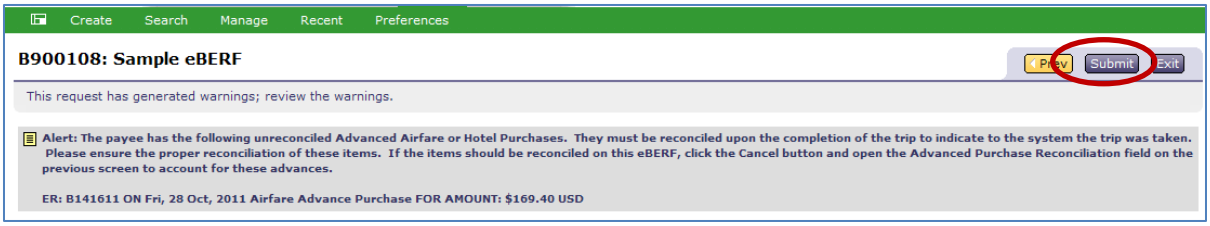


4. Notice the select Advanced Purchases appear on the Summary screen.



5. Complete your final eBERF review, making sure all required information has been provided. Then click **Submit**.

6. Note: The Advanced Purchase Warning message will appear. Click **Submit** again.

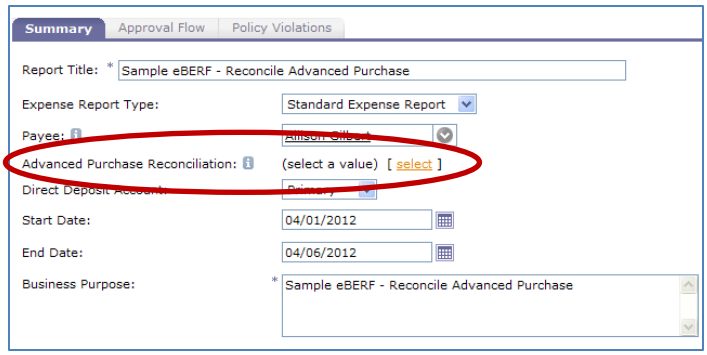


Once this eBERF is fully approved, the Advanced Purchase(s) will be removed from the pending list and from the Warning Message.

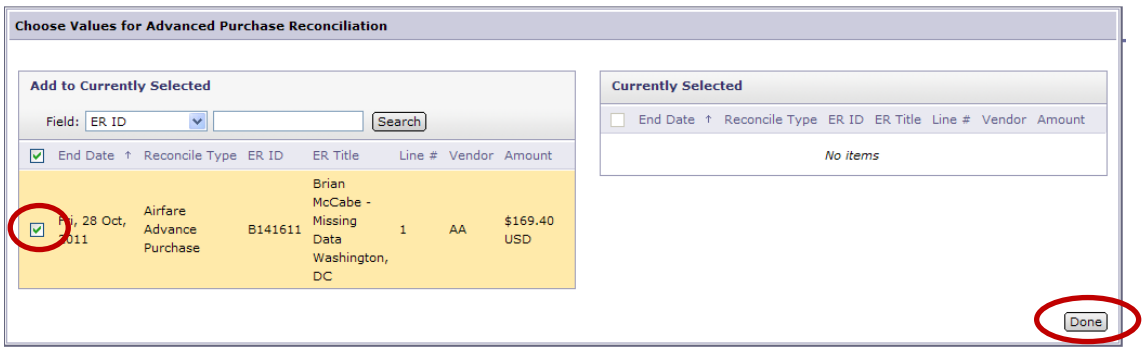
21. What is I forgot to reconcile the Advanced Purchase when I returned from my trip?

There is only one way to clear pending Advanced Purchases: reconcile them in an eBERF. So if you forgot to reconcile the advance on the trip's follow up eBERF, then you'll need to reconcile it on your next eBERF:

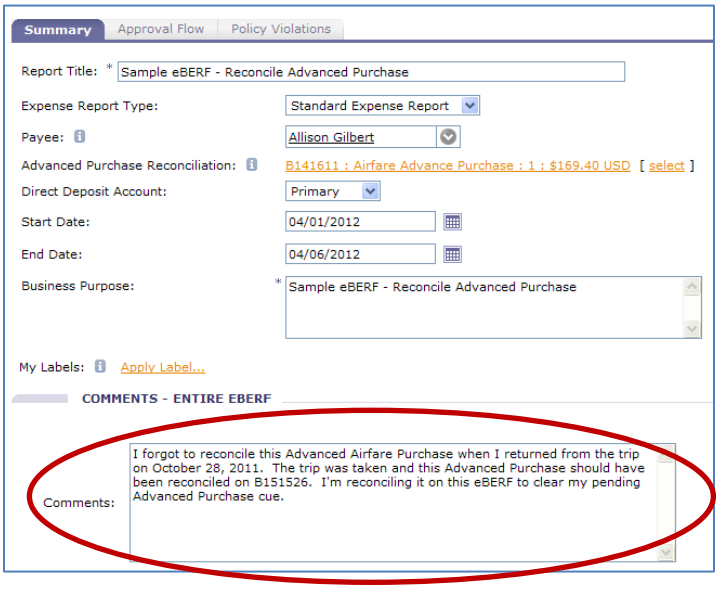
1. Create a new eBERF.
2. Enter the necessary expenses information for your reimbursement.
3. Before submitting, click the **select** link for the Advanced Purchase Reconciliation field.



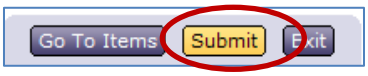
4. Check the box to the left of each of the advances that need to be reconciled. The click **Done**.



5. In the Comments section, enter an explanation about the situation. Explain that the advance(s) should have been reconciled on a previous eBERF. Be sure to enter the appropriate eBERF number.

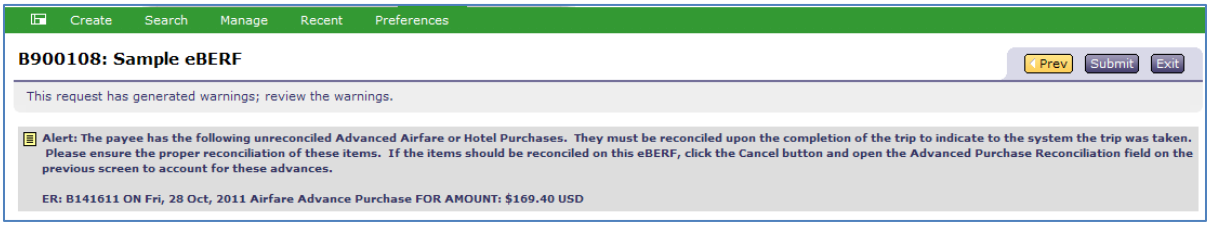


6. Click Submit.



22. What happens if I don't reconcile the Advanced Purchase?

There is only one way to clear pending Advanced Purchases: reconcile them in an eBERF. So if you forgot to reconcile the advance on the trip's follow up eBERF, then you'll need to reconcile it on your next eBERF. If an advance is not reconciled, the system will generate a warning message whenever someone submits or approves one of your eBERFs. This warning serves as a reminder that there are outstanding Advanced Purchases that are waiting to be reconciled.



The only way to remove this warning message is to reconcile the outstanding Advanced Purchase(s) in an eBERF and have that eBERF fully approved.

Cash Advance Reconciliation

23. How do I reconcile a Cash Advance/Travel Advance in an eBERF?

Currently the Cash Advance (also called Travel Advance) request process is located in eCheck. Since eCheck and eBERF do not share information, there is a different process for reconciling Cash Advances. When the employee returns from their trip the eBERF preparer should:

1. Create an "Other" Expense type.
2. Change the Transaction Date field to the date the eCheck was written.
3. Change the Amount field to be the negative amount of the Cash Advance, e.g. -$500.
    a. If you received a $400 Cash Advance, you would enter "-$400" in the Amount field.
4. Make sure the Paid By field is Employee.
5. Change the Description field to Cash Advance from eCheck Cxxxxxx.
6. In the Accounting section, enter the account(s) and object code(s) used in the eCheck Cash Advance request.
7. Click the Add Justification button and enter a brief explanation that you are reconciling a Cash Advance from an eCheck.
8. Click the Done button

Once this is entered, add all other expenses into the eBERF as usual. If the person spent more money than was advanced to them, they will receive a reimbursement (Reimburse field will be a positive number). If the person spent more money than was advanced to them, they will need to reimburse the University for the difference.

The traveler will write a check payable to the University of Miami and deposit it at one of the three locations: Check Distribution, Medical Finance, RSMAS Business Office. These funds need to be deposited back to the account(s) and object code(s) charged in the original eCheck request. A deposit receipt will be given as proof of the deposit. Along with the expense receipts and documentation, this deposit receipt needs to be included as part of the backup documentation for the eBERF.

Last Updated: 08/08/2013