

HEROS Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

When will HEROS become mandatory?

HEROS will not be mandatory until HUD is confident that it is ready for full time use. This may vary by program and user, but we anticipate that the system will not be mandatory until 2016.

Is there an option of giving input, suggestions, etc. for HEROS information?

We encourage users to send in their feedback on HEROS so that we know how well the system is working for our clients. Please submit any comments or suggestions using the [HUD Exchange Ask A Question](#) portal. In Step 2 under “My question is related to,” select “Environmental Review and HEROS.”

Where can I access the HEROS Training Environment? Is my log in information different?

To access the HEROS Training (aka Practice) Environment, go to <https://cpd1.hud.gov/heros>. Your username will be the same as in the HEROS Production Environment, but the password will be different. Refer to the original email you received with your HEROS login information for your password. If you need a password reset, submit a request to <https://www.hudexchange.info/get-assistance/my-question/>. Be sure to include your username (B or C ID) in the content of your request.

User Access & User Roles

When will HUD allow HEROS access to public housing authorities, TDHEs, CoC recipients, etc.?

The HEROS team is currently conducting pilot testing with public housing authorities and TDHEs to determine what improvements need to be made to HEROS and its training materials to prepare the system for these users. We anticipate allowing these users in to HEROS in late 2015.

HEROS is not recommended for CoC projects. Because specialized formats were developed specifically for CoC environmental reviews, these formats should continue to be used. (These specialized forms can be found at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3800/limited-scope-environmental-review-coc/>.)

What do I do when I try logging in and I get an error message?

Several things could be preventing you from logging into HEROS. You may be able to log into HEROS with a different browser, if that option is available to you. If you are unable to log in, submit a request to the [HUD Exchange Ask A Question](#) portal. In Step 2 under “My question is related to,” select “Environmental Review and HEROS.” Please include both your username (B or C ID) and the text of the

error message you received in the content of your request. We will work with our contractors to address your issue.

Will our office's process for signing off on environmental reviews change with HEROS?

HEROS was designed to work with current procedures for processing environmental reviews. The parties involved in the process should remain unchanged, the only difference being that these approvals may be processed more efficiently online. Any procedures that are permitted under 24 CFR 58 should be compatible with HEROS.

Will the certifying officer ever need access to HEROS?

Certain aspects of HEROS work best when the certifying officer (or their designee) electronically certifies the Request for Release of Funds and Certifying (RROF/C) using HEROS. However, this is not required, and certifying officers may continue to sign paper copies of the RROF/C. These paper forms must then be scanned and uploaded into HEROS to complete the environmental review record.

Navigation

In order to not "time out" do I have to hit Save and Continue at least once every 20 minutes? Does the clock reset if I am active in HEROS and make changes to the screen?

Because of HUD's IT security protocols, HEROS users will be logged out after 20 minutes of inactivity. Note that users will be given a 3-minute warning after 17 minutes. At that point, users should be sure to save their work to ensure that any work in progress is not lost.

Some actions within a screen may reset the clock on the 20 minutes without pressing the Save and Continue button. However, we recommend pressing Save and Continue regularly to avoid losing work. This is particularly important when completing longer screens, such as the Environmental Assessment Factor screen.

Are there character limits to the text boxes?

Depending on the type of information required, text boxes may be 60 characters (title boxes), 1,000 characters (short-form paragraphs), or 4,000 characters (long narrative text boxes). Character counts include symbols, spaces, and other hidden characters. If the entered text exceeds the character limit, an error message will appear at the top of the page when the User attempts to save the page. If you find that you are not able to fit your response into the textboxes provided, we recommend entering the extra text into a separate document and uploading it as an attachment.

Do uploads have to be in a certain format (e.g. pdf, jpg or xls)?

HEROS can support the following types of file uploads:

| File Type | Acceptable File Extensions |
|--------------|---|
| Document | .doc, .docx, .rtf, .pdf, and .txt |
| Spreadsheet | .xls and .xlsx |
| Presentation | .pdf and .pdfx |
| Picture | .jpg (or .jpeg), .gif, .png, .bmp, .dib, and.tif (or .tiff) |

Is there a limit to how much data can be attached? For example: adding project specifications, maps, photos, etc.

There is no system limitation on the number of files that can be uploaded. Uploaded files can be no larger than 50 megabytes per document.

Setting Up a Review/Determining Level of Review/Related Laws and Authorities

Does a project already have to be entered in IDIS by that administrator before I can begin my environmental reviews?

No, there is no need to have a project entered in IDIS for the environmental review to be processed in HEROS. HEROS can be used to completed environmental reviews for projects that have not been entered in IDIS or even for projects funded by programs that are not processed through IDIS at all.

Can I just note “not triggered” in the compliance area of a particular law or authority as I do now?

Compliance determinations are automatically generated by HEROS based on the responses put in by the user. Users must respond to the questions generated by the HEROS system to determine compliance with each law and authority before drafting their compliance determination.

Estimated total project cost changes throughout the project. What do you suggest we put in this area?

Users must input an estimated project cost when starting a new environmental review in HEROS, but this number can be changed at any time during the completion of the review. A rough estimate is sufficient for purposes of the environmental review.

Posting Public Notice/RROF and FONSI/Completion of Review

What documents will I be required to maintain in hard copy format if I complete the ER in HEROS?

There is no requirement to keep paper files for environmental reviews generated in HEROS. Users should, however, maintain electronic versions of the environmental review records generated by HEROS as a backup.

How does the use of HEROS impact our requirements for publishing or posting environmental reviews for the required public comment period?

At this time, there is no change to the requirements to publish or post public notice. Responsible entities are still required to publish or post public notice as required by 24 CFR 58.43 and 58.45. HEROS users are encouraged to include the link <https://www.hudexchange.info/environmental-review/environmental-review-records/> in their public notices to direct the public to their environmental review records during the public comment period.

After I click “Save and Finish,” can I go back later to update the ER? For example, If I discover new, relevant information that should be included.

Yes, users may continue to update their environmental review records even after the review is marked complete. In some cases, there are screens designed specifically for this purpose: the Mitigation Follow-Up screen collects documentation of completed mitigation measures, and the Reevaluation screen permits users to reevaluate completed reviews when conditions new change. In other cases, it may only be necessary to make updates to screens that have already been completed without reevaluating the review under 24 CFR 58.47, and users are free to do so.

Whenever changes are made to a completed review, users should return to the Archive screen to update the archived version of the environmental review record on the HUD Exchange site.

Tiered Reviews

I am working on site-specific reviews for a broad level tiered review I completed last year. Can I complete the site-specific reviews in HEROS?

Where a broad-level tiered review was completed outside of HEROS, the site-specific reviews should be completed outside of HEROS as well. Users should begin inputting their tiered reviews in HEROS only when they have a new broad-level environmental review to process.