

## Procedures

### Employee Responsibilities

When a new employee is hired...

# 3 Immediate Involvement With

3-1 Informing Employees of Their Responsibilities — supervisor

## ~~Traumatic Injuries and Occupational Illnesses~~

Obligation: Notifying OWCP of Traumatic Injury or Occupational Illness or Disease

FECA requires written notice of a traumatic injury be given within 30 calendar days from the date on which the injury occurs. Failure to give notice within this 30-day period will result in a loss of entitlement to COP as well as a loss of compensation rights in the event that the claim for compensation is not filed within 3 years. The notice of traumatic injury is given on the CA-1.

An employee who believes he or she has developed an occupational disease or illness, or a person acting on behalf of the employee, must give written notice of the disease or illness to the employee's official supervisor. If, for any reason, it is impractical to give notice to the employee's official supervisor, notice of the disease or illness is given to any USPS official or to OWCP. The notice of disease or illness is given on the CA-2.

FECA specifies that notice be given to OWCP within 30 calendar days from the date on which the employee was first aware, or by the exercise of reasonable diligence should have been aware, of a possible connection between the disease or illness and the related factors or conditions of employment. Failure to give notice within this time period may result in a loss of compensation rights in the event that the claim for compensation is not filed within 3 years.

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OWCP now has a web based application, Employees' Compensation Operations & Management Portal (ECOMP), that provides Federal agencies with an electronic system for recording workplace injuries and illnesses and processing claims under the FECA. The application also allows employees to electronically file claims. When at all possible, employees should be allowed to file their claim for injury or illness electronically.

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- During employee orientation, advise employees to report their injuries and illnesses immediately in order to protect their interests, receive prompt medical care, and ensure uninterrupted income.
- Regularly advise employees of their responsibilities during periodic safety meetings.
- Ensure that the employee rights and responsibilities are posted on the bulletin board along with local injury compensation policy for reporting injuries.

### 3-6 Assisting the Employee in Reporting an Injury and Making a Choice of COP or Leave — supervisor

- Provide the employee with information on electronically filing the CA-1, Federal Employee's Notification of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation. Allow the employee access to a postal computer to complete the claim in ECOMP.

Or

Provide the employee with CA-1, *Federal Employee's Notification of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation*. Instruct him or her to do the following:

- Complete the employee's section of the form.
- Make choice of treating physician.
- Elect COP, annual leave, or sick leave if time loss occurs from the job-related injury.
- Promptly return CA-1 with supporting medical documentation, if available, to the supervisor. If the employee submits medical information later, forward that information to the ICCO for submission with the CA-1, or with the case number, to OWCP.
- *The employee is responsible for submitting prima facie medical evidence of disability to the supervisor within 10 working days. If he or she fails to do so, COP can be terminated.*

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#### Prima Facie Evidence

Prima facie evidence is medical evidence that indicates the employee is disabled as a result of a job-related injury and thus cannot perform the job held at the time of injury.

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Upon email notification from ECOMP that an employee has submitted a claim, do the following:

- Review the CA-1 information completed by the employee in ECOMP
- Electronically complete the official supervisor's report of traumatic injury in ECOMP and upload any supporting documentation
- Electronically submit the claim to the HRM Office through ECOMP.
- Upon receiving the completed paper CA-1 from the employee, do the following:
  - Document on CA-1 the date the form was received.
  - Complete the receipt attached to CA-1 and give a copy to the employee or his or her representative.
  - Review the CA-1 for completeness and accuracy, and assist the employee in correcting any deficiencies found.
  - Complete the official supervisor's report of traumatic injury, items 17 through 18.
  - Inform the employee of his or her right to elect COP or annual or sick leave for time loss resulting from the job-related injury.
  - Comment on the employee's narrative statement by either confirming it, refuting it, or providing additional, relevant, and probative information in a separate cover letter to the OWCP.
  - Complete Form 1769, *Accident Report*.

### Immediate Involvement With Traumatic Injuries and Occupational Illnesses

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- Submit the completed CA-1, a copy of Form 1769, *Accident Report*, and all other documentation to the ICCO within 24 hours of receipt from the employee.
- Inform the employee whether COP will be controverted and whether pay will be terminated in accordance with one of the eight regulatory reasons.
- Explain to the employee his or her responsibility to submit prima facie medical evidence of disability within 10 working days of the date of receipt of the CA-1 from the employee.
  
- Upon notification from HRM that the completed claim has been electronically submitted for processing to OWCP, immediately have the employee sign a copy of the form that was electronically submitted to OWCP. The signed claim form must be returned to the HRM Office to be maintained in the employee's injury compensation file.

### 3-7 Assisting the Employee in Reporting an Occupational Illness or Disease — *supervisor*

- Provide the employee with information on electronically filing the CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation. Allow the employee access to a postal computer to complete the claim in ECOMP. Also provide employee with two copies of the appropriate checklist on CA-35 A-H (see Appendix D, Forms, for the individual names of these forms) for the disease reported. Instruct him or her to do the following:
  - Promptly return a narrative statement within 2 days, if possible.
  - Provide detailed information for the supporting medical and factual information requested on the checklist.
  - Choose sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay pending the OWCP adjudication of the claim, if unable to work.
  - Contact the ICCO for further guidance and compensation information.

OR

Provide the employee with CA-2, *Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation*, and two copies of the appropriate checklist on CA-35 A-H (see Appendix D, Forms, for the individual names of these forms) for the disease reported. Instruct him or her to do the following:

- Complete the employee's section of the form.
- Provide all the necessary documentation as outlined in items 1 and 2 under "Instructions for Completing Form CA-2."
- Promptly return the CA-2 and narrative statement within 2 days, if possible.
- Provide detailed information for the supporting medical and factual information requested on the checklist.
- Choose sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay pending the OWCP adjudication of the claim, if unable to work.
- Contact the ICCO for further guidance and compensation information.

Upon email notification from ECOMP that an employee has submitted a claim, do the following:

- Review the CA-2 information completed by the employee in ECOMP
- Electronically complete the official supervisor's report of traumatic injury in ECOMP and electronically upload any additional documentation.

Electronically submit the claim to the HRM Office through ECOMP. □ Upon receiving the completed paper CA-2 from the employee, do the following:

- Document on CA-2 the date the form was received.
- Complete the "Receipt of Notice of Occupational Disease or Illness" and give it to the employee or his or her representative.
- Review the CA-2 for completeness and accuracy. If incomplete, contact the employee or his or her representative for the missing information and assist the employee in correcting any deficiencies found.
- Complete the official supervisor's report of occupational disease, items 19 through 34.
- Comment on the employee's narrative statement by either confirming, refuting, or

providing additional, relevant, and probative information in a separate cover letter to OWCP.

- Complete Form 1769, *Accident Report*.
- Submit the completed CA-2, a copy of Form 1769, *Accident Report*, and all other documentation to the ICCO within 24 hours of receipt from the employee.
  - Upon notification from HRM that the completed claim has been electronically submitted for processing to OWCP, immediately have the employee sign a copy of the form that was electronically submitted to OWCP. The signed claim form must be returned to the HRM Office to be maintained in the employee's injury compensation file.

**4-7 Submitting the Claim Package to OWCP — ICCO**

- Submit the employee's claim package to OWCP within the established 10-working-day time frame. If supportive information is available, submit the entire package consisting of the following:
  - A properly completed CA-1.
  - A properly completed CA-16.
  - All available medical documentation.
  - All supportive documentation (witness statements, investigation report, etc.).
  - The signed, dated copy of the Employee Rights, Responsibilities, and Choice of Physician letter (see Exhibit 3.5b for sample).
- *Do not, under any circumstances, delay submission of the CA-1. The 10-day period begins from the date of receipt by the postal official who initially receives the document or the date submitted by the employee in ECOMP. If medical reports and supportive information are not available, send a cover letter with the completed CA-1 advising OWCP what additional information will be forthcoming. This action will allow OWCP to assign a claim number and initiate the claims process.*
- The OWCP will notify the employee and the ICCO of the claim number by CA-801 (postcard). This information is also available on the Workers' Compensation Information Subsystem (WCIS). If this information is not available within 5 days after submission of the initial claim to OWCP, send available supportive information, making sure the DOI and Social Security number are included for identification.
- *Do not hold any information or documentation in suspense more than 5 days after submission of the initial claim to OWCP while waiting for a claim number to be assigned.*

**4-11 Submitting the Claim Package to OWCP or Retaining It — ICCO**

- If medical expenses or lost time were incurred or are expected, submit the original completed CA-2 and accompanying documentation to the OWCP district office as soon as possible, but no later than 10 working days from when the form was received by the official supervisor or submitted by the employee in ECOMP.
- *Do not delay submission pending receipt of supportive and requested documentation.*
- If medical expense or lost time is not incurred or expected, submit the CA-2 to the district OWCP and file a copy of the CA-2 in the employee's OPF.
- Enter the claim and all other activity in HRIS to monitor the disability and OWCP's adjudication and establish call-up dates.



**4-17 Monitoring the Medical Documentation to Determine the RTW Date — ICCO**

- Closely monitor the supporting medical documentation, e.g., CA-17, to determine when the employee can return to work, in either a full or limited duty status.
- Check with OWCP to determine if medical information has been submitted directly to them.
- Contact the treating physician for an updated CA-17, if medical information is not available. (ELM 545.62)
- Initiate a FFD, if appropriate.
- Upon the employee's return, issue CA-3, *Report of Termination of Disability and/or Payment*.  
SEE Chapter 6, Medical Management.
- If it is anticipated that the employee's disability will extend beyond the 45-day COP entitlement period, issue CA-7, *Claim for Compensation on Account of Traumatic Injury or Occupational Disease* or provide information to the employee on electronically filing a CA-7 in ECOMP.



#### 4-19 Initiating Compensation for a Totally Disabled Employee — ICCO

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##### Obligation: Advising Employee of Obligation to Return to Work

The USPS must advise the employee of his or her obligation to return to work as soon as possible.

The USPS must advise the employee that pursuant to OWCP regulations, detailed supplementary reports must be made by the physician at approximately monthly intervals in all cases of serious injury or disease, including all cases requiring hospital treatment or prolonged care.

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- When it appears likely that disability will extend beyond the COP period, provide the employee with information on electronically filing the CA-7 or a paper CA-7 and the attached CA-20 at least 10 days before the end of COP and instruct him or her to complete Part A, items 1 through 20, on CA-7 and return it to the ICCO within 5 working days to preclude interruption of pay.
- Date-stamp all claim documents upon receipt in the ICCO.
- Date-stamp all outgoing claim documents sent to OWCP.

Upon receipt of the electronically filed CA-7 from the employee:

- USPS ICCO personnel review the employee portion of the claim in ECOMP.
- After review, the agency portion of the CA-7 is electronically completed and submitted to DOL by ICCO personnel in ECOMP.
- All supporting documentation is uploaded in ECOMP with the claim for compensation.

- Upon receipt of CA-7 from the employee:
  - Complete CA-7, Part B, items 21 through 38.
  - If the employee wishes to make a change to the Employee portion of the CA-7, ensure that the employee initials and dates the revision or submits the change in writing on a separate piece of paper that is signed and dated.
  - To prevent delays in submission of CA-7 forms to OWCP, if it is not possible to obtain written revisions from the employee of obvious or suspected errors in the Employee portion of the CA-7, such errors may be listed on the Agency portion of the CA-7 and initialed and dated by ICCO personnel (or the supervisor) identifying the errors.
  - Any changes made on the Agency portion of the CA-7 must be lined out and initialed and dated by ICCO personnel (or the supervisor) making the revision.
  - The Injury Compensation file must contain documentation explaining why changes made by ICCO personnel were necessary.
- *Under no circumstances may ICCO personnel revise any information on the Employee portion of the CA-7 or delay submission of the CA-7 to the OWCP.*
  - To ensure the continuation of health benefits, if the employee has been enrolled with health benefits since the first opportunity or for 5 years immediately preceding the start of injury compensation or from or before 12/31/64, note this fact in the "Remarks" section, showing the enrollment code and the beginning and ending dates of the pay period in which the employee's normal pay ceased.
- Forward the completed CA-7 to the OWCP district office along with the completed CA-20 by the 40th calendar day of COP.

## Appendix A

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIC	account identifier code
APWU	American Postal Workers Union
ASM	<i>Administrative Support Manual</i>
AWOL	absent without leave
BAR	basic annual rate
BMC	Bulk Mail Center
BPS	Bill Payment System (under WCIS)
CE	claims examiner
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COLA	cost-of-living allowance
COP	continuation of pay
CSA	civil service account
CSRS	Civil Service Retirement System
CSS	Customer Services and Sales
DACA	days assigned carrier absent
DOI	date of injury
DOL	Department of Labor
ECAB	Employees' Compensation Appeals Board
ECOMP	Employees' Compensation Operations & Management Portal
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
ELM	Employee and Labor Relations Manual
FCE	functional capacity evaluation
FECA	Federal Employees' Compensation Act
FECA PM	<i>Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual</i>
FEHB	Federal Employees Health Benefit
FERS	Federal Employees' Retirement System
FFD	fitness-for-duty examination
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act

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