

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

In the Matter of PAULINE C. BLANCHETTE and DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY,
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, Manchester, N.H.

*Docket No. 96-2510; Submitted on the Record;
Issued September 3, 1998*

DECISION and ORDER

Before GEORGE E. RIVERS, BRADLEY T. KNOTT,
A. PETER KANJORSKI

The issue is whether appellant has established a recurrence of disability commencing April 22, 1996, causally related to her August 30, 1995 employment injury.

Appellant filed a claim alleging that she sustained a right eye injury in the performance of duty on August 30, 1995. She indicated that she had rubbed a paper towel against her right eye. The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs accepted the claim for a corneal abrasion to the right eye.

On April 23, 1996 appellant filed a notice of recurrence of disability (Form CA-2a) alleging a recurrence of disability commencing April 22, 1996. Appellant submitted a report dated April 26, 1996 from Dr. William F. Kearney an ophthalmologist. By letter dated July 3, 1996, the Office requested additional factual and medical information.

In a decision dated August 5, 1996, the Office denied the claim for a recurrence of disability.

The Board finds that appellant has not established a recurrence of disability commencing April 22, 1996.

A person who claims a recurrence of disability due to an accepted employment-related injury has the burden of establishing by the weight of the substantial, reliable, and probative evidence that the disability, for which she claims compensation is causally related to the accepted injury. This burden of proof requires that a claimant furnish medical evidence from a physician who, on the basis of a complete and accurate factual and medical history, concludes that the disabling condition is causally related to the employment injury and supports that conclusion with sound medical reasoning.¹

¹ *Robert H. St. Onge*, 43 ECAB 1169 (1992); *Dennis J. Lasanen*, 43 ECAB 549 (1992).

In support of her claim appellant submitted an April 26, 1996 report from Dr. Kearney, who stated, "your recurrent erosion of the cornea on April 23, 1996 is directly related to the original injury on September 1, 1995 when you scratched your eye on a paper towel." Dr. Kearney does not, however, provide medical reasoning for this opinion, other than to note that the corneal erosion was in the "exact same spot" as the original injury. He does not attempt to describe the diagnosed corneal erosion and explain how it developed from the original employment injury. As noted above, a physician's opinion must be supported by medical reasoning. The Office advised appellant that additional medical evidence must be submitted to support her claim, but there is no indication that additional evidence was submitted. The Board finds that appellant has not met her burden of proof in this case.

The decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs dated August 5, 1996 is affirmed.

Dated, Washington, D.C.
September 3, 1998

George E. Rivers
Member

Bradley T. Knott
Alternate Member

A. Peter Kanjorski
Alternate Member