



**LHWCA BULLETIN NO. 22-01**

**Issue Date:** April 19, 2022

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**Subject:** Notice of Authorization for Representation through the Employees' Compensation Operations and Management Portal (ECOMP)

**References:** This bulletin supplements the information contained in the Longshore and Harbor Workers Compensation Act (LHWCA), 33 U.S.C. § 901, et seq., the Code of Federal Regulation at (20 C.F.R. § 702.131(a), and Industry Notice No. 186, ECOMP.

**Purpose:** To announce that the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), Longshore Program, has added designation of a representative through ECOMP as an acceptable form of written notice of authorization for representation.

**Background:** On June 23, 2021, the Longshore Program joined other OWCP Programs to offer claimants online access to basic information in their case files through ECOMP. In November 2021, additional functionality was added to Longshore's ECOMP site that enables representatives (called "entities" in the ECOMP system) the ability to register as an entity in ECOMP. Effective April 25, 2022, claimants may designate a representative in ECOMP and, upon acceptance by the representative, allow that entity access to the same basic information. That information includes: the parties to the claim, date of injury, type of injury and the governing Act, such as the LHWCA or the Defense Base Act (DBA). Special Fund recipients will also have access to their payment history from the Fund for each claim a claimant may have. *Please note that currently, ECOMP is available only to claimants with a Social Security Number (SSN).*

**Authorization of Representative through ECOMP:** Under the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, a claimant may authorize an attorney, or other individual, to represent their interest in any proceeding under the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act (LHWCA), 33 U.S.C. 901 et seq., and its extensions. 20 C.F.R. § 702.131(a).

In ECOMP, a registered claimant may designate a representative by following these steps:

1. Logging into their account and selecting the case from their dashboard for which they would like to designate the representative. Please note that, similar to a signed authorization submitted to the case file, the claimant must designate a representative for each case in which they wish to have that entity represent them.
2. In the middle of the page to the far right, click the "Designate Representative" button.
3. Search the list for the representative who already represents them on that case or select from the list to request new representation.

4. Upon selecting an entity for representation, the claimant will be asked to agree to the terms of representation under the LHWCA and acknowledge that although they are not required to have a representative to pursue their claim under the LHWCA, they have made a formal selection. The designation is not complete until the representative accepts the request. Until then, the claimant is responsible for taking all necessary actions in the claim. Once accepted, the representative will have the authority to view basic documents and data in the file in ECOMP, and to act on the claimant's behalf for all matters related to the claim.

Following the acceptance by the representative, a memo is automatically created and added to the case file memorializing the agreement. **This memo following the ECOMP designation of representation is considered an acceptable form of authorization pursuant to 20 C.F.R. § 702.131(a).**

Hence, this bulletin serves as an update to current Procedure Manual Chapter 4-0500(2)(a) which states that "the claimant's signature must appear on the authorization." For purposes of ECOMP authorization *only*, the claimant's signature need not be on the authorization memo, which is automatically created from the claimant's ECOMP account activity. All other forms of notification of authorization for representation (outside of ECOMP) must still adhere to Procedure Manual Chapter 4-0500(a)'s requirement and include the claimant's signature.

The ECOMP authorization memo is being added to the forms of acceptable authorization for representation because claimants are identity verified in order to access and use the ECOMP system. Similarly, for submissions outside of ECOMP, claimants' signatures serve as identity verification that they are providing authorization. OWCP believes that adding this additional acceptable form of authorization for representation will result in better service and options to our stakeholders.

Visit the [ECOMP site for claimants](#) for more information on how to register for an ECOMP account.

Visit the [ECOMP site for entities](#) for more information on how to register as an entity.

**Applicability: Claimants under the LHWCA and its extensions and their representatives.**

**Disposition:** This Bulletin is to be retained until the DFELHWC Procedure Manual has been updated.

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