

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

In the Matter of BRENDA S. RUFFIN and DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS,
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER, Jackson, MS

*Docket No. 99-1301; Submitted on the Record;
Issued June 22, 2000*

DECISION and ORDER

Before DAVID S. GERSON, BRADLEY T. KNOTT,
A. PETER KANJORSKI

The issue is whether appellant has met her burden of proof in establishing that she sustained a recurrence of disability on or after July 17, 1997, causally related to her accepted employment injury of March 3, 1997.

The Board has given careful consideration to the issue involved, appellant's contentions on appeal and the entire case record. The Board finds that the decision of the hearing representative of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs dated and finalized on February 2, 1999 is in accordance with the facts and the law in this case and hereby adopts the findings and conclusions of the Office hearing representative.¹

¹ Where appellant claims a recurrence of disability due to an accepted employment-related injury, she has the burden of establishing by the weight of reliable, probative and substantial evidence that the recurrence of disability is causally related to the original injury. This burden includes the necessity of furnishing evidence from a qualified physician who, on the basis of a complete and accurate factual and medical history, concludes that the condition is causally related to the employment injury. Moreover, the physician's conclusion must be supported by sound medical reasoning. *Robert H. St. Onge*, 43 ECAB 1169 (1992). In the instant case, appellant failed to submit rationalized medical opinion evidence establishing a causal relationship between her current physical and emotional conditions and her accepted employment injury of March 3, 1997.

The decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs dated February 2, 1999 is, hereby, affirmed.

Dated, Washington, D.C.
June 22, 2000

David S. Gerson
Member

Bradley T. Knott
Alternate Member

A. Peter Kanjorski
Alternate Member