

By decision dated September 17, 2019, OWCP accepted that the October 5, 2018 incident occurred as described. However, it denied appellant's traumatic injury claim, finding that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish a causal relationship between the accepted employment incident and her diagnosed medical conditions.

On July 2, 2020 appellant, through counsel, requested reconsideration of the September 17, 2019 decision.

By decision dated September 15, 2020, OWCP denied modification of its prior decision.

The Board has duly considered the matter and concludes that this case is not in posture for decision. OWCP's procedures provide that cases should be administratively combined when correct adjudication of the issues depends on frequent cross-referencing between files.³ For example, if a new injury case is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for a similar condition or the same part of the body, doubling is required.⁴ Herein, appellant's claims under OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx610 and xxxxxx009 also involved injuries to the right shoulder and/or neck, which are at issue in the present claim under OWCP File No. xxxxxx615. For a full and fair adjudication, this case must be returned to OWCP to administratively combine the current case record with OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx610 and xxxxxx009, so it can consider all relevant claim files and accompanying evidence in adjudicating appellant's current traumatic injury claim.⁵

Following this and other such further development as OWCP deems necessary, it shall issue a *de novo* decision.

³ Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 2 -- Claims, *File Maintenance and Management*, Chapter 2.400.8(c) (February 2000).

⁴ *Id.*; *M.L.*, Docket No. 20-1176 (issued April 29, 2021); *L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020); *L.H.*, Docket No 18-1777 (issued July 2, 2019).

⁵ *Supra* note 3 at Chapter 2.400.8(c)(1); *W.D.*, Docket No. 19-0961 (issued March 31, 2021); *L.P.*, Docket Nos. 18-1558, 18-1568 (issued June 21, 2019).

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the September 15, 2020 decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is set aside and the case is remanded for further proceedings consistent with this order of the Board.

Issued: January 11, 2022
Washington, DC

Alec J. Koromilas, Chief Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Janice B. Askin, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Patricia H. Fitzgerald, Alternate Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board