



By decision dated February 10, 2020, OWCP denied appellant's claim, finding that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish causal relationship between his low back conditions and the accepted factors of his federal employment. Consequently, it found that appellant had not met the requirements to establish an injury as defined by FECA.

On August 12, 2020 appellant requested reconsideration of OWCP's February 10, 2020 decision.

By decision dated August 26, 2020, OWCP denied appellant's request for reconsideration of the merits of his claim.

The Board, having duly considered the matter, finds that this case is not in posture for decision.

OWCP previously accepted that appellant sustained traumatic injuries to his low back and neck due to an October 21, 2016 motor vehicle accident under OWCP File No. xxxxxx319. In the present claim, appellant alleged injuries to his low back due to factors of his federal employment since 2013.

Under its procedures, OWCP has determined that cases should be combined where a new injury case is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for the same part of the body and where correct adjudication depends on cross-referencing between files.<sup>2</sup> This will allow OWCP to consider all relevant claim files in developing this occupational disease claim.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, for full and fair adjudication of the present claim, this case shall be remanded for OWCP to administratively combine File No. xxxxxx319 with the claims under OWCP Master File No. xxxxxx171. Following this and other such further development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Id.*; *W.W.*, Docket No. 19-0884 (issued June 16, 2020); *L.P.*, Docket Nos. 18-1558, 18-1568 (issued June 21, 2019); *L.S.*, Docket Nos. 17-1863, 17-1867, 17-1868 (issued April 18, 2018); *W.S.*, Docket No. 15-0969 (issued October 5, 2015); *C.C.*, Docket No. 14-1576 (issued March 9, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *M.B.*, Docket No. 20-0770 (issued January 5, 2021); *R.G.*, Docket No. 19-1755 (issued July 7, 2020); *L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020).

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT** the August 26, 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: July 29, 2022  
Washington, DC



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



Patricia H. Fitzgerald, Deputy Chief Judge  
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board



James D. McGinley, Alternate Judge  
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board