

¹ The Board notes that a appellant filed a prior claim in OWCP File No. xxxxxx 188 for an occupational disease for a right shoulder condition.

The Board, having duly considered this matter, finds 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.² 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.³ In the present claim, appellant alleged repetitive injuries to her right shoulder. OWCP had previously accepted that she developed a right shoulder condition under OWCP File No. xxxxxx188. However, as of the date of its October 14, 2021 decision, OWCP had not administratively combined the present claim with her previously accepted claim pertaining to a right shoulder condition.

As OWCP File No. xxxxxx188 also involves a claim to appellant's right shoulder, for a full and fair adjudication, the Board will remand the case to OWCP to administratively combine the case records for OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx479 and xxxxxx188.⁴ Following this and other such further development as OWCP deems necessary, it will issue a *de novo* decision.⁵

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

³ *Id.*; *L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020); *L.H.*, Docket No 18-1777 (issued July 2, 2019).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *R.G.*, Docket No. 19-1755 (issued July 7, 2020); *L.M.*, *supra* note 3.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the October 14, 2021 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: June 10, 2022
Washington, DC

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

Janice B. Askin, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. D. McGinley".

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