

<sup>1</sup> Appellant previously filed a Form CA-2 alleging a stressful and harmful work environment, which OWCP adjudicated under OWCP File No. xxxxxx975. She further referenced a prior traumatic injury claim (Form CA-1) occurring while in the performance of duty on June 4, 2019, resulting in migraine headaches, nausea, light and noise sensitivity, and extremity weakness, which OWCP adjudicated under OWCP File No. xxxxxx026. Appellant also filed a Form CA-2 alleging a negative and hostile work environment in the office resulting in migraines, panic and anxiety attacks, and depression, which OWCP adjudicated under OWCP File No. xxxxxx663. By decisions dated January 3 and July 26, 2019, and November 1, 2021, respectively, OWCP denied the claims. It administratively combined OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx975, xxxxxx026, and xxxxxx663, with the latter designated as the master file.

their relationship to her federal employment on November 11, 2021. She stopped work on July 28, 2022.

In a January 9, 2023 statement, appellant described feelings of anxiety, fear, and panic and sensitivity to noise, flashing lights, and environmental factors that she experienced while in the workplace since December 2016.

OWCP received various medical records detailing treatment that appellant received for a diagnosis of PTSD due to a history of sexual trauma while serving in the military, and for migraines and emotional difficulties that she attributed to her work environment with the employing establishment. In a February 21, 2023 narrative report, Dr. James McClelland, a clinical psychologist, diagnosed appellant with PTSD and major depressive disorder, and indicated that workplace stressors had intensified the depressed mood and symptoms associated with her past military trauma. He recommended that she be permitted to work from home.

By decision dated March 28, 2023, OWCP denied appellant's claim, finding that the evidence of record was insufficient to establish a compensable employment factor. It concluded, therefore, that the requirements had not been met to establish an injury as defined by FECA.

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

OWCP's procedures provide that cases should be combined when correct adjudication depends on cross-referencing between files and where two or more injuries occur to the same part of the body.<sup>2</sup> As appellant's claims under OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx975, xxxxxx026, and xxxxxx663 also alleged migraine headaches and emotional conditions due to her work environment, these claims shall be administratively combined with the present claim, OWCP File No. xxxxxx539, for a full and fair adjudication. This will allow OWCP to consider all relevant claim files and accompanying evidence in developing her claims.<sup>3</sup>

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

<sup>3</sup> *D.J.*, Docket No. 20-0997 (issued November 20, 2020); *S.D.*, Docket No. 19-0590 (issued August 28, 2020).

<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 March 28, 2023 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: December 11, 2023  
Washington, DC

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

Valerie D. Evans-Harrell, Alternate Judge  
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

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