

On November 10, 2022 appellant filed a notice of recurrence (Form CA-2a) for medical treatment beginning October 26, 2022 due to increased left elbow pain, stiffness, and weakness causally related to his accepted January 25, 2010 employment injury.

In a December 7, 2022 development letter, OWCP informed appellant of the deficiencies of his recurrence claim. It advised him of the type of medical evidence needed and provided a questionnaire for his completion. OWCP afforded appellant 30 days to submit the necessary evidence.

On December 28, 2022 appellant completed the development questionnaire and alleged that he had developed chronic and increasing pain in his left elbow with decreased range of motion. He reported that he had sustained an additional left elbow injury on May 19, 2011 in OWCP File No. xxxxxx885.

By decision dated January 10, 2023, OWCP denied appellant's recurrence claim, finding that there was no medical evidence of record to establish a recurrence of the need for medical treatment due to the worsening of his accepted left elbow condition.

On January 24, 2023 appellant requested a review of the written record by a representative of OWCP's Branch of Hearings and Review and provided additional evidence.

By decision dated July 18, 2023, OWCP's hearing representative affirmed the January 10, 2023 decision finding that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish a recurrence of a medical condition on October 26, 2022 causally related to appellant's accepted left elbow condition.

The Board, having duly considered this matter, finds that the 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

Herein, appellant has a previously accepted left elbow injury under OWCP File No. xxxxxx885. OWCP subsequently accepted an additional traumatic injury claim for the same part of the body as the claim in OWCP File No. xxxxxx483. Therefore, for a full and fair adjudication, the case shall be returned to OWCP to administratively combine the current case record, OWCP

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

³ *Id.*; *Order Remanding Case, K.W.*, Docket No. 22-0951 (issued January 26, 2023); *Order Remanding Case, A.D.*, Docket No. 22-0147 (issued July 1, 2022); *Order Remanding Case, S.G.*, Docket No. 21-0396 (issued September 27, 2021); *Order Remanding Case, R.L.*, Docket No. 20-0901 (issued July 27, 2021); *Order Remanding Case, M.E.*, Docket No. 21-0094 (issued May 27, 2021); *Order Remanding Case, L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020); *Order Remanding Case, L.H.*, Docket No. 18-1777 (issued July 2, 2019).

File No. xxxxxx483, with OWCP File No. xxxxxx885. Following any further development deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision. Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the July 18, 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: January 30, 2024
Washington, DC

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

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

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