

**United States Department of Labor  
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board**

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<b>S.L., Appellant</b>	)	
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<b>and</b>	)	<b>Docket No. 25-0694</b>
	)	<b>Issued: September 24, 2025</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, OKLAHOMA CITY VA MEDICAL CENTER, Oklahoma City, OK, Employer</b>	)	
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*Appearances:*

*Appellant, pro se*

*Office of Solicitor, for the Director*

*Case Submitted on the Record*

**ORDER REMANDING CASE**

Before:

ALEC J. KOROMILAS, Chief Judge

PATRICIA H. FITZGERALD, Deputy Chief Judge

VALERIE D. EVANS-HARRELL, Alternate Judge

On July 14, 2025 appellant filed a timely appeal from a March 19, 2025 merit decision and an April 4, 2025 nonmerit decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). The Clerk of the Appellate Boards docketed the appeal as No. 25-0694.

On January 22, 2024 appellant, then a 52-year-old health aid technician, filed a traumatic injury claim (Form CA-1) alleging that on that date she sustained an injury when she fell on an icy crosswalk in the parking lot of the employing establishment while in the performance of duty. She explained that she fell in the crosswalk, but was able to grab the rail, holding on by her right hand. OWCP assigned the present claim OWCP File No. xxxxxx536.<sup>1</sup>

By decision dated January 27, 2025, OWCP denied appellant's claim finding that the evidence of record was insufficient to establish a medical diagnosis in connection with the accepted

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<sup>1</sup> The record reflects that on October 20, 2024, appellant filed a Form CA-1 alleging that on January 14, 2019, she sustained injuries to her left shoulder, hip, and knee when trying to catch her balance she slipped while walking across the icy employing establishment parking lot while in the performance of duty. OWCP assigned that claim OWCP File No. xxxxxx910 and, by decision dated December 30, 2024, denied it finding that the claim was not timely filed, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 8122.

January 22, 2024 employment incident. Thus, it concluded that the requirements to establish an injury, as defined by FECA, had not been met.

On March 11, 2025 appellant requested reconsideration.

By decision dated March 19, 2025, OWCP modified the January 27, 2025 decision to find that appellant had established medical diagnoses in connection with the accepted January 22, 2024 employment incident, including left hip conditions and conditions of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar areas of the spine. However, it found that the medical evidence of record remained insufficient to establish a medical condition causally related to the accepted January 22, 2024 employment incident. OWCP noted that it had reviewed appellant's claim under OWCP File No. xxxxxx910 with a January 14, 2019 date of injury and discussed evidence from that claim including diagnostic studies.

On March 21, 2025 appellant requested reconsideration.

By decision dated April 4, 2025, OWCP denied appellant's request for reconsideration of the merits of her claim, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 8128(a).

The Board, having duly considered this matter, finds that the case is not in posture for decision.<sup>2</sup> OWCP's procedures provide that cases should be administratively combined when correct adjudication of the issues depends on frequent cross-referencing between files.<sup>3</sup> For example, if a new injury claim is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for a condition involving the same or similar region of the body, doubling is required.<sup>4</sup>

As appellant's claims both involve the same region of the body, for a full and fair adjudication, this case must be remanded to OWCP to administratively combine the current case record, OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx536, with OWCP File No. xxxxxx910.<sup>5</sup> This will allow OWCP to consider all relevant medical evidence in adjudicating the current claim.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Order Remanding Case, S.R.*, Docket No. 22-0665 (issued January 15, 2025); *Order Remanding Case, P.P.*, Docket No. 25-0118 (issued December 10, 2024); *Order Remanding Case, M.T.*, Docket No. 24-0753 (issued September 23, 2024); *Order Remanding Case, J.L.*, Docket No. 21-0958 (issued April 26, 2023).

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

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*; *Order Remanding Case, H.B.*, Docket No. 20-1298 (issued November 22, 2021); *Order Remanding Case, S.G.*, Docket No. 21-0396 (issued September 27, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> *Order Remanding Case, K.W.*, Docket No. 22-1258 (issued March 14, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> *Order Remanding Case, L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020).

On remand, OWCP shall administratively combine the above-noted claim files.<sup>7</sup> Following this and other such further development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly,

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT** the March 19 and April 4, 2025 decisions of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs are set aside, and the case is remanded for further proceedings consistent with this order of the Board.

Issued: September 24, 2025  
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

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<sup>7</sup> *Order Remanding Case, J.W.*, Docket No. 22-1047 (issued March 14, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> *Order Remanding Case, J.B.*, Docket No. 22-0127 (issued February 16, 2023).