



In a development letter dated August 5, 2025, OWCP notified appellant of the deficiencies of his claim. It advised him of the type of factual and medical evidence necessary to establish his claim and afforded him 60 days to submit the necessary evidence.

In emergency department provider notes dated August 2, 2025, Dr. Rogers related that appellant presented with complaints of a right knee injury on July 13, 2025 at work, which he had attempted to treat at home. She recounted appellant's statements that on July 13, 2025 he experienced a popping sensation while twisting his right knee to move a package. Appellant complained of persistent right knee swelling since the incident. She diagnosed right knee pain and right knee effusion.

In an August 5, 2025 report, Dr. Marshall Benjamin, a Board-certified vascular surgeon, reviewed a vascular venous doppler scan of bilateral lower extremities and found no evidence of deep venous thrombosis in either extremity.

In an August 20, 2025 correspondence, appellant advised OWCP that following his July 13, 2025 injury he was seen in an emergency room by Dr. Rogers who performed x-ray and ultrasound evaluations which showed severe swelling of the right knee and fluid on the knee.

In a follow-up letter dated September 8, 2025, OWCP advised appellant that it had conducted an interim review, and the evidence remained insufficient to establish his claim for a right knee condition. It noted that he had 60 days from the August 5, 2025 letter to submit the necessary evidence. OWCP further advised that if the evidence was not received during this time, it would issue a decision based on the evidence contained in the record.

On September 17, 2025 Kari A. Cheezum, a family nurse practitioner, provided an ambulatory referral to orthopedic surgery. She commented that appellant had a "workman's compensation injury" with right knee pain, swelling and Baker's cyst. In a September 17, 2025 work-related limitation/restriction form, Ms. Cheezum diagnosed right knee injury and provided work restrictions.

In a September 22, 2025 report, Ms. Cheezum diagnosed right knee injury and right knee Baker's cyst.

Unsigned office-visit notes dated October 9, 2025 recounted that while working on July 13, 2025 appellant felt a pop and burn in right knee. His history of previous arthroscopy with partial meniscectomy in the distant past was noted. Appellant was referred for an MRI scan of the right knee.

In an October 9, 2025 x-ray interpretation, Dr. Phillip Hugo, a Board-certified radiologist, diagnosed right knee tricompartmental degenerative changes and chondrocalcinosis.

By decision dated October 16, 2025, OWCP summarily denied appellant's claim, finding that the evidence of record was insufficient to establish a medical condition was causally related to the accepted July 13, 2025 employment incident.

The Board finds that this case is not in posture for decision.

Section 8124(a) of FECA provides that OWCP shall determine and make a finding of fact and make an award for or against payment of compensation.<sup>2</sup> Its regulations at 20 C.F.R. § 10.126 provide that the decision of the Director of OWCP shall contain findings of fact and a statement of reasons.<sup>3</sup> As well, OWCP's procedures provide that the reasoning behind OWCP's evaluation should be clear enough for the reader to understand the precise defect of the claim and the kind of evidence, which would overcome it.<sup>4</sup>

OWCP summarily denied the claim, concluding in general terms that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish causal relationship. It did not explain why the medical evidence was insufficient to establish appellant's claim. The Board therefore finds that OWCP did not discharge its responsibility to set forth findings of fact and a clear statement of reasons explaining the disposition so that appellant could understand the basis for the decision, *i.e.*, whether he had met his burden of proof to establish a medical condition causally related to the accepted July 13, 2025 employment incident.<sup>5</sup>

The case shall therefore be remanded for OWCP to make findings of fact and provide a statement of reasons for its decision, pursuant to the standard set forth in section 5 U.S.C. § 8124(a) and 20 C.F.R. § 10.126. After any further development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision. Accordingly,

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<sup>2</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 8124(a).

<sup>3</sup> 20 C.F.R. § 10.126.

<sup>4</sup> Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 2 -- Claims, *Disallowances*, Chapter 2.1400.5 (February 2013); *see also* D.B., *Order Remanding Case*, Docket No. 25-0903 (issued December 15, 2025); M.N., Docket No. 20-0531 (issued May 7, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at Chapter 2.1400.5 (February 2013).

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT** the October 16, 2025 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: February 10, 2026  
Washington, DC

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

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

Janice B. Askin, Judge  
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board