

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

S.B., Appellant)
and) Docket No. 25-0890
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS,) Issued: January 2, 2026
KANSAS CITY VA MEDICAL CENTER,)
Kansas City, MO, Employer)

)

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
JANICE B. ASKIN, Judge

On September 15, 2025 appellant filed a timely appeal from a March 21, 2025 merit decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). The Clerk of the Appellate Boards docketed the appeal as No. 25-0890.

On January 10, 2025 appellant, then a 59-year-old custodial worker, filed an occupational disease claim (Form CA-2) alleging that she sustained an aggravation of a right knee condition due to factors of her federal employment, including repetitive walking, bending, stooping, and squatting. She noted that she first became aware of her condition and realized its relation to her federal employment on December 20, 2023.¹ Appellant stopped work on August 15, 2024.

In a January 5, 2025 statement, appellant noted that she had previously filed a traumatic injury claim on advice of her supervisor, which had been denied. She explained that she filed the

¹ OWCP assigned the present claim OWCP File No. xxxxxxx012. Appellant previously filed a Form CA-1 alleging that on March 11, 2022 she sustained a right knee injury when her right foot slipped from beneath her as she was mopping a floor and her right knee bent the wrong way while in the performance of duty. The claims have not been administratively combined by OWCP.

present occupational disease claim as she believed she should have done so initially “as noted in the decision received in December 2024” in the prior claim.

In support of her claim, appellant submitted medical evidence.

By decision dated March 21, 2025, OWCP denied appellant’s occupational disease claim, finding that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish causal relationship between the claimed right knee condition and the accepted factors of her federal employment.

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 Appellant’s claim under OWCP File No. xxxxxx022 also involved a right knee condition. Therefore, for full and fair adjudication, this case shall be remanded for OWCP to administratively combine OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx022 and xxxxxx012.⁴ Following this and other such further development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision. Accordingly,

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

³ *Id.*; *Order Remanding Case, G.L.*, Docket No. 25-0793 (issued September 26, 2025); *Order Remanding Case, M.L.*, Docket No. 20-1176 (issued April 29, 2021); *L.M.*, Docket No. 19-1490 (issued January 29, 2020); *Order Remanding Case, L.H.*, Docket No. 18-1777 (issued July 2, 2019).

⁴ *Supra* note 2 at Chapter 2.400.8c(1); *Order Remanding Case, W.D.*, Docket No. 19-0961 (issued March 31, 2021); *Order Remanding Case, L.P.*, Docket Nos. 18-1558, 18-1568 (issued June 21, 2019).

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the March 21, 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: January 2, 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