

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

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R.R., Appellant)	
)	
and)	
)	Docket No. 26-0116
)	Issued: March 4, 2026
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE, SUN PRAIRIE POST OFFICE, Sun Prairie, WI, Employer)	
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Appearances: *Case Submitted on the Record*
Alan J. Shapiro, Esq., for the appellant¹
Office of Solicitor, for the Director

ORDER REMANDING CASE

Before:
ALEC J. KOROMILAS, Chief Judge
PATRICIA H. FITZGERALD, Deputy Chief Judge
JANICE B. ASKIN, Judge

On November 24, 2025 appellant, through counsel, filed a timely appeal from an August 11, 2025 merit decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). The Clerk of the Appellate Boards docketed the appeal as No. 26-0116.

On March 4, 2024 appellant, then a 55-year-old rural delivery specialist, filed a traumatic injury claim (Form CA-1) alleging that on March 2, 2024 she injured both knees when she dismounted her postal vehicle while in the performance of duty. She explained that she landed on her right leg and felt something tear in her right knee. Appellant then transferred her weight to her left leg. Appellant further explained that she experienced pain in both knees, but the pain in her

¹ In all cases in which a representative has been authorized in a matter before the Board, no claim for a fee for legal or other service performed on appeal before the Board is valid unless approved by the Board. 20 C.F.R. § 501.9(e). No contract for a stipulated fee or on a contingent fee basis will be approved by the Board. *Id.* An attorney or representative's collection of a fee without the Board's approval may constitute a misdemeanor, subject to fine or imprisonment for up to one year or both. *Id.*; *see also* 18 U.S.C. § 292. Demands for payment of fees to a representative, prior to approval by the Board, may be reported to appropriate authorities for investigation.

left knee pain worsened throughout her work shift.² Appellant stopped work on March 3, 2024 and returned on March 5, 2024.

By decision dated August 26, 2024, OWCP denied appellant's claim, finding that the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish a diagnosed condition in connection with the accepted employment incident.

Appellant requested reconsideration on December 20, 2024.

By decision dated January 2, 2025, OWCP denied appellant's request for reconsideration of the merits of the claim, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 8128(a).

On January 21, 2025 appellant requested reconsideration and provided additional medical evidence.

By decision dated February 5, 2025, OWCP modified the August 26, 2024 decision to find that the medical evidence of record was sufficient to establish diagnosed medical conditions in connection with the accepted employment incident. However, the claim remained denied as the medical evidence of record was insufficient to establish causal relationship between her diagnosed medical conditions and the accepted employment incident. OWCP indicated that it would administratively combine the current claim with OWCP File No. xxxxxx667.

Appellant requested reconsideration on June 24, and July 18 and 24, 2025.

By decisions dated July 9, 2025, July 23, 2025, and August 11, 2025, respectively, OWCP denied modification of the February 5, 2025 decision.

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, including when similar conditions are claimed in such cases.³ This allows OWCP to consider all relevant claim files in developing a given claim.⁴ Appellant's claims under OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx667 and xxxxxx331 also involved both knees and should therefore be administratively combined with the

² OWCP assigned the present claim OWCP File No. xxxxxx115. Appellant previously filed an occupational disease claim (Form CA-2) on April 27, 2022 for a right knee pain with weakness due to her work duties of entering and exiting her mail truck, which OWCP accepted under OWCP File No. xxxxxx667 for right knee patellar tendinitis, right knee prepatellar bursitis and right knee arthroscopy. She subsequently filed a Form CA-1 for a left leg fracture on November 29, 2025 due to a fall while in the performance of duty, which was in a short form closure status on December 2, 2025 under OWCP File No. xxxxxx331. Appellant's claims have not been administratively combined by OWCP as of the issuance of the August 11, 2025 decision.

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

⁴ *Id.*

present claim for a full and fair adjudication.⁵ This will allow OWCP to consider all relevant evidence in developing appellant's claim.⁶

The case shall, therefore, be remanded for OWCP to administratively combine OWCP File Nos. xxxxxx667 and xxxxxx331 with the present claim, OWCP File No. xxxxxx115. Following this and other such further development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision. Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the August 11, 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: March 4, 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

⁵ See *Order Remanding Case, S.B.*, 25-0797 (issued November 26, 2025); *Order Remanding Case, M.K.*, Docket No. 25-0184 (issued February 18, 2025); *Order Remanding Case, J.L.*, Docket No. 24-0785 (issued November 1, 2024); *Order Remanding Case, M.T.*, Docket No. 24-0753 (issued September 23, 2024); *Order Remanding Case, K.W.*, Docket No. 22-1258 (issued March 14, 2023).

⁶ *Id.* See also *K.G.*, Docket No. 21-0068 (issued July 29, 2022); *D.J.*, Docket No. 20-0997 (issued November 20, 2020); *S.D.*, Docket No. 19-0590 (issued August 28, 2020).