



**January 17, 2020**

**INDUSTRY NOTICE No. 175**

**TO: INSURANCE CARRIERS AND SELF-INSURED EMPLOYERS UNDER THE LONGSHORE AND HARBOR WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT as amended, AND OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS**

**SUBJECT: Consolidating District Offices and Revising Administrative Case Assignment Procedures in the Longshore Program of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP).**

Effective April 6, 2020, the Secretary, through his delegated official, the Director, OWCP, is establishing three new compensation districts for the Longshore Program by consolidating existing districts and re-designating existing district offices as suboffices of the new compensation districts. This action is in accordance with 20 CFR 702.102 and 33 U.S.C. § 939(b) to more efficiently administer the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act ("LHWCA") and its extensions.

The three new compensation districts established by the Secretary are to be known as the Eastern, Western, and Southern Districts and all existing offices will become suboffices of the three new districts:

- **Eastern Compensation District** – will comprise the jurisdictions covered by the offices currently based in Boston, Massachusetts; New York, New York; and Norfolk, Virginia.
- **Western Compensation District** – will comprise the jurisdictions covered by the offices currently based in Long Beach, California; San Francisco, California; and Seattle, Washington.
- **Southern Compensation District** – will comprise the jurisdictions covered by the offices currently based in Jacksonville, Florida; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Houston, Texas.

Existing cases will continue to be administered by OWCP from the offices where they currently reside. Going forward, the Secretary may transfer cases within the new compensation districts to evenly distribute workload.

Effective April 6, 2020, all newly created LHWCA, Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act ("OCSLA"), and Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities Act ("NAFIA") claims where injuries occur within the United States will be assigned to the Eastern, Western, or Southern compensation district based on the place of injury without distinction as to the suboffice.

Additionally, all newly created cases will be distributed for assignment on a rotating basis amongst the suboffices. The only exceptions are:

- Defense Base Act (“DBA”) cases where claimant resides in the United States: These cases will continue to be assigned to the suboffice based on where the claimant resides. *See* Industry Notice 122.
- DBA cases where the claimant resides outside of the United States and NAFIA cases where injury occurs outside of the United States and the claimant resides outside of the U.S.: These cases will continue to be assigned to the suboffice based on place of injury. However, consistent with 20 CFR § 704.101 and prior district office consolidations set out in prior Industry Notices (Numbers 106, 115, and 174), the OWCP has determined that cases involving injuries occurring in areas formerly assigned to:
  1. District 1 will be assigned to the Eastern Compensation District, suboffice in Boston, Massachusetts.
  2. District 2 will be assigned to the Eastern Compensation District, suboffice in New York, New York.
  3. District 10 will be assigned to the Southern Compensation District, suboffice in Houston, Texas.
  4. Districts 14 and 15 will be assigned to the Western Compensation District, suboffice in Long Beach, California.

Nothing in this Notice is intended to have any impact on where litigation of claims takes place under the LHWCA or any of its extensions.

The list of compensation districts and their respective suboffices will be viewable online effective April 6, 2020. All questions concerning this Industry Notice should be directed to OWCP, DLHWC Director.



ANTONIO A. RIOS,  
Acting Director, Division of  
Longshore and Harbor  
Workers' Compensation