

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' WORKERS COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Cherie Zieschang 358-1569

What is the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)?

- The FECA is a law providing benefits for civilian employees of the United States who have suffered work-related injuries or occupational diseases.
- Benefits provided under the FECA constitute the sole remedy against the United States Government for a work related injury, illness or death.

Who administers the FECA?

- The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), administers FECA. All entitlement decisions are made by the Department of Labor. District offices have the final decision making authority regarding all workers' compensation claims.

Who is covered under the FECA?

- All civilian employees of the United States, except those paid from non-appropriated funds.
- FECA coverage is extended to Federal employees regardless of the length of time on the job or the type of position held.

What is covered under the FECA?

- Traumatic Injury – a traumatic injury is a wound or other condition of the body caused by external force including stress or strain and identifiable by time and place of occurrence. A traumatic injury is caused by a specific event or series of events within a single work day or work shift. FORM CA 1 is filed in the event of a traumatic injury.
- Occupational Disease or Illness – an occupational disease or illness is a condition produced in the work environment over a period longer than one work day or shift. It may result from systemic infection, repeated stress, and exposure to toxins, poisons, fumes or other continuing conditions of the work environment. FORM CA 2 is filed in the event of an occupational disease or illness.
- Recurrences – A recurrence of disability is a spontaneous return or increase of disability due to a previous injury without intervening cause. A recurrence of a medical condition is defined as a documented need for further medical treatment after release from treatment but with no

accompanying work stoppage. FORM CA 2A is filed in the event of a recurrence.

What benefits are available under FECA?

- All related medical costs.
- Wage loss benefits for temporary total disability, total disability, permanent impairment of certain members, functions and organs of the body, and loss of wage earning capacity.
- Vocational rehabilitation.
- Compensation for death.

What must an employee do when injured at work?

- In case of injury, an employee should obtain first aid or medical treatment at the NASA HQ Health Unit, Room CD 70, even if the injury is minor. Every injury should be reported to the supervisor as soon as possible. In the event the injury is so severe that the employee cannot go to the Health Unit, immediate assistance is available by calling call 358-1616. If the injured employee has to obtain further medical treatment or examination, the Health Unit will provide an Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment (Form CA 16). The form authorizes an injured employee to obtain the examination and/or treatment for up to 60 days and provides OWCP with an initial medical report.
- An employee submits a written notice of the injury on Form CA 1 if a traumatic injury is sustained, or Form CA 2 if the injury is an occupational disease or illness. The purpose of filing a CA 1 or CA 2 is to notify the supervisor of a traumatic injury or occupational disease or illness, and serves as the report to the OWCP when:
 - The employee has sustained an injury which is likely to result in a medical charge against the compensation fund;
 - The employee loses time from work on any day after the date of the injury;
 - A disability for work may subsequently occur.
- The employee should notify the supervisor when medical documentation supports the ability to return to work in a limited or light duty assignment. If a suitable position is available the employee will assume the position until released to full duty status by the physician. The employee should return to work as soon as the treating physician allows him/her to do so.

What requirements must a claim meet?

- Reporting: An employee must report his/her injury on the appropriate claim form to his/her supervisor.
- Time: All compensation cases must satisfy the time requirements of the FECA. A claim for compensation must be filed within three years of the injury or death for a traumatic event. In cases of latent disability, the time for filing a claim does not begin to run until the employee becomes aware, or reasonably aware, of a possible relationship between his/her medical disability and employment.
- Civil Employee: It must be established that the injured or deceased individual was an employee at the time of the event.
- Fact of Injury: The claim must establish that the employee, in fact, sustained an injury or disease. There are two conditions that must be met. They are:
 1. The employee actually experienced the accident, event, or exposure, and
 2. A medical condition is present, which could have resulted from the accident or employment factor.
- Performance of Duty: The claim must establish that the employee was performing assigned duties at the time of the injury or illness, or was engaged in an activity reasonably incident to the employment.

What is COP?

- Continuation of Pay (COP) is continuation of the employee's regular pay for up to **45 calendar days** of wage loss due to temporary disability and/or medical treatment following a traumatic injury. Employees with occupational disease claims are not eligible to receive COP.
- COP may be stopped if an employee does not provide medical evidence of a disabling traumatic injury within 10 calendar days of claiming COP benefits.

What is Compensation for Lost Wages?

- If an employee is disabled for work or receiving medical treatment and/or physical therapy, as a result of his/her accepted condition for a period **exceeding 45**-calendar days of COP, or is disabled for work or receiving medical treatments and/or physical therapy, as the result of an occupational disease or illness, he/she may claim compensation for wage loss. Wage loss compensation is computed at **66 2/3% (single)** or **75% (with dependents)** of basic pay, plus locality pay. The employee submits Form CA 7, Claim for Compensation on Account of Traumatic Injury or Occupational Disease.
- Claims must be supported by medical documentation. Form CA 20, an Attending Physician's Report, provides the medical documentation to support a claim for lost wages.

Where do I get the forms and whom can I contact for more information?

- Forms are available in the Health Unit, Room CD70 or from the Headquarters, Facilities and Administrative Services Division, Room 1C35 or 1A42.
- Contact Frances Corradino at 358-0930 or Cherie Zieschang at 358-1569.