



Employee Rights and Responsibilities Traumatic Injury Form CA-1 Updated October 25, 2017

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) outlines the benefits for Federal employees injured in the performance of their duties. The United States Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) administers, interprets, and ensures compliance of the FECA and is the sole adjudicator of all workers' compensation claims for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) employees. You have the right to file a claim for FECA benefits with the DOL, OWCP.

Upon filing a claim, your benefits and responsibilities under the FECA are as follows:

Medical Treatment

Medical treatment encompasses all necessary and customary medical services, including testing, treatment, and intervention to assist in the recovery of work related injuries (e.g., doctor appointment(s), X-rays, physical therapy, prescriptions, etc.).

Benefits:

- You are entitled to receive immediate medical treatment from a physician of your choice. Physician is a licensed Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathy (DO). Selection of any other type of medical practitioner may delay claim adjudication or payment of services. You may search DOL registered providers at: <http://owcp.dol.acs-inc.com/portal/providersearch/agreement.do>.
- Reimbursement of services of chiropractors is limited to treatment to correct a spinal subluxation as demonstrated by X-ray to exist.
- A Form CA-16, *Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment*, may be issued to your physician. Form CA-16 will not be issued to more than one provider or 7 days after injury.
 - Provide your doctor's name, address and phone number to your supervisor and the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC) Workers' Compensation Team if you elect to receive medical treatment.

Once your choice of physician has been established, any change must be submitted in writing by you for OWCP approval, with the exception of your treating physician's referrals.

Note: Depending your preference and nature of injury, Federal employees may first be evaluated by the NASA Center's Occupational Health Clinic Physician as the first phase of filing a Workers' Compensation claim. An evaluation by the NASA Center's Occupational Health Clinic Physician **does not** constitute a choice of treating physician, unless elected as such by you. Additional NASA clinic visits will constitute an election as your provider.

Responsibilities:

- Immediately report work-related injury to your supervisor and seek medical care, if required.
- File CA-1 Workers' Compensation claim in ECOMP at <https://www.ecomp.dol.gov/>.
- Obtain all medical documentation and witness statements necessary to support your claim.
- Ensure Form CA-17, Duty Status Report, is completed by your treating physician at the initial and subsequent visits.
- Your supervisor completes Side A, and Side B is for your physician to complete.
- Return to work after the initial medical appointment, unless it is after your tour or you are directed otherwise by your physician.

Limited Duty

Limited duty is the temporary modification of regular work duties or the assignment of other available necessary work tasks that allows an injured employee to recuperate and/or rehabilitate from their on-the-job injuries while working.

Benefits:

- NASA will make every effort to accommodate your medical limitations and work capabilities if such work is available within your medical restrictions.
- A light duty job offer within your medical restrictions will be identified by your supervisor.
- Your supervisor will develop the modified work assignment and will interactively discuss your work capabilities and work tasks.

Responsibilities:

- If you are unable to return to full duty, you must advise your treating physician that modification of your present job assignment is available to you.
- Request your treating physician specify your medical limitations/restrictions in writing.
- Avoid any on or off duty activities inconsistent with your medical limitations/restrictions.
- Return to work when your physician determines that you are capable of doing so, unless you request and receive coverage (if eligible) under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
- Accept suitable employment. NASA may terminate Continuation of Pay (COP) or the OWCP may terminate compensation if a suitable offer of modified duty is refused.
- Provide updated medical documentation to support the continuation of your modified assignment (limited duty) during the recovery period from your work related injury.
- Notify your supervisor immediately, if during the period of recovery from your injury, you are unable to finish your tour or you are unable to report for your next scheduled tour.

Absence from Work

Absence from work refers to any time away from work due to the work related injury and includes, but is not limited to, time loss for doctor's appointments, medical treatments, and/or any periods of work disability.

Benefits:

- You may elect Sick Leave (SL), Annual Leave (AL), Leave Without Pay (LWOP), or Continuation of Pay (COP) for medical appointments or disability due to a work injury.
 - Administrative Leave may be charged on date of injury.
- Elect COP on Form CA-1 within 30 days of the date of injury. Initial time loss from work or work disability for COP must be within 45 calendar days of the injury.
- If your claim is denied, any COP used will be changed to SL or AL, as elected by you, to the extent such leave is available, otherwise LWOP will be charged and a debt may be incurred.
- File OWCP Form CA-7, *Claim for Compensation*, if a work disability continues after the COP eligibility period expires. Following the 45-day COP entitlement period absences may be charged as SL, AL, or LWOP, as per your election. (See Leave Buy Back).
- Leave is not earned during period(s) of LWOP totaling 80 hours during a leave year.
- If your work injury qualifies and is approved as a serious health condition covered under FMLA, absences due to your injury may be charged against your 12-week FMLA entitlement.

Responsibilities:

- Request leave for all absences in accordance with standard leave policies and procedures.
- Submit Form CA-7 if eligible, every 2 weeks (on a pay period basis) unless other instructions are provided.
- Ensure all job-related absences are supported with medical documentation that includes the diagnosis, prognosis, objective findings, duration of disability, and expected return to work.

Leave Buy Back (LBB)

LBB is a process of buying back sick or annual leave for any absence from work to receive medical treatment or for periods of work disability related to the accepted occupational disease or medical condition while awaiting the OWCP adjudication of your claim.

Benefits:

- You may request to buy back any leave used while awaiting adjudication of your claim except leave used in lieu of COP as elected on form CA-1.
 - a. When an employee buys back annual leave in an amount that exceeds the applicable maximum carry-over, such excess will be automatically forfeited. For every 80 hours of leave bought back and changed to LWOP under workers' compensation, both annual and sick leave must be adjusted by the amount earned in a pay period.

- b. You cannot complete a LBB after you have been separated from NASA rolls.
- c. All indebtedness must be paid to NASA before any leave is credited.

Responsibilities:

- You may initiate a request for LBB, in writing, to the NSSC Workers' Compensation Team within one year following your return to duty date, or within one year of the date that OWCP approves your claim, whichever is later.
- Ensure medical documentation is provided supporting medical treatment and/or work disability for all absences claimed.

FECA Claim Number

The FECA claim number is a unique number assigned by the OWCP for your injury claim.

- Ensure all correspondences submitted to the NSSC Workers' Compensation Team and/or OWCP has this number clearly written on the upper right hand corner.

Out-of-Pocket Costs

Out-of-pocket costs are any injury-related service or expense, directly paid by the employee for which the provider does not bill the OWCP for payment.

Medical Services:

- Submit Form OWCP-915, Claimant Reimbursement Form, to request reimbursement for physician appointments, prescription medications, and other services paid directly by you. Itemized bills and proof of payment must accompany all reimbursement requests.

Transportation Expenses:

- You are entitled to file Form OWCP957 for reimbursement of reasonable and necessary transportation expenses for authorized medical services and treatment. Generally 100 miles roundtrip from the worksite or residence is considered reasonable.

Additional Information

Any person who files a false report to obtain FECA benefits is subject to:

- Criminal prosecution including a fine up to \$10,000.00, imprisonment for not more than five years, or both.
- Disciplinary action by NASA may be taken irrespective of any criminal prosecution.

If you have any questions concerning this document, please contact:

NSSC Customer Contact Center

1-877-677-2123 (1-877-NSSC123) or nssc-contactcenter@nasa.gov