

OWCP Connect: The Claimant Query System returns



Assistant to the President for Workers' Compensation
Kevin Card

OWCP has reopened the Claimant Query System portal for injured workers to review claim information. CQS is a secure site where injured workers may log in to view information on case status, compensation payments and compensation claim tracking. This is good news for claimants, as they can now track claim forms as they are processed from the Postal Service to OWCP.

Access is now available through a new site called OWCP Connect, which allows individuals with existing claims under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) to register for an account and log in after authenticating their credentials. The link to register with OWCP Connect can be found at <https://owcpconnect.dol.gov/owcplogin/?site=cqs>.

During the account registration process, claimants must prove their identity by validating information entered against secure TransUnion Credit Bureau data. Information available to the credit bureau about an injured worker's credit history will be used for identity verification. Claimants will need to successfully answer questions posed by the credit bureau about their credit history to verify their identity. The information that you provide in response to the credit bureau questions is used for identity verification only to ensure that only the injured worker may access private information displayed in CQS. This information is not used for any other purpose and is not stored or maintained in OWCP records.

After a claimant's identity has been authenticated, they will create a password, security image, key phrase and security questions for the account. Once an account has been created, the claimant may log into OWCP Connect and access CQS by entering their OWCP case file number. A case may only be accessed if the personal information associated with the OWCP Connect account matches the information associated with the OWCP case file. CQS is only available to injured workers who have existing cases with OWCP. It is not available to claimant representatives or other parties.

Should the information maintained by the credit bureau prevent you from verifying your identity, you must contact the TransUnion credit bureau directly for assistance by calling 877-322-8228 or by visiting dispute.transunion.com.

Why should you register for CQS? Federal law requires the Postal Service to adhere to strict guidelines when a claimant submits OWCP claim forms. The Postal Service must submit initial claim filings of CA-1 and CA-2s within 10 working days after it is received from the employee. Form CA-7, claim for wage-loss compensation, must be submitted within five working days after it is received from the employee.

The information provided in CQS allows claimants to track Postal Service submission of CA-7s in real time. In some districts, postal managers have sent completed CA-7s back to the employee requesting changes. This is a violation of OWCP rules and procedures, and a grievance investigation should be initiated.

The Postal Service must submit completed claim forms directly to OWCP. The Postal Service may review the employee portion of the form, but it cannot change anything on the form or delay the timely submission to OWCP. OWCP is responsible for the final adjudication of any claim form. CQS allows registered claimants to see when claim forms are received and adjudicated by OWCP.

Changes to ECOMP

OWCP has updated the Employees' Compensation Operations & Management Portal (ECOMP). ECOMP is the fastest way to submit medical reports and OWCP-requested documents to a claim file. Supportive documents, such as statements, medical reports and file requests may be uploaded by injured workers, representatives, employing agency staff and medical providers. The list of documents accepted has now expanded.

OWCP now offers options in the drop-down menu, including EFT direct deposit forms, CA-1032 forms, address changes, bill payment inquiries, CA-7 status questions, case file and document requests, designation of representatives, elections between FECA and OPM/VA/FERS offset benefits, general inquiries, job offers, reconsideration requests, authorization requests, and requests for oral hearings or reviews of the written record.

To use ECOMP, go to the ECOMP home page at ecomp.dol.gov. Click on the green "Access Case & Upload Document" icon on the right side of the page. A page will open that asks for the claim number, name, claimant date of birth and date of injury. Once the information has been submitted, click on "access case" and you will be directed to a page that allows you to search for a document saved to your computer to upload into the file.

Once you select the document, a page will open that asks, "What type of document are you uploading?" The new document options will open as a drop-down menu. Using the proper drop-down category will save OWCP and the claimant valuable time in getting documents reviewed.

OWCP and the Postal Service have begun a test program for electronic claim filing in three postal districts: Dallas; Greensboro, NC; and Northern Virginia. The program allows injured workers to register on ECOMP and then file CA-1, CA-2, CA-7 and CA-7a claim forms. Once the claim is filed electronically, a copy is sent to the district Health Resource Management office and the employee's supervisor. NALC will continue to monitor the test program as it evolves.