

# OWCP representation for NALC members



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**S**uffering an on-the-job injury is no fun. Many workers can be intimidated by the process of filing a claim with the Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP).

Most injuries are relatively straightforward and easily adjudicated. Last year, OWCP accepted about 90 percent of traumatic injury claims. For the workers with denied claims, the complex challenges of the appeals process can be intimidating, and assistance may be needed.

One of the benefits of NALC membership is access to a highly experienced specialist who can advise injured workers on their claims at no expense to the member.

While injured workers are not required to have a representative to file or process their claim, they do have the option to request a representative at any time in the life of their claim.

**NALC employs nine regional workers' compensation assistants (RWCA)s** who provide expert advice and representation in the OWCP claims process. RWCA's have extensive training in the FECA claims process and with the sixth edition of *AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment* that is used in calculating schedule awards.

Tami Seastrand is the RWCA in Region 1. Coby Jones is the RWCA for Region 2. Larrissa Parde is the RWCA for Regions 3, 5 and 7. David Miller is the RWCA for Regions 4 and 10. Anita Lewallen is the RWCA for Regions 6 and 8. Misty Wenger is the RWCA for Region 9. David Picconi is the RWCA for Regions 11 and 14. Kristin Williams is the RWCA for Regions 12 and 13. RAA Bruce Didriksen handles OWCP claims for Region 15.

Selecting an RWCA to represent you in your OWCP claim is now easier with OWCP's new Entity management system. The Entity management system is a new feature in OWCP's ECOMP web portal that allows designated representatives, such as union representatives, law firms or individual attorneys to access case data and case file documents electronically.

Access to case file documents allows your NALC representative to provide timely advice on how to get claims accepted, procedures approved and adverse decisions appealed.

**To find an NALC representative in ECOMP, you first** log into your ECOMP account. Once you have accessed your ECOMP dashboard, you will see a "Representation" tab above each of your claims with the question: "Do you have a representative?" Click on the question,

and a Designate Representative page will open explaining how representation works.

If you do not already have a representative, you may use ECOMP to begin the process of obtaining a representative using ECOMP's search features. If you already have a representative, you can use ECOMP's search features to see if he or she is registered in ECOMP. Every NALC RWCA is registered in ECOMP.

Designating a representative in ECOMP does not mean that this individual or group has agreed to represent you. Your request to have that individual or group represent you will be sent to the designated representative through ECOMP, but the representative must agree to represent you before this relationship exists.

Once you have found the representative of your choice, click "Designate Representative." Selecting an RWCA gives them direct access to claim documents that can expedite their ability to give timely and accurate advice. If you select a group (like a law firm), your case will be visible to all members of that group unless you designate a specific individual within the group.

Click "Continue" at the bottom of the page to access the list of unions, attorneys and individuals who have registered in the ECOMP entity system. A list of everyone who has registered will appear in alphabetical order. On the left side of the page, you can filter the list by representation type and you will find a drop-down menu listing "Law Firm/Attorney," "Union" and "Authorized Representative (Non-Attorney)."

Click on "Union" and scroll down to "National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), 100 Indiana Ave NW Washington, DC 20001, Union." Click on "Designate Representative" on the right and an Assign Representation Contact Information page opens up. Look in the drop-down menu to find the RWCA or NALC representative you want to request to represent you.

Once you choose a name, click on "NEXT." The next page will allow you to confirm representation with the NALC representative. The NALC entity requires you to contact the representative prior to requesting their representation. This is done so NALC can verify that you are a member in good standing.

Once you have verified that you have contacted your chosen representative, you can check that box and click on "Confirm and Request." Click "I Agree" on the next page, and your chosen representative will be sent an email where the representative can accept or deny representation.

**NALC members who need representation in their** OWCP claims should contact their national business agent's office and request a referral to an RWCA.