

## CareBeat August: Filing an EEOICPA Claim with the Department of Labor

Filing a claim under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) can seem daunting. However, understanding the process and what to expect can make it more manageable. Here's a guide to help you navigate the EEOICPA claim process with the Department of Labor (DOL).

**Before You File** Before you file a claim, there are three essential things to consider:

- 1. Diagnosis Requirement:** You must have a formal diagnosis from a physician, supported by relevant tests. Self-diagnoses are not sufficient. For instance, if you suspect you have neuropathy, a physician must confirm it through neurological testing. This requirement applies to all illnesses, including COPD and cancer.
- 2. Documentation:** Ensure you have all necessary medical documentation ready. While you don't need everything before you file, a confirmed diagnosis is crucial.
- 3. Department of Labor Forms:** Be prepared to complete DOL forms EE-1 and EE-3. The EE-1 form collects general information, while the EE-3 form focuses on your work history and job duties. Think about the years you worked, your job responsibilities, and any incidents that occurred during that time.

**Filing Your Claim** When you're ready to file be ready with:

- 1. Medical Records:** Request medical records from your doctor. Once you file, the DOL often gives you a limited time (usually 30 days) to submit these records. You can request extensions, but it's important to stay on top of deadlines to keep your claim moving forward.
- 2. Letter of Causation:** Obtain a letter of causation from your physician. An authorized representative can assist your doctor in providing the necessary information.
- 3. Claim Specifics:** Claims vary based on the illness and employment history. Some claims might require dose reconstruction through NIOSH, while others might not. Understanding whether your claim falls under Part B or Part E of the program is crucial.

**The Claim Process** The claim process involves several steps:

- 1. Recommended Decision:** After reviewing your claim, the DOL will issue a recommended decision.
- 2. Final Adjudication:** The Final Adjudication Branch (FAB) reviews the recommended decision and issues a final ruling. If additional information is needed, they might request more evidence or schedule a hearing.
- 3. Denied Claims** Denied claims can be reopened if you provide new evidence. This might include new medical tests or additional employment verification. There's no limit on how many times a claim can be reopened, as long as new information is presented.
- 4. Consequential Illnesses** Consequential illnesses result from a primary illness. You must establish the primary illness before filing for consequential illnesses. This can include conditions caused by medication side effects or other related health issues.

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**Working with an Authorized Representatives** Authorized representatives bring extensive experience and knowledge from handling numerous claims. They can assist with:

- Completing complex paperwork.
- Requesting medical records.
- Providing letters of causation.
- Navigating the DOL's timelines and procedures.

While some straightforward claims (e.g., Special Exposure Cohort claims) might be manageable without an AR, having one can be beneficial for more complex cases.

**Support from CNS Cares** CNS Cares is dedicated to supporting claimants throughout the EEOICPA claims process. We provide:

- Assistance with understanding DOL letters.
- Resources for developing claims.
- Guidance on requesting extensions and navigating timelines.

For more hands-on support, especially with creating letters of causation or researching causal links between exposures and illnesses, partnering with an authorized representative might be the best course of action.

## We're Here To Help

**Filing an EEOICPA claim involves several steps and can be complex, but understanding the process and utilizing available resources can simplify it. Whether you choose to file independently or with the help of an authorized representative, CNS Cares is here to support you every step of the way. If you have any questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to us.**

Call us at 1-877-259-9001 or visit [CNSCares.com](https://www.CNSCares.com)