

§ 10.0

20 CFR Ch. I (4–1–15 Edition)

- 10.904 Does a death as a result of occupational disease qualify for payment of the death gratuity?
- 10.905 If an employee incurs a covered injury in connection with his or her service with an Armed Force in a contingency operation but does not die of the injury until years later, does the death qualify for payment of the death gratuity?
- 10.906 What special statutory definitions apply to survivors under this subpart?
- 10.907 What order of precedence will OWCP use to determine which survivors are entitled to receive the death gratuity payment under this subpart?
- 10.908 Can an employee designate alternate beneficiaries to receive a portion of the death gratuity payment?
- 10.909 How does an employee designate a variation in the order or percentage of gratuity payable to survivors and how does the employee designate alternate beneficiaries?
- 10.910 What if a person entitled to a portion of the death gratuity payment dies after the death of the covered employee but before receiving his or her portion of the death gratuity?
- 10.911 How is the death gratuity payment process initiated?
- 10.912 What is required to establish a claim for the death gratuity payment?
- 10.913 In what situations will OWCP consider that an employee incurred injury in connection with his or her service with an Armed Force in a contingency operation?
- 10.914 What are the responsibilities of the employing agency in the death gratuity payment process?
- 10.915 What are the responsibilities of OWCP in the death gratuity payment process?
- 10.916 How is the amount of the death gratuity calculated?

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Subpart A—General Provisions

INTRODUCTION

§ 10.0 What are the provisions of the FECA, in general?

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) as amended (5 U.S.C. 8101 *et seq.*) provides for the payment of workers' compensation benefits to civilian officers and employees of all

branches of the Government of the United States. The regulations in this part describe the rules for filing, processing, and paying claims for benefits under the FECA. Proceedings under the FECA are non-adversarial in nature.

(a) The FECA has been amended and extended a number of times to provide workers' compensation benefits to volunteers in the Civil Air Patrol (5 U.S.C. 8141), members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (5 U.S.C. 8140), Peace Corps Volunteers (5 U.S.C. 8142), Job Corps enrollees and Volunteers in Service to America (5 U.S.C. 8143), members of the National Teachers Corps (5 U.S.C. 8143a), certain student employees (5 U.S.C. 5351 and 8144), certain law enforcement officers not employed by the United States (5 U.S.C. 8191–8193), and various other classes of persons who provide or have provided services to the Government of the United States.

(b) The FECA provides for payment of several types of benefits, including compensation for wage loss, schedule awards, medical and related benefits, and vocational rehabilitation services for conditions resulting from injuries sustained in performance of duty while in service to the United States.

(c) The FECA also provides for payment of monetary compensation to specified survivors of an employee whose death resulted from a work-related injury and for payment of certain burial expenses subject to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 8134.

(d) All types of benefits and conditions of eligibility listed in this section are subject to the provisions of the FECA and of this part. This section shall not be construed to modify or enlarge upon the provisions of the FECA.

§ 10.1 What rules govern the administration of the FECA and this chapter?

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 8145 and Secretary's Order 5–96, the responsibility for administering the FECA, except for 5 U.S.C. 8149 as it pertains to the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board, has been delegated to the Director of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Except as otherwise provided by law, the Director, OWCP and his or her designees have

the exclusive authority to administer, interpret and enforce the provisions of the Act.

§ 10.2 What do these regulations contain?

This part 10 sets forth the regulations governing administration of all claims filed under the FECA, except to the extent specified in certain particular provisions. Its provisions are intended to assist persons seeking compensation benefits under the FECA, as well as personnel in the various Federal agencies and the Department of Labor who process claims filed under the FECA or who perform administrative functions with respect to the FECA. This part 10 applies to part 25 of this chapter except as modified by part 25. The various subparts of this part contain the following:

(a) *Subpart A.* The general statutory and administrative framework for processing claims under the FECA. It contains a statement of purpose and scope, together with definitions of terms, descriptions of basic forms, information about the disclosure of OWCP records, and a description of rights and penalties under the FECA, including convictions for fraud.

(b) *Subpart B.* The rules for filing notices of injury and claims for benefits under the FECA. It also addresses evidence and burden of proof, as well as the process of making decisions concerning eligibility for benefits.

(c) *Subpart C.* The rules governing claims for and payment of continuation of pay.

(d) *Subpart D.* The rules governing emergency and routine medical care, second opinion and referee medical examinations directed by OWCP, and medical reports and records in general. It also addresses the kinds of treatment which may be authorized and how medical bills are paid.

(e) *Subpart E.* The rules relating to the payment of monetary compensation benefits for disability, impairment and death. It includes the provisions for identifying and processing overpayments of compensation.

(f) *Subpart F.* The rules governing the payment of continuing compensation benefits. It includes provisions concerning the employee's and the em-

ployer's responsibilities in returning the employee to work. It also contains provisions governing reports of earnings and dependents, recurrences, and reduction and termination of compensation benefits.

(g) *Subpart G.* The rules governing the appeals of decisions under the FECA. It includes provisions relating to hearings, reconsiderations, and appeals before the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board.

(h) *Subpart H.* The rules concerning legal representation and for adjustment and recovery from a third party. It also contains provisions relevant to three groups of employees whose status requires special application of the provisions of the FECA: Federal grand and petit jurors, Peace Corps volunteers, and non-Federal law enforcement officers.

(i) *Subpart I.* Information for medical providers. It includes rules for medical reports, medical bills, and the OWCP medical fee schedule, as well as the provisions for exclusion of medical providers.

(j) *Subpart J.* Death Gratuity. The rules relating to the payment of the death gratuity benefit under 5 U.S.C. 8102a.

§ 10.3 Have the collection of information requirements of this part been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)?

The collection of information requirements in this part have been approved by OMB and assigned OMB control numbers 1240-0001, 1240-0007, 1240-0008, 1240-0009, 1240-0012, 1240-0013, 1240-0015, 1240-0016, 1240-0017, 1240-0018, 1240-0019, 1240-0022, 1240-0044, 1240-0045, 1240-0046, 1240-0047, 1240-0049, 1240-0050 and 1240-0051.

DEFINITIONS AND FORMS

§ 10.5 What definitions apply to the regulations in this subchapter?

Certain words and phrases found in this part are defined in this section or in the FECA. Some other words and phrases that are used only in limited situations are defined in the later subparts of the regulations in this subchapter.

(a) *Benefits* or *Compensation* in the regulations in this subchapter means

Compensation as defined by the FECA at 5 U.S.C. 8101(12), which is the money OWCP pays to or on behalf of a beneficiary from the Employees' Compensation Fund. The terms Benefits and Compensation include payments for lost wages, loss of wage-earning capacity, and permanent physical impairment. The terms Benefits and Compensation also include the money paid to beneficiaries for an employee's death, including both death benefits and any death gratuity benefit. These two terms also include any other amounts paid out of the Employees' Compensation Fund for such things as medical treatment, medical examinations conducted at the request of OWCP as part of the claims adjudication process, vocational rehabilitation services under 5 U.S.C. 8111, services of an attendant and funeral expenses under 5 U.S.C. 8134, but do not include continuation of pay as provided by 5 U.S.C. 8118.

(b) *Beneficiary* means an individual who is entitled to a benefit under the FECA and this part.

(c) *Claim* means a written assertion of an individual's entitlement to benefits under the FECA, submitted in a manner authorized by this part.

(d) *Claimant* means an individual whose claim has been filed.

(e) *Director* means the Director of OWCP or a person designated to carry out his or her functions.

(f) *Disability* means the incapacity, because of an employment injury, to earn the wages the employee was receiving at the time of injury. It may be partial or total.

(g) *Earnings from employment or self-employment* means:

(1) Gross earnings or wages before any deductions and includes the value of subsistence, quarters, reimbursed expenses and any other goods or services received in kind as remuneration; or

(2) A reasonable estimate of the cost to have someone else perform the duties of an individual who accepts no remuneration. Neither lack of profits, nor the characterization of the duties as a hobby, removes an unremunerated individual's responsibility to report the estimated cost to have someone else perform his or her duties.

(h) *Employee* means, but is not limited to, an individual who fits within one of the following listed groups:

(1) A civil officer or employee in any branch of the Government of the United States, including an officer or employee of an instrumentality wholly owned by the United States pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(1)(A);

(2) An individual rendering personal service to the United States similar to the service of a civil officer or employee of the United States, without pay or for nominal pay, when a statute authorizes the acceptance or use of the service, or authorizes payment of travel or other expenses of the individual pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(1)(B);

(3) An individual, other than an independent contractor or an individual employed by an independent contractor, employed on the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin in operations conducted under a statute relating to Tribal timber and logging operations on that reservation pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(1)(C);

(4) An individual appointed to a position on the office staff of a former President under section 1(b) of the Act of August 25, 1958 (72 Stat. 838) pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(1)(E); or

(5) An individual selected and serving as a Federal petit or grand juror pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8101(1)(F).

(i) *Employer* or *Agency* means any civil agency or instrumentality of the United States Government, or any other organization, group or institution employing an individual defined as an "employee" by this section. These terms also refer to officers and employees of an employer having responsibility for the supervision, direction or control of employees of that employer as an "immediate superior," and to other employees designated by the employer to carry out the functions vested in the employer under the FECA and this part, including officers or employees delegated responsibility by an employer for authorizing medical treatment for injured employees.

(j) *Entitlement* means entitlement to benefits as determined by OWCP under the FECA and the procedures described in this part.

(k) *FECA* means the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, as amended.

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Labor

§ 10.5

(l) *Hospital services* means services and supplies provided by hospitals within the scope of their practice as defined by State law.

(m) *Impairment* means any anatomic or functional abnormality or loss. A permanent impairment is any such abnormality or loss after maximum medical improvement has been achieved.

(n) *Knowingly* means with knowledge, consciously, willfully or intentionally.

(o) *Medical services* means services and supplies provided by or under the supervision of a physician. Reimbursable chiropractic services are limited to physical examinations (and related laboratory tests), x-rays performed to diagnose a subluxation of the spine and treatment consisting of manual manipulation of the spine to correct a subluxation.

(p) *Medical support services* means services, drugs, supplies and appliances provided by a person other than a physician or hospital.

(q) *Occupational disease or illness* means a condition produced by the work environment over a period longer than a single workday or shift.

(r) *OWCP* means the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs.

(s) *Pay rate for compensation purposes* means the employee's pay, as determined under 5 U.S.C. 8114, at the time of injury, the time disability begins or the time compensable disability recurs if the recurrence begins more than six months after the injured employee resumes regular full-time employment with the United States, whichever is greater, except as otherwise determined under 5 U.S.C. 8113 with respect to any period.

(t) *Physician* means an individual defined as such in 5 U.S.C. 8101(2), except during the period for which his or her license to practice medicine has been suspended or revoked by a State licensing or regulatory authority.

(u) *Qualified hospital* means any hospital licensed as such under State law which has not been excluded under the provisions of subpart I of this part. Except as otherwise provided by regulation, a qualified hospital shall be deemed to be designated or approved by OWCP.

(v) *Qualified physician* means any physician who has not been excluded

under the provisions of subpart I of this part. Except as otherwise provided by regulation, a qualified physician shall be deemed to be designated or approved by OWCP.

(w) *Qualified provider of medical support services or supplies* means any person, other than a physician or a hospital, who provides services, drugs, supplies and appliances for which OWCP makes payment, who possesses any applicable licenses required under State law, and who has not been excluded under the provisions of subpart I of this part.

(x) *Recurrence of disability* means an inability to work after an employee has returned to work, caused by a spontaneous change in a medical condition which had resulted from a previous injury or illness without an intervening injury or new exposure to the work environment that caused the illness. This term also means an inability to work that takes place when a light-duty assignment made specifically to accommodate an employee's physical limitations due to his or her work-related injury or illness is withdrawn or when the physical requirements of such an assignment are altered so that they exceed his or her established physical limitations. A recurrence of disability does not apply when a light-duty assignment is withdrawn for reasons of misconduct, non-performance of job duties or other downsizing or where a loss of wage-earning capacity determination as provided by 5 U.S.C. 8115 is in place.

(y) *Recurrence of medical condition* means a documented need for further medical treatment after release from treatment for the accepted condition or injury when there is no accompanying work stoppage. Continuous treatment for the original condition or injury is not considered a "need for further medical treatment after release from treatment," nor is an examination without treatment.

(z) *Representative* means an individual or law firm properly authorized by a claimant in writing to act for the claimant in connection with a claim or proceeding under the FECA or this part.

(aa) *Student* means an individual defined at 5 U.S.C. 8101(17). Two terms

§ 10.6

20 CFR Ch. I (4–1–15 Edition)

used in that particular definition are further defined as follows:

(1) *Additional type of educational or training institution* means a technical, trade, vocational, business or professional school accredited or licensed by the United States Government or a State Government or any political subdivision thereof providing courses of not less than three months duration, that prepares the individual for a livelihood in a trade, industry, vocation or profession.

(2) *Year beyond the high school level* means:

(i) The 12-month period beginning the month after the individual graduates from high school, provided he or she had indicated an intention to continue schooling within four months of high school graduation, and each successive 12-month period in which there is school attendance or the payment of compensation based on such attendance; or

(ii) If the individual has indicated that he or she will not continue schooling within four months of high school graduation, the 12-month period beginning with the month that the individual enters school to continue his or her education, and each successive 12-month period in which there is school attendance or the payment of compensation based on such attendance.

(bb) *Subluxation* means an incomplete dislocation, off-centering, misalignment, fixation or abnormal spacing of the vertebrae which must be demonstrable on any x-ray film to an individual trained in the reading of x-rays.

(cc) *Surviving spouse* means the husband or wife living with or dependent for support upon a deceased employee at the time of his or her death, or living apart for reasonable cause or because of the deceased employee's desertion, unless otherwise defined under the FECA for the specific benefit such as the FECA death gratuity at 5 U.S.C. 8102a.

(dd) *Temporary aggravation of a pre-existing condition* means that factors of employment have directly caused that condition to be more severe for a limited period of time and have left no greater impairment than existed prior to the employment injury.

(ee) *Traumatic injury* means a condition of the body caused by a specific event or incident, or series of events or incidents, within a single workday or shift. Such condition must be caused by external force, including stress or strain, which is identifiable as to time and place of occurrence and member or function of the body affected.

§ 10.6 What special statutory definitions apply to dependents and survivors?

(a) 5 U.S.C. 8133 provides that certain benefits are payable to certain enumerated survivors of employees who have died from an injury sustained in the performance of duty.

(b) 5 U.S.C. 8148 also provides that certain other benefits may be payable to certain family members of employees who have been incarcerated due to a felony conviction.

(c) 5 U.S.C. 8110(b) further provides that any employee who is found to be eligible for a basic benefit shall be entitled to have such basic benefit augmented at a specified rate for certain persons who live in the beneficiary's household or who are dependent upon the beneficiary for support.

(d) 5 U.S.C. 8101, 8110, 8133, and 8148, which define the nature of such survivorship or dependency necessary to qualify a beneficiary for a survivor's benefit or an augmented benefit, apply to the provisions of this part but not to the death gratuity provided under subpart J.

(e) 5 U.S.C. 8102a provides the definitions for survivorship or dependency necessary to qualify as a beneficiary for a death gratuity benefit as well as allowing half the death gratuity benefit to be paid to alternate beneficiary.

§ 10.7 What forms are needed to process claims under the FECA?

(a) Notice of injury, claims and certain specified reports shall be made on forms prescribed by OWCP. Employers shall not modify these forms or use substitute forms. Employers are expected to maintain an adequate supply of the basic forms needed for the proper recording and reporting of injuries.

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Labor

§ 10.12

Form No.	Title
(1) CA-1	Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation.
(2) CA-2	Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation.
(3) CA-2a	Notice of Employee's Recurrence of Disability and Claim for Pay/Compensation.
(4) CA-3	Report of Work Status.
(5) CA-5	Claim for Compensation by Widow, Widower and/or Children.
(6) CA-5b	Claim for Compensation by Parents, Brothers, Sisters, Grandparents, or Grandchildren.
(7) CA-6	Official Superior's Report of Employee's Death.
(8) CA-7	Claim for Compensation Due to Traumatic Injury or Occupational Disease.
(9) CA-7a	Time Analysis Form.
(10) CA-7b	Leave Buy Back (LBB) Worksheet/Certification and Election.
(11) CA-16	Authorization of Examination and/or Treatment.
(12) CA-17	Duty Status Report.
(13) CA-20	Attending Physician's Report.
(14) CA-20a	Attending Physician's Supplemental Report.
(15) CA-40	Designation of a Recipient of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act Death Gratuity Payment under Section 1105 of Public Law 110-181 (Section 8102a).
(16) CA-41	Claim for Survivor Benefits Under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act Section 8102a Death Gratuity.
(17) CA-42	Official Notice of Employees' Death for Purposes of FECA Section 8102a Death Gratuity.
(18) CA-1108	Statement of Recovery Letter with Long Form.
(19) CA-1122	Statement of Recovery Letter with Short Form.

(b) Copies of the forms listed in this paragraph are available for public inspection at the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210. They may also be obtained from district offices, employers (*i.e.*, safety and health offices, supervisors), and the Internet, at <http://www.dol.gov>.

INFORMATION IN PROGRAM RECORDS

§ 10.10 Are all documents relating to claims filed under the FECA considered confidential?

All records relating to claims for benefits, including copies of such records maintained by an employer, are considered confidential and may not be released, inspected, copied or otherwise disclosed except as provided in the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974 or under the

routine uses provided by DOL/GOVT-1 if such release is consistent with the purpose for which the record was created.

§ 10.11 Who maintains custody and control of FECA records?

All records relating to claims for benefits filed under the FECA, including any copies of such records maintained by an employing agency, are covered by the government-wide Privacy Act system of records entitled DOL/GOVT-1 (Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Federal Employees' Compensation Act File). This system of records is maintained by and under the control of OWCP, and, as such, all records covered by DOL/GOVT-1 are official records of OWCP. The protection, release, inspection and copying of records covered by DOL/GOVT-1 shall be accomplished in accordance with the rules, guidelines and provisions of this part, as well as those contained in 29 CFR parts 70 and 71, and with the notice of the system of records and routine uses published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. All questions relating to access/disclosure, and/or amendment of FECA records maintained by OWCP or the employing agency, are to be resolved in accordance with this section.

§ 10.12 How may a FECA claimant or beneficiary obtain copies of protected records?

(a) A claimant seeking copies of his or her official FECA file should address a request to the District Director of the OWCP office having custody of the file. A claimant seeking copies of FECA-related documents in the custody of the employer should follow the procedures established by that agency.

(b) (1) While an employing agency may establish procedures that an injured employee or beneficiary should follow in requesting access to documents it maintains, any decision issued in response to such a request must comply with the rules and regulations of the Department of Labor which govern all other aspects of safeguarding these records.

(2) No employing agency has the authority to issue determinations with respect to requests for the correction

§ 10.13

or amendment of records contained in or covered by DOL/GOVT-1. That authority is within the exclusive control of OWCP. Thus, any request for correction or amendment received by an employing agency must be referred to OWCP for review and decision.

(3) Any administrative appeal taken from a denial issued by the employing agency or OWCP shall be filed with the Solicitor of Labor in accordance with 29 CFR 71.7 and 71.9.

§ 10.13 What process is used by a person who wants to correct FECA-related documents?

Any request to amend a record covered by DOL/GOVT-1 should be directed to the district office having custody of the official file. No employer has the authority to issue determinations with regard to requests for the correction of records contained in or covered by DOL/GOVT-1. Any request for correction received by an employer must be referred to OWCP for review and decision.

RIGHTS AND PENALTIES

§ 10.15 May compensation rights be waived?

No employer or other person may require an employee or other claimant to enter into any agreement, either before or after an injury or death, to waive his or her right to claim compensation under the FECA. No waiver of compensation rights shall be valid.

§ 10.16 What criminal and civil penalties may be imposed in connection with a claim under the FECA?

(a) A number of statutory provisions make it a crime to file a false or fraudulent claim or statement with the Government in connection with a claim under the FECA, or to wrongfully impede a FECA claim. Included among these provisions are 18 U.S.C. 287, 1001, 1920, and 1922. Furthermore, a civil action to recover benefits paid erroneously under the FECA may be maintained under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. 3729-3733. Enforcement of such provisions that may apply to claims under the FECA is within the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice.

(b) In addition, administrative proceedings may be initiated under the

20 CFR Ch. I (4-1-15 Edition)

Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1986 (PFCRA), 31 U.S.C. 3801-12, to impose civil penalties and assessments against persons who make, submit, or present, or cause to be made, submitted or presented, false, fictitious or fraudulent claims or written statements to OWCP in connection with a claim under the FECA. The Department of Labor's regulations implementing the PFCRA are found at 29 CFR part 22.

§ 10.17 Is a beneficiary who defrauds the Government in connection with a claim for benefits still entitled to those benefits?

When a beneficiary either pleads guilty to or is found guilty on either Federal or State criminal charges of defrauding the Federal Government in connection with a claim for benefits, the beneficiary's entitlement to any further compensation benefits will terminate effective the date of conviction, which is the date of the verdict or, in the case of a plea bargain, the date the claimant made the plea in open court (not the date of sentencing or the date court papers were signed). The employing agency may, upon request, be required to provide the documentation needed for termination under this section. Termination of entitlement under this section is not affected by any subsequent change in or recurrence of the beneficiary's medical condition.

§ 10.18 Can a beneficiary who is incarcerated based on a felony conviction still receive benefits?

(a) Whenever a beneficiary is incarcerated in a State or Federal jail, prison, penal institution or other correctional facility due to a State or Federal felony conviction, he or she forfeits all rights to compensation benefits during the period of incarceration. A beneficiary's right to compensation benefits for the period of his or her incarceration is not restored after such incarceration ends, even though payment of compensation benefits may resume. A beneficiary has an affirmative duty to provide notice of any conviction and imprisonment. The employing agency shall provide OWCP any information or documentation they may have concerning such matters.

(b) If the beneficiary has eligible dependents, OWCP will pay compensation to such dependents at a reduced rate during the period of his or her incarceration, by applying the percentages of 5 U.S.C. 8133(a)(1) through (5) to the beneficiary's gross current entitlement rather than to the beneficiary's monthly pay.

(c) If OWCP's decision on entitlement is pending when the period of incarceration begins, and compensation is due for a period of time prior to such incarceration, payment for that period will only be made to the beneficiary following his or her release.

Subpart B—Filing Notices and Claims; Submitting Evidence

NOTICES AND CLAIMS FOR INJURY, DISEASE, AND DEATH—EMPLOYEE OR SURVIVOR'S ACTIONS

§ 10.100 How and when is a notice of traumatic injury filed?

(a) To claim benefits under the FECA, an employee who sustains a work-related traumatic injury must give notice of the injury in writing on Form CA-1, which may be obtained from the employer or from the Internet at www.dol.gov under forms. The employee must forward this notice to the employer. Another person, including the employer, may give notice of injury on the employee's behalf. The person submitting a notice shall include the Social Security Number (SSN) of the injured employee. All such notices should be submitted electronically wherever feasible to facilitate processing of such claims. All employers that currently do not have such capability should create such a method by December 31, 2012.

(b) For injuries sustained on or after September 7, 1974, a notice of injury must be filed within three years of the injury. (The form contains the necessary words of claim.) The requirements for filing notice are further described in 5 U.S.C. 8119. Also see § 10.205 concerning time requirements for filing claims for continuation of pay.

(1) If the claim is not filed within three years, compensation may still be allowed if notice of injury was given within 30 days or the employer had ac-

tual knowledge of the injury or death within 30 days after occurrence. This knowledge may consist of written records or verbal notification. An entry into an employee's medical record may also satisfy this requirement if it is sufficient to place the employer on notice of a possible work-related injury or disease.

(2) OWCP may excuse failure to comply with the three-year time requirement because of truly exceptional circumstances (for example, being held prisoner of war).

(3) The claimant may withdraw his or her claim (but not the notice of injury) by so requesting in writing to OWCP at any time before OWCP determines eligibility for benefits. Any continuation of pay (COP) granted to an employee after a claim is withdrawn must be charged to sick or annual leave, or considered an overpayment of pay consistent with 5 U.S.C. 5584, at the employee's option.

(c) However, in cases of latent disability, the time for filing claim does not begin to run until the employee has a compensable disability and is aware, or reasonably should have been aware, of the causal relationship between the disability and the employment (see 5 U.S.C. 8122(b)).

§ 10.101 How and when is a notice of occupational disease filed?

(a) To claim benefits under the FECA, an employee who has a disease which he or she believes to be work-related must give notice of the condition in writing on Form CA-2, which may be obtained from the employer or from the Internet at www.dol.gov under forms. The employee must forward this notice to the employer. Another person, including the employer, may do so on the employee's behalf. The person submitting a notice shall include the Social Security Number (SSN) of the injured employee. All such notices should be submitted electronically wherever feasible to facilitate processing of such claims. All employers that currently do not have such capability should create such a method by December 31, 2012. The claimant may withdraw his or her claim (but not the notice of occupational disease) by so requesting in writing to OWCP at any