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NASA Policy Directive

NPD 1840.1BEffective Date: February 23,
2001Expiration Date: February 23,
2011**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

Request Notification of Change

(NASA Only)

Subject: NASA Workers' Compensation Program (Revalidated 3/29/04)

Responsible Office: Office of the Chief Health & Medical Officer

1. Policy

NASA's goal is the prevention of occupationally related injuries and illnesses, thereby reducing the number of occupational injury and illness claims, including those that result in a Continuation of Pay (COP). It is NASA's policy, as directed by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), to provide compensation for the disability or death of a NASA employee resulting from personal injury sustained while in the performance of duty. For most employees who sustain a traumatic injury, NASA must continue the employee's regular pay during any periods of resulting disability up to a maximum of 45 calendar days. After 45 calendar days, the employee is either placed on long-term disability, or is required to use annual leave, sick leave, or leave without pay. Through proactive and preventive management efforts, the Compensation Claims Officer will work with the Occupational Health Office, Office of Human Resources and Education, the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance and supervisors to reduce compensation costs for medical treatment and benefits. While the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) initially pays these costs, they are annually charged back to NASA. NASA will make all efforts to return injured employees to work.

2. Applicability

This NPD applies to NASA employees, including those on international travel and assignment, from NASA Headquarters and all NASA Centers, as well as Component Facilities.

3. Authority

a. 5 U.S.C. 8101 et seq., Federal Employees' Compensation Act, as amended.

b. 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10.

4. Applicable Documents

a. 29 CFR Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters.

b. 5 CFR Part 339, Medical Qualification Determinations.

c. 5 CFR Part 353, Restoration to Duty from Uniformed Service or Compensable Injury.

d. NPR 1000.3, The NASA Organization.

e. NPD 1800.2, NASA Occupational Health Program.

f. NPD 8710.2, NASA Safety and Health Program Policy.

g. Reserved.

h. Reserved.

i. Injury Compensation for Federal Employees, A Handbook for Employing Agency Personnel, CA-810.

j. Federal Injury Compensation Questions and Answers about the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (Pamphlet CA-550).

k. CA-16, Authorization for Examination or Treatment.

l. CA-17, Duty Status Report.

m. Reserved.

5. Responsibility

a. The Chief Health and Medical Officer (CHMO) is responsible for the overall NASA Occupational Health Program including the Workers' Compensation Program. The CHMO will ensure the following:

(1) Establishing and coordinating overall Agency workers' compensation policy in collaboration with the Center Medical Directors, and Center Human Resources and Center Compensation Claims Officers.

(2) Approving workers' compensation program standards, procedures, and guidelines.

b. The Director, Occupational Health Programs, located at Headquarters, serves as the Executive Secretary of the NASA Health Council and is responsible for the oversight of the Occupational Health Program and ensuring compliance with programmatic, statutory, and regulatory guidelines and policy implementation.

c. Reserved.

d. The Manager, Agency Workers' Compensation Program, located at KSC is responsible for the following:

(1) Operating and monitoring the workers' compensation case tracking system for

reporting Agencywide experience with claim rates and costs;

- (2) Serving as the principal point of contact for all operational matters pertaining to the workers' compensation program;
- (3) Assuring that corrective action is taken on incorrect or inaccurate claims as needed;
- (4) Transmitting all summary reports to the Department of Labor (DOL) as required by OWCP regulations;
- (5) Establishing eligibility requirements, in collaboration with the Center Medical Director and Human Resources Office, for light duty assignments for employees medically unable to return to full duty; and
- (6) Notifying the CHMO, Center Compensation Claims Officers, and other Agency officials, as appropriate of changes in OWCP requirements, procedures, and guidelines.
- (7) Ensuring that claims are processed in a timely manner and that supervisors are informed of their rights and responsibilities.

e. Center Compensation Claims Officers are responsible for the following:

- (1) Counseling supervisors and/or employees on their responsibilities and rights concerning on-the-job injuries and illnesses.
- (2) Completing and submitting appropriate injury forms in an expeditious manner, and assisting supervisors and/or employees with completion of the forms.
- (3) Coordinating with management officials, safety officials, and employees in determining and eliminating the cause of accidents and illnesses.
- (4) Monitoring claims and working with management and the DOL to controvert those claims without basis and keeping supervisors informed of the status of each case.
- (5) Submitting quarterly OWCP reports, all appropriate NASA injury and illness forms, and other claims reports as requested by the Agency Workers' Compensation Manager.
- (6) Obtaining medical information from OWCP or the injured employees as often as is necessary within OWCP and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations to assess the possibility of return to regular or light duty assignments. In order to facilitate reemployment, advise physicians of any light duty available assignments and their specific requirements. This step will also allow the Agency to monitor the medical care provided and notify OWCP if it believes action should be taken in this regard.
- (7) Maintaining contact with injured employees while they are receiving workers' compensation. With the aid of the Office of Human Resources and Education, identifying suitable jobs and initiating efforts to reemploy recovered or recovering employees, as soon as the medical evidence indicates that this is possible.
- (8) Arranging for timely independent medical examinations when indicated. A NASA occupational health physician may give this exam for the sole purpose of determining if the individual is able to work in any capacity, thereby facilitating return to work.

f. Human Resources Directors at each Center and at Headquarters are responsible for informing employees of new FECA benefits, working with supervisors and ensuring that FECA benefits and claims processing information to identify light duty assignments for partially disabled employees is included in all supervisors' training, counseling long-term

disability employees on civil service retirement and compensation programs for election of annuity or compensation, returning an employee who recovers from disability within 1 year of receiving compensation to the employee's previous position or equivalent one, and making every reasonable effort to place an employee recovering from disability after more than 1 year to the former position or equivalent.

g. The Payroll Officer, in coordination with the Compensation Claims Officer at each NASA Center, is responsible for verifying that COP does not exceed the limit, and furnishing COP usage information for the Center's quarterly reports.

h. Health Clinic Personnel at each NASA Center are responsible for providing emergency first-aid care for job-related injuries and illnesses and for completing appropriate OWCP and other reporting forms.

i. Health and safety personnel at each NASA Center are responsible for investigating workplace conditions allegedly responsible for compensable injuries and illnesses, assisting compensation claims officers in supporting and controverting claims, and in overseeing corrective actions of hazards.

j. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees injured on the job receive appropriate first aid, investigating all mishaps resulting in injury, coordinating with safety and health personnel in investigations of workplace conditions, coordinating time and attendance reports for injured employees with the Claims Officer, notifying the Claims Officer of evidence for controversion, completing appropriate forms, and instituting positive measures to eradicate the causes of occupational illnesses and injuries by taking the necessary corrective actions.

k. Employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor and immediately seeking first aid at the Center's Health Clinic for any injury which occurs on the job, providing appropriate information to the Claims Officer, obtaining prior authorization for private medical care, submitting to medical examinations required for determination of disability status, and accepting light duty assignments during periods of partial disability.

6. Delegation of Authority

None.

7. Measurements/Verification

None.

8. Cancellation

NPD 1840.1A, NASA Workers' Compensation Program, dated February 23, 2001.

Revalidated

March 29, 2004

/s/ Daniel S. Goldin
Administrator

Attachment A: (Text)

None.

(URL for Graphic)

None.

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