

CA-7/20 Claim for Compensation

By Bob Wood, Vice President, Milwaukee WI Area Local, from the February 2014 issue of *The Hi-Lites*

In the case of a traumatic injury you would be required to file a form CA-7 when you are unable to return to work at the end of the 45 days of COP.

If the medical evidence shows that the disability resulting from the traumatic injury is expected to continue beyond the 45 day period, you must obtain a CA-7 by day 30 of the COP period. You must then fill out the CA-7 and submit it to Injury Compensation Office. Make sure to get a date stamped copy for your records.

The form and medical is then submitted to OWCP district office by Injury Comp by day 40.

If your disability is a result of an Occupational Disease and is for a short period of time lost a CA-7 is completed and the medical identifying you were unable to work for that period.

In instances of either traumatic injury or occupational disease or illness, subsequent claims of compensation for periods of disability beyond the initial period of compensation are also made on form CA-7.

It is your responsibility to submit the CA-7.

If you don't fill out the CA-7 there is no way OWCP would have knowledge of your continued loss of wages. Therefore, while your disability continues:

- You must submit a claim using Form CA-7 every 2 weeks until OWCP tells you differently.
- You are also responsible for the submission of medical evidence in support of the claim. This medical can either be on the attached CA-20 (which you give to your doctor) or the doctor must write a report that includes dates you were incapacitated.

In instances where the traumatic injury or occupational disease requires you to take off intermittently you will also be required to fill out a CA-7a which is a time analysis sheet along with the CA-7.

Waiting Period: There is a (3) three day waiting period before OWCP compensation begins, unless the disability extends beyond (14) calendar days. (**Remember this is calendar days not work days.**)

The (3) day waiting period cannot be satisfied by using sick or annual leave: you must be in a non-pay status.

The waiting applies as follows:

- In the case of an occupational disease/illness, compensation is not payable for the first (3) days of disability, unless the disability extends beyond (14) days.
- In the case of a traumatic injury, the (3) day waiting period begins immediately after

the end the 45-day COP period, unless the disability continues for more than (14) calendar days after the expiration of the 45-day COP period.

Leave Buy-Back (when Annual or Sick Leave is used)

If you used annual leave or sick leave during the period after COP expired or during a period of disability due to an occupational injury, you are eligible to buy back the leave with compensation payments.

This is done by filling out the CA-7 and checking the "leave buy back" square. The time you are trying to buy-back must be supported by medical documentation.

The buy-back must be initiated within (1) year of the return to duty, or within (1) year of the date of OWCP approved the claim, whichever is later.

You are not able to buy back leave if you are being separated because of disability or other reasons and you are off the rolls of the Postal Service.

Note: Once you have an approved claim you can no longer use Sick Leave or Annual Leave and have it compensated by OWCP. Once approved you must use LWOP to receive compensation from OWCP.