



# United States Department of the Interior

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POLICY, MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
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To: Solicitor  
Assistant Secretaries  
Inspector General  
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: P. Lynn Scarlett *P L Scarlett*

Subject: Electronic Filing of Workers' Compensation Claims

*Ken*

The Safety Management Information System (SMIS) is the Department of the Interior's pioneering, web-based, safety and health record keeping system. SMIS has been enhanced to allow direct electronic filing of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) claims with the Department of Labor (DOL). Electronic filing will provide faster service to injured employees and their families. This SMIS enhancement also enables all supervisors, managers, safety officers, and human resources staff, to more efficiently carry out their responsibilities for accident reporting and OWCP case management.

On Tuesday, June 1, 2004, Bureaus and Offices will be able to submit OWCP forms electronically. Please ensure that your supervisors, managers, safety and health staff, and human resources staff use this system for reporting all occupational accidents, injuries and illnesses, and filing of OWCP claims. Statistics on the timeliness of filing claims will be reported to you quarterly. The DOL also monitors timeliness as part of its Safety, Health, and Return to Employment (SHARE) Initiative. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of the Solicitor, Office of the Special Trustee, Office of Hearing and Appeals, and other organizations without Internet access are exempt from direct electronic filing of OWCP claims, until access is available.

Three electronic "SMIS User's Guides" and Powerpoint presentations are available on-line for supervisors, managers, employees, and Workers' Compensation Program Specialists. SMIS is accessed at: <http://www.SMIS.doi.gov/>. For additional information regarding SMIS electronic filing, please contact Kenneth Rueff of the Office of Managing Risk and Public Safety at (303) 236-7128 (extension 232). Attached are two documents, "Workers' Compensation Program Responsibilities of Employees, Supervisors, Workers' Compensation Specialists, and Safety Officers/Managers," and "Safety Management Information System (SMIS) OWCP Program Guideline for Employees, Supervisors, Workers' Compensation Program Specialists, and Safety Officers/Managers."

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving employee safety and health.

Attachments

# Workers' Compensation Program Responsibilities of Employees, Supervisors, Workers' Compensation Program Specialists, and Safety Officers/Managers

## 1. Employees:

- Report the work-related injury to your supervisor immediately.
- Get emergency medical treatment if needed, and notify your supervisor as soon as possible after receiving treatment.
- If you sustain a traumatic injury, obtain a form CA-16, Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment from supervisor or workers' compensation program specialist.
- Complete a Form CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury, online in the SMIS system as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days after your injury. Employee must complete a paper copy of the appropriate form if computer is not available.
- Supervisors and workers' compensation program specialists can assist injured employees in completion of claim forms, either paper copy or in SMIS. Employees needing assistance with SMIS can call the SMIS Help Desk for assistance.
- Notify your supervisor of injury via e-mail or providing printed copy of CA-1 or CA-2 to supervisor.
- Obtain witness(s) statement(s), either online in the SMIS system, or printed copy of form.
- Ensure that electronic SMIS transmittals were properly sent (e-mail back, view status, etc.)
- Inform your doctor of any particular light duty jobs made available and furnish the doctor with any written description of specific duties and physical requirements for such jobs.
- Inform your doctor of any particular alternate jobs made available and furnish doctor with any written description of specific duties and physical requirements for such jobs.
- Inform your supervisor immediately of any medical limitations or restrictions specified by your doctor.
- You are obligated to return to regular duty as soon as you are able to do so, and avoid activities while on workers' compensation that might aggravate the injury/condition.



## **2. Supervisors:**

### **Prevention of injury:**

- Make safe working conditions a top priority.

### **Medical Care:**

- If the employee requires emergency medical treatment, ensure that he/she receives immediate care.
- Provide the employee with a form CA-16, Authorization for Examination And/Or Treatment that authorizes medical care to be provided to employee as soon as possible.

### **Filing Claim:**

- If the employee's injury results from a specific event or series of events during one day or shift, ensure that the employee has access to SMIS, or is provided the appropriate claim form, CA-1 for traumatic injury or CA-2 for occupational disease;
- Request the injured employee to initiate a claim online for an injury or illness in SMIS system; if employee does not have access to a computer, he/she could enter claim using his/her supervisor's computer. Employee must complete a paper copy of the appropriate form if computer is not available.
- Supervisors and workers' compensation program specialists can assist injured employees in completion of claim forms.

### **Timely Submission:**

- When employee's CA-1 or CA-2 is completed, check to see if form is complete.
- Complete the supervisor's section of the form and forward it immediately to your designated workers' compensation program specialist, whether or not you feel the claim should be approved.

### **Controversion:**

- If you have specific information which casts doubt on the claim's validity, you may challenge it and supporting information, but you must still forward the claim promptly. Failure to do so can result in fine, imprisonment, or both.

### **Continuation of Pay:**

- Explain to employee that he or she is entitled to Continuation of Pay (COP) for absences due to disability or obtaining medical treatment for not more than 45 calendar days following the injury.

## **3. Workers' Compensation Program Specialists**

### **Filing Claim:**

- Ensure that injured employees complete claim forms in the Safety Management Information System (SMIS), if available.

If injured employee does not have access to SMIS, workers' compensation program specialist should allow injured employee to use his/her computer or other available office computer; or, provide injured employees with paper copies of appropriate claim forms.

### **Timely Submission:**

- When employee's CA-1 or CA-2 is completed, check to see if form is complete.
- Submit form in a timely manner – within 14 calendar days of employees' signature.
- Ensure medical evidence is submitted within 10 workdays from the date the employee claims COP, or the disability begins or recurs, whichever is later.

### **Tracking:**

- Upon SMIS notification of an injury claim filed, follow-up with supervisor, offer assistance, and ensure that supervisor completes his/her section of the claim form in a timely manner.
- Upon SMIS notification of a claim filed, notify the bureau/office equivalent Safety Manager of employee's injury, either by e-mail or telephone.
- Establish OWCP case file and maintain workers' compensation tracking log, case record form, or locally produced equivalents.

### Communication:

- Provide employees and supervisors with information and assistance regarding workers' compensation.

## 4. Safety Officers/Managers

- Provide appropriate safety and health, accident prevention, and investigation training for managers and supervisors
- Assist management in the annual inspection of workplaces to assure safe and healthful conditions for workers. Prepare appropriate notices for management to issue for abatement of any identified hazards.
- Provide promotional materials and develop and administer recognition systems to promote safe and healthful work performance.
- Assist management and supervisors in investigating accidents and developing measures to prevent recurrences.
- Support the Safety Management Information System (SMIS) by recording all accident reports in a timely, complete, and accurate manner.
- Assure that claims for injuries and illnesses posted in SMIS are posted in the OSHA log.
- Assist Workers' Compensation Program Specialists with proper codes in completion of CA-1 and CA-2 forms.



# **Safety Management Information System (SMIS) OWCP Program Guideline for Employees, Supervisors, Workers' Compensation Program Specialists, and Safety Officers/Managers**

The following guidelines are intended to assist bureaus and offices in their implementation of electronic filing of OWCP claims.

## **1. Bureau or Office Workers' Compensation Program Specialist**

Each bureau and office will establish a bureau/office level individual who will oversee the implementation, administration and mechanism of the process. These include responsibilities such as:

- Identify individual (name, position, phone number, email, fax, etc.) to SMIS staff.
- Write bureau policy and establish bureau administrative procedures concerning mandatory E-Government electronic filing of OWCP claims.
- Be very knowledgeable of their organizational structure. This is the basis for the flow of OWCP claims.
- Understand the Department of Labor (DOL) OWCP claim process. Forms, codes, district offices, contacts, agency chargeback, etc.
- Understand the SMIS OWCP flow process. Employee, supervisor and workers' compensation program specialists' electronic forms.
- Know how to add, edit and delete workers' compensation program specialists for their organizational units.
- Know how to assign organization codes to unit workers' compensation program specialists, so they can review, edit, and submit claims to DOL.
- Maintain SMIS tables associated with bureau organization codes, chargeback and alpha codes, OWCP district office code, bureau users, and authorization tables. Keep SMIS personnel abreast of bureau changes.
- Insure that a point of contact for user support is available for their bureau or office.
- Monitor performance and effectiveness of the electronic OWCP process.
- Evaluate training needs for bureau/office management, supervisors and workers' compensation program specialists.

## **2. Employees**

Each bureau/office should revise their "How to Help the Injured Employee" procedure to explain the electronic means that an employee should use to file a claim. The revisions should include the following topics:

- Individual and on behalf of individual filings.
- Email notification.
- Use of individual claim number for filing.
- Monitoring claim and compensation assistance.

## **3. Supervisors**

Each bureau should brief their supervisors on the electronic means employees will use to file claims and the supervisors responsibilities. The briefings should include the following:

- Email notification.
- Use of individual claim number to complete claim.
- Monitoring claim and compensation assistance.

## **4. Local Workers' Compensation Program Specialists**

Each bureau should train their local workers' compensation program specialists on how to complete the electronic filing of compensation claims which should include.

- Email notification.
- Use of individual claim number to complete claim.
- Coding.
- Transmitting and monitoring claim.
- Adding proxy claimants.
- Reviewing reports.

## **5. Safety Officer/Manager**

- Safety Managers should review the injury report after supervisors and workers' compensation program specialists have completed their portion, to assure that the information is posted to the OSHA Log. Safety Managers and workers' compensation program specialists need to develop an internal procedure to assure notification.

- Safety Managers should assist workers' compensation program specialists in coding the CA-1/CA-2 when necessary.

## **6. Training Materials**

The SMIS staff has developed three forms of training materials to assist in developing and carrying out their electronic OWCP responsibilities and procedures. They are available to view or download from the SMIS Reference Library (<http://www.smis.doi.gov>).

- Quick Reference Guides for employees, supervisors, and workers' compensation program specialists
- PowerPoint Slide Presentations to guide employees, supervisors, and workers' compensation program specialists.
- Documented SMIS User Guides (reference manuals) for workers' compensation program specialists for each of the three entry modules, employees, supervisors and workers' compensation program specialists.

If you need further technical assistance in developing your implementation plan, please feel free to contact Kenneth R. Rueff at (303) 236-7158 x 232.