

*(The following information includes excerpts from material available on the DOL web site at "Questions and Answers About the FECA" and Summary of Major Laws of the Department of Labor.)*

## **Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) - Summary**

### **History**

In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt signed legislation to provide workers' compensation for certain Federal employees in unusually hazardous jobs. The scope of the law was very restricted and its benefits were quite limited. However, it was the first workers' compensation law to pass the test of constitutionality applied by the U. S. Supreme Court. The FECA, which superseded the 1908 statute in 1916, is a workers' compensation law for all civilian Federal employees. It provides for wage loss compensation, medical care and survivors' benefits.

### **Major Provisions**

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), 5 U.S.C. 8101 et seq., establishes a comprehensive and exclusive workers' compensation program which pays compensation for the disability or death of a federal employee resulting from personal injury sustained while in the performance of duty. The FECA, administered by OWCP, provides benefits for wage loss compensation for total or partial disability, schedule awards for permanent loss or loss of use of specified members of the body, related medical costs, and vocational rehabilitation.

### **Coverage**

All civilian employees of the United States, except those paid from non-appropriated funds, are covered. Special legislation provides coverage to Peace Corps and VISTA volunteers; Federal petit or grand jurors; volunteer members of the Civil Air Patrol; Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadets; Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and Youth Conservation Corps enrollees; and non-Federal law enforcement officers under certain circumstances involving crimes against the United States.

FECA coverage is extended to Federal employees regardless of the length of time on the job or the type of position held. Probationary, temporary, and term employees are covered on the same basis as permanent employees. Also, part-time, seasonal, and intermittent employees are covered.

All kinds of injuries, including diseases caused by employment, are covered if they occur in the performance of duty (see questions C-5 to C-9). However, benefits cannot be paid if injury or death is caused by willful misconduct of the injured employee, by intent to bring about the injury or death of oneself or another, or by intoxication of the injured employee.

### **Goal to Return to Work**

The FECA does not provide retirement benefits. Employees who fully or partially recover from their injuries are expected to return to work. The FECA provides vocational rehabilitation services to partially disabled employees for this purpose.

