



## Memo

**To: All Stewards and Branch Officers**

**From: Joe Golonka, Branch 2184 CAU**

**Date: 01/03/2022**

**Re: Continuation of Pay (COP) for Covid-Related OWCP claims**

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The Branch has been made aware that in some of our installations management is failing to pay or is outright refusing to pay Continuation of Pay (COP) to letter carriers that have submitted traumatic injury claims (OWCP Form CA-1) for work-related Covid-19 illness. In most instances, management's alleged (and quite bogus) excuse is that the employee's OWCP claim has not yet "been approved."

Please be aware that management has NO authority whatsoever to withhold payment of COP to any employee submitting a CA-1, as long as the claim was completed and submitted within 30 days of date of injury (with Covid-related claims, that is the last day worked prior to their diagnosis) and supporting medical documentation (in this instance, a positive Covid test) is provided within 10 days of the submission of the claim. **Under NO circumstances is "approval" of an OWCP traumatic injury claim by any entity a prerequisite condition for the payment of COP.**

Stewards becoming aware of ANY delay in the payment of COP to any carrier incurring a traumatic job-related injury, whether Covid-related or not, MUST immediately initiate a grievance in response. Do NOT wait, as time is of the essence. **Violations are (including but not limited to): Articles 19 and 21, section 4 of the Contract; the ELM sections 541.131.a, 541.2.d, 543.41, and 545.7; the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA); 20 CFR@10.200; and 5 USC@8118.**

Grievance remedy should include, in addition to immediate payment of COP to the affected carrier(s), an appropriate compensatory remedy (i.e., \$10 a day) for the willful delay in paying the employee.

CC: Erik Venzke, Tracy Mitchell

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