

HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN



20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, Virginia 20149 • (703)729-4677 or 1-888-636-NALC (6252)
Fredric V. Rolando, President • Stephanie M. Stewart, Director



Dear Health Plan Member:

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. This bill is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill to provide additional relief related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Amid many key provisions included in the bill, the new law makes it easier for federal workers diagnosed with COVID-19 to establish coverage under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA).

In response to the ARPA, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) released new guidance for federal and postal employees who may have contracted COVID-19 in the workplace.

The impacts of this provision are as follows:

1. Any COVID-19 claim filed under the FECA that was accepted for COVID-19 prior to March 12, 2021, is **not** impacted because coverage for benefits has already been extended.
2. Any COVID-19 claim filed under the FECA that was denied or withdrawn prior to March 12, 2021, is eligible for review under the new eligibility requirements.
3. Any COVID-19 claim filed under the FECA on or after March 12, 2021, will be reviewed solely under the new eligibility requirements.

How does this affect you as a Health Benefit Plan member? If you contracted COVID-19 in the workplace and your claim was denied or withdrawn under the FECA on or before March 12, 2021, you have the right to file a CA-1 (Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation) through the Employees' Compensation Operations and Management Portal (ECOMP).

Additionally, if a compensation claim is filed, you will need to notify the Plan about the pending case while the injury or illness is under review by the compensation department. The following information is required:

- Compensation Case number
- Date of injury
- Diagnosis
- The name of all related prescription drugs that were dispensed
- Copies of any OWCP correspondence

For additional assistance you can contact your local Federal Workers' Compensation Program Professional within your agency, or visit:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/owcp/FECA/InfoFECACoverageCoronavirus>

Although the NALC Health Benefit Plan is unable to determine if a case will be accepted by the Office of Workers Compensation, the Plan is dedicated to providing claims assistance to our members who may have contracted COVID-19 in the workplace.

You can reach our Customer Service Representatives at 888-636-NALC (6252).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Stewart".

Stephanie Stewart
Director

Board of Trustees

Michael J. Gill Lawrence D. Brown, Jr., Ch. Mack I. Julion