

Office of Worker Advocacy

Mission

Implements Subpart D of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA) and provides information to the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) to support their activities within the EEOICPA.

Functions

1. Educates and communicates information to former Department of Energy (DOE) contract workers about the programs through various community outreach activities such as Traveling Resource Centers, a toll-free hotline, an Internet website, etc.
2. Coordinates closely with counterpart offices at the Department of Labor and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, as well as the Department of Justice, to effectively implement the EEOICPA statute.
3. Develops and executes Memoranda of Agreement with the state workers' compensation agencies in states in which current and former DOE facilities operated. Coordinates closely with state workers' compensation agencies regarding implementation of EEOICPA Subtitle D.
4. Along with the Department of Labor, operates and manages Energy Employee Compensation Resource Centers at key locations across the country.
5. Reviews applications for review by physician panels for eligibility and completeness.
6. Provides requests for information from and guidance to EEOICPA Points of Contact at DOE sites concerning the retrieval of employment and exposure records for claimant history.
7. Develops procedures and operations to expedite processing of case files for physician panel review so that cases can be promptly referred to the Physician Panels.
8. Establishes and operates the Physician Panels and reviews panel reports prior to issuing them. As appropriate, reassigns cases to another panel for reconsideration.
9. Provides Program Secretarial Officers (PSOs) with positive Physician panel findings. Where orders can legally and contractually be made to not contest, PSOs facilitate the payment of claims approved by the State Workers' Compensation Agency. Works with PSOs to maintain up to date information on the status of Subtitle D cases referred to State Workers' Compensation agencies.
10. Establishes and manages an Advisory Committee consisting of diverse stakeholders to advise the office on the implementation and functioning of the Office of Worker Advocacy.
11. Coordinates with the DOE Office of Hearings and Appeals regarding processing of appeals of (1) determinations of ineligibility for EEOICPA Subtitle D or (2) negative physician panel decisions.
12. Designates Atomic Weapons Employers, as needed and appropriate.
13. Maintains the list of facilities that are covered under the EEOICPA program, including dates that those entities performed covered work, and revises the list as appropriate. Provides information to the public on what facility, contractor, sub-contractor, vendor, and private company employees are eligible for benefits under the program.