

§ 30.518

20 CFR Ch. I (4–1–12 Edition)

that the action was based chiefly or solely in reliance on the payments or on the notice of payment. Gratuitous transfers of funds to other individuals are not considered relinquishments of valuable rights.

(2) To establish that a recipient's position has changed for the worse, it must be shown that the decision made would not otherwise have been made but for the receipt of benefits, and that this decision resulted in a loss.

§ 30.518 Can OWCP require the recipient of the overpayment to submit additional financial information?

(a) The recipient of the overpayment is responsible for providing information about income, expenses and assets as specified by OWCP. This information is needed to determine whether or not recovery of an overpayment would defeat the purpose of the Act, or would be against equity and good conscience. This information will also be used to determine the repayment schedule, if necessary.

(b) Failure to submit this requested information within 30 days of the request shall result in denial of waiver, and no further request for waiver shall be considered until the requested information is furnished.

§ 30.519 How does OWCP communicate its final decision concerning recovery of an overpayment?

(a) After considering any written documentation or argument submitted to OWCP within the 30-day period set out in § 30.512(d), OWCP will issue a final decision on the overpayment. OWCP will send a copy of the final decision to the individual from whom recovery is sought and his or her representative, if any.

(b) The provisions of subpart D of this part do not apply to any decision regarding the recovery of an overpayment.

§ 30.520 How are overpayments collected?

(a) When an overpayment has been made to a recipient who is entitled to further payments, the recipient shall refund to OWCP the amount of the overpayment as soon as the error is discovered or his or her attention is

called to same. If no refund is made, OWCP shall recover the overpayment by reducing any further lump-sum payments due currently or in the future, taking into account the financial circumstances of the recipient, and any other relevant factors, so as to minimize any hardship. Should the recipient die before collection has been completed, further collection shall be made by decreasing later payments, if any, payable under EEOICPA with respect to the underlying occupational illness or covered illness.

(b) When an overpayment has been made to a recipient and OWCP is unable to recover the overpayment by reducing compensation due currently, the recipient shall refund to OWCP the amount of the overpayment as soon as the error is discovered or his or her attention is called to same. The overpayment is subject to the provisions of the Federal Claims Collection Act of 1966, as amended (31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*), and may be reported to the Internal Revenue Service as income. If the recipient fails to make such refund, OWCP may recover the overpayment through any available means, including offset of salary, annuity benefits, or other Federal payments, including tax refunds as authorized by the Tax Refund Offset Program, or referral of the debt to a collection agency or to the Department of Justice.

Subpart G—Special Provisions

REPRESENTATION

§ 30.600 May a claimant designate a representative?

(a) The claims process under this part is informal, and OWCP acts as an impartial evaluator of the evidence. A claimant need not be represented to file a claim or receive a payment. Nevertheless, a claimant may appoint one individual to represent his or her interests, but the appointment must be in writing.

(b) There can be only one representative at any one time, so after one representative has been properly appointed, OWCP will not recognize another individual as a representative until the claimant withdraws the authorization of the first individual. In

addition, OWCP will recognize only certain types of individuals (see § 30.601). For the purposes of paragraph (b) of this section, a "representative" does not include a person who only has a power of attorney to act on behalf of a claimant.

(c) A properly appointed representative who is recognized by OWCP may make a request or give direction to OWCP regarding the claims process, including a hearing. This authority includes presenting or eliciting evidence, making arguments on facts or the law, and obtaining information from the case file, to the same extent as the claimant.

(1) Any notice requirement contained in this part or EEOICPA is fully satisfied if served on the representative, and has the same force and effect as if sent to the claimant.

(2) A representative does not have authority to sign the Form EN-20, described in § 30.505(c) of these regulations, which collects information necessary for issuance of a compensation payment.

§ 30.601 Who may serve as a representative?

A claimant may authorize any individual to represent him or her in regard to a claim under EEOICPA, unless that individual's service as a representative would violate any applicable provision of law (such as 18 U.S.C. 205 and 208). A federal employee may act as a representative only:

(a) On behalf of immediate family members, defined as a spouse, children, parents, and siblings of the representative, provided no fee or gratuity is charged; or

(b) While acting as a union representative, defined as any officially sanctioned union official, and no fee or gratuity is charged.

§ 30.602 Who is responsible for paying the representative's fee?

A representative may charge the claimant a fee for services and for costs associated with the representation before OWCP. The claimant is solely responsible for paying the fee and other costs. OWCP will not reimburse the claimant, nor is it in any way liable for the amount of the fee and costs.

§ 30.603 Are there any limitations on what the representative may charge the claimant for his or her services?

(a) Notwithstanding any contract, the representative may not receive, for services rendered in connection with a claim pending before OWCP, more than the percentages of the lump-sum payment made to the claimant set out in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) The percentages referred to in paragraph (a) of this section are:

(1) 2 percent for the filing of an initial claim with OWCP, provided that the representative was retained prior to the filing of the initial claim; plus

(2) 10 percent of the difference between the lump-sum payment made to the claimant and the amount proposed in the recommended decision with respect to objections to a recommended decision.

(c)(1) Any representative who violates this section shall be fined not more than \$5,000.

(2) The authority to prosecute violations of this limitation lies with the Department of Justice.

(d) The fee limitations described in this section shall not apply with respect to representative services that are rendered in connection with a petition filed with a U.S. District Court seeking review of an OWCP decision that is final pursuant to § 30.316(d), or with respect to any subsequent appeal in such a proceeding.

THIRD PARTY LIABILITY

§ 30.605 What rights does the United States have upon payment of compensation under EEOICPA?

If an occupational illness or covered illness for which compensation is payable under EEOICPA is caused, wholly or partially, by someone other than a federal employee acting within the scope of his or her employment, a DOE contractor or subcontractor, a beryllium vendor, an atomic weapons employer or a RECA section 5 mine or mill, the United States is subrogated for the full amount of any payment of compensation under EEOICPA to any right or claim that the individual to whom the payment was made may have