

OPM eFile Instructions

Agency Representative

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The Agency's Role in an Appeal

Overview

When a suitability action appeal is filed, the agency responsible for the action becomes a party to the proceeding. The agency must designate an authorized representative, respond to the appeal, and participate through OPM's eFile system. These instructions explain what agencies are required to do and how to participate in the process.

Agency Notification

How OPM notifies your agency. Once OPM SuitEA determines an appeal is timely and jurisdictionally proper, it notifies the responsible agency through eFile and requests the Agency Response File (ARF). The notification identifies the appellant, the case number, the nature of the appeal, the ARF instructions, and the deadline — 30 calendar days from notification unless OPM SuitEA directs otherwise.

Register a representative in advance. Have your designated representative registered in eFile before an appeal arrives.

Why it matters. A representative already registered in eFile is added to the case when the acknowledgment letter issues, so the 30-day window is not lost to setup. Additional representatives can be added later.

If no representative is registered. OPM SuitEA will attempt to identify your point of contact from the final action letter or other documentation the appellant submitted.

Representatives and eFile Access

Designating an Authorized Agency Representative

Agencies must designate an authorized agency representative to act on their behalf throughout the appeal. The agency representative is responsible for all filings and communications with OPM SuitEA related to the appeal.

The designation must be in writing and specific to this appeal. Include a designation of, and signature by, the authorized agency representative with each Agency Response File you submit.

The agency representative is responsible for:

- Submitting the Agency Response File (ARF) — the complete administrative record — within 30 calendar days of OPM SuitEA's acknowledgment letter
- Providing the complete record with exhibits, indexed, paginated, and certified
- Representing and defending the agency's suitability determination and action throughout the appeal
- Monitoring eFile for notices, orders, and deadlines
- Complying with all OPM SuitEA orders issued during the proceeding

Disallowing the Appellant's Representative

Who may disallow. OPM or the responsible agency may, in its sole and exclusive discretion, disallow an appellant's choice of representative.

When it applies. Only when the appellant's representative is an employee of the responsible agency or of OPM, and the representative's activities would cause a conflict of interest or position. Both conditions must be present.

Federal employee representatives. A Federal employee serving as an appellant's representative may not perform representational functions while in a duty status and may not claim agency reimbursement for expenses of that representation.

If your agency disallows a representative. Notify OPM SuitEA and the appellant through eFile, stating the basis for the disallowance. OPM has final authority to evaluate the disallowance and may reject one that does not meet the regulatory standard, permitting the representative to continue. If OPM upholds the disallowance, the appellant may designate a different representative or proceed without one (pro se).

Creating an Account

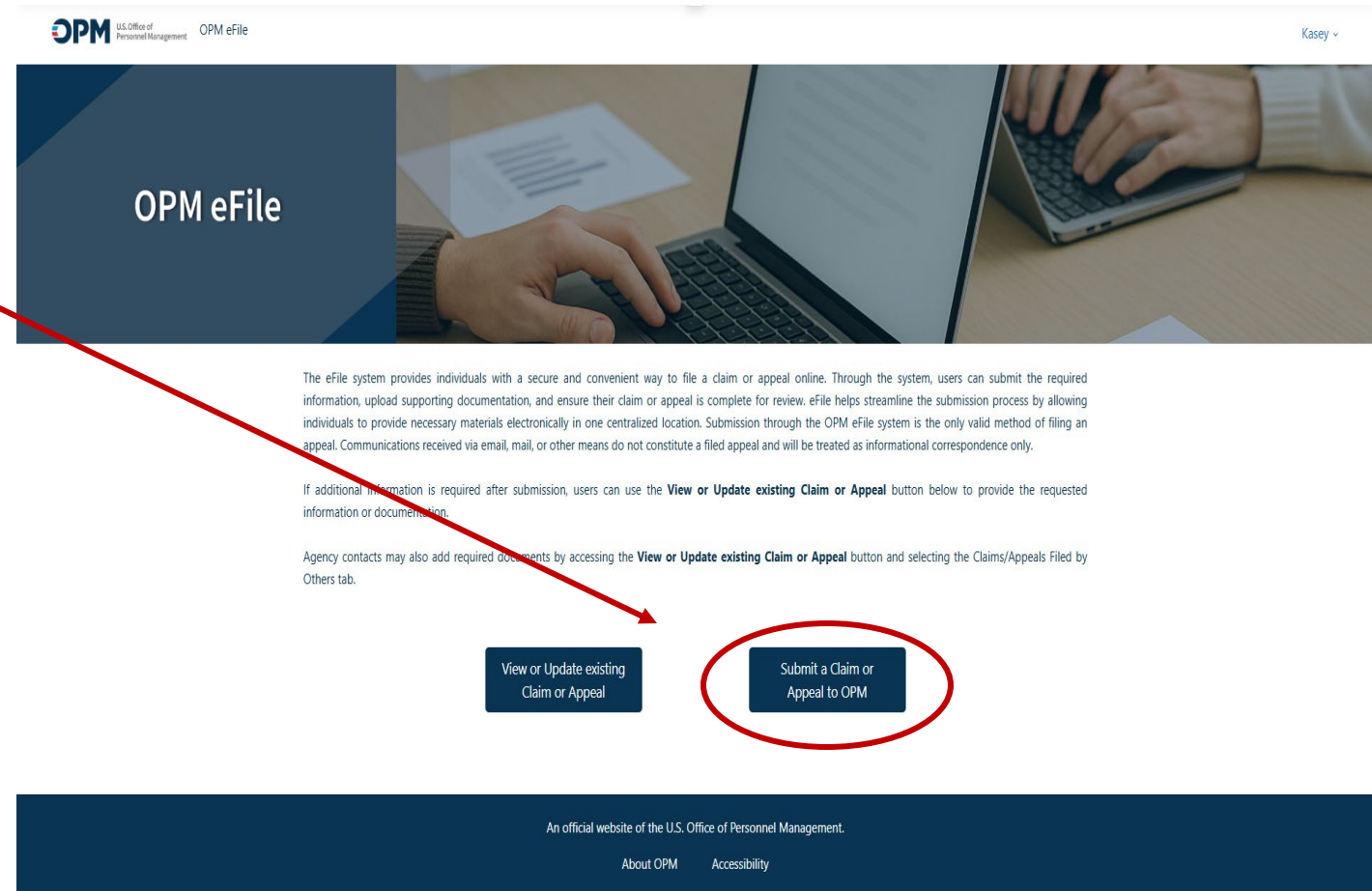
eFile Registration and Requirements

All agency filings and communications must go through the OPM eFile system. Agency representatives must register in eFile using a government email address. Registration constitutes consent to receive all case documents and notices electronically.

Monitor eFile regularly. Representatives are responsible for checking their eFile cases for new notices, orders, and to uploaded documents. OPM SuitEA sends automatic notifications when documents are uploaded, but it is the agency's responsibility to ensure receipt and timely response.

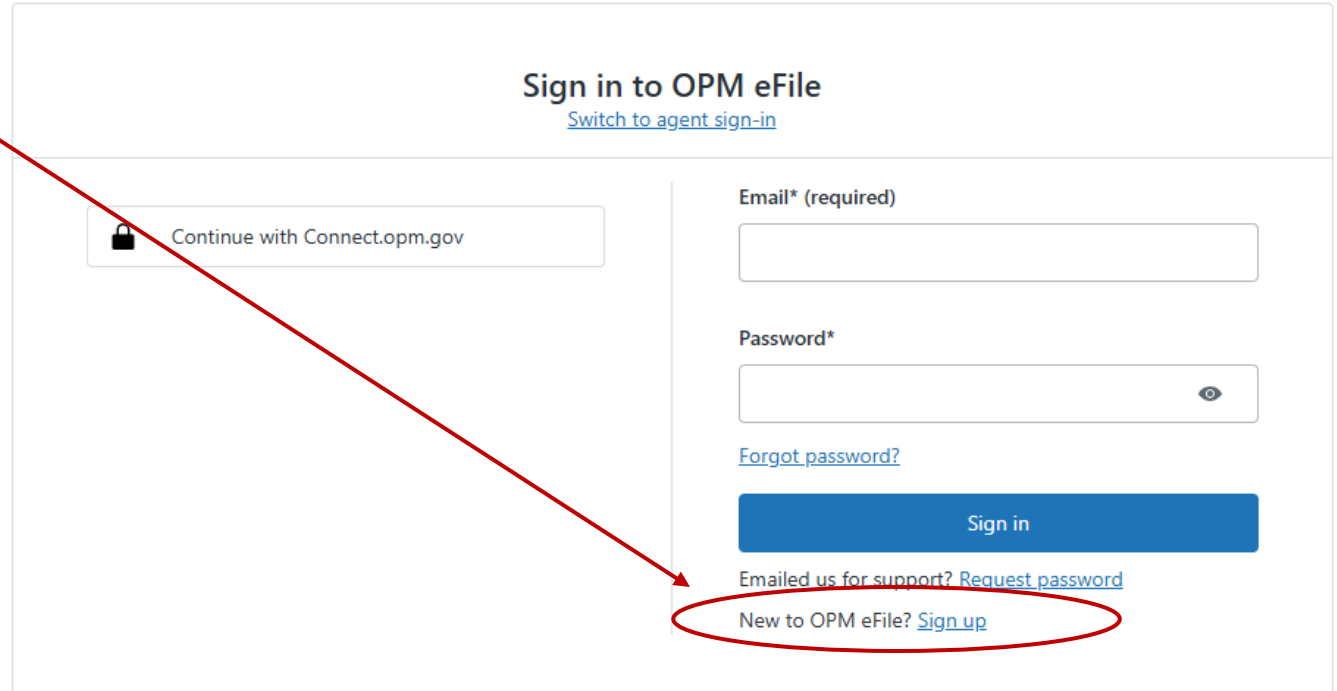
Go to OPM eFile

1. Open a web browser and go to <https://opmefile.opm.gov/>.
2. To create an account, click "Submit a Claim or Appeal to OPM".
3. This will take you to the OPM eFile sign-in page.



Register for an Account

1. On the sign-in page, click "Sign up" in the bottom right.
2. Enter your email address and create a password.
3. OPM eFile will send a confirmation link to your email.
4. Click the link in that email to verify your account.
5. Return to <https://opmefile.opm.gov/> and sign in with your new credentials.

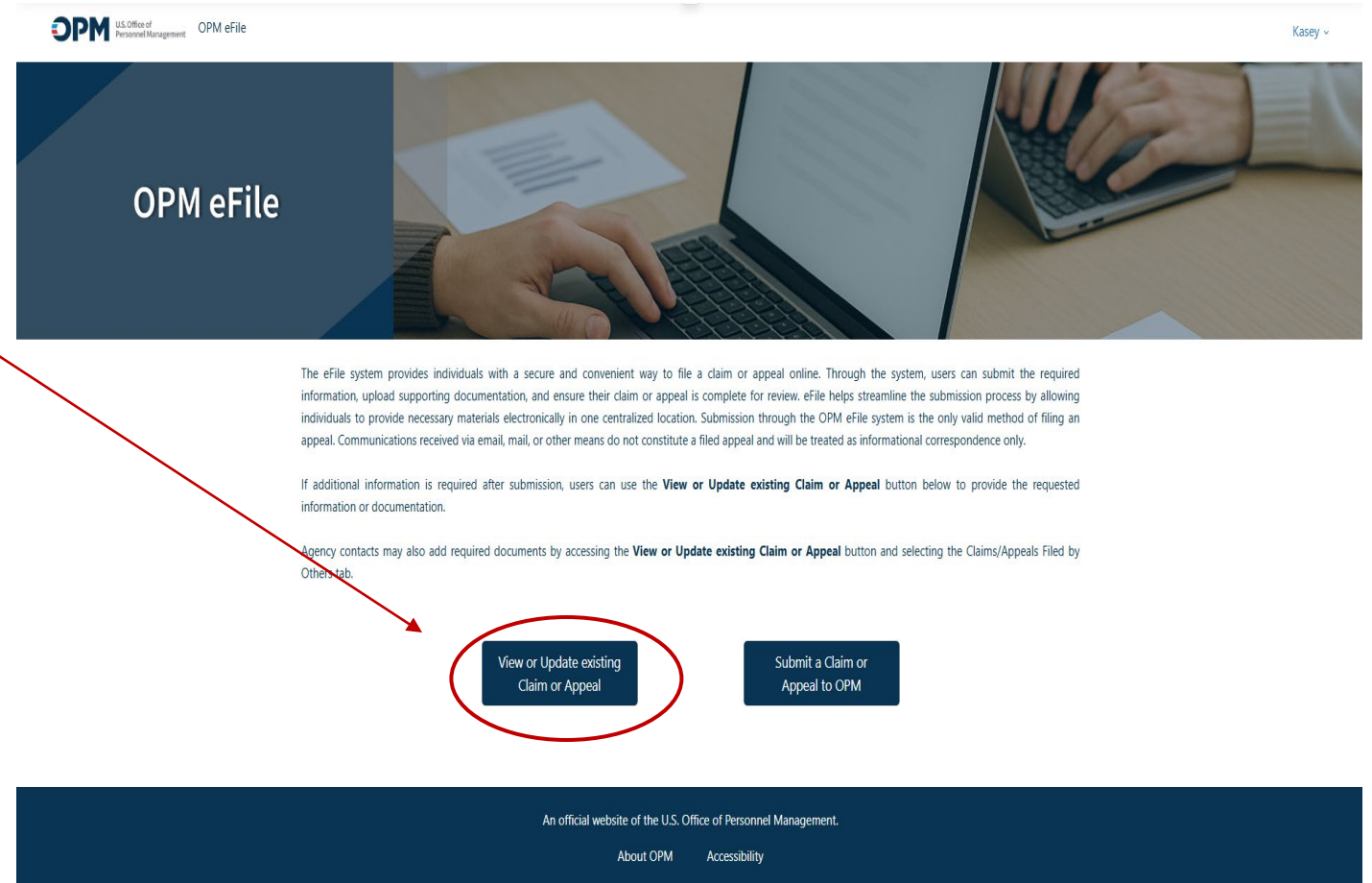


The screenshot shows the "Sign in to OPM eFile" page. At the top, there is a link to "Switch to agent sign-in". Below this, on the left, is a button labeled "Continue with Connect.opm.gov" with a lock icon. On the right, there are input fields for "Email* (required)" and "Password*", followed by a "Forgot password?" link and a blue "Sign in" button. At the bottom right, there are two links: "Emailed us for support? Request password" and "New to OPM eFile? Sign up". A red arrow originates from the "Sign up" text in the first step of the instructions and points to the "Sign up" link in the bottom right of the screenshot. The "Sign up" link is also circled in red.

Finding Claims & Appeals

Finding Claims & Appeals

1. Sign in to OPM eFile at <https://opmefile.opm.gov/>.
2. From the home page, click "View or Update existing Claim or Appeal".



View Your Claims & Appeals

1. The "Claims/Appeals Filed by Other" tab lists every claim you are an agency representative for.

2. Each row shows the claim subject, ID, status, claimant name, and OPM case number.

3. Click any row to open that claim, view its details, or upload additional documents.

4. Use the status dropdown or the search bar to filter results.

OPM U.S. Office of Personnel Management OPM eFile Kasey

Claims and Appeals

My Filed Claims/Appeals Claims/Appeals Filed by Others

Search requests

Status: Any

Subject	Id	Created	Last activity	Status	Claimant First Name	Claimant Last Name	OPM eFile Case Number
Kasey Acres	#325893	3 minutes ago	41 seconds ago	Open	Kasey	Acres	—
YES	#188017	3 months ago	3 months ago	Open	Test	Test	CA-NV33-26-0001 TEST, TEST

An official website of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

About OPM Accessibility

Agency Response Requirements

Agency Response Requirement

Unless OPM SuitEA instructs otherwise, agencies must submit the Agency Response File (ARF) — the complete administrative record — within **30 calendar days** of OPM SuitEA's acknowledgment letter. For full guidance on what the ARF must contain and how to prepare it, see the Agency Response File guidance on the Agency Representatives page of OPM's Suitability Action Appeals website.

The ARF can be uploaded directly in the eFile system by clicking "Upload Agency Record." Submit the record as a single PDF named YYYYMMDD [Agency Name] Agency Response File for [Appellant's Name]. If the file exceeds eFile's 50 MB limit, split it into sequentially numbered parts. Attach the certification attestation in eFile with the ARF and click "Submit." The system simultaneously serves the record to the appellant and appellant's representative, if applicable.

ARF Format Requirements

The ARF must be submitted as a single PDF file through the OPM eFile system. eFile accepts files up to 50 MB; if the record exceeds that limit, split it into as few sequentially numbered PDFs as possible. Per 5 CFR 731.503, the record must be complete, indexed, paginated, and certified by an authorized agency representative. Organize documents in chronological order to the extent practicable.

Submit the complete record. Do not omit responsive documents.

Restricted-use information is different. Information restricted from use may not be relied on or included in the ARF at all — withholding or redacting it does not remove the restriction. Review the entire file for restricted information before filing, whether the material is being submitted or withheld.

What to redact. Redact personally identifiable information about individuals other than the appellant. Keep the document in the record; redact only the third-party identifiers.

What to withhold and log. Note every withheld or redacted document in a privilege log — unless identifying it is prohibited by law. Material not disclosed to the appellant cannot be relied on to affirm the action unless the appellant receives notice of its substance and a meaningful opportunity to respond.

ARF Extension Requests

If the responsible agency cannot submit the ARF within 30 calendar days, it may request an extension through the OPM eFile system. The extension request must be submitted at least 14 calendar days before the 30-day ARF deadline. The request must explain the reason for the extension and the amount of additional time needed.

Extensions are granted at OPM SuitEA's discretion and are not guaranteed.

E-Filing Exemptions

All filings go through eFile. OPM will not accept filings by email or postal mail unless a party shows good cause and obtains OPM's prior written authorization. This requirement applies to all parties, including the responsible agency.

How to request an exemption. Contact OPM at SuitEAAppeals@opm.gov before the filing deadline, explain the specific reason your agency cannot use eFile, and await OPM's written authorization before filing through any other channel.

Timing. Submit the request at least 14 calendar days before your filing deadline. The deadline is paused from the date OPM receives a timely request until OPM issues its determination. Requests submitted after the deadline has passed will not be approved.

What qualifies. Documented technical barriers or circumstances making eFile genuinely unavailable — for example, a firewall or network restriction blocking access, a disability or accommodation preventing use, or verified lack of internet access. A general preference for email or mail is not good cause.

Deadlines During a Lapse in Appropriations

Appeals are suspended. During a lapse in appropriations, OPM will not accept new appeals, and open appeals are placed in suspended status.

All deadlines extend. When the government reopens, every appeal deadline — including the agency response deadline — is extended by the total number of calendar days of the lapse.

Example. An Agency Response File due March 10, with a lapse running March 1 through March 15, becomes due March 25.

Watch eFile for the new date. OPM posts notice of the suspension and the recalculated deadlines in the eFile system. Do not assume the original due date still applies — confirm the recalculated date before filing.

Filings in Other Forums

An appeal does not foreclose other forums. An appellant may separately file with the EEOC, FLRA, MSPB (on non-suitability grounds), the Office of Special Counsel, the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service, or an Inspector General.

Court filings — notify OPM immediately. If your agency receives a court filing that purports to appeal an OPM suitability decision, notify OPM immediately.

Misdirected MSPB filings. A suitability appeal filed with MSPB is misdirected. MSPB will not forward or transfer it to OPM — the appellant must refile with OPM — and the OPM filing deadline continues to run while the misdirected filing is pending.

Compliance with OPM SuitEA Orders

Parties must comply with protective orders and cease-and-desist directives issued by OPM SuitEA under 5 CFR 731.506. If a party fails to comply — or fails to participate in an OPM investigation or hearing — OPM SuitEA may:

- Draw adverse inferences,
- Prohibit the noncompliant party from introducing or relying on evidence, or
- Eliminate from consideration appropriate parts of the noncompliant party's filings or submissions.

Any sanction imposed by OPM SuitEA must be proportionate, causally related to the violation, and no broader than necessary to protect the adjudicatory process.

Agency Response Requirement

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The ARF can be uploaded directly in the eFile system by clicking “Upload Agency Record.” The file should be in one PDF, if possible, and it should be named YYYYMMDD [Agency Name] Agency Response File for [Appellant's Name]. Attach the certification attestation in eFile with the ARF and click “Submit.” The system simultaneously serves the record to the appellant and appellant's representative, if applicable.

The Appeal Process After the Agency Response

After the ARF Is Submitted

Once the ARF is uploaded, the appellant has 15 calendar days to file a reply. After the reply period closes, OPM SuitEA will adjudicate the appeal on the written record. Supplemental material is accepted only at OPM SuitEA's request.

If the appellant raises a new allegation. A reply may not raise new allegations of error unless they rest on information first disclosed in the ARF, or OPM grants leave for good cause. OPM may permit your agency to respond before ruling on such a request.

Fact Development and Hearings

OPM SuitEA decides the appeal on the developed written record, plus the hearing record if OPM holds a witness credibility hearing.

If OPM requests more information. OPM may require your agency — or the employing agency, if it is not a party — to provide additional information, and may investigate the underlying facts. OPM will inform the parties of the investigation and the information requested, provide the results, and give a reasonable opportunity to submit argument or additional information.

When a hearing is required. There is no automatic right to a hearing. Where resolving a material factual dispute requires evaluation of witness credibility, or the written record is insufficient to resolve facts material to the outcome, OPM may assign an administrative judge to preside over a hearing, limited to those material factual issues.

Identify any factual dispute. Identifying in the Agency Response File which material facts are disputed — and whose credibility is at issue — helps OPM determine early whether fact development beyond the written record is warranted.

If your agency does not participate. Failing to participate in an OPM investigation or hearing may result in sanctions.

Filing Motions and Requests Through eFile

All agency requests must be filed through the OPM eFile system, subject to the exemption process described earlier in these instructions.

In addition to ARF extension requests, the agency may file a request for a protective order or cease-and-desist order to protect the integrity of the adjudicatory process. The request must include a statement of reasons justifying it, together with any relevant documentary evidence, filed at the same time.

OPM SuitEA may strike documents if an e-filer repeatedly fails to follow the instructions after a show cause order.

The Initial Decision

OPM SuitEA issues an initial decision in writing to the responsible agency and the appellant. OPM SuitEA may affirm, reverse, modify, vacate, or remand the suitability action in whole or in part.

What the decision contains. Every initial decision includes findings on each material charge, specification, and suitability factor, and assesses whether any sustained grounds support the action taken.

How a hearing factors in. Where OPM holds a witness credibility hearing, the hearing record is part of the record on which the decision rests. See Fact Development and Hearings for when a hearing may be held.

How to File a Reconsideration Request

File through eFile within 30 calendar days of the date the initial decision is issued — not the date you receive it. Either party may ask OPM to reopen and reconsider an initial decision. Create a new appeal in the system, click “Yes” to the case being a reconsideration, and complete the form (please ensure to include previous claim/appeal case number).

Explain the impact. State the ground(s) for reopening and explain how each affected the outcome — citing a ground without explanation is not enough.

Grounds (5 CFR 731.507): (1) an erroneous finding of material fact; (2) an erroneous interpretation or application of the law; (3) new and material evidence that was unavailable despite your due diligence when the record closed; or (4) other good cause.

What good cause is not. Good cause does not include oversight, failure to investigate available information, strategic omission, or disagreement with the agency’s prior decision.

Attach everything at once. All documents and further filings must be filed at the same time the request is submitted — supplements are not accepted.

Effect. A timely request suspends finality; an untimely request does not. Ordered relief continues unless OPM stays it.

Decision Finality and Director Review

The initial decision becomes OPM's final decision 30 calendar days after issuance unless a party timely requests reopening and reconsideration (R&R) or the OPM Director reopens the decision. An untimely reconsideration request does not suspend or otherwise affect finality.

If OPM denies or dismisses a timely reconsideration request, the initial decision becomes final 30 calendar days after the denial or dismissal unless the Director reopens it. If OPM grants the request, the R&R decision becomes final 30 calendar days after issuance unless the Director reopens it.

The Director may, on the Director's own initiative and before a decision becomes final, reopen any initial or R&R decision. Neither party may request Director review — such a filing is not a proper submission and does not toll any deadline.

Agencies must monitor eFile for decisions and compliance orders. All notices, orders, and decisions are served electronically through the eFile system.

Publication. OPM makes final merits decisions, or de-identified summaries, publicly available without disclosing protected information. OPM also provides a final merits decision on request to the individual, their representative, or an agency representative with a need to know (5 CFR 731.509).

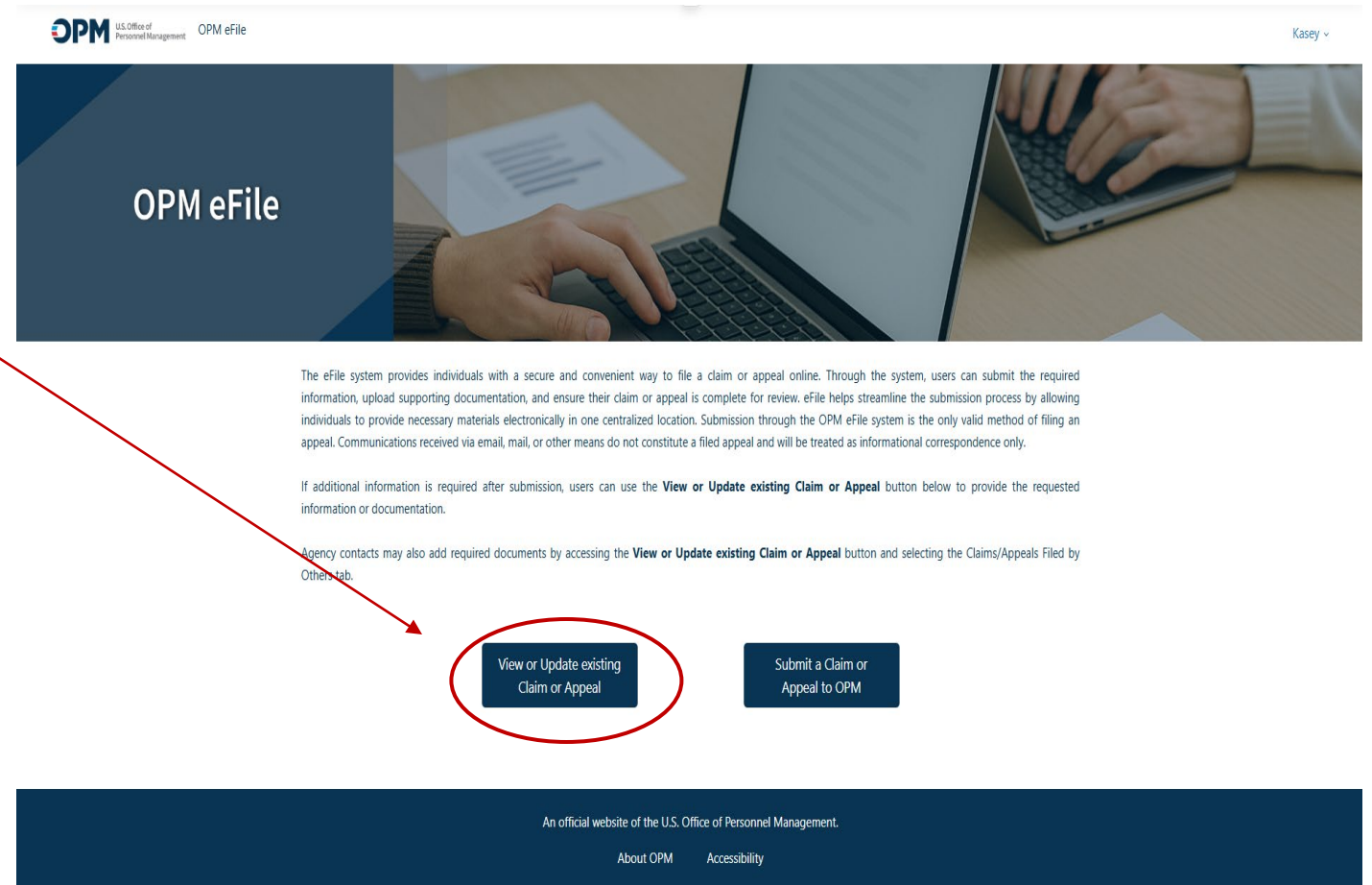
Key Deadlines for Agencies

Action	Deadline
Submit Agency Response File (ARF)	30 Calendar Days from OPM SuitEA Acknowledgment Letter
Respond to OPM SuitEA Fact-Development Requests <i>(if required)</i>	As Specified in OPM SuitEA's Written Notice
Request Reconsideration of Initial Decision <i>(optional)</i>	30 Calendar Days from Initial Decision

Replying Within an Appeal & Adding Documents to an Existing Appeal

Navigate to View/Update Existing Claim or Appeal

1. Sign in to OPM eFile at <https://opmefile.opm.gov/>.
2. From the home page, click "View or Update existing Claim or Appeal".



Select the Claim/Appeal

1. The "Claims/Appeals Filed by Other" tab lists every claim you are an agency representative for.

2. Select the claim you want to submit a reply to by clicking on it.

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Claims and Appeals

My Filed Claims/Appeals Claims/Appeals Filed by Others

Search requests Status: Any ▾

Subject	Id	Created	Last activity ▾	Status	Claimant First Name	Claimant Last Name	OPM eFile Case Number
Kasey Acres	#325893	3 minutes ago	41 seconds ago	Open	Kasey	Acres	—
YES	#188017	3 months ago	3 months ago	Open	Test	Test	CA-NV33-26-0001 TEST, TEST

An official website of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

About OPM Accessibility

Submit Your Reply/Documentation

1. Add your reply in the text box.
2. Add any additional documentation that needs to be submitted.
3. Click Submit when complete.

OPM U.S. Office of Personnel Management OPM eFile

OPM eFile > Claims/Appeals

Kasey Acres

Kasey
8 days ago

submitting appeal via the eFile system.

Paragraph

Add file or drop files here

Submit

REQUESTER	Kasey
CREATED	August 3, 2026 at 8:20 AM
LAST ACTIVITY	August 3, 2026 at 8:22 AM
ID	#325893
STATUS	Open
PRIORITY	Normal
SECURITY POLICY - WARNING	Yes
PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT	Yes
PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT	Yes
INSTRUCTIONS	Yes
TYPE OF APPEAL	Suitability Action (under 5 CFR part 731)
USER ROLE	Appellant: You plan to file a new appeal with OPM eFile, or if you have a pending appeal and want to register as an eFiler with OPM.
USER ROLE	—
USER ROLE	—
IS THIS A REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/REOPEN?	No
PREVIOUS CLAIM/FILE NUMBER	—

Questions?

Contact the OPM Suitability Appeals Team at SuitEAAppeals@opm.gov or (202) 599-0090.

Do not submit appeal documents to this address — all case documents must be filed through the [OPM eFile system](#).