

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

JEFFREY CARSON, *Applicant*

vs.

**RECOLOGY EEL RIVER, permissibly self-insured, administered by
CORVEL CORPORATION, *Defendants***

**Adjudication Number: ADJ11982218
Eureka District Office**

**OPINION AND DECISION
AFTER RECONSIDERATION**

We previously issued an “Opinion and Order Granting Petition for Reconsideration” (Grant for Study) on July 12, 2021 in order to study the factual and legal issues in this case.¹ This is our Opinion and Decision After Reconsideration.

We have considered the allegations of the Petition for Reconsideration and Removal and the contents of the Report of the workers’ compensation administrative law judge (WCJ) with respect thereto. Based on our review of the record, and based upon the WCJ’s analysis of the merits of petitioner’s arguments in the WCJ’s Report, as our decision after reconsideration, we will vacate our Grant for Study, dismiss the petition to the extent it seeks reconsideration and deny it to the extent it seeks removal.

A petition for reconsideration may properly be taken only from a “final” order, decision, or award. (Lab. Code, §§ 5900(a), 5902, 5903.) A “final” order has been defined as one that either “determines any substantive right or liability of those involved in the case” (*Rymer v. Hagler* (1989) 211 Cal.App.3d 1171, 1180; *Safeway Stores, Inc. v. Workers’ Comp. Appeals Bd. (Pointer)* (1980) 104 Cal.App.3d 528, 534-535 [45 Cal.Comp.Cases 410]; *Kaiser Foundation Hospitals v. Workers’ Comp. Appeals Bd. (Kramer)* (1978) 82 Cal.App.3d 39, 45 [43 Cal.Comp.Cases 661])

¹ Commissioner Deidra E. Lowe, who was on the panel that granted reconsideration to further study the factual and legal issues in this case, no longer serves on the Appeals Board. Another panelist has been assigned in her place.

or determines a “threshold” issue that is fundamental to the claim for benefits. (*Maranian v. Workers’ Comp. Appeals Bd.* (2000) 81 Cal.App.4th 1068, 1070, 1075 [65 Cal.Comp.Cases 650].) Interlocutory procedural or evidentiary decisions, entered in the midst of the workers’ compensation proceedings, are not considered “final” orders. (*Id.* at p. 1075 [“interim orders, which do not decide a threshold issue, such as intermediate procedural or evidentiary decisions, are not ‘final’ ”]; *Rymer, supra*, at p. 1180 [“[t]he term [‘final’] does not include intermediate procedural orders or discovery orders”]; *Kramer, supra*, at p. 45 [“[t]he term [‘final’] does not include intermediate procedural orders”].) Such interlocutory decisions include, but are not limited to, pre-trial orders regarding evidence, discovery, trial setting, venue, or similar issues.

Here, the WCJ’s decision solely resolves an intermediate procedural or evidentiary issue or issues. The decision does not determine any substantive right or liability and does not determine a threshold issue. Accordingly, it is not a “final” decision and the petition will be dismissed to the extent it seeks reconsideration.

We will also deny the petition to the extent it seeks removal. Removal is an extraordinary remedy rarely exercised by the Appeals Board. (*Cortez v. Workers’ Comp. Appeals Bd.* (2006) 136 Cal.App.4th 596, 599, fn. 5 [71 Cal.Comp.Cases 155]; *Kleemann v. Workers’ Comp. Appeals Bd.* (2005) 127 Cal.App.4th 274, 280, fn. 2 [70 Cal.Comp.Cases 133].) The Appeals Board will grant removal only if the petitioner shows that substantial prejudice or irreparable harm will result if removal is not granted. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, § 10955(a); see also *Cortez, supra*; *Kleemann, supra*.) Also, the petitioner must demonstrate that reconsideration will not be an adequate remedy if a final decision adverse to the petitioner ultimately issues. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, § 10955(a).) Here, for the reasons stated in the WCJ’s report, we are not persuaded that substantial prejudice or irreparable harm will result if removal is denied and/or that reconsideration will not be an adequate remedy if the matter ultimately proceeds to a final decision adverse to petitioner.

Accordingly, we vacate our Grant for Study and dismiss the Petition for Reconsideration and deny the Petition for Removal.

For the foregoing reasons,

IT IS ORDERED as the Decision After Reconsideration of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board that the Opinion and Order Granting Petition for Reconsideration issued by the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board on July 12, 2021 is **VACATED**.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Petition for Reconsideration of the decision issued by a WCJ on April 26, 2021 is **DISMISSED**.

IT IS ORDERED that the Petition for Removal of the decision issued by a WCJ on April 26, 2021 is **DENIED**.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD

/s/ JOSEPH V. CAPURRO, COMMISSIONER

I CONCUR,

/s/ ANNE SCHMITZ, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

/s/ JOSÉ H. RAZO, COMMISSIONER



DATED AND FILED AT SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

DECEMBER 22, 2022

SERVICE MADE ON THE ABOVE DATE ON THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW AT THEIR ADDRESSES SHOWN ON THE CURRENT OFFICIAL ADDRESS RECORD.

**JEFFREY CARSON
PACIFIC ATTORNEY GROUP
HANNA, BROPHY, MACLEAN, MCALEER & JENSEN**

AS/ara

I certify that I affixed the official seal of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board to this original decision on this date.
CS