Preventing Strains and Sprains Fatality File

Mustafa Omar started working at Amazon in 2016, but left in 2017 and returned in 2018, and has worked there for the past three years. He picks and loads items that weigh up to 80lbs, typically working on six or seven different stations. He has experienced back pain due to the repetitive motions and lifting heavy items involved in his job.

In early November 2021, Omar fell back onto a pallet, injuring his back. He flagged down a senior manager to get his station covered so he could go to Amcare. Omar said he felt like he was in trouble when he asked the manager to take him to the clinic, where he was given ice and ibuprofen.

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“At this time, I’m thinking ‘oh my God, if I say that I have an injury, that I’ve hurt myself, I might lose my job.’ Because they already instilled fear in me about me being the one that was getting in trouble. I’m thinking about my family, my pregnant wife, my kids, about all the bills that I have and worrying about not being able to work because I’m the breadwinner in my house,” said Omar.

Once at Amcare, he downplayed the pain he was feeling so he would be sent back to work and continued working for a few weeks while visiting Amcare about twice a day for ice and ibuprofen. Eventually he couldn’t tolerate the pain any longer and visited his own doctor, who recommended physical therapy, pain medication and light duty accommodations.

When he brought his doctor’s forms to Amazon, Omar says he was told he couldn’t attend the recommended physical therapy because it wasn’t approved. He is still waiting to hear back about getting medical treatment approved by Amazon and his workers’ compensation

claim approved and paid out.

“I’m still in pain today,” Omar added. “All of us want to come home safely, and when people get injured, they should be treated like human beings and taken care of.”