

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 10-882V
(Not to be published)

VALERIA WATSON,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Filed: May 6, 2015

Decision by Stipulation; Damages;
Influenza (“Flu”) Vaccine;
Guillain-Barré Syndrome (“GBS”);
Chronic Inflammatory
Demyelinating Polyneuropathy
 (“CIDP”)

Irving Gertel, Kagan & Gertel, Brooklyn, NY, for Petitioner.

Glenn MacLeod, U.S. Dep’t of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

On December 27, 2010, Petitioner Valeria Watson filed a petition seeking compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, (“the Vaccine Program”).² Petitioner alleges that she suffered Guillain-Barré syndrome (“GBS”) and/or Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (“CIDP”) and related complications as a result of receiving a trivalent influenza (“flu”) vaccine.

¹ Because this decision contains a reasoned explanation for my action in this case, I will post this decision on the United States Court of Federal Claims’ website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-347, § 205, 116 Stat. 2899, 2913 (codified as amended at 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2006)). As provided by 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-12(d)(4)(B), however, the parties may object to the posted decision’s inclusion of certain kinds of confidential information. Specifically, under Vaccine Rule 18(b), each party has 14 days within which to request redaction “of any information furnished by that party: (1) that is a trade secret or commercial or financial in substance and is privileged or confidential; or (2) that includes medical files or similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy.” Vaccine Rule 18(b). Otherwise, the whole decision will be available to the public. (*Id.*)

² The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program is set forth in Part 2 of the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755, codified as amended, 42 U.S.C.A. § 300aa-10-§ 300aa-34 (West 1991 & Supp. 2002). All citations in this decision to individual sections of the Vaccine Act are to 42 U.S.C.A. § 300aa.

Respondent denies that Petitioner's GBS, CIDP, and any related medical problems were caused by the receipt of the flu vaccine. Nonetheless both parties, while maintaining their above-stated positions, agreed in a stipulation filed May 6, 2015 that the issues before them can be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding Petitioner compensation.

I have reviewed the file, and based upon that review, I conclude that the parties' stipulation is reasonable. I therefore adopt it as my decision in awarding damages on the terms set forth therein.

The stipulation awards:

A lump sum of \$40,000.00, in the form of a check payable to Petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

Stipulation ¶ 8.

I approve a Vaccine Program award in the requested amount set forth above to be made to Petitioner. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment herewith.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

/s/ Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by jointly filing notice renouncing their right to seek review.

RECEIVED
By: K'Loach at 9:36 am, Apr 17, 2015

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

VALERIA WATSON,)
)
Petitioner,)
)
v.)
)
SECRETARY OF HEALTH)
AND HUMAN SERVICES,)
)
Respondent)
)

No. 10-882V (ECF)
Special Master
BRIAN H. CORCORAN

STIPULATION

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Petitioner filed a petition for vaccine compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 to 34 (the "Vaccine Program"). The petition seeks compensation for injuries allegedly related to petitioner's receipt of trivalent influenza ("flu") vaccine, which vaccine is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the "Table"), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3(a).
2. Petitioner received flu vaccine on or about September 21, 2009.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that she suffered Guillain-Barre syndrome ("GBS") and/or Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy ("CIDP") as a consequence of the flu immunization she received on or about September 21, 2009, and further alleges that she suffered the residual effects of this injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on her behalf as a result of her condition.

6. Respondent denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner's alleged GBS/CIDP or any other injury and further denies that her current disabilities are a sequela of a vaccine-related injury.

7. Maintaining their above-stated positions, the parties nevertheless now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in paragraph 8 of this Stipulation.

8. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue the following vaccine compensation payment:

A lump sum of \$40,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner, representing compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

9. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioner has filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

10. Petitioner and her attorney represent that they have identified to respondent all known sources of payment for items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), including State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or entities that provide health services on a prepaid basis.

11. Payment made pursuant to paragraph 8 of this Stipulation and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 9 will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

12. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorney's fees and litigation costs, the money provided pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

13. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 8 and 9, petitioner, in her individual capacity, and on behalf of her heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the United States Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the flu vaccination administered on or about September 21, 2009, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about December 27, 2010, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 10-882V.

14. If petitioner should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

15. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the United States Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

16. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, except as otherwise noted in paragraph 9 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

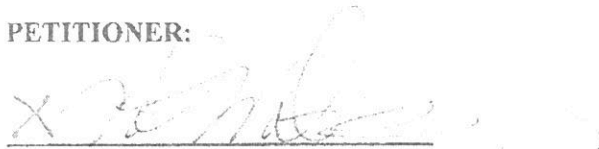
17. This Stipulation shall not be construed as an admission by the United States or the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the flu vaccine caused petitioner's GBS/CIDP or any other injury or any of her current disabilities.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION

Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER:




VALERIA WATSON

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR
PETITIONER:**



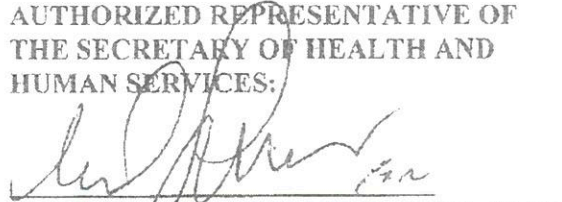
IRVING GERTEL, ESQ.
Kagen & Gertel, Esqs.
1575 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230
Tel: (718) 258-8080

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:**




VINCENT J. MATANOSKI
Deputy Director
Torts Branch
Civil Division
U. S. Department of Justice
P. O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044-0146

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES:**



A. MELISSA HOUSTON, M.D., M.P.H, FAAP
Director, Division of
Injury Compensation Programs (DICP)
Healthcare Systems Bureau
U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services
5600 Fishers Lane
Parklawn Building, Stop 11C-26
Rockville, MD 20857

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR
RESPONDENT:**



GLENN A. MACLEOD
Senior Trial Counsel
Torts Branch, Civil Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, D.C. 20044-0146
Tel: (202) 616-4122

Dated: 5/6/15