

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 16-686V

Filed: October 20, 2016

UNPUBLISHED

CANDY GLASCOCK,

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Petitioner,

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v.

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Attorneys' Fees and Costs;

SECRETARY OF HEALTH

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Special Processing Unit ("SPU")

AND HUMAN SERVICES,

*

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Respondent.

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Michael McLaren, Black McLaren, et al., PC, Memphis, TN, for petitioner.

Lara Englund, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS¹

Dorsey, Chief Special Master:

On June 10, 2016, petitioner filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration ("SIRVA") following an April 13, 2015 tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis ("Tdap") vaccination. On August 16, 2016, the undersigned issued a decision awarding compensation to petitioner based on respondent's proffer. (ECF No. 14).

On September 12, 2016, petitioner filed an unopposed motion for attorneys' fees and costs. (ECF No. 18).³ Petitioner requests attorneys' fees and costs in the amount

¹ Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, the undersigned intends to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, the undersigned agrees that the identified material fits within this definition, the undersigned will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all "§" references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

³ In the motion, petitioner states that respondent has no objection to petitioner's request.

of \$14,000.00. *Id.* at 11. In compliance with General Order #9, petitioner has filed a signed statement indicating petitioner incurred no out-of-pocket expenses.

In light of all the facts and circumstances of this case, particularly including the history of expedited resolution within the Special Processing Unit, and mindful of the unopposed nature of the instant application, the undersigned finds that the overall amount sought for attorneys' fees and costs is reasonable. Given that this application is unopposed, further analysis is not warranted.⁴ Further, Special Masters are entitled to rely on their own experience and understanding of the issues raised. *Wasson v. HHS*, 24 Cl. Ct. 482, 483 (Fed. Cl. 1991) *aff'd in relevant part*, 988 F.2d 131 (Fed.Cir.1993) (per curiam). *J.B. v. HHS*, No. 15-67V, 2016 WL 4046871 (Fed. Cl. Spec. Mstr. July 8, 2016) (addressing attorneys' fees and costs in the context of a history of attorneys' fees and costs awards in over 300 similarly situated SPU cases.).

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. § 15(e). Based on the reasonableness of petitioner's request and the lack of opposition from respondent, the undersigned **GRANTS** petitioner's motion for attorneys' fees and costs.

Accordingly, the undersigned awards the total of \$14,000.00⁵ as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to petitioner and petitioner's counsel Michael G. McLaren.

The clerk of the court shall enter judgment in accordance herewith.⁶

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Nora Beth Dorsey

Nora Beth Dorsey
Chief Special Master

⁴ Given that this application is unopposed, this decision does not address the specific hourly rates of the attorneys, only the total amount requested. Further, the undersigned need not determine whether the law firm of Black McLaren Jones Ryland & Griffie is entitled to forum rates set forth in *McCulloch v. Sec'y of HHS*, 2015 U.S. Claims LEXIS 1227 (Sept. 1, 2015).

⁵ This amount is intended to cover all legal expenses incurred in this matter. This award encompasses all charges by the attorney against a client, "advanced costs" as well as fees for legal services rendered. Furthermore, § 15(e)(3) prevents an attorney from charging or collecting fees (including costs) that would be in addition to the amount awarded herein. See *generally Beck v. Sec'y of Health & Human Servs.*, 924 F.2d 1029 (Fed. Cir.1991).

⁶ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.