

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 17-1987V

Filed: December 19, 2018

UNPUBLISHED

FAITH HOELZEL,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Special Processing Unit (SPU);  
Damages Decision Based on Proffer;  
Influenza (Flu) Vaccine; Vasovagal  
Syncope

*Jerome Albert Hierseman, End Hierseman and Crain LLC, Milwaukee, WI, for petitioner.  
Sarah Christina Duncan, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.*

## **DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES**<sup>1</sup>

**Dorsey**, Chief Special Master:

On December 20, 2017, petitioner filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,<sup>2</sup> (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleges that that she suffered a syncopal episode upon receiving an influenza vaccine on December 23, 2014, which resulted in “injuries, including concussion, dental fractures, and permanent facial scarring.” Petition at 1. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On October 30, 2018, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding petitioner entitled to compensation for her alleged injury. On December 17, 2018, respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”) indicating petitioner should be

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<sup>1</sup> The undersigned intends to post this decision on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website. **This means the decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** 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. Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, undersigned is required to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website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).

<sup>2</sup> 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).

awarded \$101,671.56, which includes \$100,000.00 for actual and projected pain and suffering. Proffer at 1-2. In the Proffer, respondent represented that petitioner agrees with the proffered award. Based on the record as a whole, the undersigned finds that petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer. *Id.*

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, **the undersigned awards petitioner a lump sum payment of \$101,671.56 in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Faith Hoelzel.** This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under § 15(a).

The clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/Nora Beth Dorsey**  
Nora Beth Dorsey  
Chief Special Master

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

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

_____	)	
FAITH HOELZEL,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	No. 17-1987V
v.	)	Chief Special Master Dorsey
	)	ECF
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN	)	
SERVICES,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	
_____	)	

**RESPONDENT’S PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION**

On December 20, 2017, Faith Hoelzel (“petitioner”) filed a Petition for Compensation (“petition”) under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended (“the Vaccine Act” or “the Act”). 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1 to -34. Petitioner alleges that she suffered a syncopal episode upon receiving an influenza vaccine on December 23, 2014, which resulted in “injuries, including concussion, dental fractures, and permanent facial scarring.” *See* Petition at 1. On October 29, 2018, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (“respondent”) filed a Rule 4(c) Report indicating that this case is appropriate for compensation under the terms of the Act, and the Chief Special Master issued a Ruling on Entitlement finding petitioner entitled to compensation on October 30, 2018. ECF No. 26; ECF No. 27.

**I. Items of Compensation**

A. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that Faith Hoelzel should be awarded \$100,000.00 in actual and projected pain and suffering. This amount reflects that the award for projected pain and

suffering has been reduced to net present value. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(4). Petitioner agrees.

**B. Past Unreimbursable Expenses**

Evidence supplied by petitioner documents Faith Hoelzel's expenditure of past unreimbursable expenses related to her vaccine-related injury. Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded past unreimbursable expenses in the amount of \$1,671.56, as provided under the Vaccine Act, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(1)(B). Petitioner agrees.

**II. Form of the Award**

Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case. Respondent recommends that the compensation provided to Faith Hoelzel should be made through a lump sum payment as described below and requests that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following<sup>1</sup>: a lump sum payment of \$101,671.56, representing compensation for pain and suffering (\$100,000.00), and past unreimbursable expenses (\$1,671.56), in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Faith Hoelzel.

**III. Summary of Recommended Payments Following Judgment**

Lump sum payable to petitioner, Faith Hoelzel:	<b>\$101,671.56</b>
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Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH H. HUNT  
Assistant Attorney General

C. SALVATORE D'ALESSIO  
Acting Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

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<sup>1</sup> Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future lost earnings and future pain and suffering.

CATHARINE E. REEVES  
Deputy Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

HEATHER L. PEARLMAN  
Assistant Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

s/ Sarah C. Duncan  
Sarah C. Duncan  
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DATED: December 17, 2018