

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

Filed: August 31, 2023

JODI RODRIGUEZ, * No. 18-459V
*
Petitioner, * Special Master Sanders
*
v. *
*
SECRETARY OF HEALTH *
AND HUMAN SERVICES, *
*
Respondent. *

Diana L. Stadelnikas, Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA, Sarasota, FL, for Petitioner.
Debra A. Filteau Begley, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION^1

On March 28, 2018, Jodi Rodriguez ("Petitioner") filed a petition for compensation pursuant to the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program.^2 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-10 to -34 (2012). Petitioner alleged that the influenza ("flu") vaccine she received on October 14, 2016, caused her to suffer from a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration ("SIRVA"). See Pet. ¶¶ 1, 8, ECF No. 1. Petitioner further alleged that her injury lasted for more than six months. Id. ¶ 10.

On August 24, 2023, the parties filed a stipulation in which they state that a decision should be entered awarding compensation to Petitioner. Stipulation ¶ 7, ECF No. 65. Respondent "denies that [P]etitioner sustained a SIRVA Table injury; denies that the flu vaccines [sic] caused her alleged shoulder injury or any other injury or condition; and denies that her current condition is a sequelae of a vaccine-related injury." Id. ¶ 6. Nevertheless, the parties agree to the joint stipulation, attached hereto as Appendix A. See id. ¶ 7. I find the stipulation reasonable and adopt it as the decision of the Court in awarding damages, on the terms set forth therein.

^1 Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). 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, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

^2 National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755.

The parties stipulate that Petitioner shall receive the following compensation:

A lump sum of \$35,000.00 in the form of a check payable to [P]etitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

Id. ¶ 8.

I approve the requested amount for Petitioner's compensation. Accordingly, an award should be made consistent with the stipulation.

In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the Clerk of Court **SHALL ENTER JUDGMENT** in accordance with the terms of the parties' stipulation.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Herbrina D. Sanders
Herbrina D. Sanders
Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment is 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**

JODI RODRIGUEZ,

*

Petitioner,

*

*

No. 18-459V

SPECIAL MASTER SANDERS

*

v.

*

*

**SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,**

*

*

*

Respondent.

*

STIPULATION

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Jodi Rodriguez (“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 an influenza (“flu”) vaccine, which vaccine is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the “Table”), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3 (a).¹

2. Petitioner received a flu immunization October 14, 2016.

3. That vaccine was administered within the United States.

4. Petitioner alleges that she sustained a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration (“SIRVA”) within the time period set forth in the Table. In the alternative, she alleges that she suffered a shoulder injury that was caused-in-fact or significantly aggravated by

¹ Petitioner’s name at the time the Petition was filed was Jodi Mickelson, but she subsequently married and changed her name to Jodi Rodriguez. The Court granted her motion to amend the caption to reflect her married name on April 12, 2021. ECF Doc 43.

her vaccination. She further alleges that she has experienced residual effects of her alleged 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 petitioner sustained a SIRVA Table injury; denies that the flu vaccines caused her alleged shoulder injury or any other injury or condition; and denies that her current condition is a sequelae 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 payments:

A lump sum of **\$35,000.00** 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).

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 compensation to be provided pursuant to this Stipulation is not for any items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable

under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa- 15(g), to the extent that payment has been made or can reasonably be expected to be made under any 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 by entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

11. Payments made pursuant to paragraph 8 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 9 of this Stipulation 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 attorneys' fees, and litigation costs, and past unreimbursable expenses, 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 or 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 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, an influenza vaccination administered on October 14,

2016, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about March 28, 2018, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 18-459V.

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 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 to 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 petitioner sustained a SIRVA Table injury; that the flu vaccine caused any other injury; or that her current condition is a sequelae of a vaccine-related injury.

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:

 Digitally signed by Jodi Rodriguez
Date: 2023.08.15 22:22:33 UTC -04'00'

JODI RODRIQUEZ

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR PETITIONER:



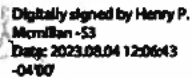
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AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:

Henry P. Mcmillan -S3
by  Digitally signed by Henry P. Mcmillan -S3
Date: 2023.08.04 12:06:43 -04'00'

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Dated: 8/22/2023