

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 18-0838V

Filed: October 18, 2019

UNPUBLISHED

ANGELA OVERALL,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Special Processing Unit (SPU);
Attorneys' Fees and Costs

*Danielle Strait, Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA, Seattle, WA, for petitioner.
Ida Nassar, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.*

DECISION ON ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS¹

Corcoran, Chief Special Master:

On June 13, 2018, 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 alleges that she suffered brachial neuritis causally related to an adverse reaction from the tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis ("tdap") vaccination she received in her left arm on February 19, 2016. Petition at 1, ¶¶ 1, 9-10. On July 26, 2019, a decision was issued by then Chief Special Master Nora Beth Dorsey, awarding compensation to petitioner based on the respondent's proffer. ECF No. 37.

On September 24, 2019, petitioner filed a motion for attorneys' fees and costs. ECF No. 42. Petitioner requests attorneys' fees in the amount of \$19,264.60 and attorneys' costs in the amount of \$818.86. *Id.* at 1. In compliance with General Order

¹ It is my intent 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, I find that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access. Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, I am required to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website in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).

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

#9, petitioner filed a signed statement indicating that petitioner incurred no out-of-pocket expenses. ECF No. 42-3. Thus, the total amount requested is \$20,083.46.

On October 8, 2019, respondent filed a response to petitioner's motion. ECF No. 43. Respondent argues that "[n]either the Vaccine Act nor Vaccine Rule 13 requires respondent to file a response to a request by a petitioner for an award of attorneys' fees and costs." *Id.* at 1. Respondent adds, however, that he "is satisfied the statutory requirements for an award of attorneys' fees and costs are met in this case." *Id.* at 2. Respondent "respectfully requests that the Court exercise its discretion and determine a reasonable award for attorneys' fees and costs." *Id.* at 3.

On October 8, 2019, petitioner filed a reply. ECF No. 44. Petitioner disputes respondent's position that he has no role in resolving attorneys' fees and costs and further reiterates his view that his attorneys' fees and costs in this case are reasonable.

I have reviewed the billing records submitted with petitioner's request. In my experience, the request appears reasonable, and I find no cause to reduce the requested hours or rates.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorneys' fees and costs. § 15(e). Based on the reasonableness of petitioner's request, I hereby **GRANT** petitioner's motion for attorneys' fees and costs.

Accordingly, petitioner is awarded the total amount of \$20,083.46³ as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to petitioner and petitioner's counsel Danielle Strait. Petitioner requests check be forwarded to Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA, 1605 Main Street, Suite 710, Sarasota Florida 34236.

The clerk of the court shall enter judgment in accordance herewith.⁴

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran

Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ 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).

⁴ 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.