

**In the United States Court of Federal Claims**

**OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**

**No. 20-992V**

Filed: May 2, 2023

\* \* \* \* \*

PHIL E. MULLINS, \*

Petitioner, \*

v. \*

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, \*

Respondent. \*

\* \* \* \* \*

Decision on Joint Stipulation;  
Influenza (“flu”) Vaccine;  
Lichen Planus Pigmentosus;  
Dermatitis.

*Howard Gold, Esq.*, Gold Law Firm, LLC, Wellesley, MA, for petitioner.  
*Katherine Esposito, Esq.*, US Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.

**DECISION ON JOINT STIPULATION**<sup>1</sup>

**Roth**, Special Master:

On August 10, 2020, Phil E. Mullins [“Mr. Mullins” or “petitioner”] filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program.<sup>2</sup> Petitioner alleges that he developed<sup>3</sup> lichen planus pigmentosus and dermatitis after receiving an influenza (“flu”) vaccination on September 21, 2018. Stipulation, filed May 2, 2023, at ¶¶ 1-4. Respondent denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner’s injury. Stipulation at ¶ 6.

Nevertheless, the parties have agreed to settle the case. On May 2, 2023, the parties filed a joint stipulation agreeing to settle this case and describing the settlement terms. ECF No. 42.

<sup>1</sup> 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, the undersigned finds that the identified material fits within this definition, such material will be redacted from public access.

<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).

<sup>3</sup> Petitioner filed an amended petition on January 2, 2023, amending his claim to allege that the flu vaccine caused a significant aggravation of his lichen planus pigmentosus and dermatitis. Amended Petition, ECF No. 38.

Respondent agrees to issue the following payment:

**A lump sum of \$15,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Phil E. Mullins.** This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under § 300aa-15(a).

I adopt the parties' stipulation attached hereto, and award compensation in the amount and on the terms set forth therein. The clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>4</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/ Mindy Michaels Roth**  
Mindy Michaels Roth  
Special Master

---

<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by each party filing a notice renouncing the right to seek review.

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

PHIL E. MULLINS,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 20-992V  
Special Master Roth

**STIPULATION**

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Petitioner, Phil E. Mullins, 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 is contained in the Vaccine Injury Table (the “Table”), 42 C.F.R. § 100.3 (a).
2. Petitioner received a flu vaccine in his left arm on September 21, 2018.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that he subsequently experienced a significant aggravation of his lichen planus pigmentosus and dermatitis. He further alleges that he has experienced residual effects of these injuries for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on his behalf as a result of his conditions.

6. Respondent denies that petitioner sustained lichen planus pigmentosus and dermatitis; denies that the flu vaccine caused or significantly aggravated petitioner's alleged injuries, or any other injury; and denies that his 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 payment:

A lump sum of **\$15,000.00** 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 his 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. Payment 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, 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 his individual capacity and on behalf of his 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 a flu vaccine administered on September 21, 2018, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about August 10, 2020, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 20-992V.

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 the flu vaccine caused or significantly aggravated petitioner's alleged injury or any other injury or his current disabilities, or that petitioner suffered an injury contained in the Vaccine Injury Table.

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:**



PHIL MULLINS

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
PETITIONER:**



HOWARD S. GOLD  
GOLD LAW FIRM LLC  
83 Walnut Street, Suite 150  
Wellesley Hills, MA 02481  
(781) 239-1000  
[hgold@goldlawfirm.net](mailto:hgold@goldlawfirm.net)

**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:**



HEATHER L. PEARLMAN  
Deputy Director  
Civil Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 146  
Benjamin Franklin Station  
Washington, DC 20044-0146

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

George R. Grimes Digitally signed by George R. Grimes -S14  
Date: 2023.04.10 14:00:20 -04'00'  
-S14

CDR GEORGE REED GRIMES, MD, MPH  
Director, Division of Injury  
Compensation Programs  
Health Systems Bureau  
Health Resources and Services  
Administration  
U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
5600 Fishers Lane, 08N146B  
Rockville, MD 20857

**ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR  
RESPONDENT:**



KATHERINE C. ESPOSITO  
Trial Attorney  
Torts Branch  
Civil Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 146  
Benjamin Franklin Station  
Washington, DC 20044-0146  
(202) 305-3774  
[katherine.esposito@usdoj.gov](mailto:katherine.esposito@usdoj.gov)

Dated: 5/2/2023