

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 21-711V

CORRECTED

KATHLEEN RICE,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: March 23, 2026

Jessi Carin Huff, Maglio Christopher & Toale, PA, Seattle, WA, for Petitioner.

Mitchell Jones, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On January 12, 2021, Kathleen Rice 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 following an influenza vaccination she received on October 30, 2019. Petition, ECF No. 1. On April 8, 2025, I issued a ruling on entitlement finding Petitioner entitled to compensation, following briefing by the parties. ECF No. 49. On July 14, 2025,

¹Because 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. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on Respondent's proffer. ECF No. 57.

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$78,404.81 (representing \$76,764.80 in fees plus \$1,640.01 in costs). Application for Attorneys' Fees and Costs ("Motion") filed November 25, 2025, ECF No. 62. Furthermore, Petitioner filed a signed statement representing that no personal out-of-pocket expenses were incurred. ECF No. 62-4 at 2.

Respondent reacted to the motion on December 8, 2025, indicating that he is satisfied the statutory requirements for an award of attorneys' fees and costs are met in this case but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. Respondent's response to Motion at ECF No. 63. On December 10, 2025, Petitioner filed a reply requesting that the amount of fees and costs listed in Petitioner's motion be awarded. ECF No. 64.

The rates requested for work performed through 2025 are reasonable and consistent with our prior determinations and are therefore awarded herein. Regarding the time billed, I note this case required additional briefing regarding entitlement. See Petitioner's Motion for Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, filed July 31, 2023, ECF No. 44; Petitioner's Reply to Respondent's Response to Motion for Findings of Fact, filed Oct. 30, 2023, ECF No. 48; Petitioner's counsel expended approximately 12.5 hours drafting the entitlement brief and 9.6 hours drafting the responsive brief, for a combined total of 22.1 hours. ECF No. 62-2 at 20-22. I find this amount of time to be reasonable and will award the attorney's fees requested. And all time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred.

Petitioner has otherwise provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs. ECF No. 62-3 at 1-32. Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought. I find the requested costs reasonable and hereby award them in full.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT, Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. **Petitioner is awarded attorneys' fees and costs in the total amount of \$78,404.81 (representing \$76,764.80 in fees plus \$1,640.01 in costs) to be paid through an ACH deposit to petitioner's counsel's IOLTA account for prompt disbursement.** In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix

B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.