In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

Filed: December 9, 2025

JERRY STEWART,	*	
Petitioner,	*	No. 21-1258V
v.	*	Special Master Gowen
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,	*	
Respondent.	*	

Diana L. Stadelnikas, Mctlaw, Sarasota, FL, for petitioner.
Dorian Hurley, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., for respondent.

DECISION ON STIPULATION[1]

On April 20, 2021, Jerry Stewart ("petitioner") filed a claim for compensation in the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program.[2] Petition (ECF No. 1). Petitioner alleges that as a result of receiving the influenza ("flu") he suffered autoimmune encephalitis and neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder. *Id.*

On December 9, 2025, respondent filed a stipulation providing that a decision should be entered awarding compensation to petitioner. Stipulation (ECF No. 65).[3] Respondent denies that petitioner's alleged autoimmune encephalitis and neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder, or their residual effects were caused-in-fact or significantly aggravated by the flu vaccine; and

[1] Pursuant to the E-Government Act of 2002, *see* 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012), because this decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, I am required to post it to a publicly available website. This decision will appear at https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc or on the Court of Federal Claims website. **This means the decision will be available to anyone with access to the Internet.** Before the decision is posted on the court's website, each party has 14 days to file a motion requesting redaction "of any information furnished by that party: (1) that is a trade secret or commercial or financial in substance and is privileged or confidential; or (2) that includes medical files or similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy." Vaccine Rule 18(b). "An objecting party must provide the court with a proposed redacted version of the decision." *Id.* **If neither party files a motion for redaction within 14 days, the decision will be posted on the court's website without any changes.** *Id.*

[2] The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program is set forth in Part 2 of the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755, codified as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1 to -34 (2012) (Vaccine Act or the Act). All citations in this decision to individual sections of the Vaccine Act are to 42 U.S.C.A. § 300aa.

[3] The stipulation was signed using an electronic signature and the electronic signature page was removed as it contains petitioner's confidential information.

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denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner any other injury or current condition. *Id.* at 6. Nevertheless, maintaining their positions, the parties now agree that the issues between them shall be settled and that a decision should be entered awarding compensation to petitioner described in the stipulation, attached hereto as Appendix A.

The stipulation provides:

1) **A lump sum payment of $105,000.00, to be paid through an ACH deposit to petitioner's counsel's IOLTA account for prompt disbursement to petitioner. These amounts represent compensation for all damages that would be available to petitioner under 42 U.S.C. § 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 **SHALL ENTER JUDGMENT** in accordance with the terms of the parties' stipulation.[4]

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Thomas L. Gowen
Thomas L. Gowen
Special Master

[4] Entry of judgment is expedited by each party's filing notice renouncing the right to seek review. Vaccine Rule 11(a).

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

JERRY STEWART, Petitioner, v. SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Respondent.	No. 21-1258V Special Master Gowen ECF

STIPULATION

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Jerry Stewart ("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).

2. Petitioner received a flu vaccine on September 18, 2019.

3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.

4. Petitioner alleges that petitioner suffered from autoimmune encephalitis and neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder that was caused-in-fact or significantly aggravated by the flu vaccine. Petitioner further alleges that petitioner suffered the residual effects of these alleged 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 petitioner's behalf as a result of the alleged injuries.

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6. Respondent denies that petitioner's alleged autoimmune encephalitis and neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder or their residual effects were caused-in-fact or significantly aggravated by the flu vaccine; and denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner any other injury or his current condition.

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 for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a):

> A lump sum payment of **$105,000.00** to be paid through an ACH deposit to petitioner's counsel's IOLTA account for prompt disbursement 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 petitioner's 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,

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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 attorney's fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursed 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 petitioner's individual capacity, and on behalf of petitioner's 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, the flu vaccination administered on September 18, 2019, as alleged in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about April 20, 2021, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 21-1258V.

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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 injuries or any other injury or condition, or that his current condition is a sequela of a vaccine-related injury.

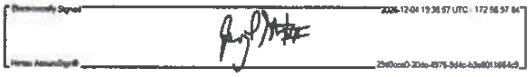
18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION /

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Respectfully submitted,

PETITIONER:



JERRY STEWART

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR PETITIONER:



DIANA L. STADELNIKAS
mctlaw
1515 Ringling Blvd., Suite 700
Sarasota, FL 34236
Telephone: 888.952.5242
Email: dstadelnikas@mctlaw.com

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:



HEATHER L. PEARLMAN
Deputy Director
Torts Branch
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:

Jeffrey S. Beach -S Digitally signed by Jeffrey S. Beach -S Date: 2025.11.25 14:38:07 -05'00' for

CAPT 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, 14W-18
Rockville, MD 20857

ATTORNEY OF RECORD FOR RESPONDENT:



DORIAN HURLEY
Trial Attorney
Torts Branch
Civil Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 146
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, DC 20044-0146
Phone: (202) 353-7751
Email: dorian.hurley@usdoj.gov

Dated: 12/9/2025