

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 21-1424v

CRISTINE JOHNSON,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: March 11, 2024

*Jonathan Joseph Svitak, Shannon Law Group, P.C., Woodridge, IL, for Petitioner.*

*Lauren Kells, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.*

### **DECISION ON DAMAGES**<sup>1</sup>

On February 2, 2021, Cristine Johnson filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*<sup>2</sup> (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a left-sided shoulder injury related to vaccine administration (“SIRVA”) as the result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccine received on September 14, 2020. Petition (ECF No. 1) at 1; *see also* Amended Petition filed Aug. 16, 2022 (ECF No. 23). The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On February 5, 2024, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for SIRVA. On March 8, 2024, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”). Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the

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<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, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material 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 section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

proffered award. *Id.* at 2. Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

**Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, I award a lump sum payment of \$45,497.74 (representing \$45,000.00 for pain and suffering, and \$497.74 for out-of-pocket expenses) in the form of a check payable to Petitioner.** This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under Section 15(a).

The Clerk of Court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS  
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CRISTINE JOHNSON,

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No. 21-1424V

Chief Special Master Corcoran

ECF

**RESPONDENT’S PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION**

On June 2, 2021, Cristine Johnson (“petitioner”) filed a petition for compensation under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1 to -34 (“Vaccine Act” or “Act”), alleging that she suffered a Shoulder Injury Related to Vaccine Administration (“SIRVA”), as defined in the Vaccine Injury Table, following administration of an influenza vaccine she received on November 1, 2016. Petition at 1. On August 16, 2022, petitioner filed an Amended Petition with additional details of her claim. ECF No. 23. On February 2, 2024, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (“respondent”) filed a Rule 4(c) Report indicating that this case is appropriate for compensation under the terms of the Act for a SIRVA Table injury, and on February 5, 2024, the Chief Special Master issued a Ruling on Entitlement finding petitioner entitled to compensation. ECF No. 44; ECF No. 45.

**I. Items of Compensation**

A. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded \$45,000.00 in pain and suffering.

*See* 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(4). Petitioner agrees.

B. Past Unreimbursable Expenses

Evidence supplied by petitioner documents that she incurred past unreimbursable expenses related to her vaccine-related injury. Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded past unreimbursable expenses in the amount of \$497.74. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(1)(B). Petitioner agrees.

These amounts represent all elements of compensation to which petitioner is entitled under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a). Petitioner agrees.

**II. Form of the Award**

Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case. Respondent recommends that the compensation provided to petitioner should be made through a lump sum payment as described below and requests that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following<sup>1</sup>: a lump sum payment of \$45,497.74, in the form of a check payable to petitioner.

**III. Summary of Recommended Payments Following Judgment**

Lump sum payable to petitioner, Cristine Johnson: \$45,497.74

Respectfully submitted,

BRIAN M. BOYNTON  
Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General

C. SALVATORE D'ALESSIO  
Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

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<sup>1</sup> Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future lost earnings and future pain and suffering.

HEATHER L. PEARLMAN  
Deputy Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

ALEXIS B. BABCOCK  
Assistant Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

/s/ Lauren Kells  
Lauren Kells  
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Date: March 8, 2024