

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 22-1482V

BRIAN C. HOLTZHAFFER,  
Administrator of the Estate  
Of WALTER C. HOLTZHAFFER,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: January 22, 2024

*Stephen Zakos, Knafo Law Offices, Allentown, PA, for Petitioner.*

*Sarah Christina Duncan, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.*

### **RULING ON ENTITLEMENT**<sup>1</sup>

On October 11, 2022, Walter C. Holtzhafer (“Mr. Holtzhafer”) 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”). Mr. Holtzhafer alleged that he suffered Guillain-Barré syndrome (“GBS”), a Table injury, as a result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccine he received on November 19, 2020. Petition at 1, 4. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

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<sup>1</sup> Because this unpublished Ruling contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of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 Ruling 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).

On October 15, 2023, Mr. Holtzhafer died due to causes unrelated to his vaccination. See Ex. 15 (death certificate). On December 6, 2023, Brian C. Holtzhafer (“Petitioner”) the administrator of Mr. Holtzhafer’s estate, was substituted as Petitioner. ECF Nos. 52, 53.

On January 22, 2024, Respondent filed his Rule 4(c) report in which he **concedes** that Petitioner is entitled to compensation in this case. Respondent’s Rule 4(c) Report at 1. Specifically, Respondent agrees that Petitioner has satisfied the criteria set forth in the revised Vaccine Injury Table (“Table”) and the Qualifications and Aids to Interpretation (“QAI”), which afford Petitioner a presumption of causation if the onset of GBS occurs between three and forty-two days after a seasonal flu vaccination, and there is no more likely alternative diagnosis and no apparent alternative cause. *Id.* at 6 (citing 42 C.F.R. §§ 100.3(a)(XIV)(D), (c)(15)).

**In view of Respondent’s position and the evidence of record, I find that Petitioner is entitled to compensation.**

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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