

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 24-0814V

RACHEL TUPITZA,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: January 20, 2026

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

Nathaniel Trager, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

On May 28, 2024, Rachel Tupitza 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 alleges that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccination (“SIRVA”) resulting from an influenza vaccine received on October 2, 2022. Petition at 1. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On December 22, 2025, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for SIRVA. On January 15, 2026, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”) indicating Petitioner should be awarded \$85,300.00. Proffer at 2. In the Proffer, Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the proffered award. *Id.* Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

¹ 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.

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).

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, **I award Petitioner a lump sum payment of \$85,300.00 (comprised of \$85,000.00 for pain and suffering and \$300.00 for past unreimbursable expenses), 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 Section 15(a).

The Clerk of Court is directed to 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), 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
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

RACHEL TUPITZA,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 24-814V

Chief Special Master Brian H. Corcoran
ECF

PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION¹

On May 28, 2024, Rachel Tupitza (“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, 42 C.F.R. § 100.3, as the result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccination received on October 2, 2022. Petition at 1. On December 19, 2025, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (“respondent”) filed a Vaccine Rule 4(c) report, concluding that this case is appropriate for compensation under the terms of the Act for a Table SIRVA. *See* ECF No. 31. On December 22, 2025, Chief Special Master Corcoran issued a ruling on entitlement, finding petitioner entitled to compensation for a Table SIRVA. *See* ECF No. 32.

I. Items of Compensation

Based upon the evidence of record, respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded the following:

¹ This Proffer does not include attorneys’ fees and costs, which the parties intend to address after the Damages Decision is issued.

A. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded **\$85,000.00** 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 **\$300.00**. *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

The parties recommend that compensation provided to petitioner should be made through a lump sum payment, as described below, and request that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following:²

A lump sum payment of **\$85,300.00** to be paid through an ACH deposit to petitioner's counsel's IOLTA account for prompt disbursement to petitioner, Rachel Tupitza.

Petitioner is a competent adult. Proof of guardianship is not required in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BRETT A. SHUMATE
Assistant Attorney General

JONATHAN D. GUYNN
Acting Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

² Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, respondent would oppose any award for future medical expenses, future lost earnings, and future pain and suffering, and the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief.

HEATHER L. PEARLMAN
Deputy Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

ALEXIS B. BABCOCK
Assistant Director
Torts Branch, Civil Division

s/ NATHANIEL M. TRAGER
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Dated: January 15, 2026