

August 12, 2005

Dear Counsel:

I am writing to inform you of the upcoming United States Court of Federal Claims Judicial Conference. The Court's Conference is scheduled for November 3 and 4, 2005, to be held in Philadelphia, PA. The general theme of this year's Conference is Damages. While the Conference will present a variety of interesting and useful information for all attendees, once again, a significant portion of the conference will focus on Vaccine litigation - valuable information for anyone interested in the litigation of vaccine cases under the Program. The Court's formal invitation, including registration details and the full program description, will be mailed in the early fall. Let me take this opportunity to describe briefly the Vaccine portion of the Conference.

Keeping with the general Conference theme, the Vaccine session will present "Creative Approaches for Determining Reasonable Compensation." While it will be difficult to top the excellent presentation on vaccine causation at last year's conference (remember, those materials are on-line at the court's web site), this year's damages panel has the knowledge and experience to at least equal that effort!!!

I am extremely pleased and excited (as well as very grateful) to report that the panel discussion will be moderated by **Jerry P. Roscoe**, Owner/Neutral, JAMS, Inc. As part of his very broad and active practice, Jerry has mediated several vaccine cases and participated on a panel several years ago discussing vaccine damages process issues.

His team of panelists consists of:

Lawrence H. Curtis, General Counsel, Mass Tort Settlement Services. Larry has extensive experience with structured settlements, many in vaccine cases, and a wealth of other relevant experiences.

Suzanne Labansky, Life Care Planner. Suzanne has produced numerous life care plans in vaccine cases for the government and has also acted as a joint life care planner, representing the interests of both parties, in cases.

Roberta Hurley, Life Care Planner, Hurley & Econs Consulting. Roberta likewise has produced numerous life care plans in vaccine cases, appearing on behalf of petitioners.

To assist the panel in focusing their presentations and providing the most helpful insights for practicing attorneys, the panel is being ably advised by petitioners' counsel Ron Homer and Department of Justice Attorney, Traci Patton.

I have had numerous successful experiences resolving damages with all of these highly qualified and knowledgeable professionals. Their vast experience in vaccine cases fits squarely with the charge I gave to this panel: tell us what we do right, tell us what we do wrong and suggest alternative approaches to determining damages as quickly, efficiently and cooperatively as possible. I am certain we all have much to learn and this panel will provide much helpful guidance.

Please note that I appreciate fully the cost and difficulty for counsel around the country to attend these Conferences. To justify the time and expense, as we did last year, several additional informational sessions will be available for counsel. First, Special Master George Hastings will conduct a live status conference on November 4 in the Omnibus Autism Proceeding. The purpose of the status conference is to update counsel on the progress of the autism proceedings and to give counsel an opportunity ask questions of Special Master Hastings and lead counsel in the proceedings. Second, I am very pleased to announce that members of the Vaccine Advisory Commission, whose members are responsible for advising the Secretary of Health and Human Services on Vaccine Program matters, will conduct an open question and answer session with the Special Masters and members of the Bar. This is a unique opportunity to exchange ideas and suggestions on the workings of the Program.

I believe wholeheartedly that the Bench and Bar must communicate periodically to improve the system of justice. I believe this Conference program - the session on damages, the autism status conference and the Advisory Commission's open session - can provide that important dialogue. Dialogue requires participation. I am asking for your support.

If you have any questions or suggestions about the Conference or Vaccine session, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, if you have any questions for the panelists or have issues you would like them to address, please submit them to the panelists or to me. I have set up a special e-mail address to handle your input. The address is OSM_Judicial_Conference@ao.uscourts.gov . If you need to speak directly to someone, please contact Puja Satiani, law clerk to Special Master John Edwards, at 202-357-6353.

Thank you in advance for your support. I look forward to seeing you in November.

Sincerely,

Gary J. Golkiewicz
Chief Special Master