

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

**No. 10-440V**

**Filed: November 17, 2011**

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RUTH W. MUNFORD,

\*

\*

Petitioner,

\*

v.

\*

Stipulation; Influenza; GBS;

\*

Attorneys' Fees and Costs

SECRETARY OF HEALTH  
AND HUMAN SERVICES,

\*

\*

\*

Respondent.

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**DECISION<sup>1</sup>**

**Vowell**, Special Master:

Ruth W. Munford ["Petitioner"] filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program<sup>2</sup> on July 8, 2010. Petitioner alleges that she developed Gullian-Barre Syndrome ["GBS"] as a result of an influenza vaccination she received on September 11, 2009, and she further alleges that she experienced residual effects of this injury for more than six months. See Stipulation, filed November 16, 2011, at ¶¶ 2, 4. Respondent denies that petitioner's GBS, or any other injury, was caused by her flu vaccination. Stipulation at ¶ 6. Additionally, respondent denies that petitioner's current disabilities are sequelae of a vaccine-related injury. *Id.*

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<sup>1</sup> Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, I intend to post this decision on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-347, § 205, 116 Stat. 2899, 2913 (codified as amended at 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2006)). In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), a party has 14 days to identify and move to delete medical or other information that satisfies the criteria in § 300aa-12(d)(4)(B). Further, consistent with the rule requirement, a motion for redaction must include a proposed redacted decision. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within the requirements of that provision, I will delete 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 "§" references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2006).

Nevertheless, the parties have agreed to settle the case. On November 16, 2011, the parties filed a joint stipulation agreeing to settle this case and describing the settlement terms. Respondent agrees to pay petitioner a lump sum payment of \$285,000.00. **Accordingly, I hereby award the total of \$285,000.00<sup>3</sup> in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Ruth Munford, and on the terms set forth in the attached stipulation.**

On November 15, 2011, the parties filed a stipulation for attorney fees and costs. Petitioner has separately provided the court with an accounting of her attorney's hours and expenses and a statement pursuant to General Order #9 setting forth her personal litigation costs. The stipulation indicates that after informal discussions of petitioner's initial request, petitioner requests an amended amount to which respondent does not object.

I find that this petition was brought in good faith and that there existed a reasonable basis for the claim. Therefore, an award for fees and costs is appropriate, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-15(b) and (e)(1). Further, the proposed amount seems reasonable and appropriate. **Accordingly, I hereby also award the total \$17,504.67<sup>4</sup> in the form of a check payable jointly to petitioner and petitioner's counsel, Diana Stadelnikas, for petitioner's attorney fees and costs**

In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review filed pursuant to Appendix B of the Rules of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the clerk of the court shall enter judgment in accordance herewith.<sup>5</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/ Denise K. Vowell**

Denise K. Vowell  
Special Master

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<sup>3</sup> This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under § 300aa-15(a).

<sup>4</sup> This amount is intended to cover all legal expenses incurred in this matter. This award encompasses all charges by the attorney against a client, "advanced costs" as well as fees for legal services rendered. Furthermore, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(e)(3) prevents an attorney from charging or collecting fees (including costs) that would be in addition to the amount awarded herein. See *generally Beck v. Sec'y, HHS*, 924 F.2d 1029 (Fed. Cir.1991).

<sup>5</sup> Entry of judgment can be expedited by each party's filing of a notice renouncing the right to seek review. See Vaccine Rule 11(a).

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

RUTH MUNFORD,	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	
v.	)	No. 10-440V
	)	Special Master Vowell
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN	)	ECF
SERVICES,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	

STIPULATION

The parties hereby stipulate to the following matters:

1. Petitioner, Ruth Munford, 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 immunization on September 11, 2009.
3. The vaccine was administered within the United States.
4. Petitioner alleges that she suffered Guillain-Barre Syndrome ("GBS") as the result of the administration of the flu vaccine, and that she experienced residual effects of this injury for more than six months.
5. Petitioner represents that there has been no prior award or settlement of a civil action for damages on her behalf as a result of her condition.

6. Respondent denies that the flu vaccine caused petitioner's GBS, or any other injury and denies that her current disabilities are sequelae of a vaccine-related injury.

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:

A lump sum of \$285,000.00 in the form of a check payable to petitioner, Ruth Munford. 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 her 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, 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. The 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 attorneys' fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursable 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 her individual capacity and on behalf of her 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 11, 2009, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about July 8, 2010, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 10-440V.

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 petitioner's GBS, or any other injury or her current disabilities.

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:**

  
RUTH MUNFORD

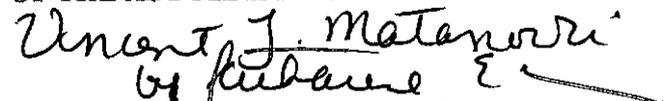
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Dated: November 16, 2011