



Special Master, Sheila Birnbaum, Issues a Late May 2016 VCF Reauthorization Status Report

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As of May 24, 2016, the Victims Compensation Fund (VCF) has paid out over \$1 billion to claimants since the VCF reopened in 2011, according to the Fund's Special Master.

Parker Waichman LLP, a national law firm that has spent many years fighting to ensure that the heroes and survivors of the 9/11 terrorist attacks are never forgotten, comments on recent news involving benefits for these rescue workers and survivors. The VCF Special Master indicated that she was very pleased to report that, as of May 24, 2016, the VCF has paid over \$1 billion dollars to claimants since the VCF reopened in 2011. This includes all payments made to date, partial or full, on Group A claims. "I am tremendously proud of the VCF team for reaching this milestone, and deeply touched by the calls and letters we have received from claimants expressing their appreciation for the VCF's efforts."

According to the Special Master, by end-of-day May 22, 2016, the VCF team authorized the final payment on 8,717 Group A claims. This means the team authorized full payment on all Group A claims except for those payments on which issues were encountered that might have prevented payments. The team continues to work to resolve these issues, according to the Special Master. Special Master Birnbaum added that, "Our

partners in the Department of Justice (?DOJ?) and Treasury Department continue to be very supportive in moving payments through the required steps as quickly as possible to facilitate the actual payments to claimants.?

Parker Waichman LLP notes that, following approval of the \$8.1 billion measure to renew the Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, President Obama signed the bill into law on December 18, 2015, reauthorizing the Act. The Act includes the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program and the VCF. The WTC Health Program provides medical treatment and monitoring and is extended for another 75 years to 2090 with \$3.5 billion in funding to monitor and care for 73,000 responders and survivors. The VCF was set to expire October 1, 2016 and is extended for another five years to 2021 with \$4.6 billion in funding.

The new law directs the VCF to issue full compensation to claimants with Group A Claims? those nearly 10,000 claims for which a loss determination was made on or before December 17, 2015?which will be followed by payment Group B claims, the firm explains.

Group A payments must be made before the funds will be made available to pay Group B claims. According to the VCF, in part, if claims with unresolved issues prevent the Fund from making payments, it will authorize the claim payment and the DOJ accounting office will place those funds into an account for future payments and will enable the Fund to authorize all Group A funding, while confirming Group B fund availability. Among other tasks, Group B claims continue to be reviewed, claimants continue to be contacted for missing information, and more than 2,050 eligibility decisions have been made on Group B claims since January 2016. The Fund expects to render the first Group B loss determinations by end-of-June 2016.

?We are thrilled that the VCF is expediting payments to those individuals who already received their award letter and applaud the VCF for looking for ways to make the process even more efficient to benefit the remaining claimants,? said Mathew McCauley, Senior Litigation counsel at Parker Waichman.

Parker Waichman notes that responders and survivors were exposed to many hazardous substances?asbestos, pulverized cement, and other toxins and chemicals?which have been tied to serious, life-altering conditions, including asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease, and over 50 types of cancer. At least 4,166 cancer diagnoses have been linked to exposure to the toxic cloud that hovered over Manhattan?s attack site and that number is expected to increase.

?These individuals selflessly answered the call for help during and following the attacks and survivors may not know they have a developed condition as a result of the attacks,? says Mr. McCauley. ?These individuals now know that these benefits will remain open for them and their families.?

Parker Waichman vows to continue its efforts to safeguard these heroes and survivors and ensure that they

receive their deserved Zadroga Act compensation. Please visit Parker Waichman's website or call 1-800-LAW-INFO (1-800-529-4636) for additional information and assistance.

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