



## **9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act Includes Residents, Workers**

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Parker Waichman wants residents and workers who were at the September 11th terrorist attacks in Manhattan, specifically those who spent significant of time south of Canal Street, to know that they may have legal rights for related illnesses.

Parker Waichman LLP, a national law firm that has spent many years fighting to ensure that those injured during and following the 9/11 terrorist attacks are never forgotten and points out that residents and workers are among the survivors who must be remembered. Parker Waichman is particularly concerned about workers and residents who spent significant time south of Canal Street in the months following the terrorist attacks through May 2002. Specifically, the firm is concerned about those workers and residents who have been diagnosed with certain cancers in the past two years, including breast, prostate, thyroid, and blood (leukemia and lymphoma).

The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act is named after a deceased New York Police Department (NYPD) detective who worked at Ground Zero. In the years following the attacks, researchers determined that the thick plume of dust and debris that followed the collapse of the World Trade Center

towers contained a toxic mix of compounds including asbestos, lead, pulverized cement, jet fuel, and other chemicals, according to Parker Waichman. Many area residents and workers were exposed to these toxins and have since been diagnosed with various illnesses, including asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease, and over 50 types of cancer. Tragically, many have succumbed to their illnesses in the years since the attacks. In fact, by year-end 2015, at least 4,166 cancer diagnoses have been linked to exposure to the toxic cloud that hovered over Manhattan; the number of cases is expected to increase.

The original Zadroga Act passed just prior to year-end 2010. While the 2010 Act was not everything that Ground Zero residents, workers, and other survivors had hoped for, the passage was seen as a victory and was believed to be the start of more measures to permanently extend benefits. Sadly, Congress allowed one of the two programs to expire in late 2015; specifically, the program that provides medical treatment to survivors: The World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program. The program was running on cash reserves until benefits ended entirely, while the second program—the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF)—was scheduled to expire in October 2016 if Congress did not take action. With, at that time, more than 33,000 sick participants dependent on the program for medical treatment, another 70,000 being monitored, and sick current and former residents and workers living in every state and in 433 of the 435 Congressional districts, immediate action was needed.

Parker Waichman emphasizes the importance of the VCF and the WTC Health Program, which were both created and reauthorized by the Zadroga Act in 2015. “We applaud the efforts of VCF Special Master Sheila Birnbaum and the VCF for their ongoing dedication to the workers and residents who survived the 9/11 attack,” said Matthew J. McCauley, Senior Litigation Counsel at the firm. “Many of these individuals had to wait such a long time for the Zadroga Act to be reauthorized, they should not have to wait any longer.”

The firm is proud to have fought alongside Ground Zero residents, workers, first responders, and other survivors and advocates, to help ensure passage of Zadroga Act amendments, and vows to continue its efforts to safeguard all those who were exposed by Ground Zero’s toxic cloud and ensure that all of the deserved Zadroga Act compensation is received. To determine eligibility for compensation under the Act, or for assistance with a claim, please visit Parker Waichman’s website or call 1-800-LAW-INFO (1-800-529-4636).

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