



VCF Issues Reauthorization Update, Parker Waichman Comments

June 20, 2016

June 20, 2016 - PRESSADVANTAGE -

The VCF, which was refunded through reauthorization of the Zadroga Act in December 2015, provides compensation to injured area workers and residents, responders, and other survivors. The VCF Special Master issued a recent update regarding the Interim Final Rule.

Parker Waichman LLP, a national law firm that has spent many years fighting to ensure that the area workers and residents, first responders, and other survivors of the 9/11 terrorist attacks are never forgotten, comments that the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) Special Master Sheila Birnbaum has issued an update on the reauthorization. According to an announcement posted on the VCF website, the Interim Final Rule is now effective and available for 30-day public comment. This means that the VCF can begin issuing Group B compensation decisions when funding becomes available.

Additionally, the announcement states that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has given its final approval for the VCF's updated claim form. A sample version is now available on the VCF website to use as a guide for the type of information required; the sample form cannot be submitted as a claim itself. Ms. Birnbaum advises claimants to review the forms and gather the necessary information. The actual claim form

is expected to be available online at the end of July 2016.

The firm applauds the VCF, which has dedicated its efforts to providing compensation to 9/11 area residents and workers, responders, and survivors. It has taken a tremendous amount of work to update the regulations to reflect the reauthorization law and to redesign the claim form, while at the same time continuing to implement the other changes required by the reauthorization, Ms. Birnbaum stated in the announcement.

As of June 12, 2016, the Fund has authorized final payment on 8,930 Group A claims; less than 200 remain that need to be authorized for full payment, the announcement indicates. The VCF notes that it is working to resolve any remaining issues with payment. The announcement also states that Group A payments must be authorized before Group B claims can begin. As such, it is very important that we complete VCF activity on the Group A payments within our original timeline, according to the Fund announcement.

The Zadroga Act was first passed in 2010. The Act created the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program, which provides healthcare, and reopened the VCF for an additional five years. As the deadline for Zadroga approached in 2015, advocates, including Parker Waichman, fought hard for permanent reauthorization. The Zadroga Act was reauthorized on December 18, 2015; the law funds the WTC Health Program for another 75 years and extends the VCF for another five years.

Parker Waichman actively worked toward the 2010 passage of the Zadroga Act, including taking part in lobbying efforts and trips to the nation's capital, often along with the firm's clients, other responders and survivors. Parker Waichman has fought for permanent extension of the Act, taking part in numerous lobbying efforts and being part of delegations. In fact, Parker Waichman assisted with the research on, and creation of the "Take Action" tool that enabled citizens to review Congress members' activities concerning the Act.

The firm continues to fight alongside Ground Zero area residents and workers, first responders, other survivors, and advocates and vows to continue its efforts to safeguard these individuals 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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