

SEPTEMBER 11TH COMPENSATION FUND REGULATIONS ANNOUNCED

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, less than one month after his appointment as Special Master for the September 11 Victim's Compensation Fund, Kenneth R. Feinberg announced a set of Interim Final Regulations that will permit the program to start running immediately and begin providing Advanced Benefits to those most in need. The September 11th Fund was created by Congress to provide victims with an alternative to the long and costly litigation process. Those eligible to receive compensation from the Fund include representatives of victims who died at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

"This Victims' Compensation Fund is an unprecedented expression of compassion on the part of the American people to the victims and their families devastated by the horror and tragedy of September 11th," said Feinberg. "While there is no amount of compensation that can replace a human life, our goal is to aid those who have so greatly suffered as a result of this horrendous act. The Attorney General instructed me to cut all unnecessary red tape and deliver a program that can help the victims as soon as possible. Such a program is precisely what we are announcing today."

The program, as structured, will resolve every claim within a matter of months. Claimants may elect a procedure involving detailed submissions and a full hearing that will take approximately 120 days, or may ask to have their claim calculated by an evaluator within 45 days from the date they complete the claim forms. The Special Master can also provide Advance Benefits for victims who need financial assistance during the time that the claims are pending - \$50,000 for families who lost loved ones, or \$25,000 for seriously injured victims.

The final awards under the program will depend upon the individual circumstances of every claimant, and will be calculated based upon an economic and non-economic component. The Special Master is today issuing charts and tables of estimated awards explaining generally how such awards will be calculated, and how claimants might estimate their likely awards. "It is important to ensure that people have a sense of what they might receive from the program before they decide to apply." Feinberg said.

Congress required that the Special Master deduct "collateral source compensation" from the award, e.g.

benefits from other government programs, insurance benefits, etc. However, the program will not deduct gifts from charities to the victims.

"We will also ensure that every family who lost a loved one receives, in total, at least a minimum level of compensation from all sources. For victims who were married or had children, that minimum will be \$500,000 -- meaning that that they will receive a combined total of at least \$500,000 from our program, other state and federal programs, life insurance and other compensation (excluding gifts from charities). The minimum for deceased victims who were single will be \$300,000. Many claimants will receive substantially more than these minimums."

Any disputes over whether an individual should be named as a deceased victim's personal representative shall be resolved according to state law.

In developing these Interim Final Regulations, the Department and Special Master reviewed many hundreds of comments from interested parties, and consulted with economic experts. In addition, a number of meetings have been held with groups that represent the victims of the attacks, with elected officials and with other interested parties. Although the Special Master is soliciting further comments from the public and may adjust the Interim Final Regulations as appropriate after analyzing such comments, claimants may now rely upon these regulations and may begin the application process.

The Special Master will begin processing claims for Advanced Benefits tomorrow, Friday, December 21, and will have personnel available by telephone, and at locations in New York City at Pier 94, West 54th St. and 12th Ave., New York, New York 10019; and Metro Washington at the Sheraton Crystal City, 1800 Jefferson David Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Offices will open at 1 p.m. on Friday. Claimants may also call 1-888-714-3385 (Toll-Free) or 202-305-1352 and TDD: 1-888-560-0844.

A copy of the Interim Regulations with explanatory material will be available at the Department of Justice website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/victimcompensation/>. Also posted at that site are materials explaining how to estimate compensation under the Fund.

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