

## § 1261.311

### **§ 1261.311 Claims requiring Department of Justice approval or consultation.**

(a) When in the opinion of the NASA official designated in §1261.308, Department of Justice approval or consultation may be required, pursuant to 28 CFR part 14, in connection with a claim being acted upon under the Federal Tort Claims Act, the following papers shall be forwarded to the General Counsel:

(1) A short and concise statement of the facts of the claim.

(2) Copies of all relevant portions of the claim file.

(3) A statement of the recommendations or views of the forwarding official.

(b) A claim forwarded to the General Counsel in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section, or upon which the General Counsel is acting pursuant to §1261.308(c), shall be referred to the Department of Justice when, in the opinion of the General Counsel, Department of Justice approval or consultation is required or may be appropriate.

### **§ 1261.312 Action on approved claims.**

(a) Upon settlement of a claim, the official designated in §1261.308 will prepare and have executed by the claimant a Voucher for Payment of Tort Claims (NASA Form 616) if the claim has been acted upon pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(13), or a Voucher for Payment under Federal Tort Claims Act (Standard Form 1145) if the claim has been acted upon pursuant to the Federal Tort Claims Act. The form will then be referred to the cognizant NASA installation fiscal or financial management office for appropriate action.

(b) When a claimant is represented by an attorney, both the claimant and attorney will be designated as "payees" on the voucher, and the check will be delivered to the attorney whose address shall appear on the voucher.

(c) Acceptance by the claimant, agent, or legal representative, of any award, compromise, or settlement made pursuant to this subpart shall be final and conclusive on the claimant, agent or legal representative and any other person on whose behalf or for whose benefit the claim has been presented, and shall constitute a complete

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release of any claim against the United States and against any employee of the Government whose act or omission gave rise to the claim, by reason of the same subject matter.

### **§ 1261.313 Required notification in the event of denial.**

Final denial of a claim shall be in writing and shall be sent to the claimant, the attorney, or legal representative by certified or registered mail. The notification of final denial may include a statement of the reasons for the denial and shall include a statement that if the claimant is dissatisfied with NASA's action, the claimant may file suit in an appropriate U.S. District Court not later than 6 months after the date of mailing the notification.

### **§ 1261.314 [Reserved]**

### **§ 1261.315 Procedures for the handling of lawsuits against NASA employees arising within the scope of their office or employment.**

The following procedures shall be followed in the event that a civil action or proceeding is brought, in any court, against any employee of NASA (or against the estate) for injury or loss of property or personal injury or death, resulting from the NASA employee's activities while acting within the scope of office or employment:

(a) After being served with process or pleadings in such an action or proceeding, the employee (or the executor(rix) or administrator(rix) of the estate) shall immediately deliver all such process and pleadings or an attested true copy thereof, together with a fully detailed report of the circumstances of the accident giving rise to the court action or proceeding, to the following officials:

(1) The Assistant General Counsel for Litigation insofar as actions or proceedings against employees of NASA Headquarters are concerned; or

(2) The Chief Counsel of the NASA Installation at which the employee is employed, insofar as actions against other than NASA Headquarters employees are concerned.

(b) Upon receipt of such process and pleadings, the Assistant General Counsel for Litigation or the Chief Counsel

of the NASA Installation receiving the same shall furnish to the U.S. Attorney for the district embracing the place where the action or proceeding is brought and, if appropriate, the Director, Torts Branch, Civil Division, Department of Justice, the following:

(1) Copies of all such process and pleadings in the action or proceeding promptly upon receipt thereof; and

(2) A report containing a statement of the circumstances of the incident giving rise to the action or proceeding, and all data bearing upon the question of whether the employee was acting within the scope of office or employment with NASA at the time of the incident, at the earliest possible date, or within such time as shall be fixed by the U.S. Attorney upon request.

(c) The Assistant General Counsel for Litigation or a Chief Counsel acting pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section shall submit the following documents to the General Counsel, who is hereby designated to receive such documents on behalf of the Administrator:

(1) Copies of all process and pleadings submitted to a U.S. Attorney in accordance with paragraph (b).

(2) In addition, where the action or proceeding is for damages in excess of \$25,000, or where (in the opinion of the Chief Counsel) such action or proceeding involves a new precedent, a new point of law, or a question of policy, copies of reports and all other papers submitted to the U.S. Attorney.

**§ 1261.316 Policy.**

(a) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration may indemnify a present or former NASA employee, who is personally named as a defendant in any civil suit in state or Federal court, or in an arbitration proceeding or other proceeding seeking damages against that employee personally, for any verdict, judgment, appeal bond, or other monetary award which is rendered against such employee, provided that the conduct giving rise to the verdict, judgment, appeal bond, or award was taken within the scope of his or her employment and that such indemnification is in the interest of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, as determined by the Administrator or designee.

(b) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration may settle or compromise a personal damage claim against a present or former NASA employee by the payment of available funds, at any time, provided the alleged conduct giving rise to the personal damage claim was taken within the employee's scope of employment and that such settlement or compromise is in the interest of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, as determined by the Administrator or designee.

(c) Absent exceptional circumstances as determined by the Administrator or designee, the agency will not entertain a request either to agree to indemnify or to settle a personal damage claim before entry of an adverse verdict, judgment, or award.

(d) A present or past NASA employee may request indemnification to satisfy a verdict, judgment, or award entered against that employee. The employee shall submit a written request, with appropriate documentation including copies of the verdict, judgment, appeal bond, award, or settlement proposal to the General Counsel, who shall make a recommended disposition of the request. Where appropriate, the agency shall seek the views of the Department of Justice. The General Counsel shall forward the request, the accompanying documentation, and the General Counsel's recommendation to the Administrator for decision.

(e) Any payment under this section either to indemnify a National Aeronautics and Space Administration employee or to settle a personal damage claim shall be contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

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**§ 1261.317 Attorney-client privilege.**

(a) Attorneys employed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration participate in the process utilized for the purpose of determining whether the agency should request the Department of Justice to provide representation to a present or former agency employee sued, subpoenaed, or charged in his/her individual capacity,