

of medical care furnished or to be furnished to the injured party, in accordance with § 537.22(a)(3) and rates established by the Office of Management and Budget. When a military member has been retained in a military hospital for administrative reasons, or where the patient was absent from the hospital or was in a purely convalescent status, the amount of the claim will be recomputed to apply the outpatient rate, if under circumstances warranting only outpatient treatment in a civilian hospital or eliminate such periods altogether if the injured party received no treatment during those periods. In making these determinations the RJA will coordinate with the registrar or other responsible official of the hospital or medical unit in his area of responsibility.

(3) *Amount.* In the event of doubt concerning the extent of medical care furnished or to be furnished an injured party, the RJA will assert the claim in an indefinite amount. Demand will be made in a definite amount at the earliest possible date, based on an estimate of a reasonable value of medical care to be furnished, if appropriate. The RJA will assure that the file contains complete statements of the value of medical care furnished, including all charges by civilian physicians, medical technicians and civilian hospitals.

§ 537.24 Post demand procedures.

(a) *Coordination with the injured party's claim.* (1) Every effort will be made to coordinate action to collect the claim of the United States with the injured party's action to collect his own claim for damages, in order that the injured party's recovery for his damages, other than the reasonable value of medical care furnished or to be furnished by the United States, is not prejudiced by the Government's claim.

(2) Attorneys representing an injured party may be authorized to assert the claim on behalf of the government as an item of special damages with the injured party's claim or suit except where prohibited by law. Any agreement to this effect will be in writing, and the agreement should expressly recognize the fact that counsel fees may be neither paid by the Government (5 U.S.C. 3106) nor computed on

the basis of the Government's portion of the recovery. The agreement must also require the Government's permission to settle its claim.

(3) If the injured party, denies or his attorney or legal representative, fails or refuses to cooperate in the prosecution of the claim of the United States, independent collection action will be vigorously pursued.

(b) *Independent collection action.* Unless suit between the injured party and the prospective defendant is pending, all available administrative collection procedures will be followed prior to reference of the claim to the Department of Justice under paragraph (e) of this section. Direct contact with the prospective defendant's insurer, if known, is desirable. If the prospective defendant is an uninsured motorist, timely and appropriate action will be taken to collect the claim, or to request suspension of driving and registration privileges under the applicable uninsured motorist fund statute, or to seek compensation from the victim's insurer, or otherwise under financial responsibility laws.

(c) *Delegation of authority.* Subject to the provisions of paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section, authority to compromise or waive, in whole or in part, claims of the United States not in excess of \$40,000 exclusive of interest penalties and administrative fees is delegated as follows. The Area Claims Office as defined in paragraph (c)(6) of section 537.1 is authorized to:

(1) Compromise claims, provided the compromise does not reduce the claim by more than \$15,000 in any claim not asserted for more than \$25,000; and

(2) Waive claims for the convenience of the Government (but not on account of undue hardship upon the injured party) provided the uncollected amount of the claim does not exceed \$15,000 in any claim not asserted for more than \$25,000; and

(3) Redelegation in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 compromise authority to any claim processing office with approval authority is permitted.

(d) *Compromise and waiver of claims—*
(1) *General.* A debtor's liability to the United States arising from a particular incident will be considered as a single claim in determining whether the

claim is not more than \$40,000, for the purpose of compromise or waiver. Claims not resolved within the delegation of authority stated in this section or referred to the Department of Justice, will be forwarded to Commander, USARCS. A claim file forwarded to higher authority will contain a memorandum of opinion supported by necessary exhibits.

(2) *Compromise.* (i) The authority delegated in paragraph (c) of this section to compromise claims will be exercised in accordance with standards set forth in 4 CFR 103. When available funds are insufficient to satisfy both the claim of the United States and that of the injured party, the claim of the United States will be compromised to the extent required to achieve an equitable apportionment of the available funds.

(ii) If appropriate, a request by the injured party or his attorney for waiver on the ground of undue hardship may be treated initially as a suggestion for compromise with the tortfeasor, and the compromised amount of the claim of the United States will be determined. In such cases, RJA's may make offers of compromise within their delegated authority. RJA's may also make counteroffers within their delegated authority to offers of compromise beyond their delegated authority. If settlement within the limits of delegated authority is not achieved, the claim will be referred to higher authority.

(iii) When time is a factor, SJA or major overseas command staff JA's may make telephonic delegation within their compromise authority on a case by case basis. When such verbal delegations are made, they will be confirmed in writing and the writing included in the case file.

(3) *Waiver.* (i) The authority delegated in paragraph (c) of this section to waive claims for the convenience of the Government will be exercised in accordance with standards set forth in 4 CFR part 103.

(ii) If the injured party or his attorney requests waiver of the full or any compromised amount of the claim on the ground of undue hardship, and the request may not be appropriately treated under paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section, the file will be forwarded

to appropriate major overseas command claims authority or Commander, USARCS. For the purpose of evaluation of the request for waiver, the file will include detailed information concerning the reasonable value of the injured party's claim for permanent injury, pain and suffering, decreasing earning power, and other items of special damages, pension rights, and other Government benefits accruing to the injured party; and the present and prospective assets, income, and obligations of the injured party, and those dependent on him.

(iii) In the event an affirmative determination is made by TJAG that, as a result of the collection of the Government's claim the injured party has suffered an undue hardship, the RJA will be authorized to direct issuance of the amount waived to the injured party.

(4) A file forwarded to higher authority for waiver of compromise consideration will contain a memorandum by the RJA giving his assessment of the case and his recommendation with regard to the approval or denial of the requested compromise or waiver.

(e) *Only the Department of Justice may approve claims involving.* (1) compromise or waiver of a claim asserted for more than \$40,000 exclusive of interest, penalties or administrative fees,

(2) Settlement actions previously referred to the Department,

(3) Settlement where a third party files suit against the United States on the injured party arising out of the same incident.

PART 538—MILITARY PAYMENT CERTIFICATES

Sec.

538.1 Definitions.

538.2 Use of military payment certificates.

538.3 Restrictions on possession and use.

538.4 Convertibility of military payment certificates.

538.5 Conversion of invalidated military payment certificates.

538.6 Claims.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 3, 58 Stat. 821, as amended; 31 U.S.C. 492c.

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