

U.S. Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund

Payment Calculation Explanation for Non-9/11-Related Claims

August 2020

Important Note: *This explanation does NOT apply to 9/11-related claims. Please refer to the separate “Payment Calculation Explanation for 9/11-Related Claims.”*

This explanation shows how the U.S. Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund (USVSST Fund) applies the governing statute, 34 U.S.C. § 20144¹ (Act), to determine eligible **non-9/11-related** claimants’ award amounts. It includes discussion of the most relevant subsections of the Act, a description of the methodology, and calculation examples. The frequently asked questions (FAQs), available on the USVSST Fund’s website at www.usvsst.com, provide additional information.

The USVSST Fund Clarification Act, passed in November 2019, amended some of the Act’s provisions regarding payment calculations. It required the USVSST Fund to divide the total amount of funds available for the third distribution in half, and allocate one-half to non-9/11-related claimants and the other half to 9/11-related claimants. Act § (d)(3)(A)(i). For the third round, the USVSST Fund allocated a total of \$1.075 billion for the entire distribution. Accordingly, when calculating third-round payments, the USVSST Fund allocated \$537.5 million for eligible non-9/11-related claimants, and \$537.5 million for 9/11-related claimants.²

The Clarification Act did not otherwise change the calculation methodology for **non-9/11-related** claimants’ awards. The USVSST Fund calculated these awards to allocate the \$537.5 million available for eligible non-9/11-related claimants. The Clarification Act did require certain changes to the methodology for 9/11-related claimants; those are explained in the separate “Payment Calculation Explanation for 9/11-Related Claims.”

I. Payments are *Pro Rata*

The key sections of the Act that govern the calculation of an eligible claimant’s compensation are found in subsection (d), titled “Payments.” In general, the USVSST Fund pays

¹ The statute incorporates the Justice for United States Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Act, Pub. L. No. 114-113, div. O, title IV, § 404 (Dec. 18, 2015), as amended by the United States Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism Fund Clarification Act, Pub. L. No. 116-69, div. B, title VII, § 1701 (Nov. 21, 2019).

² In previous rounds of distribution, a single calculation methodology applied to all claimants. The USVSST Fund allocated all funds to eligible claimants in a single *pro rata* calculation, subject to the statutory limitations.

eligible claimants *pro rata*³ based on the compensatory damage award in qualifying judgments.⁴ Only eligible claims with “amounts outstanding and unpaid” are included in the calculation. Act § (d)(3)(A)(i). Claimants who have already received full payment of their compensatory damages will not receive any compensation from the USVSST Fund.

II. Individual and Family Caps for Non-9/11-Related Claims

Certain provisions of the Act limit payments if compensatory damage amounts exceed certain amounts: \$20 million for individuals, and \$35 million for the total of immediate family members’ claims. These provisions provide “caps” on the amounts eligible claimants can receive from the USVSST Fund.⁵

If an individual claimant has an eligible compensatory damage award amount in a qualifying judgment of more than \$20 million, the USVSST Fund will calculate his or her award as if the amount were \$20 million.

*Example:*⁶ An individual claimant’s compensatory damage amount is \$25 million in the judgment. When calculating payments, the USVSST Fund must treat this claim as the statutory maximum for an individual claim: \$20 million.

Groups of immediate family members whose total compensatory damages in qualifying judgments add up to more than \$35 million are subject to a separate cap. The USVSST Fund will calculate their awards after adjusting the damage amounts so that the total eligible compensatory damage amounts for all the family members’ claims does not exceed \$35 million.

Example: Five family members have individual judgments of \$10 million each. (*See* chart below). The family group’s total damages are therefore \$50 million, which exceeds the Act’s family cap of \$35 million. When calculating payments, the USVSST Fund must allocate the \$35 million family cap among the family members in proportion to their individual compensatory damage awards. Therefore, the USVSST Fund must treat each family member’s claim as if it were \$7 million (\$35 million allocated among the five family members’ equal claims).

³ “Except as provided in subparagraph (B) and subject to the limitations described in clause (ii), the Special Master shall carry out paragraph (1), by ... dividing the funds ... on a pro rata basis, based on the amounts outstanding and unpaid on eligible claims...” Act § (d)(3)(A)(i)(II)-(III).

⁴ *See also* Act § (c)(1)-(2).

⁵ “(I) In the event that a United States person has an eligible claim that exceeds \$20,000,000, the Special Master shall treat that claim as if it were for \$20,000,000 for purposes of this section. (II) In the event that a non-9/11 related victim of state sponsored terrorism and the immediate family members of such person have claims that if aggregated would exceed \$35,000,000, the Special Master shall, for purposes of this section, reduce such claims on a pro rata basis such that in the aggregate such claims do not exceed \$35,000,000.” Act § (d)(3)(A)(ii).

⁶ The USVSST Fund does not disclose information about individual claimants. The examples in this document illustrate how the USVSST Fund calculates awards – they do not represent actual claims.

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	Family Member A	Family Member B	Family Member C	Family Member D	Family Member E	Family Total
Judgment Award Amount	\$10 million	\$50 million				
After Family Cap	\$7 million	\$35 million				

The USVSST Fund will apply the individual cap first, and then the family cap. For some family groups, applying the individual cap may mean that the family’s total compensatory damages no longer exceed the \$35 million family cap.

Example: Three family members have judgments: one has a \$45 million damage amount; the other two have \$5 million. *See* chart below. The USVSST Fund must treat the individual’s claim of \$45 million as the statutory individual maximum, \$20 million. After applying the individual cap, reducing the \$45 million family total damage amount to \$20 million, the family cap is not triggered.

	Family Member A	Family Member B	Family Member C	Family Total
Judgment Award Amount	\$45 million	\$5 million	\$5 million	\$55 million
After Individual Cap	\$20 million	\$5 million	\$5 million	\$30 million

For other family groups, some individuals may have their gross compensatory damage award amounts capped at \$20 million, and then further reduced when the family cap is applied.

Example: Three family members have judgments: one has a \$45 million damage amount; one has \$25 million; and one has \$10 million. *See* chart below. The USVSST Fund must treat Family Member A’s claim of \$45 million as the statutory maximum for individuals, \$20 million. The USVSST Fund must also treat Family Member B’s claim of \$25 million as the statutory maximum for individuals, \$20 million. After applying the individual cap, the family cap is triggered because the total still exceeds the statutory family cap of \$35 million. The USVSST Fund allocates the \$35 million family cap among the family members in proportion to their individual compensatory damage awards, after applying the individual caps.

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	Family Member A	Family Member B	Family Member C	Family Total
Judgment Award Amount	\$45 million	\$25 million	\$10 million	\$80 million
After Individual Cap	\$20 million	\$20 million	\$10 million	\$50 million
After Family Cap	\$14 million	\$14 million	\$7 million	\$35 million

III. Payments from Other Sources

Certain provisions of the Act limit payments to eligible claimants who have received payments from sources other than this Fund.⁷ They do not apply to eligible claimants who have not received any such payments.

One subsection applies only to claimants who have received 30 percent or more of their compensatory damages from sources other than this Fund. It provides that these claimants “shall not receive any payment from the USVSST Fund until such time as all other eligible applicants have received from the USVSST Fund an amount equal to 30 percent of the compensatory damages.”⁸ This is determined using the amount of payments from other sources and the compensatory damages (or the capped amounts described above, if applicable). The USVSST Fund cannot include these claimants in its payment calculations, because no claimants have yet received, nor will any claimants after the third round of payments have received, payments of 30 percent of their compensatory damages from the USVSST Fund. (For non-9/11-related claimants, the payment percentages for the first three rounds of payments combined are 23.69 percent.⁹)

⁷ “The term ‘source other than this Fund’ means all collateral sources, including life insurance, pension funds, death benefit programs, payments by Federal, State, or local governments, and court awarded compensation related to the act of international terrorism that gave rise to a claimant’s final judgment.” Act § (j)(6). All USVSST Fund applicants must identify all such other sources. The Special Master retains discretion in assessing any identified source other than this Fund and determining how it will factor into an award calculation. As one example, if the claimant is deceased, life insurance payments paid on personally secured policies must be identified as a source other than the Fund, but will not affect claimants’ awards. Throughout this paper, “payments from sources other than this Fund” is used exclusively to refer to those payments included in the calculations.

⁸ “Any applicant with an eligible claim described in subsection (c)(2) who has received, or is entitled or scheduled to receive, any payment that is equal to, or in excess of, 30 percent of the total compensatory damages owed to such applicant on the applicant’s claim from any source other than this Fund shall not receive any payment from the Fund until such time as all other eligible applicants have received from the Fund an amount equal to 30 percent of the compensatory damages awarded to those applicants pursuant to their final judgments or to claims under subsection (c)(2)(B) or (c)(2)(C). For purposes of calculating the pro rata amounts for these payments, the Special Master shall not include the total compensatory damages for applicants excluded from payment by this subparagraph.” Act § (d)(3)(B)(i).

⁹ The payment percentage for the initial round of payments was 13.6561 percent (generally rounded to 13.66 percent in USVSST Fund communications). The payment percentage for the second round of payments was 4.1955 percent (generally rounded to 4.2 percent in USVSST Fund communications). The payment percentage for non-9/11-related claimants in the third round of payments is 5.8385 percent (generally rounded to 5.84 percent in USVSST Fund

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Example: A claimant has compensatory damages of \$10 million, and has received \$4 million from sources other than this Fund. Because this claimant has received 40 percent of her damages, she will not receive a payment from the USVSST Fund.

A separate subsection applies to claimants who have received some payments from sources other than the USVSST Fund, but these payments do not total 30 percent or more of their gross compensatory damages.¹⁰ The subsection requires the USVSST Fund to account for claimants' payments from sources other than this Fund when calculating awards from the USVSST Fund.

As explained in the methodology below, the USVSST Fund will calculate the "maximum potential payment amount" due from the USVSST Fund. Claimants who have received some compensation from other sources will have their award amounts reduced from this maximum to reflect these payments from other sources. Claimants who have received more than the maximum potential payout amount from sources other than the USVSST Fund will not receive payments. *See also* Section V, calculation examples, below.

IV. Methodology for Calculating Payments

The sections of the Act discussed above mandate the methodology for the award calculations. The funds available for non-9/11-related claimants must be distributed *pro rata* to these eligible claimants after accounting for the individual cap of \$20 million, the family cap of \$35 million, and compensation from sources other than this Fund. This section explains the fundamental methodology of calculating awards.

Payment Percentage: For purposes of the USVSST Fund's calculations, a "payment percentage" is computed. The payment percentage is the amount of funds available to pay to all eligible non-9/11-related claimants¹¹ divided by their compensatory damages after accounting for the individual cap of \$20 million, the family cap of \$35 million, compensation from sources other than the USVSST Fund, and prior payments from the USVSST Fund (see below). **For third-round payments in 2020, the USVSST Fund payment percentage for non-9/11-related claimants is 5.84 percent.**¹²

communications). The payment percentage total for all three rounds is 23.6901 percent, rounded here to 23.69 percent.

¹⁰ "To the extent that an applicant with an eligible claim has received less than 30 percent of the compensatory damages owed that applicant under a final judgment or claim described in subsection (c)(2) from any source other than this Fund, such applicant may apply to the Special Master for the difference between the percentage of compensatory damages the applicant has received from other sources and the percentage of compensatory damages to be awarded other eligible applicants from the Fund." Act § (d)(3)(B)(ii).

¹¹ The USVSST Fund allocated \$537.5 million for third-round payments to eligible non-9/11-related claimants.

¹² The USVSST Fund has rounded this from the 5.8385 percent figure used in the actual calculations. (Note that the payment percentage for 9/11-related claimants in the third round of payments is 0.76 percent.)

Payment Percentage = Total Amount of Funds Available for Distribution to Non-9/11-Related Eligible Claimants

Divided by

Compensatory Damages (after accounting for the individual and family caps, compensation from sources other than the USVSST Fund, and prior payments from the USVSST Fund)

Maximum potential USVSST Fund award amount: When performing payment calculations, the USVSST Fund also calculates a maximum potential USVSST Fund payment amount for each non-9/11-related claimant. The maximum potential USVSST Fund award amount is the payment percentage multiplied by the claimant's compensatory damages after applying the caps. For non-9/11-related claimants participating in only the third round, this is the third-round payment percentage (5.84 percent) multiplied by the claimant's compensatory damages after applying the caps. For non-9/11-related claimants participating in all three rounds of payments, this is the total payment percentage of all three rounds (23.69 percent) multiplied by the claimant's compensatory damages after applying the caps. Thereafter, the USVSST Fund will offset the compensation from other sources and prior USVSST Fund payments, if any, to determine the USVSST Fund award payment.

The USVSST Fund payment calculation methodology is the same for all non-9/11-related claimants. There are seven basic steps in the calculation.

1. Determine the amount of gross compensatory damages (or the statutory lump sum award amounts for Iran hostages and their families).
2. Apply the \$20 million individual cap, if applicable.
3. Apply the \$35 million family cap, if applicable.
4. Compute the maximum potential USVSST Fund award amount (before accounting for compensation from other sources and from the USVSST Fund).
5. Determine the amount of compensation received from sources other than the USVSST Fund.
6. Determine the amount of compensation received from the USVSST Fund in prior rounds.
7. Compute the USVSST Fund award payment (maximum potential Fund award amount less compensation from sources other than this Fund and payment received from the USVSST Fund).

Note: For non-9/11-related claimants who are not subject to the individual or family caps, and do not have any payments from sources other than the USVSST Fund, their USVSST Fund payment amounts in any round will equal the payment round's payment percentage of their eligible compensatory damage awards. In the initial round, these claimants received 13.66 percent of their compensatory damage awards. In the second round, these claimants received 4.2 percent of their compensatory damage awards. In the third round, the non-9/11-related claimants will receive 5.84 percent of their damages. Nevertheless, their payments are calculated using this multi-step methodology.

V. Illustrative Examples of the Calculations Used to Determine USVSST Fund Payments to Eligible Non-9/11-Related Claimants under Varying Circumstances

The following illustrative examples show the calculations used to determine a USVSST Fund award payment for non-9/11-related claimants participating in the third round of payments. The USVSST Fund does not disclose information about individual claimants. The examples in this document illustrate how the USVSST Fund calculates awards – they do not represent actual claims.

In these examples, **the 10 percent total payment percentage for the prior rounds (initial round and second round taken together), and the 5 percent payment percentage for the third round are used to simplify the arithmetic.** The actual payment percentages were 13.66 percent for the initial round, 4.2 percent for the second-round, and 5.84 percent for non-9/11-related claimants in the third round.

The examples show calculations for four situations:

1. Claimant in All Rounds with No Payment from Other Sources
2. Claimant in All Rounds with Payment from Other Sources
3. Claimant in Round Three Only with No Payment from Other Sources
4. Claimant in Round Three Only with Payment from Other Sources

Example 1:

Claimant in All Three Rounds with No Payment from Other Sources	
Gross Compensatory Damage Amount (no caps apply)	\$ 10,000,000
Amount Received from Other Sources Percent of Gross Compensatory Damages	\$ - 0%
Prior-round payments; 10% of damages = \$1M	\$ 1,000,000
Third-Round Calculation:	
Payment Round Claimant First Appeared Effective Payment Percent (Equals the sum of Prior and Third-Round payment percentage, 10% + 5%)	Initial round 15%
Maximum Potential Payment Amount Due From USVSST (Equals Effective Payment Percentage of gross compensatory damages)	\$ 1,500,000
Less: Amount Already Received from Prior USVSST Payments	\$ 1,000,000
Less: Amount Received from Other Sources	\$ -
Equals: Amount Received from USVSST in Third Round	\$ 500,000

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Example 2:

Claimant in All Three Rounds with Payment from Other Sources	
Gross Compensatory Damage Amount (no caps apply)	\$ 10,000,000
Amount Received from Other Sources Percent of Gross Compensatory Damages	\$ 1,200,000 12%
Claimant receives no earlier-round payments; 10% of damages = \$1M Claimant's \$1.2M in other source payments exceeds this	
Third-Round Calculation:	
Payment Round Claimant First Appeared Effective Payment Percent (Equals the sum of Prior and Third-Round payment percentage, 10% + 5%)	Initial round 15%
Maximum Potential Payment Amount Due From USVSST (Equals Effective Payment Percentage of gross compensatory damages) Less: Amount Already Received from Prior USVSST Payments Less: Amount Received from Other Sources Equals: Amount Received from USVSST in Third Round	\$ 1,500,000 \$ - \$ 1,200,000 \$ 300,000

Example 3:

Claimant in Round Three Only with No Payment from Other Sources	
Gross Compensatory Damage Amount (no caps apply)	\$ 10,000,000
Amount Received from Other Sources Percent of Gross Compensatory Damages	\$ - 0%
Claimant receives no initial or second-round payment; did not participate	
Third-Round Calculation:	
Payment Round Claimant First Appeared Effective Payment Percent (3rd Round only payment percentage, 5%)	3rd round 5%
Maximum Potential Payment Amount Due From USVSST (Equals Effective Payment Percentage of gross compensatory damages) Less: Amount Already Received from Prior USVSST Payments Less: Amount Received from Other Sources Equals: Amount Received from USVSST in Third Round	\$ 500,000 \$ - \$ - \$ 500,000

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Example 4:

Claimant Round Three Only with Payment from Other Sources	
Gross Compensatory Damage Amount (no caps apply)	\$ 10,000,000
Amount Received from Other Sources Percent of Gross Compensatory Damages	\$ 1,200,000 12%
Claimant receives no initial or second-round payment; did not participate	
Third-Round Calculation:	
Payment Round Claimant First Appeared	3rd round
Effective Payment Percent (3rd Round only payment percentage, 5%)	5%
Maximum Potential Payment Amount Due From USVSST (Equals Effective Payment Percentage of gross compensatory damages)	\$ 500,000
Less: Amount Already Received from Prior USVSST Payments	\$ -
Less: Amount Received from Other Sources	\$ 1,200,000
Equals: Amount Received from USVSST in Third Round	\$ -