

KEY POINTS

9/11-related health conditions continue to plague responders

- Fire fighters and others who responded to the World Trade Center on 9/11 and in the following months selflessly put their lives and health on the line to help America recover from a national disaster. We have a moral obligation as a nation to continue providing them compensation for their sacrifice, lost wages, and quality of life.
- All 100 U.S. Senators and nearly every member of the U.S. House of Representatives counts World Trade Center responders or survivors among their constituents. Responders came from all over the country to aid in the response to the attacks, and some area residents, workers and survivors have since moved.
- Today, over 42,000 people who are in the World Trade Center Health Program are suffering from at least one certified 9/11 condition, while a large percentage have multiple conditions.
- Chronic diseases like asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease and cancer continue to plague those who were exposed to the many toxins and carcinogens on 9/11 and in the weeks and months thereafter.
- Cancer, in particular, continues to develop in responders and survivors due to its long latency period. To date, over 9,300 of those involved in the World Trade Center Health Program have been certified with a 9/11-related cancer, with more being diagnosed every day. Thousands more who have been diagnosed with cancer are only now joining the program, so these numbers will increase dramatically.
- Fire fighters and other public safety officers are particularly affected. More than 2,000 active-duty fire department personnel have retired due to disabling 9/11 injuries. Additionally, over 182 FDNY fire fighters have died of their 9/11 injuries, with many more 9/11 injury-related deaths expected in the coming years.

The VCF continues to provide compensation for sacrifice in service to the country

- 9/11 illnesses have caused major financial strains on those exposed, many of whom are no longer able to work and suffer diminished quality of life. The VCF compensates individuals for such losses made in service to their nation.
- To date, the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund has received over 40,000 eligibility claims and made approximately 20,000 determinations for injured and ill responders and survivors or their families. Claims have been made from all 50 states.
- As latent diseases continue to manifest, the number of new claims will continue to rise as we reach the expiration of the current Victim Compensation Fund in 2020.
- According to Rupa Bhattacharyya, the VCF Special Master, with claims surging, the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund “may be insufficient to compensate all claims (including those filed and those anticipated to be filed) under the current policies and procedures guiding the calculation of awards.”
- Absent swift congressional action, 9/11 responders will soon face cuts to compensation claims and the entire program will abruptly end in December of 2020.