UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

NATIONAL VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM, NATIONAL CONSUMER LAW CENTER, and ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE, for themselves and all others similarly situated, Plaintiffs, v. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Defendant.	Civil Action No. 16-0745 (PLF)

ORDER SETTING SETTLEMENT HEARING PROCEDURES

On May 8, 2023, the Court granted preliminary approval of the parties' Class

Action Settlement Agreement (the "Settlement") in this action. Order Granting Plaintiffs'

Revised Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Settlement [Dkt. No. 153].[1] The Court

scheduled a hearing (the "Settlement Hearing") to determine whether to grant final approval to

the Settlement and enter judgment, and to decide other remaining issues. Id. ¶ 3. On October 4,

2023, the Court moved the location of the hearing from Courtroom 20, the Ceremonial

Courtroom, to Courtroom 29. Order Changing Settlement Hearing Location [Dkt. No. 161].

The Settlement Hearing is scheduled for October 12, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. (Eastern Daylight

Time) in Courtroom 29 in the William B. Bryant Annex to the United States District Court for

the District of Columbia, 333 Constitution Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. It is hereby

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[1]   The parties are the National Veterans Legal Services Program and the Alliance for Justice (collectively, the "Class Plaintiffs"), and the United States.

ORDERED that the Settlement Hearing will adhere to the following procedures:

1. Virtual attendance at or participation in the Settlement Hearing will be permitted only for the parties and for any Class Members that have submitted written statements to the Court in advance of the hearing. Zoom videoconference information will be made available to those individuals upon request by the Courtroom Deputy Clerk, Tanya Johnson, who can be contacted at Tanya_Johnson@dcd.uscourts.gov. Due to technology constraints, those participating virtually will not be able to present any exhibits or demonstratives to the Court or view any that are physically displayed in the courtroom during the hearing. Virtual attendance at the Settlement Hearing will not be permitted for any Class Member that has not submitted a written statement to the Court in advance of the hearing. Any such Class Members may attend in person or listen to the hearing via the public telephone line: 877-848-7030 (access code 8204797).

2. During the Settlement Hearing, the following procedures shall apply:

    a. Opening Statement. The Class Plaintiffs and the United States will each be given twenty minutes to present opening remarks in support of the Settlement.

    b. Objections.

        i. Class Members that have submitted a written statement. If a Class Member has submitted a written statement and wishes to be heard at the Settlement Hearing, the Class Member shall be allocated ten minutes to make their presentation.

ii.   <u>Class Members that have not submitted a written statement</u>. If a Class Member has not submitted a written statement but wishes to be heard at the Settlement Hearing, the Class Member shall be allocated five minutes to make their presentation.

c. Responses to Objections. After all objections have been made by Class Members, the parties shall each have an opportunity to respond to the objections raised at the Settlement Hearing and in the written submissions. The time allotted to the parties for responding to objections will be determined by the Court at the hearing.

d. Closing Statement. The Class Plaintiffs and the United States shall each be given twenty minutes to present closing remarks in support of the Settlement.

e. Attorney Fees Argument. After closing remarks regarding the Settlement, the Class Plaintiffs and the United States shall each be given fifteen minutes to present their position, and to answer questions from the Court, regarding the amount of attorney fees that should be awarded to class counsel.

SO ORDERED.

PAUL L. FRIEDMAN
United States District Judge

DATE: 10/4/23

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