

9/11 Fund to Cut Payments to Sick Survivors by at Least 50%

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The \$7.4 billion fund created to aid people sickened by exposure to toxins at the sites of deadly attacks on the World Trade Center, after the EPA assured them it was safe, now has only \$2.4 billion left to pay 19,000 claims. In addition, thousands more are expected to file before the 2020 deadline. Close to 10,000 people in New York have been diagnosed with cancer linked to the attack. Payments to survivors who have already applied will be cut by 50%. For those who file after 2 February, checks will be slashed by 70%.

Sick first responders and survivors of the 9/11 terrorist attacks will see payments slashed dramatically as the fund to compensate them runs out of money, officials said Friday.

The fund was created to aid people sickened by exposure to toxins at the sites of deadly attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, and the families of those who have died.

But the \$7.4bn fund is running short on cash so it will cut future payments at least in half, its administrator **announced** Friday. Payments to survivors who have already applied will be cut by 50%. For those who file after 2 February, checks will be slashed by 70%.

"This is devastating," said John Feal, a leading advocate for 9/11 responders. "For so many it's a lifeline, and that lifeline has just been cut off."

Thousands of people have **fallen ill** after breathing air thick with smoke from the collapse of the World Trade Center. Close to 10,000 people in New York have been diagnosed

with cancer linked to the attack.

Congress voted in 2011 to open the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund for first responders and survivors sickened by the attack.

So far, it has awarded \$5bn to more than 21,000 applicants, with an average award of about \$240,000. That leaves only \$2.4bn to pay another 19,000 claims already filed, plus thousands more expected before the fund closes at the end of 2020.

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