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Attorney General George Secures Major Victory in the Distribution of the Epstein Estate Compensation Fund

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Little St. James Island, part of the Epstein Estate off the coast of St. Thomas

The VI Department of Justice has struck an agreement with lawyers for Jeffrey Epstein's Estate and Epstein's victims which Attorney General Denise George said safeguards victims' privacy and improved their chances for fair compensation from hundreds of millions of dollars in assets the dead pedophile left behind.

Under terms of the agreement, Ms. George will allow the release of a portion of Estate funds for the victims so that the Compensation Program can forge ahead.

"The Victim Compensation Fund as it stands now, is a substantial improvement from the original victims' claim fund proposed by the Estate," read a written statement from the Department of

Justice on Friday.

Among other things, the Fund now includes:

- Involvement of victim advocate Marci Hamilton, CEO of Child USA and the country's preeminent expert and advocate on child sexual abuse issues. This will help ensure that the decisions of the fund administrator are fully informed by and sensitive to the unique experiences and needs of survivors of trafficking and sexual abuse;
- Dedicated funding to ensure that victims who have not yet come forward or who are not satisfied with the claims process or award can opt-out without sacrificing the chance of a judgment or recovery;
- Protections to ensure that information shared by victims in the claims process is not provided to the Estate and, potentially, used against the claimant or other victims;
- Access to counseling and referral services through the FBI Victim Services program and Child USA; and
- Approval of the program's administrative budget by the Probate Court and monthly reporting to the Attorney General's Office and the Probate Court on the number and value of claim awards

The VIDOJ filed a civil enforcement action under the territory's Criminally Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act against the Epstein Estate and six other related companies based in the Virgin Islands in January.

Prior to the government's lawsuit, the Estate filed a motion with the probate court in the Virgin Islands to seek approval for a claims fund to provide an alternative resolution process for numerous victims who filed claims against the Estate.

Ms. George opposed the Estate's initial demand that, in order to obtain funds under the program, victims be required to sign broad releases to protect other individuals who may have sexually abused them. With that broad release in place, the Fund could not ensure a fundamentally fair and legally sufficient process for victims, she said.

"I'm hopeful the Agreement will receive final approval, so these women are able to receive the help they need," the attorney general said.