



ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
HEPATITIS C & HIV  
COMPENSATION TRIBUNAL  
2021



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# Introduction

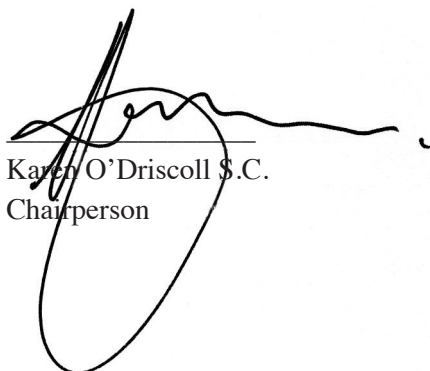
I am very pleased to introduce the Twenty-Fourth Annual Report on the activities of the Hepatitis C and HIV Compensation Tribunal for the calendar year 2021.

The Tribunal was established in December 1995 to compensate, inter alia, persons infected with Hepatitis C as a result of the use of Human Immunoglobulin Anti-D, or the receipt of contaminated blood transfusions or blood products within the State. The Hepatitis C Compensation Act 1997 was commenced on the 1st day of November 1997. In October 2002 the work of the Tribunal expanded due to the introduction of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 2002 enabling the Tribunal to award compensation to certain persons who contracted HIV within the State from certain blood products and to provide for related matters. The powers of the Tribunal were further modified in 2006 under the Hepatitis C Compensation (Amendment) Act 2006.

In 2020, due to the necessary restrictions placed on society to cope with the COVID- 19 pandemic, the Tribunal applied to the Minister for Health for designation to conduct remote hearings and this designation was provided for under Section 31 of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 2020 and commenced by S.I. No. 428/2020 - Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 (Sections 29 and 31) (Hepatitis C and HIV Compensation Tribunal) (Designation) Order 2020.

The Tribunal has been hearing claims on a continuous basis since March 1996. There were 10 new claims submitted in 2021 making a total of 4987 to the end of 2021. While the Tribunal paid awards in 42 cases in 2021, approximately 283 initial claims are still awaiting hearing and/or determination before the Tribunal. The Tribunal is actively engaged in encouraging claimants to bring on their claims before it and the Tribunal continues to be able to assign a hearing date without delay to any claim for which full supporting documentation has been lodged.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Tribunal and the staff attached to the Tribunal office.



Karen O'Driscoll S.C.  
Chairperson



# Membership of the Tribunal

**The membership of the Tribunal is as follows:**

Ms. Karen O’Driscoll SC (Chairperson)

Mr. Stephen Boggs BL

Ms. Emma Cassidy BL

Ms. Adrienne Cawley BL

Ms. Claire Cummins BL

Mr. John Healy SC

Mr. Michael MacNamee BL

Mr. Joseph O’Sullivan BL

Ms Romaine Scally Solicitor





## Entitlement to Make a Claim

The categories of persons entitled to apply for compensation are set out in Section 4 (1) of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act, 1997 as amended and in S.I. No. 432 of 1998 (extension of classes of Claimants before Tribunal) Regulations, 1998 and the onus of proof on a Claimant is set out in Section 4 (8) of the Act as amended. The Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act, 1997, the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 2002 and 2006, and associated Statutory Instruments can be viewed on the Tribunal website: [www.hepccomtrib.com](http://www.hepccomtrib.com).

The Tribunal is anxious that all those who might be entitled to apply for compensation are aware of its existence and how to apply.

Application forms may be downloaded from the site and general information including a location map and frequently asked questions may be obtained.

**POTENTIAL CLAIMANTS ARE  
PARTICULARLY ADVISED  
TO NOTE THE RELEVANT  
TIME LIMITS WHICH ARE  
SET OUT IN SECTION 4 (14) OF  
THE ACT AS AMENDED.**



# Operation of the Tribunal

The Tribunal operated as a non-statutory Scheme of compensation from the date of its establishment on 16th December 1995 to 31st October 1997. On 1st November 1997 the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act, 1997 came into effect. On 9th October 2002, the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act 2002 became effective. Sections 1 and 2 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act 2006 became effective on 20th June 2006.

Claims are dealt with by the Tribunal by way of an in camera oral hearing before at least two members of the Tribunal or by way of an offer of settlement. (Settlement arrangements - Appendix III).

Hearings are held in the offices of the Tribunal and since April 2012 the Tribunal is located at 31-35 Bow Street, Dublin 7. The Tribunal from time to time holds sittings in Cork in response to requests from Claimants in the Munster area. A firm of stenographers is engaged for all hearings in the Tribunal and transcripts of proceedings are made available to each Claimant through their Solicitor.

The Tribunal has also since the 13th October 2020 been designated by the Minister for Health pursuant to Sections 29 and 31 of the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2020 as a state body with an entitlement to conduct its hearings remotely and the Tribunal introduced a facility for such hearings to enable it to continue to function during the Covid-19 Pandemic, and this facility remains available to Applicants on request.

Claimants are entitled to be legally represented at the hearings. In some cases, the Tribunal may decide to appoint Counsel to assist it.

## Awards

The Tribunal *paid* a total of €9,017,833 in respect of 42 awards during 2021. There was 1 payment totalling €455,000 in respect of a High Court Appeal (see Appendix I).

There were 46 awards *made* by the Tribunal during 2021. The total amount awarded was €15,468,251 with the average being €346,158. The awards ranged from €55,000 to €3,728,018 and may be summarised as follows:-

Provisional Awards	10
Single Lump Sum Awards	36

Interim payments are made generally in situations where a Claimant is not in a position to present the claim in full e.g. when he/she is undergoing treatment for the condition of Hepatitis C or HIV and a final prognosis is not immediately available. There was 1 interim payment made during the year 2021 totaling €75,000.

In the provisional awards made to date the Tribunal has been of the view that on the evidence before it that there was a possibility, but no more than a possibility that the Claimant, as a result of having contracted Hepatitis C or HIV might suffer a particular serious consequence or consequences in the future. In addition, the Tribunal has specified the time period within which the Claimant may apply for further compensation in the event of such consequence or consequences occurring.

## **Applications for Further Compensation Arising from a Provisional Award**

Included in the total number of awards made during 2021, 3 claims for Further Compensation were heard resulting in additional awards of compensation to the Claimants in the sum of €4,193,018.

## **Legal Costs**

In 2021 the sum of €849,347 was paid in costs in respect of 18 Tribunal awards. (See Appendix IV for a complete breakdown of payments).

## **Reparation Fund**

Section 11 (4) of the 1997 Act established a Reparation Fund whereby a Claimant who had accepted an award from the Tribunal or an offer of settlement would be entitled to apply to have an amount paid to her/him from the Fund in lieu of the Tribunal assessing and awarding aggravated or exemplary damages – with the amount from the fund to be fixed at 20% of the total award or settlement. The Government subsequently made arrangements to allow the legal personal representatives of deceased Claimants to apply for the Fund payment.

In addition, a person who, on appeal to the High Court under Section 5(15) or Section 6(3)(e) of the Act, is granted an award of general or special damages or both, has an amount paid to her or him from the Fund in lieu of the assessment of aggravated or exemplary damages.

In 2021, €2,617,127 was paid out by the Tribunal from the Fund in respect of 43 Tribunal awards and 1 High Court Appeal.

## **Withdrawn/Inactive Claims**

555 claims have been withdrawn to the end of 2021. Currently the Tribunal is actively engaged in getting all primary claims brought on for hearing. In addition, approximately 416 cases have been adjourned generally with liberty to re-enter as at the end of 2021.

## **Staff**

During 2021 a staff of two (one full-time and one part-time) provided the administrative/clerical support for the operation of the Tribunal.

# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX I

### Summary of Awards, Appeals, Reparation Fund Payments and Legal Costs to date

#### Awards of the Tribunal

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Awards</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u> €
1996	204	€28,627,096.00
1997	327	€56,672,735.00
1998	535	€105,660,817.00
1999	214	€43,221,011.00
2000	126	€31,943,504.00
2001	71	€23,646,314.00
2002	62	€18,541,096.00
2003	108	€27,964,437.00
2004	243	€39,384,189.00
2005	287	€42,186,950.00
2006	290	€46,543,469.00
2007	193	€57,782,743.00
2008	143	€39,349,934.00
2009	158	€32,244,590.00
2010	117	€30,496,254.00
2011	114	€17,066,854.00
2012	79	€15,091,916.00
2013	77	€16,298,493.00
2014	75	€16,370,641.00
2015	59	€15,700,074.00
2016	28	€14,892,384.00
2017	62	€13,114,428.00
2018	52	€10,754,172.00
2019	28	€8,045,988.00
2020	38	€5,828,690.00
2021	42	€9,017,833.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3732</b>	<b>€766,446,612.00</b>

## High Court Appeals

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Appeals</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u> €
2000	41	€6,053,486.00
2001	113	€24,835,283.00
2002	52	€17,762,094.00
2003	29	€7,372,875.00
2004	43	€7,954,150.00
2005	23	€2,260,174.00
2006	26	€5,249,856.00
2007	15	€3,242,913.00
2008	10	€4,670,878.00
2009	12	€1,638,493.00
2010	14	€1,670,025.00
2011	3	€195,001.00
2012	7	€1,385,476.00
2013	1	€40,000.00
2014	2	€150,000.00
2015	3	€220,000.00
2016	2	€135,000.00
2017	6	€1,506,500.00
2018	0	€0.00
2019	3	€1,070,642.00
2020	4	€1,765,480.00
2021	1	€455,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>€89,633,326.00</b>



## Reparation Fund Payments

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Payments</u>	<u>Award or Appeal</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u> €
1997	340	Awards	€11,971,841.00
1998	686	Awards	€25,249,850.00
1999	220	Awards	€8,928,869.00
2000	136	Awards	€6,692,662.00
2000	39	Appeals	€1,124,269.00
2001	77	Awards	€4,889,774.00
2001	115	Appeals	€5,053,485.00
2002	67	Awards	€3,800,910.00
2002	52	Appeals	€3,552,419.00
2003	92	Awards	€4,789,220.00
2003	29	Appeals	€1,474,575.00
2004	240	Awards	€7,723,198.00
2004	43	Appeals	€1,590,830.00
2005	285	Awards	€8,355,730.00
2005	23	Appeals	€452,035.00
2006	288	Awards	€9,296,865.00
2006	25	Appeals	€1,028,715.00
2007	170	Awards	€11,146,133.00
2007	15	Appeals	€648,583.00
2008	138	Awards	€7,597,215.00
2008	10	Appeals	€934,176.00
2009	152	Awards	€6,234,917.00
2009	12	Appeals	€327,699.00
2010	112	Awards	€5,964,670.00
2010	14	Appeals	€321,405.00
2011	112	Awards	€3,388,004.00
2011	3	Appeals	€39,000.00
2012	76	Awards	€3,127,929.00
2012	6	Appeals	€263,295.00
2013	70	Awards	€2,985,965.00
2014	75	Awards	€2,965,048.00
2014	2	Appeals	€30,000.00
2015	54	Awards	€2,988,111.00
2015	3	Appeals	€44,000.00
2016	25	Awards	€3,040,174.00
2016	2	Appeals	€27,000.00

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Payments</u>	<u>Award or Appeal</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u> €
2017	58	Awards	€2,711,089.00
2017	6	Appeals	€289,000.00
2018	45	Awards	€2,068,654.00
2018	0	Appeals	€0.00
2019	25	Awards	€1,540,214.00
2019	2	Appeals	€164,128.00
2020	35	Awards	€1,128,738.00
2020	4	Appeals	€453,096.00
2021	43	Awards	€2,449,647.00
2021	1	Appeal	€91,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4027</b>		<b>€168,944,137.00</b>

## Legal Costs

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Claims</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u> €
1996	93	€1,737,849.00
1997	275	€7,518,688.00
1998	512	€16,345,926.00
1999	315	€9,984,938.00
2000	180	€8,297,691.00
2001	183	€8,605,772.00
2002	77	€4,490,412.00
2003	131	€6,859,157.00
2004	197	€7,094,735.00
2005	307	€13,180,987.00
2006	344	€11,371,437.00
2007	187	€7,825,866.00
2008	129	€8,986,744.00
2009	155	€13,027,173.00
2010	148	€10,229,280.00
2011	149	€10,608,721.00
2012	96	€7,948,739.00
2013	65	€4,571,765.00
2014	78	€6,689,814.00
2015	40	€2,101,000.00
2016	30	€2,388,221.00
2017	48	€3,750,966.00
2018	48	€4,859,695.00
2019	45	€5,418,090.00
2020	37	€2,702,948.00
2021	18	€849,347.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3887</b>	<b>€187,445,961.00</b>



## **APPENDIX II**

### **HEPATITIS C AND HIV COMPENSATION TRIBUNAL**

#### **ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

### **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

#### **Basis of Accounts**

The accounts are a cash-based record of the Receipts and Payments in the period.

#### **Reporting Period**

The reporting period is the year ending 31 December 2021.

#### **Receipts**

Receipts for the period represent those monies claimed and received from the Special Account and the Reparation Fund established under Sections 10 and 11 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act, 1997 and amended under Sections 7 and 8 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act 2002.

#### **Payments**

Payments consist of those sums which have been discharged during the period.

#### **Suspense Account at Department of Health**

Payments are made by the Department of Health on behalf of the Hepatitis C and HIV Compensation Tribunal at the direction of either, the Hepatitis C and HIV Compensation Tribunal or, in respect of legal costs only, the Office of the Chief State Solicitor. These payments are made from a suspense account, which forms part of the Appropriation Account of the Department of Health and is subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

## HEPATITIS C AND HIV COMPENSATION TRIBUNAL

<u>Accounts of Receipts and Payments for the year ended</u> <u>31 December 2021</u>	Number	2021 €	Number	2020 €
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>Tribunal Awards</b>				
Including New Awards	42	9,017,833	38	5,828,690
High Court Appeals	1	455,000	4	1,765,480
Re-Issued Awards *	See Note *	382,400	0	0
Total Awards	43	9,855,233	42	7,594,170
<i>* Five (5) awards were re-issued in 2021</i>				
<b>Reparation Fund payments</b>				
Including New Awards	43	2,449,647	35	1,128,738
High Court Appeals	1	91,000	4	453,096
Re-Issued Awards	See Note *	76,480	0	0
Total Reparation Fund Payments	44	2,617,127	39	1,581,834
<i>* Five (5) Reparation Fund Awards were re-issued in 2021</i>				
<b>Legal costs of Tribunal Awards</b>				
Including New Awards	17	384,404	37	2,702,948
High Court Appeals	1	464,943	0	0.00
Total Legal costs	18	849,347	37	2,702,948
<b><u>Administrative costs</u></b>				
Pay		429,287	Note 1	389,649
Non-Pay		72,979	Note 2	86,974
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>13,823,973</b>		<b>12,355,573</b>
<b><u>Receipts</u></b>				
Received from the Special Account established under Section 10 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act 1997.		9,245,000		0.00
Received from the Reparation Fund established under Section 11 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act 1997.		1,229,000		0.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>10,474,000</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for year</b>		<b>(3,349,973)</b>		<b>(12,355,573)</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) brought forward from previous year</b>		<b>(13,561,206)</b>		<b>(1,205,633)</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) carried forward to following year</b>		<b>(16,911,179)</b>		<b>(13,561,206)</b>
<b><u>Financed by</u></b>				
<b>Suspense Account at Department of Health</b>				
This sum represents the amount to be drawn from the relevant accounts established under Sections 10 and 11 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act, 1997 and amended under Sections 7 and 8 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal (Amendment) Act, 2002.				

## HEPATITIS C AND HIV COMPENSATION TRIBUNAL

<u>Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021</u>			
<u>Notes to the Accounts</u>		<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
		€	€
<b>Pay</b>			
<b>Note 1</b>	Fees paid to Tribunal Members and Chairman	274,809	190,719
	Administration	154,477	198,930
	<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>429,286</b>	<b>389,649</b>
<b>Non-Pay</b>			
<b>Note 2</b>	Confidential waste disposal	645	535
	Contract Cleaning	3,493	4,153
	Courier Services	4,520	1,731
	Fees for Expert Witnesses	0	1,035
	Heat, Power and Light	5,673	4,189
	ICT	4,988	28,594
	Legal Services	0	0
	Maintenance and Fixtures	60	9,462
	Miscellaneous	402	898
	Office Supplies	1,989	2,837
	Phones	2,663	2,478
	Postage	1,186	949
	Printing	0	1,597
	Room hire	708	0
	Stenography services	45,887	24,325
	Travel and Subsistence	765	4,144
	Vending machine and water supplies	0	47
	<b>Total Non-Pay</b>	<b>72,979</b>	<b>86,974</b>

\* This sum includes a once-off payment of arrears to a former member of the Tribunal Staff.





## **APPENDIX III**

### **Settlement Arrangements made by the Minister for Health and Children under Section 8 of the Hepatitis C Compensation Tribunal Act 1997**

#### **Introduction**

The settlement arrangements provide for the settlement of claims in respect of general and special damages only. The arrangements will operate as informally as possible and in a manner which ensures settlement offers are made as early as possible.

#### **Supporting Documentation**

Where a claimant advises the Secretary to the Tribunal that she or he wishes to settle, the claimant will be required to furnish to the Secretary a full brief of the documentation on which the claim is based including complete documentation in support of claims for general and special damages. A claimant may opt for a single lump sum award or a provisional award by way of settlement.

#### **Causation**

The claim together with all supporting documentation will be referred to a member of the Tribunal. The claimant will be required to establish to the satisfaction of the Tribunal member, that she or he meets the criteria set out in Section 4 of the Act.

Where the Tribunal member is not satisfied that the claimant meets the criteria set out in Section 4 of the Act, the claim will be referred to the Tribunal for a decision on causation and, if the claimant so wishes, for an award by the Tribunal, where appropriate. Where the claimant so wishes, a claim may be returned for settlement following a determination by the Tribunal on causation.

Where the Tribunal decides that the claimant is not entitled to compensation under the Act, the claimant may appeal that decision to the High Court.

#### **Settlement Offer**

Settlement offers will be based on the same criteria applied by the Tribunal under section 5 of the Act in relation to the level of awards. The Secretary to the Tribunal will advise the claimant of her/his legal representative in writing of the settlement offer.

#### **Acceptance of Settlement Offer**

The claimant will be requested to indicate, in writing, acceptance or rejection of the settlement within 28 days of the date of the offer.

Where the claimant accepts the offer, she or he will sign the necessary waivers in respect of any right of action which the claimant might otherwise have had.

The Secretary to the Tribunal will note that the offer has been accepted and will arrange for the Tribunal to make an award on consent of the settlement amount.

In the case of a claimant who is a minor, the acceptance of an award shall be subject to the approval of the High Court.

### **Rejection of settlement**

Where the claimant does not advise the Secretary within 28 days of the date of the settlement offer it will be taken that the claimant has rejected the offer and is seeking a Tribunal hearing.

Where a claimant rejects an offer, or is deemed to have rejected an offer, the claim will be referred by the Secretary to the Tribunal for a hearing unless he is instructed otherwise by the claimant.

Where a claimant rejects a settlement or is deemed to have rejected a settlement, the claimant will be deemed to have exhausted the arrangements for settlement under Section 8.

### **Reparation Fund**

A claimant who accepts a settlement offer may apply to the Secretary to have an amount of 20% of the settlement offer paid out of the Reparation Fund established under section 11 of the Act. Alternatively, the claimant may apply to have a claim for aggravated or exemplary damages decided by the Tribunal under section 5.

### **Representative Claim**

The Secretary to the Tribunal may accept a claim representative of a class or group of claimants where the circumstances which have given rise to their claims are broadly similar. Similar arrangements to those set out above will apply in such cases. The rights of each individual claimant to accept or reject a settlement and the rights of each claimant under any other provision of the Act are preserved.

### **Costs**

Where a Tribunal makes an award based on a settlement offer, costs will be awarded on the same basis and using the same procedures as if it had heard the claim under the Act. Similarly, the Tribunal will take into account costs incurred in opting for settlement where a claimant has rejected a settlement offer.

### **Confidentiality**

In cases where the offer is not accepted by the claimant and the case is referred for a full hearing by the Tribunal, the Tribunal member who was involved in the settlement arrangements will not be a member of the division of the Tribunal hearing the claim. The Tribunal will not be made aware that the claimant applied for a settlement or that she/he rejected a settlement.

The confidentiality of the case is guaranteed under Section 8(2) of the Act which provides as follows:

***“Any documents or papers submitted to the Tribunal in respect of a claim where a settlement is being negotiated under this section may be seen by persons involved in the settlement who shall not disclose the information contained in such documents or papers other than to any person involved in the settlement.”***

This means that the Tribunal member who is involved in a settlement is not permitted to give any information (including details of any offer which was made to the claimant) to anyone who is not involved in the settlement, or to discuss the case with the other Tribunal members.



## APPENDIX IV

### LEGAL COSTS PAID IN 2021

DATE	TRIBUNAL REFERENCE	AMOUNT	PAYEE
		€	
24/02/2021	4820/16	21,421.12	D.M. O'Connor and Co
24/02/2021	2077/00	452,642.82	Malcomson Law
21/04/2021	4865 and 4864/17	19,065.00	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
21/04/2021	1917/99	12,773.00	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
21/04/2021	4947/18; 4948/18; 4949/18	25,461.00	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
28/04/2021	2210/02	44,796.00	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
28/04/2021	4915/18	21,622.20	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
16/06/2021	3982/06	31,839.44	Malcomson Law
16/06/2021	4514/12	23,480.08	Malcomson Law
16/06/2021	2077/00	12,300.00	Malcomson Law
16/06/2021	4918/18	44,224.00	Fiona Ryan Solicitors
23/06/2021	4937/18	26,083.50	D.M. O'Connor and Co
23/06/2021	1561/96	33,464.50	Mannion Aird and Co Solicitors
14/07/2021	4914/18	37,687.25	MB Solicitors
04/08/2021	0094/96	19,430.50	Hoey and Denning
03/11/2021	4512/12	23,056.12	Malcomson Law
	<b>Total</b>	<b>849,346.53</b>	





