

gave rise to the use of force by the United States, such coalition, or such military organization resulting in such property damage, personal injury, or death.

“(c) NATURE OF PAYMENT.—A payment provided pursuant to the authority under subsection (a) may not be construed or considered as an admission or acknowledgment of any legal obligation to provide compensation for any property damage, personal injury, or death.

“(d) AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS.—If the Secretary of Defense determines a payment under subsection (a) to be appropriate in a particular setting, the amounts of payments, if any, to be provided to civilians determined to have suffered harm incident to the use of force by the United States Armed Forces under the program should be determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary and based on an assessment, conducted in consultation with the Secretary of State, that includes such factors as cultural appropriateness and prevailing economic conditions. A copy of any regulations so prescribed shall be provided to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations] of the Senate and the House of Representatives] upon finalization.

“(e) LEGAL ADVICE.—Local military commanders shall receive legal advice before making ex gratia payments under this subsection. The legal advisor, under regulations of the Department of Defense, shall advise on whether an ex gratia payment is proper under this section and applicable Department of Defense regulations.

“(f) WRITTEN RECORD.—A written record of any ex gratia payment offered pursuant to the authority under subsection (a), and whether accepted or denied, shall be kept by the local military commander and on a timely basis submitted to the appropriate office in the Department of Defense as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

“(g) QUARTERLY REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Dec. 20, 2019], and every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations] of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report including the following:

“(1) With respect to each ex gratia payment made under the authority in this subsection or any other authority during the preceding 90-day period, each of the following:

“(A) The amount used for such payments and the country with respect to which each such payment was made.

“(B) The manner in which claims for such payments were verified.

“(C) The position of the official who approved the payment.

“(D) The manner in which payments are made.

“(2) With respect to a preceding 90-day period in which no ex gratia payments were made—

“(A) whether any such payment was refused, along with the reason for such refusal; or

“(B) any other reason for which no such payments were made.

“(h) RELATION TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the authority provided by this section shall be construed as the sole authority available to make ex gratia payments for property damage, personal injury, or death that is incident to the use of force by the United States Armed Forces.”

REPORT ON DEPARTMENT POLICY ON PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR LOSS OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Pub. L. 105-85, div. A, title X, §1013(b), Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1874, provided that: “The Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report describing the Department of Defense policy regarding the payment of a claim by a member of the Armed Forces who is not assigned to quarters of the United States for losses and damage to personal property of the member incurred at

the member’s residence as a result of a natural disaster. The report shall include a description of the number of such claims received over the past 10 years, the number of claims paid, and the number of claims rejected. If the Secretary determines the Department of Defense should modify its policy in order to accept additional claims by members who are not assigned to quarters of the United States for losses and damage to personal property, the Secretary shall also include in the report any legislative changes that the Secretary considers necessary to enable the Secretary to implement the policy change.”

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Authority vested by this chapter in “military departments”, “the Secretary concerned”, or “the Secretary of Defense” to be exercised, with respect to commissioned officers of Public Health Service, by Secretary of Health and Human Services or his designee, see section 213a of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Authority vested by sections 2731, 2732, and 2735 of this title in “military departments”, “the Secretary concerned”, or “the Secretary of Defense” to be exercised, with respect to commissioned officer corps of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, by Secretary of Commerce or his designee, see section 3071 of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters.

**§ 2732. Payment of claims: availability of appropriations**

Appropriations available to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance may be used for payment of claims authorized by law to be paid by the Department of Defense (except for civil functions), including—

(1) claims for damages arising under training contracts with carriers; and

(2) repayment of amounts determined by the Secretary concerned to have been erroneously collected—

(A) from military and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense; or

(B) from States or territories or the District of Columbia (or members of the National Guard units thereof).

(Added Pub. L. 101-510, div. A, title XIV, §1481(j)(1), Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1708.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in Pub. L. 100-463, title VIII, §8098, Oct. 1, 1988, 102 Stat. 2270-35, which was set out as a note under section 2241 of this title, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 101-510, §1481(j)(3).

A prior section 2732, acts Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 152; Sept. 2, 1958, Pub. L. 85-861, §§1(53), 33(a)(16), 72 Stat. 1461, 1565; Sept. 15, 1965, Pub. L. 89-185, §1, 79 Stat. 789, related to settlement of property loss incident to service, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 88-558, §5(3), Aug. 31, 1964, 78 Stat. 768, effective two years from Aug. 31, 1964. See section 3701 et seq. of Title 31, Money and Finance.

**§ 2733. Property loss; personal injury or death: incident to noncombat activities of Department of Army, Navy, or Air Force**

(a) Under such regulations as the Secretary concerned may prescribe, he, or, subject to appeal to him, the Judge Advocate General of an armed force under his jurisdiction, or the chief Counsel of the Coast Guard, as appropriate, if designated by him, may settle, and pay in an

amount not more than \$100,000, a claim against the United States for—

- (1) damage to or loss of real property, including damage or loss incident to use and occupancy;
- (2) damage to or loss of personal property, including property bailed to the United States and including registered or insured mail damaged, lost, or destroyed by a criminal act while in the possession of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, or Coast Guard, as the case may be; or
- (3) personal injury or death;

either caused by a civilian officer or employee of that department, or the Coast Guard, or a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, or Coast Guard, as the case may be, acting within the scope of his employment, or otherwise incident to noncombat activities of that department, or the Coast Guard.

(b) A claim may be allowed under subsection (a) only if—

- (1) it is presented in writing within two years after it accrues, except that if the claim accrues in time of war or armed conflict or if such a war or armed conflict intervenes within two years after it accrues, and if good cause is shown, the claim may be presented not later than two years after the war or armed conflict is terminated;
- (2) it is not covered by section 2734 of this title or section 2672 of title 28;
- (3) it is not for personal injury or death of such a member or civilian officer or employee whose injury or death is incident to his service;
- (4) the damage to, or loss of, property, or the personal injury or death, was not caused wholly or partly by a negligent or wrongful act of the claimant, his agent, or his employee; or, if so caused, allowed only to the extent that the law of the place where the act or omission complained of occurred would permit recovery from a private individual under like circumstances; and
- (5) it is substantiated as prescribed in regulations of the Secretary concerned.

For the purposes of clause (1), the dates of the beginning and ending of an armed conflict are the dates established by concurrent resolution of Congress or by a determination of the President.

(c) Payment may not be made under this section for reimbursement for medical, hospital, or burial services furnished at the expense of the United States.

(d) If the Secretary concerned considers that a claim in excess of \$100,000 is meritorious, and the claim otherwise is payable under this section, the Secretary may pay the claimant \$100,000 and report any meritorious amount in excess of \$100,000 to the Secretary of the Treasury for payment under section 1304 of title 31.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (d), no claim may be paid under this section unless the amount tendered is accepted by the claimant in full satisfaction.

(f) For the purposes of this section, a member of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or of the Public Health Service

who is serving with the Navy or Marine Corps shall be treated as if he were a member of that armed force.

(g) Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary concerned, an officer or employee under the jurisdiction of the Secretary may settle a claim that otherwise would be payable under this section in an amount not to exceed \$25,000. A decision of the officer or employee who makes a final settlement decision under this section may be appealed by the claimant to the Secretary concerned or an officer or employee designated by the Secretary for that purpose.

(h) Under such regulations as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe, he or his designee has the same authority as the Secretary of a military department under this section with respect to the settlement of claims based on damage, loss, personal injury, or death caused by a civilian officer or employee of the Department of Defense acting within the scope of his employment or otherwise incident to noncombat activities of that department.

(Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 153; Pub. L. 85-729, §1, Aug. 23, 1958, 72 Stat. 813; Pub. L. 85-861, §1(54), Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1461; Pub. L. 89-718, §8(a), Nov. 2, 1966, 80 Stat. 1117; Pub. L. 90-522, Sept. 26, 1968, 82 Stat. 875; Pub. L. 90-525, §§1, 3-5, Sept. 26, 1968, 82 Stat. 877, 878; Pub. L. 91-312, §2, July 8, 1970, 84 Stat. 412; Pub. L. 93-336, §1, July 8, 1974, 88 Stat. 291; Pub. L. 96-513, title V, §511(94), Dec. 12, 1980, 94 Stat. 2928; Pub. L. 98-564, §1, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2918; Pub. L. 104-316, title II, §202(e), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3842; Pub. L. 116-283, div. A, title IX, §924(b)(2)(A)(ix), Jan. 1, 2021, 134 Stat. 3821.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES  
1956 ACT

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
2733(a) .....	31:223b (1st sentence, less 52d through 62d, and 76th through 93d, words; and less proviso).	July 3, 1943, ch. 189, §1 (less 4th sentence), 57 Stat. 372; May 29, 1945, ch. 135, §4, 59 Stat. 225; June 28, 1946, ch. 514, §1, 60 Stat. 332; July 3, 1952, ch. 570, §2(c), 66 Stat. 334; Mar. 31, 1953, ch. 13 (as applicable to Act of July 3, 1952, ch. 570, §2(c)), 67 Stat. 18; June 30, 1953, ch. 172 (as applicable to Act of July 3, 1952, ch. 570, §2(c)), 67 Stat. 131.
2733(b) .....	[Uncodified: Aug. 2, 1946, ch. 753, §424(a) (4th clause), 60 Stat. 847]. 31:223b (76th through 93d words and proviso of 1st sentence; and 2d sentence).	Aug. 2, 1946, ch. 753, §424(a) (4th clause), 60 Stat. 847.
2733(c) .....	31:223b (3d sentence).	Dec. 28, 1945, ch. 597, §1, 59 Stat. 662; June 28, 1946, ch. 514, §2, 60 Stat. 333.
2733(d) .....	31:223b (last sentence).	Dec. 28, 1945, ch. 597, §6; added Mar. 20, 1946, ch. 104 (last par.), 60 Stat. 56.
2733(e) .....	31:223b (52d through 62d words of 1st sentence).	
2733(f) .....	31:222h. [31:223b is made applicable to the Navy by 31:223d and 223e].	

In subsection (a), the words “a civilian officer or employee of that department, or a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps, as the case may be” are substituted for the words “military personnel or civilian employees of the Department of the Army or of the Army”. The words “whether under a lease, express or implied” are omitted as surplusage. The words “consider, ascertain, adjust, determine” are omitted as covered by the word “settle”, as defined in section 2731 of this title. The words “arising on or after May 27, 1941” are omitted as executed, since, under revised subsection (b), a claim must be filed within one year after

it accrues, or within one year after the war is terminated, if it accrues in time of war.

In subsection (a)(1), the words “or loss” are inserted before the word “incident”, for clarity.

In subsection (b)(1), the words “it accrues” are substituted for the words “the accident or incident out of which such claim arises shall have occurred”, in 31:223b. The words “the claim accrues” are substituted for the words “That if such accident or incident occurs”. The words “not later than” are substituted for the words “within” to make it clear that a claim may be presented during a war. The words “the war is terminated” are substituted for the words “after peace is established”, since the other time covered is “time of war”. 31:223b (last 49 words of proviso of 2d sentence) is omitted as executed.

In subsection (b)(2), the words “or section 2672 of title 28” are substituted for the words “claims cognizable under part 2 of this title”, to reflect the express amendment of 31:223b and 223c by the fourth clause of section 424(a) of the Federal Tort Claims Act, 60 Stat. 847. Section 424(a) of the Federal Tort Claims Act referred to “claims cognizable under part 2 of this title”. Part 2 of that act consisted of sections 403 and 404 which were repealed by section 39 of the Act of June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 1008, and replaced by sections 2672 and 2673 of title 28. The words “or possessions thereof” are omitted, since possessions of foreign countries are not specifically covered by the section to which the words refer.

In subsection (d), the words “claim \* \* \* that would otherwise be covered by this section” are substituted for the words “such claims”.

In subsection (e), the words “and final settlement” are omitted as surplusage.

## 1958 ACT

Revised section	Source (U.S. Code)	Source (Statutes at Large)
2733 .....	31:223b.	Mar. 29, 1956, ch. 103, §§1-3, 70 Stat. 60, 61.

## AMENDMENTS

2021—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 116-283 substituted “Marine Corps, Space Force,” for “Marine Corps,” in par. (2) and in concluding provisions.

1996—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 104-316 substituted “Secretary of the Treasury” for “Comptroller General”.

1984—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 98-564, §1(1), substituted “Chief Counsel” for “chief legal officer” and “\$100,000” for “\$25,000” in provisions preceding par. (1).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 98-564, §1(2), amended subsec. (d) generally, substituting “\$100,000” for “\$25,000” and provisions requiring Secretary to report excess to the Comptroller General for provisions requiring reporting to Congress.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 98-564, §1(3), substituted provisions permitting officers and employees of Secretary concerned to settle claims not otherwise payable under this section in amounts not to exceed \$25,000 and providing for an appeal to Secretary concerned or his designee for provisions which provided for delegation of claims settlement authority by Secretary for cases not to exceed \$5,000 and for appeal therefrom.

1980—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 96-513 substituted “National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration” for “Environmental Science Services Administration”.

1974—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 93-336, §1(1), substituted “\$25,000” for “\$15,000”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 93-336, §1(2), substituted “\$25,000” for “\$15,000” wherever appearing.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 93-336, §1(3), substituted “\$5,000” for “\$2,500”.

1970—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 91-312, §2(a), substituted “\$15,000” for “\$5,000”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 91-312, §2(b), substituted “\$15,000” for “\$5,000” wherever appearing.

1968—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 90-525, §1, substituted “Secretary concerned” for “Secretary of a military depart-

ment”, and authorized the Chief Legal Officer of the Coast Guard to settle claims, settlement of claims for damage or loss to personal property in possession of the Coast Guard, and settlements when the torts are caused by civilian officers or employees and members of the Coast Guard when acting within scope of employment or otherwise incident to noncombat activities of the Coast Guard.

Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 90-522, §1(1), authorized application of local law in determining effect of claimant's contributory negligence.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 90-525, §5, struck out “of the military department” after “Secretary”.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 90-525, §3, increased limitation on amount of settlement from \$1,000 to \$2,500, struck out “military” before “department concerned”, and provided for appeals to Secretary concerned, or his designee, from determinations delegating authority to settle claims to an officer of an armed force. See Pub. L. 90-522, §1(2), hereunder, for identical provision for appeals to Secretary concerned.

Pub. L. 90-522, §1(2), provided for appeals to Secretary concerned, or his designee, from determinations delegating authority to settle claims to an officer of an armed force.

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 90-525, §4, added subsec. (h).

1966—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 89-718 substituted “Environmental Science Services Administration” for “Coast and Geodetic Survey”.

1958—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 85-729, §1(1)(A), substituted “the Judge Advocate General of an armed force under his jurisdiction, if designated by him, may settle, and pay in an amount not more than \$5,000” for “any officer designated by him may settle, and pay in an amount not more than \$1,000”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 85-861, §1(54)(A), (B), in cl. (1), substituted “two years” for “one year” in three places and included claims accruing in time of armed conflict, and inserted sentence providing for the determination of dates of the beginning and ending of an armed conflict.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 85-861, §1(54)(C), substituted provisions prohibiting payment for reimbursement for medical, hospital, or burial services furnished at the expense of the United States for provisions which prohibited allowance of claims for personal injury or death for more than the cost of reasonable medical, hospital, and burial expenses actually incurred, and not otherwise furnished or paid by the United States.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 85-729, §1(1)(B), substituted provisions authorizing partial payments on claims over \$5,000 for provisions which authorized the Secretary of the military department concerned to report a claim for more than \$1,000 to Congress for its consideration.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 85-729, §1(1)(B), substituted “Except as provided in subsection (d), no claim may be paid under this section” for “No claim may be paid under subsection (a)”.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 85-729, §1(1)(C), added subsec. (g).

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1980 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 96-513 effective Dec. 12, 1980, see section 701(b)(3) of Pub. L. 96-513, set out as a Amendment note under section 101 of this title.

## REPEALS

The directory language of, but not the amendment made by, Pub. L. 89-718, §8(a), Nov. 2, 1966, 80 Stat. 1117, cited as a credit to this section, was repealed by Pub. L. 97-295, §6(b), Oct. 12, 1982, 96 Stat. 1314.

## TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of authorities, functions, personnel, and assets of the Coast Guard, including the authorities and functions of the Secretary of Transportation relating thereto, to the Department of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 468(b), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reor-

ganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

For transfer of functions of Public Health Service, see note set out under section 802 of this title.

CLAIMS FOR INJURY OR DEATH ACCRUED BEFORE  
MARCH 30, 1956

Pub. L. 85-861, §17, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1558, disallowed claims for personal injury or death under section 2733 of this title, for more than the cost of reasonable medical, hospital, and burial expenses actually incurred if the claim accrued before March 30, 1956.

**§ 2733a. Medical malpractice claims by members of the uniformed services**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Consistent with this section and under such regulations as the Secretary of Defense shall prescribe under subsection (f), the Secretary may allow, settle, and pay a claim against the United States for personal injury or death incident to the service of a member of the uniformed services that was caused by the medical malpractice of a Department of Defense health care provider.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR CLAIMS.—A claim may be allowed, settled, and paid under subsection (a) only if—

(1) the claim is filed by the member of the uniformed services who is the subject of the medical malpractice claimed, or by an authorized representative on behalf of such member who is deceased or otherwise unable to file the claim due to incapacitation;

(2) the claim is for personal injury or death caused by the negligent or wrongful act or omission of a Department of Defense health care provider in the performance of medical, dental, or related health care functions while such provider was acting within the scope of employment;

(3) the act or omission constituting medical malpractice occurred in a covered military medical treatment facility;

(4) the claim is presented to the Department in writing within two years after the claim accrues;

(5) the claim is not allowed to be settled and paid under any other provision of law; and

(6) the claim is substantiated as prescribed in regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense under subsection (f).

(c) LIABILITY.—(1) The Department of Defense is liable for only the portion of compensable injury, loss, or damages attributable to the medical malpractice of a Department of Defense health care provider.

(2) The Department of Defense shall not be liable for the attorney fees of a claimant under this section.

(d) PAYMENT OF CLAIMS.—(1) If the Secretary of Defense determines, pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary under subsection (f), that a claim under this section in excess of \$100,000 is meritorious, and the claim is otherwise payable under this section, the Secretary may pay the claimant \$100,000 and report any meritorious amount in excess of \$100,000 to the Secretary of the Treasury for payment under section 1304 of title 31.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (1), no claim may be paid under this section unless the

amount tendered is accepted by the claimant in full satisfaction.

(e) REPORTING MEDICAL MALPRACTICE.—Not later than 30 days after a determination of medical malpractice or the payment of all or part of a claim under this section, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Director of the Defense Health Agency a report documenting such determination or payment to be used by the Director for all necessary and appropriate purposes, including medical quality assurance.

(f) REGULATIONS.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe regulations to implement this section.

(2) Regulations prescribed by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Policies and procedures to ensure the timely, efficient, and effective processing and administration of claims under this section, including—

(i) the filing, receipt, investigation, and evaluation of a claim;

(ii) the negotiation, settlement, and payment of a claim;

(iii) such other matters relating to the processing and administration of a claim, including an administrative appeals process, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) Uniform standards consistent with generally accepted standards used in a majority of States in adjudicating claims under chapter 171 of title 28 (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”) to be applied to the evaluation, settlement, and payment of claims under this section without regard to the place of occurrence of the medical malpractice giving rise to the claim or the military department or service of the member of the uniformed services, and without regard to foreign law in the case of claims arising in foreign countries, including uniform standards to be applied to determinations with respect to—

(i) whether an act or omission by a Department of Defense health care provider in the context of performing medical, dental, or related health care functions was negligent or wrongful, considering the specific facts and circumstances;

(ii) whether the personal injury or death of the member was caused by a negligent or wrongful act or omission of a Department of Defense health care provider in the context of performing medical, dental, or related health care functions, considering the specific facts and circumstances;

(iii) requirements relating to proof of duty, breach of duty, and causation resulting in compensable injury or loss, subject to such exclusions as may be established by the Secretary of Defense; and

(iv) calculation of damages.

(C) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) In order to implement expeditiously the provisions of this section, the Secretary may prescribe the regulations under this subsection—

(A) by prescribing an interim final rule; and

(B) not later than one year after prescribing such interim final rule and considering public