

3M Lawsuit Ends in Victory for Veterans

Significant funds will be awarded to hundreds of thousands of veterans

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Thousands of veterans and current military service members may be entitled to receive compensation in the 3M earplug lawsuit. 3M agreed to pay \$6.01 billion to settle lawsuits filed by U.S. service members and veterans who suffered hearing injuries to include hearing loss and tinnitus as a result of using the company's earplugs. From 1999 to 2015, 3M manufactured, marketed and sold its Combat Arms Earplugs, Version 2 (CAEv2) with a design defect which hampered their effectiveness.

Approximately 240,000 veterans filed lawsuits against 3M, making the 3M Combat Arms Earplug Products Liability Litigation the largest mass tort multidistrict litigation in U.S. history. The settlement comes after 3M failed to move the lawsuits into bankruptcy court in hope of limiting its liability.

“This settlement is a tremendous outcome for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who put their lives on the line for our freedom,” said Duane Sarmiento, VFW national commander. “For those who came home with hearing damage due to 3M’s faulty earplugs, this is not only compensation, it’s a statement that their sacrifices won’t be ignored.”

In February, VFW filed an Amicus Curiae brief to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in support of claimants seeking relief from 3M for defective ear protection. 3M had tried to shift the blame to its subsidiary Aearo Technologies, who it said was responsible for the defective earplugs and who had filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy, to avoid paying claimants. The bankruptcy appeal is being held in abeyance pending finalization of the settlement.

More information about the settlement is available at 3m-earplugsettlement.com.

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