

TITLE 22 - FOREIGN RELATIONS AND INTERCOURSE

CHAPTER 38 - DEPARTMENT OF STATE

§ 2702. Malpractice protection

(a) Exclusiveness of designated remedies

The remedy—

- (1) against the United States provided by sections 1346 (b) and 2672 of title 28, or
- (2) through proceedings for compensation or other benefits from the United States as provided by any other law, where the availability of such benefits precludes a remedy under such sections,

for damages for personal injury, including death, allegedly arising from malpractice or negligence of a physician, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, or paramedical (including medical and dental assistants and technicians, nursing assistants, and therapists) or other supporting personnel of the Department of State in furnishing medical care or related services, including the conducting of clinical studies or investigations, while in the exercise of his or her duties in or for the Department of State or any other Federal department, agency, or instrumentality shall be exclusive of any other civil action or proceeding by reason of the same subject matter against such physician, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, or paramedical or other supporting personnel (or his or her estate) whose act or omission gave rise to such claim.

(b) Defense of civil actions by United States; delivery of process; furnishing of copies of pleadings

The United States Government shall defend any civil action or proceeding brought in any court against any person referred to in subsection (a) of this section (or his or her estate) for any such damage or injury. Any such person against whom such civil action or proceeding is brought shall deliver, within such time after date of service or knowledge of service as may be determined by the Attorney General, all process served upon him or her or an attested true copy thereof to whomever was designated by the Secretary to receive such papers. Such person shall promptly furnish copies of the pleading and process therein to the United States attorney for the district embracing the place wherein the proceeding is brought, to the Attorney General, and to the Secretary.

(c) Removal of actions; remand or dismissal; suspension of limitations

Upon a certification by the Attorney General that the defendant was acting within the scope of his or her employment in or for the Department of State or any other Federal department, agency, or instrumentality at the time of the incident out of which the suit arose, any such civil action or proceeding commenced in a State court shall be removed without bond at any time before trial by the Attorney General to the district court of the United States of the district and division embracing the place wherein it is pending and the proceeding deemed a tort action brought against the United States under the provisions of title 28, and all references thereto. Should a United States district court determine on a hearing on a motion to remand held before a trial on the merits that the case so removed is one in which a remedy by suit within the meaning of subsection (a) of this section is not available against the United States, the case shall be remanded to the State court except that where such remedy is precluded because of the availability of a remedy through proceedings for compensation or other benefits from the United States as provided by any other law, the case shall be dismissed, but in that event, the running of any limitation of time for commencing, or filing an application or claim in, such proceedings for compensation or other benefits shall be deemed to have been suspended during the pendency of the civil action or proceeding under this section.

(d) Compromise or settlement of claims

The Attorney General may compromise or settle any claim asserted in such civil action or proceeding in the manner provided in section 2677 of title 28, and with the same effect.

(e) Inapplicability of section 2680 (h) of title 28

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 3, 2005 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscprint.html>).

For purposes of this section, the provisions of section 2680 (h) of title 28, shall not apply to any tort enumerated therein arising out of negligence in the furnishing of medical care or related services, including the conducting of clinical studies or investigations.

(f) Holding harmless or providing for liability insurance

The Secretary may, to the extent he deems appropriate, hold harmless or provide liability insurance for any person to whom the immunity provisions of subsection (a) of this section apply, for damages for personal injury, including death, negligently caused by any such person while acting within the scope of his or her office or employment and as a result of the furnishing of medical care or related services, including the conducting of clinical studies or investigations, if such person is assigned to a foreign area or detailed for service with other than a Federal agency or institution, or if the circumstances are such as are likely to preclude the remedies of third persons against the United States provided by sections 1346 (b) and 2672 of title 28, for such damage or injury.

(g) Medical care or related service within scope of employment

For purposes of this section, any medical care or related service covered by this section and performed abroad by a covered person at the direction or with the approval of the United States chief of mission or other principal representative of the United States in the area shall be deemed to be within the scope of employment of the individual performing the service.

(Aug. 1, 1956, ch. 841, title I, § 30, as added Pub. L. 96-465, title II, § 2201(a), Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2155; renumbered title I, Pub. L. 97-241, title II, § 202(a), Aug. 24, 1982, 96 Stat. 282.)

Effective Date

Section effective Feb. 15, 1981, except as otherwise provided, see section 2403 of Pub. L. 96-465, set out as a note under section 3901 of this title.