

GOVERNOR, ATTORNEY GENERAL AND FEINBERG AGREE ON GULF COAST CLAIMS FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Tallahassee – Following meetings last month, Gov. Rick Scott, Attorney General Pam Bondi and Claims Czar Kenneth Feinberg have agreed on initial steps for improving the Gulf Coast Claims Facility's (GCCF) process regarding outstanding Florida claims as a result of the Deepwater oil spill.

“Florida’s tourism, fishing and seafood industries are still feeling the impacts of last summer’s disaster almost a year later,” said Gov. Scott. “Mr. Feinberg agrees that It’s time to get to work and implement a streamlined, fair and effective way of paying these claims for Floridians.”

Last month Gov. Scott and Attorney General Bondi met separately with Feinberg and wrote letters outlining the initial steps that must be taken. Some of those steps include:

- Processing at least 25 percent of all pending claims by March 31, 2011.
- Expanding staffing in Florida to provide more localized treatment of claimants, specifically in Panama City, Pensacola, Santa Rosa, Gulf Breeze and Ft. Walton Beach.
- In each Florida claims office, providing the names of local, independent accounting firms that are available to review and assist claimants in preparing claims documentation. The fees for these accountants will be submitted with the claimant’s GCCF submission as an expense, reimbursable by the GCCF.
- In each Florida claims office, providing a named contact person who is part of Florida claims’ team to allow claimants to obtain additional information on the status of their claim.
- Coordinating the claims process through one person in Florida and one person in Washington in an effort to assure responsiveness and efficiency.
- Having GCCF accountants on site or available by appointment to answer questions for claimants about their claim determination calculations.
- Summarizing, by general category, the reasons for claims being denied to assist with educating claimants and possibly preventing future denials.

“Hundreds of thousands of Floridians’ livelihoods have been devastated by the oil spill and compounded by a nearly halted claims process,” said Attorney General Bondi. “I look forward to working with Gov. Scott and Mr. Feinberg to ensure Floridians receive the compensation they deserve.”

Feinberg has agreed to return to Tallahassee in April to report on the progress of these steps and discuss additional improvements moving forward.

To view Gov. Scott's letter to Fienberg from March 2, 2011,
visit:<http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/GovScottLetter-03.02.2011.pdf>

To view Attorney General Bondi's letter to Fienberg from Feb. 25, 2011,
visit:<http://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/bondi-feinbergltrt.pdf>