



Thousands more Downtown residents may now receive compensation for their 9/11-related illnesses, after the federal government agreed to allow those who live as far north as Canal Street to apply.

Sheila Birnbaum, the special master overseeing the new \$2.8 billion Victim Compensation Fund, initially proposed to only cover those who lived south of Reade Street. But after examining photographs and hearing from many residents north of Reade Street who are sick, Birnbaum decided to expand the coverage area roughly 10 blocks north.

"In addition to the dust that was present most heavily in the area south of Reade Street, there is also evidence suggesting that prolonged exposure to dust between Reade Street and Canal Street created a risk of physical harm," Birnbaum wrote in an email to those interested in the fund Monday.

"There are also substantial numbers of patients who live between Reade Street and Canal Street who are receiving treatment in the World Trade Center Environmental Health Center program," Birnbaum added.

Those who advocated for the expanded eligibility were glad to hear of Birnbaum's decision.

"That's terrific news," said Catherine McVay Hughes, vice chairwoman of Community Board 1, which wrote a resolution urging Birnbaum to make the change. "The public process worked...and the community's concerns were listened to."

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