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NYC withdraws appeal of Giuliani aide's Sept. 11 health claim

May 23, 2006

NEW YORK (AP) _ A high-ranking Giuliani administration official who suffered severe respiratory distress after the Sept. 11 attack planned to move forward with his workers' compensation claim after the city lifted its appeal of his case on Tuesday.

Rudy Washington, a deputy mayor and top aide to then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, was on scene when the first World Trade Center tower collapsed in a plume of debris and dust, and he played a role in ground zero operations for weeks after the 2001 attack.

He now suffers from debilitating asthma and other health complications, which were the basis for his workers' compensation claim.

Washington had presented his case to an administrative law judge, who ruled that he was entitled to medical benefits, but the city appealed.

After the New York Post reported the story last week, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the city had been wrong in filing the appeal _ a "technicality" apparently based on the statute of limitations _ and directed his law department to reach a fair settlement.

Washington and his attorney met Tuesday with city lawyers, and both sides said afterward that the appeal would be withdrawn.

Washington's lawyer, Robert Grey, said the resolution clears the path for his client to receive medical coverage.

"It was unfortunate that this was portrayed as anything other than a legitimate workers' compensation claim," Grey said. "Mr. Washington is pleased that the city has come to see that."

Bloomberg's spokesman, Stu Loeser, said the mayor was "pleased that this matter is resolved."

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