



Jewelers of America press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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De Beers Settlement Claims Process Approved At Last

*Publication and mailed notice will start near the end of the holiday season,
and claim forms will be made available at the same time*

New York, NY – U.S. District Court Judge Stanley R. Chesler has approved the notice and claims process for the De Beers settlement, which means the process will finally get underway at the end of the year. Jewelers of America will provide more instructions and details to its members in the coming weeks, to ensure that they are fully prepared for the steps they need to take to obtain the claims form and begin the filing process in late December.

“Jewelers of America welcomes the news that the De Beers settlement process will soon get underway,” says JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci. JA and its counsel have had significant involvement and input into the settlement process and timing.

In mid-April 2008, the Court will hold a hearing to determine whether the settlement should receive final approval. If it is approved, U.S. consumers and “reseller” members of the trade, who share the majority of the settlement, will have until May 19, 2008 to file their claims.

The administrators of the De Beers settlement claims process will send mailed notices to the trade just before Christmas, and will conduct a trade magazine ad campaign starting in January. Publication notice to consumers about the De Beers settlement will also start to appear in newspapers, magazines and on the Internet just before Christmas, and continue

through winter and early spring. In addition, a public relations campaign would start in January to reach the maximum number of consumers who might wish to file a claim.

Because the claims process will require consumers to itemize the amount of their purchases of diamond jewelry, it is likely that consumers could ask retailers to research the purchase price of any diamond or diamond jewelry they obtained at their stores between January 1, 1994 and March 31, 2006. JA will be prepared to offer guidance to members after the claims forms have actually been distributed.

While the claims period for jewelers is also January 1, 1994 to March 31, 2006, the trade's claims form will ask jewelers to pick any two-year period during those years, and to submit the total costs of the diamonds and diamond jewelry they purchased for resale during that time. The claims administrator will use that figure to compute each jeweler's share of the settlement.

Retailers will share proportionately with other "resellers" a settlement portion amounting to \$137 million. But the total amount will be reduced by plaintiffs' attorneys' fees, for work they performed on the case itself and its settlement. They can claim up to 25% of the total settlement. Also taken from the \$137 million will be a portion of the attorneys' out-of-pocket expenses, settlement administration fees and other expenses. The Court will determine the actual amount of attorneys' fees and expenses to which they will be entitled at the final approval hearing. The remaining amount will be divided among the total number of "reseller" trade members who file.

The payouts themselves will probably not occur until late 2008 or 2009, to allow time for the claims administrators to assess all claims and apportion the funds among the claimants, according to court papers. Any trade claim that amounts to under \$25 will not be paid.

For more information about the De Beers Settlement or Jewelers of America, visit www.jewelers.org.

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for retail jewelers. With 11,000 member stores, JA also works locally through its 40 state and regional affiliates. JA advocates high social, ethical, and environmental standards, promotes professional business and leadership skills, and enhances its members' profitability by offering education, certification, marketing and cost-saving programs.

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