

DOCUMENT RESUME

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**[Travel Expenses Incurred Due to Death in Employee's Family].
B-191773. November 22, 1978. 2 pp.**

**Decision re: Richard R. Rogers; by Robert F. Keller, Deputy
Comptroller General.**

**Contact: Office of the General Counsel: Personnel Law Matters I.
Organization Concerned: Department of the Air Force: Warner
Robins Air Logistics Center, GA.
Authority: B-185718 (1976). B-184496 (1976).**

An advance decision was requested concerning the propriety of paying the cost of travel of an employee on a temporary duty assignment in England who returned to the United States to attend his mother's funeral and then returned to England to complete his assignment. He may not be paid for round-trip transportation since his travel was for personal reasons. (HTW)

DECISION

N. D. ...
**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

8395

FILE: B-191773

DATE: November 22, 1978

MATTER OF: Richard R. Rogers - Travel Expenses Incurred
Due to Death in Employee's Family

DIGEST: Employee on temporary duty assignment at RAF Woodbridge, UK, returned to permanent duty station in United States to attend his mother's funeral. Although agency then instructed employee to assemble and return parts to temporary duty station, he may not be paid round-trip transportation. Travel was for personal reasons, and there is no authority under applicable statutes and regulations authorizing reimbursement for personal travel.

The Chief, Accounting and Finance Branch, Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Department of the Air Force, requested an advance decision as to the propriety of paying the cost of round-trip travel from RAF Woodbridge, United Kingdom, to Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, of Mr. Richard R. Rogers, an employee of the Air Force. This request has been assigned Control No. 78-18 by the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee.

The record shows that Mr. Rogers was on a temporary duty assignment in England. During the temporary duty assignment, Mr. Rogers returned to the United States to attend the funeral of his mother. After the funeral, he returned to England to complete his assignment. Additionally, the Deputy Director of Maintenance, Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Department of the Air Force, reports that the travel was performed under amended orders. He also states that the purpose of Mr. Rogers' round-trip in question was to assemble and return some necessary parts to insure the continued flow of work at the overseas location. The Deputy Director concedes that the propriety of using Mr. Rogers for this type of mission was questionable. However, he notes that Mr. Rogers did complete his ordered mission as directed and he believes it would be inappropriate to penalize him. The issue is whether Mr. Rogers returned for personal reasons or whether he traveled under valid amended orders.

There is no authority under applicable statutes or regulations to reimburse Mr. Rogers for the cost of either part of his round-trip air travel between the United Kingdom, and the United States,

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if the travel was for personal reasons. In this connection our decisions have held that there is no authority for reimbursement of travel expenses when an employee leaves a temporary duty assignment to attend the funeral of a close relative. Leonard D. Holmen, B-185718, November 9, 1976, and Mark N. Jacobs, B-184496, November 9, 1976.

If Mr. Rogers had been ordered to return from his temporary assignment primarily to assemble and return parts, as he actually did during the trip in question, he could properly be reimbursed for the round-trip despite the fact that at the time of his departure he had not completed the contemplated assignment in England. However, the record shows that Mr. Rogers was notified of the death of his mother on November 2, 1977, and his return transportation was arranged immediately after such notice. Further, Mr. Rogers was not instructed to assemble and return parts until after he had returned to the United States to attend the funeral of his mother. Under the circumstances we conclude that Mr. Rogers' return was for personal reasons and not under valid travel orders.

Accordingly, the travel voucher may not be paid.


Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States