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DECISION



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

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FILE: B-191773

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DATE: March 6, 1979

MATTER OF: Richard R. Rogers - Travel Expenses - Reconsideration

[Request by Military Member for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses]

DIGEST: Employee on temporary duty (TDY) assignment at RAF Woodbridge, United Kingdom, returned to permanent duty station in United States to attend his mother's funeral. Although employee was informed by his unit chief that his return travel to TDY location would be at Government expense, there is no authority under applicable statutes and regulations authorizing reimbursement for personal travel.

Decision Warner Robins AFB

This action is in response to a letter of January 10, 1979, from Mr. Richard R. Rogers, an employee of the Air Force, requesting reconsideration of our decision Matter of Richard R. Rogers, B-191773, November 22, 1978, which disallowed his claim for travel expenses incurred in connection with a temporary duty assignment. Mr. Rogers believes that his "side of the story has not been presented." He, therefore, feels that our decision was not a proper judgment on his claim and should be reversed. The facts of this case were fully stated in our decision of November 22, 1978, and will not be repeated except as pertinent to the present discussion of the case.

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~~Mr. Rogers' letter states that he informed his supervisor at his temporary duty station, RAF Woodbridge, United Kingdom, before departing to his permanent duty station, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, to attend the funeral of his mother, that he would be willing to return to Woodbridge if he did not have to pay the return travel expense. When he reported at Robins his unit chief informed him that arrangements were being made to return him to Woodbridge as advantageous to the Air Force and that he would not have to pay for the return flight. Mr. Rogers states that he was instructed to hand carry an assortment of spare parts needed at RAF Woodbridge. Before returning to England Mr. Rogers was told that the amendment to his orders returning him to Woodbridge as advantageous to the Air Force and at no expense to him had been approved.~~

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In his letter of January 10, 1979, Mr. Rogers stated that he felt he was misled on the issue of his return to England. He was under the impression that everything was in order and if Warner Robins would send him back to England under his original orders

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he would go back. If he had known that he would have to pay his own way back he would have refused and asked that someone else be sent. He states in pertinent part:

"* * * It is my opinion that I am an innocent victim of a government mistake and I shouldn't be made to pay for it.

* * * * *

"It should be noted that if I hadn't returned to England the Air Force would have had to send someone else and would have had to provide their transportation anyway."

The general rule is that an employee who interrupts or abandons official travel or a temporary duty assignment because of the death or illness of a member of his family may be reimbursed only the cost of the travel to the point of interruption or abandonment. See 747 Comp. Gen. 59, 60 (1967). An exception may be made in cases where the employee has substantially completed the purpose of the travel or where the duties he was to perform are completed at no additional expense to the Government. B-172048, March 29, 1971. Based upon the record in the present case it is clear that Mr. Rogers did not substantially complete his duties and, therefore, does not fall within this exception to the general rule.

Accordingly, our decision of November 22, 1978 is affirmed.

R. F. K. Miller
Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States