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**DECISION**



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

**FILE:** B-195218

**DATE:** October 3, 1979

**MATTER OF:** Maurice A. Parker - Travel - Receipt For Airline Ticket

*REC 408*

**DIGEST:** Mediator of National Mediation Board claims reimbursement of \$192 for airline ticket bought when he voluntarily flew home during recess of temporary duty and performed duties as required at home. While Board authorized reimbursement for such travel not to exceed cost of remaining at temporary duty station, a receipt, passenger coupon, or other evidence of cost of trip is required to support claim under Federal Travel Regulations, para. 1-10.2b(4) and para. 1-11.5c(3), Supp. 4, June 1, 1977.

Mr. Rowland K. Quinn, Jr., an authorized certifying officer, National Mediation Board, requests a decision on the [entitlement of Maurice A. Parker to reimbursement of commercial air travel expenses]

The issue is whether a voluntary round-trip by commercial airline between Mr. Parker's temporary duty station and his home during a recess of temporary duty must be evidenced by a receipt for the airline ticket.

In the position of a mediator for the National Mediation Board, Mr. Parker continually travels on temporary duty and returns to his residence in Houston, Texas, which is considered his permanent duty station. While Mr. Parker is on temporary duty, he participates in labor elections and similar activities which are often recessed. In accordance with Board policy on recesses, Mr. Parker may either remain at the temporary duty station or travel to his residence and return to the temporary duty station when the recess ends. If he elects to return home during a recess, the Board pays the round-trip travel costs, not to exceed the estimated cost the Government would have incurred had he remained at his temporary duty station. The Board's payment policy for voluntary return travel is similar to that authorized in paragraph 1-7.5c of the Federal Travel Regulations governing employees' return to official station on nonworkdays. However, Board mediators do not have designated nonworkdays and perform official duties as required regardless of whether they remain at the temporary duty stations or return home during recesses.

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B-195218

Because Mr. Parker declined to furnish an airline ticket receipt, the Board's certifying officer denied him reimbursement of a round-trip ticket in the amount of \$192 that he purchased with his own funds to return home during a recess commencing April 19, 1979. On previous occasions the Board had reimbursed Mr. Parker for return tickets without receipts. Mr. Quinn asks whether a receipt is required and whether collection action should be taken against Mr. Parker for tickets previously reimbursed without receipts.

Under paragraph 1-10.2b(4) of the Federal Travel Regulations (FPMR Temp. Reg. A-11, Supp. 4, effective June 1, 1977) a receipt, passenger coupon, or other appropriate evidence is required to support a claim for reimbursement of cash payments for passenger transportation services in all cases except for use of local transit systems. Moreover, FTR paragraph 1-11.5c(3) provides that receipts, passenger coupons, or other appropriate evidence shall be furnished by the traveler with his travel voucher. See also FTR paragraph 1-11.3c(18), Supp. 4. In this connection we point out that there must be sufficient evidence to establish the validity of a claim against the Government before it may be paid. 18 Comp. Gen. 980 (1939); 53 *id.* 181 (1973), B-187713, February 14, 1978. We believe these requirements apply to voluntary travel to return home as well as to other travel for the Government. Consequently, a receipt or other evidence is required as proof that Mr. Parker paid the amount claimed for the ticket.

Accordingly, reimbursement of the \$192 round-trip ticket for the recess beginning April 19, 1979, should be withheld until Mr. Parker furnishes a receipt, a copy of the passenger coupon, or other appropriate evidence in support of his claim. If it is impracticable to furnish a receipt, the failure to do so must be fully explained in the travel voucher. FTR paragraph 1-11.3d(1). As to prior vouchers that may have been paid without receipts, we do not feel it is necessary for the Board to start collection action for voluntary travel by Mr. Parker in the absence of evidence that the vouchers were improperly presented.

  
Deputy Comptroller General  
of the United States