

**DECISION**

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

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27609**FILE:** B-213765**DATE:** March 6, 1984**MATTER OF:** Pat Young - Claim for Limousine Service  
from Airport**DIGEST:**

Employee on temporary duty took a limousine from the airport to her hotel although a hotel courtesy limousine was available. Federal Travel Regulations para. 1-2.3c permits agencies to limit or restrict transportation claims where courtesy transportation is available. However, where the employee was unaware of the availability of the courtesy transportation, her claim for the limousine service she used may be paid.

The issue in this decision is whether an employee on temporary duty may be reimbursed for the cost of limousine service from the airport to her place of lodgings where a hotel courtesy limousine was available. We hold that the employee may be reimbursed for the limousine service where it appears she was unaware of the availability of the hotel courtesy service.

This decision is in response to a request from David J. Pepper, a certifying officer with ACTION, Region VI, concerning the travel claim of Ms. Pat Young, an ACTION employee assigned to the Kansas City, Missouri, Office.

Ms. Young was directed to attend an ACTION regional meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on September 13 and 14, 1983, and, upon arrival at the Oklahoma City Airport, she used a limousine service in order to travel to the conference site, the Lincoln Plaza Hotel. The cost of the limousine was \$12, plus a \$1 tip.

The certifying officer denied Ms. Young's claim for the limousine service since free limousine service was available and provided by the hotel. Although this limousine service was not mentioned in the memorandum announcing the conference, the certifying officer states that the service was prominently featured on a limousine call kiosk in the center of the baggage area of the airport.

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The certifying officer concedes that although Ms. Young travels frequently, she has traveled by airplane only one other time in the past 2 years. In her own behalf, Ms. Young states:

"I did not see any limo service display. I did ask at the airline counter about limo service and was directed to the limo service I used, which I felt was reasonable, considering the cost of taxi service."

The certifying officer concludes that he denied the claim because of the prominence of the kiosk and the ease of obtaining the service (he also attended the conference and used the courtesy limousine).

As noted by the certifying officer, employees traveling on official business are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses as a prudent person would if traveling on official business. See paragraph 1-1.3a of the Federal Travel Regulations, FPMR 101-7 (September 1981) (FTR). These regulations also focus on the travel in question in this case. Paragraph 1-2.3c(1) of the FTR, as amended by Supplement 4, effective October 1, 1982, states that available courtesy transportation service furnished by hotels or motels should be used by employees "to the maximum extent possible as a first source of transportation" between the common carrier terminal and the place of lodging at the temporary duty point. Further, the regulation provides that an agency shall, "where appropriate," restrict the use of taxicabs or limit reimbursement when such courtesy transportation service is provided. FTR para. 1-2.3c(2). The stated purpose of this amendment to the FTR was to encourage employee use of available courtesy transportation and "to permit agencies to restrict reimbursement for the use of taxicabs or place a monetary limit on the amount of reimbursement when such courtesy transportation is available but not used." Supp. 4, p. 2.

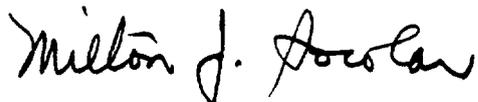
In this case the certifying officer contends that the courtesy transportation was available but was not used. However, he does not dispute Ms. Young's contention that she was unaware of the availability of the service. Thus, this case is distinguishable from our decision in Joseph J. Kisiolk, B-190070, December 16, 1977, where the employee was aware that Government transportation was available but

he chose to use a taxicab because the Government transportation was "unreliable." In Kisiolk we denied the employee's claim since the agency's regulations did not allow reimbursement for commercial transportation if Government transportation was available.

The certifying officer also concedes that there was no mention of this courtesy limousine in Ms. Young's travel orders or notification. Thus, this case is distinguishable from our decision in Dolores Vaughn, B-201301, June 9, 1981, where the employee rented a vehicle commercially even though her travel orders stated that a motor pool or contract rental vehicle should be obtained first. In Vaughn we limited her reimbursement to the lower contract rental rate since the agency stated she was provided with a confirmed reservation slip for the contract rental vehicle.

Since it appears that Ms. Young was unaware of the availability of this courtesy transportation, we find no basis under the applicable regulations or our prior decisions to deny her reimbursement for the limousine service she used.

Accordingly, we hold that Ms. Young may be reimbursed the limousine fee she incurred.

*for*   
Comptroller General  
of the United States