

## DECISION



L-CP

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

FILE: B-200779

DATE: August 12, 1981

MATTER OF: - Lodging Expenses at  
Official Duty Station

**DIGEST:** Employee stationed in Portland, Oregon, rented a hotel room rather than return to her residence 20 miles away, due to heavy snow and icy roads, because she was required to report to work the next day no matter what weather conditions prevailed. Claim must be denied as employee may not receive per diem or subsistence at official duty station, unless the situation involves imminent danger to life or property.

This action is in response to a request for an advance decision by a certifying officer of the General Services Administration (GSA) concerning the payment of a voucher submitted by Ms. , an employee of the GSA in Portland, Oregon, for reimbursement of lodging expenses incurred at her official duty station under the following circumstances.

The roads in the Portland, Oregon area, on the evening of January 9, 1980, were icy and dangerous due to snowfall and freezing rain during the day. The police department requested that motorists keep off the streets due to those conditions. Ms. Acting FTS Switchboard Supervisor, left her duty station and discovered that no public transportation was available to her home in Gresham, 20 miles from her duty station. In order to comply with a GSA Regional Order designating the Switchboard Supervisor as an employee required to report to work even when the agency as a whole was closed by adverse weather conditions, Ms. knew that she had to come into work the next day. Therefore, she decided that it was in the best interest of the Government to stay in town for the night. She took a bus to downtown Portland and remained overnight in a motel room at a cost of \$34.98. She did not check with Regional Headquarters in Auburn, Washington, prior to registering at the motel. Ms. has requested reimbursement for the lodging expenses, but for the following reasons her claim is denied.

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Decisions of the Comptroller General have consistently held that an employee is entitled neither to subsistence nor to per diem for expenses at the employee's official duty station, despite unusual working conditions which may be involved. See Federal Travel Regulations, (FPMR 101-7) (May 1973), para. 1-7.6a; 42 Comp. Gen. 149 (1962); Department of Commerce, B-188985, August 23, 1977. The latter case specifically denied payment to an employee who rented a hotel room due to blizzard conditions.

In \_\_\_\_\_, B-189003, July 5, 1977, cited in the submission, we allowed payment for the cost of providing meals to employees who were stranded at their office during a severe blizzard. However, these payments were based on emergency conditions which presented an imminent danger to human life and the destruction of Federal property. Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ supervisor admitted that life and property were not in danger. Thus, Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ claim does not qualify as an exception to the general rule stated above.

Accordingly, the voucher may not be certified for payment.

*Milton J. Aorolan*

Acting Comptroller General  
of the United States