



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

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E-178228

June 5, 1973

Mr. James F. Wagner, Chief
Central Accounts Branch
Office of the Comptroller
United States Atomic Energy Commission

Dear Mr. Wagner:

This is in reply to your letter dated March 14, 1973, requesting a decision as to the certification of a reclaim voucher in favor of Mr. Leo G. Kulovitz, an employee of the Atomic Energy Commission, for reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses incurred by him incident to his transfer from Cleveland, Ohio, to Gaithersburg, Maryland.

The record indicates that in connection with his transfer, Mr. Kulovitz has been paid an allowance for miscellaneous expenses in excess of \$200. Although he has been reimbursed on a computed rate basis for the transportation of his household goods, he claims that he is entitled to reimbursement for a \$10 organ handling fee as a miscellaneous expense. He states that the weight of the organ was included in the computation of the computed rate, but that the organ handling fee is a separate expense which is not included in the computed rate. He also claims as a miscellaneous expense reimbursement for the cost of having his color television adjusted after the move. He states that he paid \$15 to have the color controls adjusted because they had been knocked out of focus by the movers and to have the tuner adjusted to receive channel 9 which was not available in the Cleveland area.

As to the \$10 organ handling fee, subsection 3.1c(2) of Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-56, revised September 1, 1971, specifically precludes the use of the miscellaneous expense allowance to reimburse an employee for any costs which are reimbursable under other provisions of the regulations. In this regard Mr. Kulovitz was reimbursed on a computed rate basis under section 6 of the regulations for the transportation of his household goods which included the organ. Under the computed rate system the employee is paid an allowance based on the weight and distance of the shipment rather than the actual cost of such shipment. Since there are variables in individual shipments of household goods, the actual reimbursement to the employee may be slightly more or less than the actual cost to the employee depending on the circumstances of the particular case. In the present case Mr. Kulovitz has been reimbursed for the transportation of his

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household goods which included shipment of the organ on a computed rate basis and there is no authority to pay him any additional amounts as a miscellaneous expense allowance regardless of the expense actually incurred by him for such transportation. B-171808, March 31, 1971.

As to the cost of adjusting the color controls of the television set, subsection 3.1c(3) of Circular No. A-56 specifically precludes the use of a miscellaneous expense allowance to reimburse an employee for the cost of loss or damage to household goods while in transit to the new official station. Since Mr. Kulovitz stated that the color controls were knocked out of focus by the movers, we must conclude that the cost of this adjustment is a result of damage to household goods for which reimbursement is not authorized. Furthermore a portion of this cost represents the expense of adjusting the tuner to receive channel 9 properly. Since the purpose of this adjustment is to improve the quality of the operation of the television itself rather than being for the purpose of installation, the work performed must be regarded as being in the nature of repairs for which reimbursement is precluded by section 3.1c (13) of the regulations. See B-165745, February 11, 1969. The fact that the need for this adjustment did not occur or was not recognized until after the move because channel 9 was not received in Cleveland does not alter the conclusion that the work performed was in the nature of repair work for which reimbursement is not authorized.

In view of the foregoing, the voucher returned herewith may not be certified for payment.

Sincerely yours,

Paul G. DeBittora

For the Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure