



Comptroller General
of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20548

Decision

Matter of: Francine Jefferson

File: B-242326

Date: May 29, 1991

DECISION

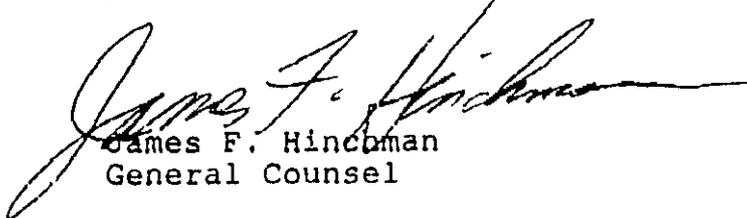
The Social Security Administration requests our decision regarding two issues arising from Ms. Francine Jefferson's relocation to Baltimore, Maryland from Hamtramck, Michigan. Both issues relate to expenses associated with the transportation and servicing of Ms. Jefferson's grandfather clock.

According to the record, the agency's contract mover, Aero Mayflower Transit, lacked the expertise necessary to disassemble the clock at the old residence and prepare it for shipment. Mayflower subcontracted this service with K and S 3rd Party Services and included the subcontractor's costs (\$85.00) in its freight bill, which the agency paid. Ms. Jefferson states that she incurred costs of \$100 at the new residence to have the clock serviced and leveled, which she claimed as a transportation expense. That work involved cleaning, adjusting and calibrating the clock's mechanical parts. After reviewing Ms. Jefferson's claim, the agency determined that both charges related to the clock could be reimbursed only as miscellaneous expenses, for which Ms. Jefferson already had been reimbursed the maximum amount allowable without receipts. See 41 C.F.R. § 302-3.3 (1990). Accordingly, the agency denied Ms. Jefferson's claim for \$100 and has sought reimbursement for the \$85 paid to Mayflower.

The regulations authorizing relocation allowances for miscellaneous expenses and expenses for the transportation of household goods are set out in 41 C.F.R. Parts 302-3 and 302-8, respectively. Miscellaneous expenses are allowed for costs incidental to the movement of household goods. See generally, 41 C.F.R. 302-3.1(b). Because servicing and leveling are related more to restoring a grandfather clock to working order than to transporting it, we have held that those services are reimbursable only as miscellaneous costs. Gregory J. Cavanaugh, B-183789, Jan. 23, 1976; John F. McCauley, B-190444, May 30, 1978. Thus, the agency properly denied Ms. Jefferson's \$100 claim for those services.

However, regarding the dismantling work done at the old residence, the record shows that Mayflower subcontracted with K and S to obtain the expertise necessary to enable Mayflower to safely transport the clock. Therefore, that service charge may be considered a part of the transportation expenses payable by the agency.

Accordingly, Ms. Jefferson may not be reimbursed the \$100.00 spent to service and level the clock at her new residence because she already has been reimbursed the maximum amount allowable as miscellaneous expenses, and the agency may not collect from Ms. Jefferson the \$85.00 paid to the movers to prepare the clock for shipment.


James F. Hinchman
General Counsel