

CCM
Ms. Cooper
14115

DECISION



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

FILE: B-198720

DATE: June 23, 1980

MATTER OF: Linda A. Rose [Payment of
Individual Membership Fee]

DIGEST: Employee's individual membership fee in an organization is not reimbursable to employee under prohibition of 5 U.S.C. 5946 absent specific statutory authority. Employee's designation by Federally Employed Women, Inc., as the agency's regional representative to that organization is not sufficient justification to allow the payment.

An authorized certifying officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of Commerce, has requested our decision on the legality of certifying for payment a voucher in the amount of \$20.15 in favor of Ms. Linda A. Rose, a NOAA employee, to reimburse her for her membership fee in Federally Employed Women, Inc. (FEW).

FEW has designated Ms. Rose as the representative of the Northeast Region of the National Fisheries Service. Ms. Rose contends that this designation renders her membership sufficiently job related to warrant payment of her membership fee by NOAA.

Title 5 of the United States Code, section 5946, prohibits the use of appropriated funds for payment of an individual employee's membership fees in any organization unless such payment is authorized by a specific appropriation, by express terms in a general appropriation, or the membership is part of an employee training program pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §§ 4109 and 4110. Although membership in FEW may in fact be job related, section 5946 limits payment of individual membership fees to those instances which fall within these exceptions, none of which applies in this case. See 52 Comp. Gen. 495 (1973).

Since under 5 U.S.C. § 5946 NOAA may not reimburse the employee for her individual membership fee, the voucher covering Ms. Rose's claim may not be certified for payment.

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Milton J. Arosler

Acting Comptroller General
of the United States