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*Adverse*

**DECISION**



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

**FILE:** B-200841

**DATE:** November 19, 1981

**MATTER OF:** Franklin G. Goss - Permanent Change  
of Station Expenses

- DIGEST:**
1. As a result of a reduction in force (RIF), a civilian employee of the Department of the Army transferred from Fort Ord, California, to Fort Detrick, Maryland, in June 1978. He was not issued permanent change of station travel orders until April 1980. Employee may be reimbursed for relocation expenses if the required documentation is submitted with travel voucher, even though written travel orders were issued subsequent to travel, since, under Volume 2, Joint Travel Regulations paragraph C4101, an employee who is subject to a RIF is entitled to reimbursement of relocation expenses. The fact that the travel orders were not issued until 2 years later does not reduce that entitlement.
  2. Employee claims expenses for house-hunting trip incident to change of permanent station. Such expenses may not be paid since authorization for the househunting trip was not issued prior to the trip as required by Federal Travel Regulations paragraph 2-4.3c
  3. Employee was authorized shipment and temporary storage of household goods under the commuted rate system, incident to permanent change of station. He may be reimbursed under the commuted rate system for the shipment of his household goods based upon the carrier's bill of lading. However, he may not be reimbursed for

the storage because the receipt presented does not state dates of storage or the weight of goods stored as required by Federal Travel Regulations para. 2-8.5b(1).

4. Employee claims temporary quarters subsistence expenses incident to permanent change of station, but he has not submitted the required receipts and itemization for lodging, laundry or food while occupying temporary quarters. Employee may not be reimbursed for lodging and laundry expenses since regulations require receipts and itemization for such costs before reimbursement is allowed. However, he may be reimbursed for expenses of coin-operated laundry facilities, since receipts are not required by Federal Travel Regulations para. 2-5.4b. He may also be reimbursed for food expenses for the days itemized, and for remaining days if he submits a daily itemization of food expenses and these expenses are reasonable as to amount.
5. A transferred employee has claimed reimbursement of expenses for a lease cancellation at his old duty station, but he has not submitted a copy of the lease or any other document for the claimed expense. The employee may not be reimbursed for the lease breaking expense because the documentation required by Federal Travel Regulations para. 2-6.2h, and GAO decisions has not been submitted.
6. A transferred employee has claimed \$200 for miscellaneous expenses, but he has not submitted evidence of having incurred any miscellaneous expenses of the type listed in Federal Travel Regulations para. 2-3.1b. Since the employee moved

his household effects from one state to another, we assume he incurred miscellaneous expenses and he is entitled to the minimum amount.

7. A transferred employee has claimed reimbursement of mileage, lodging and meal expenses for the travel between his old and his new duty stations. Since he has not submitted odometer readings for the mileage, payment should be made based upon standard highway mileage guides at the rate stated in his travel orders. Since reimbursement of lodging and meal expenses for the employee and his dependents is on the same basis as reimbursement for similar expenses during travel by the employee alone, the same documentation requirements apply, the employee may not be reimbursed for lodging expenses here because no receipts were submitted. However, he may be reimbursed for food expenses without receipts.

This decision is in response to a request by Mr. John T. Beck, Finance & Accounting Officer, Department of the Army, Fort Detrick, Maryland, concerning the claim of Mr. Franklin G. Goss for reimbursement of relocation expenses incurred incident to a permanent change of station. For the reasons set forth below, and within the limits described, Mr. Goss may be reimbursed.

Mr. Goss was employed at Fort Ord, California, where he was to be separated due to a reduction in force (RIF). As a result of the RIF, he transferred to Fort Detrick, Maryland, in June 1978. At that time Mr. Goss was not issued orders authorizing reimbursement of permanent change of station expenses. However, in April 1980, Mr. Goss was issued orders authorizing

reimbursement of some of the expenses incurred at the time of his change of station in 1978. Mr. Goss submitted vouchers claiming permanent change of station travel, a househunting trip, temporary lodging and subsistence, miscellaneous expenses, lease cancellation expenses, transportation of household goods and temporary storage. However, Mr. Goss failed to submit receipts or other documentation (except for transportation of his household goods), and the certifying officer sent the voucher to our Office to determine whether Mr. Goss may be reimbursed based upon the documentation submitted.

Mr. Goss states that all of the receipts were lost or destroyed. He also states that the request for reimbursement represents an honest attempt to average out expenses incurred during his permanent change of station.

Before we consider the question presented by the certifying officer, we must examine the threshold issue, namely whether Mr. Goss' travel and relocation expenses may be paid when the travel authorization was issued well after the travel was performed.

It is not clear from the record whether Mr. Goss was actually separated in the RIF or was transferred prior to actual separation. In either case, under paragraph C4101 of Volume 2 of the Joint Travel Regulations (2 JTR), he is entitled to reimbursement of his relocation expenses. Nor is the record clear as to why travel orders were not issued at the time of his transfer. The fact that they were not issued, however, does not lessen Mr. Goss' right to reimbursement as long as he complies with all of the other relevant portions of 2 JTR and the Federal Travel Regulations, (FPMR 101-7, May 1973) (FTR), when submitting his claim.

The Army submitted the claim to our Office to determine to what extent Mr. Goss may be reimbursed for his relocation expenses on the basis of the

documentation he submitted. The applicable Department of the Army regulation, AR 37-106, paragraph 1-41.b, states in pertinent part:

"b. Documents Required. A travel voucher will be supported by travel orders, required statements, receipts (when required), and memorandum copies of transportation requests (if used, or if ticket is obtained and not used). It will also contain or be supported by a complete and correct itinerary, itemization of reimbursable expenses (when required), and information as to mode of transportation used."

Therefore we must examine what receipts and other documentation were required to determine what portions of Mr. Goss' claim may be certified for payment.

#### Househunting Trip

Mr. Goss has submitted a voucher in which he claims \$178 for meals, \$425 for lodging, and travel expenses for a househunting trip from May 20 to June 5, 1978. This trip apparently served as a househunting trip and as a means of transporting the first of two loads of household goods. The Federal Travel Regulations, para. 2-4.3c, provide that a trip for finding residence quarters shall not be made at Government expense unless prior to the househunting trip a travel order has been issued which includes authorization for a round trip. We have held that there may be no reimbursement for the costs of a househunting trip without the prior authorization. See William R. Clayton, B-200421, July 20, 1981, and cases cited therein. In this case, Mr. Goss did not receive authorization for the househunting trip until 2 years after he made the trip. Therefore, in accordance with the FTR and our decisions, Mr. Goss may not be reimbursed for any expenses incident to his househunting trip.

Transportation and Storage of Household Goods

The travel order authorizes shipment of household goods not to exceed 11,000 pounds and provides that the shipment will be by commuted rate. Mr. Goss shipped 1,350 pounds of household goods by commercial carrier. He has submitted a combined bill of lading and freight bill from Continental Van Lines for \$560.67. Mr. Goss states that he transported other household goods by himself and is not claiming any further reimbursement for transporting these household goods. Since Mr. Goss was authorized shipment of household goods by the commuted rate, it is mandatory that he be reimbursed by that method. B-174642, March 6, 1972. Therefore, Mr. Goss may be reimbursed for the transportation of his household goods by Continental Van Lines under the commuted rate method in accordance with FTR para. 2-8.3a.

Mr. Goss' travel order authorizes temporary storage of household goods for up to 60 days. Mr. Goss has claimed \$56 for temporary storage and \$104 for placing and removing the goods from storage. He has supplied a receipt for \$52.50 from Metro Transfer and Storage, Westminster, Maryland, but the receipt does not give the date of storage or the weight of the household goods stored. The Federal Travel Regulations state that costs for storage of goods, including in and out charges, are reimbursable. FTR para. 2-8.5b(1). However, that provision requires a receipted copy of the warehouse or other bill for storage costs showing the dates and location of storage and the weight of the household goods to support reimbursement. A.B. Restivo, 53 Comp. Gen. 513 (1974). Since the receipt submitted by Mr. Goss does not contain the required information, he may not be reimbursed for the claimed storage expenses. He should be informed of the FTR requirements and allowed the opportunity to furnish the required information.

Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses

Mr. Goss has submitted a "Daily Itemization of Expenses Paid" for his temporary quarters subsistence expenses, which were authorized in his travel order. Mr. Goss has claimed \$120 for laundry and dry cleaning for the 30-day period but has not claimed a specific amount for lodging and meals for that period on the

daily itemization. Mr. Goss did not list his expenses daily, but instead listed expenses for 4 days of the 30-day period.

Regulations concerning temporary quarters subsistence expenses are contained in part 5 of chapter 2 of the FTR. Under FTR para. 2-5.4b, which is entitled "Itemization and Receipts" there is a statement that receipts are required for at least lodging and laundry and cleaning expenses, except when coin-operated facilities are used. Since Mr. Goss has not supplied receipts as required, he may not be reimbursed for lodging and cleaning expenses except for those amounts claimed for coin-operated facilities. The above paragraph also requires that actual expenses be itemized in a manner prescribed by the head of the agency which will permit a review of daily amounts spent on food. On the basis of the vouchers submitted, Mr. Goss may be reimbursed for the 4 days for which he listed his daily expenses. If he resubmits a daily itemization of food expenses for the other 26 days, and these expenses are reasonable as to amount, then the certifying officer may approve reimbursement of such expenses if otherwise proper.

#### Lease Payment

Mr. Goss has claimed \$200 for lease breaking expenses. However, he did not supply a copy of a lease or a receipt for the costs of breaking the lease. The FTR provides that expenses incurred in breaking a lease must be supported by documentation showing that the expense was in fact incurred and paid by the employee. FTR para. 2-6.2h. Also, our cases require that a copy of a lease or acceptable alternative evidence be submitted in order for an employee to be reimbursed for lease breaking expenses. Lewis R. Perry, B-184164, December 8, 1975; and Carol A. Dentz, B-181737, August 19, 1974. Since Mr. Goss has not submitted any evidence supporting his claim for lease breaking expenses, he may not be reimbursed for such expenses.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Mr. Goss has claimed \$200 in miscellaneous expenses, but he has not mentioned any specific allowable miscellaneous expenses that he has incurred. Miscellaneous expenses may be reimbursed to an employee with an immediate family in the amount of \$200 without support or documentation of those expenses, FTR para. 2-3.3a. However, we have held that some allowable miscellaneous expense, as outlined in FTR para. 2-3.1b, must be incurred before a miscellaneous expense allowance may be paid, B-163632, April 9, 1968, and B-168284, December 2, 1969. We also held in those cases that where there is a change of residence involving movement of household effects or when the transfer is from one state to another it may be assumed that miscellaneous expenses have been incurred. Therefore, since Mr. Goss moved his household effects from California to Maryland, we assume that he incurred miscellaneous expenses and his \$200 miscellaneous expense claim may be certified for payment.

Transportation to New Duty Station

Mr. Goss' travel order allows for transportation of himself and his family by privately owned vehicle at a rate of \$0.12 per mile. Therefore, he is entitled to be reimbursed for his travel from Marina, California, to his new duty station between June 14 and June 25, 1978, at the \$.12 per mile rate. FTR para. 2-2.2a. However, since he has not included odometer readings on his voucher, the distance between his former residence and his new duty station should be calculated based on the standard highway mileage guide. 26 Comp. Gen. 463 (1946).

For this trip Mr. Goss also has claimed \$342 for meals and \$420 for lodging, but he has not provided a day-by-day breakdown of the expenses or any receipts for any of the lodging expenses. Since per diem for travel by an employee and his dependents to a new duty station is to be computed in the same manner as per diem for an employee traveling alone, Mr. Goss may not be reimbursed for lodging costs during his travel from



B-200841

his old residence to his new duty station because the documentation and itemization is not sufficient, 52 Comp. Gen. 34 (1972). However, he may be authorized a per diem rate for food expenses incurred by his family and himself since receipts are not required for these expenses.

Accordingly, we are returning the vouchers submitted by the certifying officer for action in accordance with this decision.

*for Milton J. Doreau*  
Comptroller General  
of the United States