



**The Comptroller General  
of the United States**

Washington, D.C. 20548

## Decision

**Matter of:** Nancy A. Coldeway - Temporary Duty While in  
Temporary Quarters  
**File:** B-235402  
**Date:** November 9, 1989

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### DIGEST

An employee, who is occupying temporary quarters and who must perform temporary duty away from the permanent duty station, may be reimbursed for the lodging expenses portion of her temporary quarters subsistence expenses as well as lodging expenses at the temporary duty station, provided the agency determines the employee acted reasonably in retaining the temporary quarters. Paul G. Thibault, B-232503, dated today.

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### DECISION

This decision is in response to a request from Conrad R. Hoffman, Director, Office of Budget and Finance (Comptroller), Veterans Administration (VA), concerning a VA employee who claimed reimbursement for lodging expenses for her temporary quarters during the period she was away from her duty station on temporary duty. For the reasons stated below, we conclude that the lodging expenses may be reimbursed as temporary quarters expenses.

### BACKGROUND

Dr. Nancy A. Coldeway, an employee of the VA, transferred to Washington, D.C., effective November 19, 1987, and she rented temporary quarters on a month-to-month basis in Washington. During the first 30-day period, Dr. Coldeway traveled to Minneapolis on official business for 2 days (December 15 and 16, 1987). Dr. Coldeway claimed reimbursement for lodging and subsistence expenses for the official travel, as well as lodging expenses for the temporary quarters during the 2-day travel period. The VA denied reimbursement for the lodging expenses portion of the temporary quarters subsistence expenses during that period on the basis that temporary quarters lodging expenses cannot be claimed on days for which an employee receives payment

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for official travel. The agency cited B-175499, Apr. 21, 1972, as support for the disallowance.

#### OPINION

The authority to reimburse relocation expenses incurred by an employee is provided by chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code (1982). Reimbursement of the subsistence expenses of employees while occupying temporary quarters is governed by the provisions of chapter 2, part 5 of the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR), incorp. by ref., 41 C.F.R. § 101-7.003 (1987).

Paragraph 2-5.2i of the FTR provides:

"i. Duplication of other allowances. In no case shall subsistence expenses under these provisions be allowed which duplicate, in whole or in part, payments received under other laws or regulations covering similar costs . . . ."

Our previous decisions have held that where an employee is reimbursed for per diem while on temporary duty away from the official duty station, the employee may not be similarly reimbursed for temporary quarters expenses those same days. 47 Comp. Gen. 84 (1967); B-175499, Apr. 21, 1972; B-172739, June 14, 1971. However, by decision of today, Paul G. Thibault, B-232503, we held that if the agency concludes that the employee acted reasonably in retaining temporary quarters at the permanent duty station, these expenses would be reimbursable as part of temporary quarters subsistence expense.

Accordingly, we have no objection to reimbursement of the lodging expenses claimed so long as the agency determines that Dr. Coldeway acted reasonably in retaining her temporary quarters at the permanent duty station while away on official business.



Acting Comptroller General  
of the United States