



UNITED STATES
CIVILIAN BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS

May 31, 2017

CBCA 5564-TRAV

In the Matter of MARCUS R. JACKSON

Marcus R. Jackson, Falls Church, VA, Claimant.

Wayne F. HarRell, Travel Office, Overseas Building Operations, Department of State, Stafford, VA, appearing for Department of State.

RUSSELL, Board Judge.

Background

Claimant, Marcus R. Jackson, is a civilian employee with the Department of State (agency). In September 2016, Mr. Jackson traveled from his permanent duty station in Washington, D.C., to Guatemala City, Guatemala, for temporary duty (TDY). Mr. Jackson used his personal credit card for travel expenses, and subsequently submitted his request for reimbursement of those expenses through the agency's online reimbursement system. The issue before the Board relates to the receipt that Mr. Jackson submitted to support his claim for reimbursement of lodging expenses. The charges on that receipt were in Guatemalan currency. The agency subsequently requested that Mr. Jackson submit his personal credit card statement to verify the exact exchange rate used so that it could accurately determine lodging expense amounts, and thus, Mr. Jackson's reimbursement, in dollars. The agency explained to Mr. Jackson that he could redact from the provided statement all charges unrelated to the lodging expenses. Mr. Jackson, however, asks the Board to provide him relief from the agency's request for his personal credit card statement.

Discussion

“The Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) governs reimbursement for all employees on official government travel.” *Lindsay Hum*, CBCA 2277-TRAV, 11-1 BCA ¶ 34,728. Under the FTR, to receive reimbursement for lodging costs, an employee must provide the agency with, among other documents, receipts for any lodging expense, 41 CFR 301-52.4 (2016), and “any additional information [the] agency may specifically require.” *Id.* 301-52.2(a). An agency may disallow a payment “if an employee does not provide a receipt or other documentation required to support an item within [a] claim.” *Sam Wright, Jr.*, GSBCA 14942-TRAV, 99-2 BCA ¶ 30,433, at 150,397.

There is no dispute that Mr. Jackson is entitled to reimbursement for the lodging expenses incurred while on TDY. However, the hotel receipt that he provided to support his claim does not show costs in U.S. dollars, the currency used by the agency for reimbursement. The agency asserts that Mr. Jackson’s personal credit card statement is thus required to know the exact exchange rate he paid. With the exchange rate verified, the agency asserts that it will be able to accurately determine a reimbursement amount, mitigating the possibility of Mr. Jackson’s either receiving a windfall or being short-changed. On this point, the agency explains that it has had “many cases where [it] has collected overpayments due to erroneous exchange rates used and . . . has also identified instances where . . . travelers are due additional amounts.” The Board believes that the agency’s position requiring Mr. Jackson’s credit card statement to ensure accurate proof of costs comports with applicable FTR provisions and is, thus, reasonable.

Decision

For the foregoing reasons, Mr. Jackson’s request for relief from the agency’s documentation requirement is denied.

BEVERLY M. RUSSELL
Board Judge