

Board of Contract Appeals

General Services Administration
Washington, D.C. 20405

March 1, 2002

GSBCA 15750-TRAV

In the Matter of TIARA A. STANLEY

Tiara A. Stanley, Kalamazoo, MI, Claimant.

Keith L. Yoder, District Manager, Social Security Administration, Kalamazoo, MI,
appearing for Social Security Administration.

DeGRAFF, Board Judge.

Tiara A. Stanley, an employee of the Social Security Administration (SSA), attended a training course at a temporary duty station from July 18 through October 19, 2000. In connection with her temporary duty, Ms. Stanley submitted vouchers to SSA for lodging (\$5580), meals and incidental expenses (\$3179), mileage (\$406.59), and telephone calls (\$26.73). The vouchers totaled \$9192.32, and SSA paid her that amount.

Ms. Stanley's government credit card charges during her time on temporary duty totaled \$7545.99. For some reason unknown to Ms. Stanley, she was \$808.45 short of the funds she needed to pay the credit card company. Ms. Stanley decided that she had been overcharged by the hotel where she stayed while on temporary duty, and she convinced the hotel to credit her account for \$808.45.

SSA audited Ms. Stanley's vouchers, and discovered that the hotel had not overcharged her. She owed the hotel \$5580 for her room charges, and the hotel charged her credit card for \$5703.79. The \$123.79 difference is accounted for in part by \$102.72 of telephone charges that Ms. Stanley incurred during her stay at the hotel, as shown on itemized bills provided by the hotel. SSA concluded that the remaining \$21.07 (\$123.79 - \$102.72) probably represented charges for telephone calls that Ms. Stanley made during a ten day period for which the hotel did not have itemized bills, and Ms. Stanley did not debate this point. Thus, SSA concluded that the hotel's original charge was, in fact, correct.

SSA explained to Ms. Stanley that the amount she could claim on her vouchers for lodging had to be reduced to the extent that the hotel's credit of \$808.45 reduced the amount she paid for her lodging. SSA decided to treat all of Ms. Stanley's unreimbursed telephone charges (\$97.06) as part of the \$808.45, which left \$711.39 (\$808.45 - \$97.06) as the amount of the credit that was attributable to lodging. SSA told Ms. Stanley that she had been

reimbursed an excess of \$711.39 for her temporary duty lodging expenses. Ms. Stanley asks us to review SSA's decision.

SSA correctly determined that Ms. Stanley was reimbursed an excess of \$711.39 for her temporary duty lodging expenses. According to the Federal Travel Regulation, Ms. Stanley should have been reimbursed not more than her actual lodging cost. 41 CFR 301-11.100 (2000). The hotel correctly charged Ms. Stanley a total of \$5703.79. This included \$5580 for lodging, \$97.06 for telephone calls that were not reimbursable by SSA, and \$26.73 for telephone calls that were reimbursed by SSA. Ms. Stanley submitted vouchers for \$5580 for lodging and \$26.73 for telephone calls, and SSA paid these amounts to her. Ms. Stanley, however, did not pay the hotel's charges in full. Instead, due to the credit extended by the hotel, Ms. Stanley's hotel cost was \$808.45 less than the total of the lodging and telephone charges. SSA decided to attribute as much of the \$808.45 as possible to unreimbursed telephone calls (\$97.06) and the remaining \$711.39 to lodging. This meant that Ms. Stanley paid the hotel \$4868.61 for lodging, \$97.06 for unreimbursed telephone calls, and \$26.73 for reimbursed telephone calls. Because Ms. Stanley's actual lodging cost (\$4868.61) was \$711.39 less than the amount for which she vouchered and was reimbursed (\$5580), she was reimbursed an excess amount for her temporary duty lodging expenses.

MARTHA H. DeGRAFF
Board Judge