



UNITED STATES
CIVILIAN BOARD OF CONTRACT APPEALS

September 30, 2026

CBCA 9029-RELO

In the Matter of GEEBIO G.

Geebio G., Claimant.

Renee Achille-Williamson, Chief, Civilian PCS Budget Section, Air Force Personnel Center, Department of the Air Force, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph Air Force Base, TX, appearing for Department of the Air Force.

SULLIVAN, Board Judge.

Claimant seeks reimbursement of costs incurred to relocate a pet dog from an overseas assignment to the continental United States. The Department of the Air Force (Air Force or agency) denied the claim because the costs were not incurred for the quarantine of the dog. Because some of the costs were incurred as the result of legal requirements imposed for the entry of pets into the United States, we grant the claim in part.

Background

Claimant is a civilian employee of the agency. In January 2026, claimant received orders to transfer from Morocco to the continental United States. Claimant's orders authorized the payment of miscellaneous expenses and authorized claimant to ship the pet. According to claimant's orders, the costs of transportation of the pet were "a reimbursable cost against the auth[orized] Miscellaneous Expense Allowance [(MEA)]."

In June 2026, claimant traveled with the pet and submitted a travel voucher for pet transportation expenses totaling \$2410.19. In the voucher, claimant itemized the following costs with the dates that the costs were incurred:

Date	Nature of Expense	Amount
20260629 ¹	Pender Pet Retreat at Dulles Gateway	\$1596
20260325	Vacin De Rage [Rabies Vaccine]	\$16.10
20260428	Rabies Titer (blood) & Sedition	\$289.70
20260608	Trip Certificate & Medications	\$47
20260608	Morocco Gov Exportation Certificate	\$16.10
20260109	Electronic Chip & Initial Titer Receipt	\$321.90
20260610	Cabin Fee for Pet (Airline)	\$123.39
	Total	\$2410.19

Claimant provided receipts supporting these amounts. The Pender Pet Retreat is an authorized animal care facility (ACF), licensed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and responsible for handling pets when they enter the United States. The charges for the Pender Pet Retreat were itemized on the receipt as follows:

Description	Amount
ACF Reservation with Rabies Titer	\$546
Customs Clearance & Compliance	\$425
Post Entry Fee - Royal Air Maroc Airlines	\$275
After Hours Fee	\$350
Total	\$1596

Claimant provided an email from Pender that describes in detail the process that it follows to comply with United States Customs and Border Control and CDC entry requirements when handling pets. According to the receipt, the “after hours fee” is assessed for arrival times outside the window of 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Claimant’s flight arrived outside this window.

¹ Although the identified date of June 29, 2026, is the date on which claimant submitted the voucher, it appears, based upon the submitted receipt, that claimant incurred these costs on June 10, 2026, the day that claimant traveled with the dog.

Discussion

Claimant, as a civilian Air Force employee, is subject to the requirements of both the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) and the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). *Alphonso H.*, CBCA 7285-RELO, 22-1 BCA ¶ 38,103, at 185,045. As an employee relocated in the interests of the Government, claimant was entitled to reimbursement of miscellaneous expenses. 5 U.S.C. § 5724a(f) (2024). Pursuant to regulation, federal employees may seek reimbursement of either (1) a lump sum amount set in the FTR bulletin (currently \$905)² or (2) an actual amount, authorized by the agency, that is supported by receipts or other documentation. 41 CFR 302-16.2 (published in eCFR) (FTR 302-16.2).³ The actual amount sought cannot exceed one week of the base pay rate for a GS-13, step 10, *id.*, which, at the time claimant reported, was \$22,73.15.⁴

The FTR states that “[e]mployees will be reimbursed the [miscellaneous expenses allowance (MEA)] in accordance with their agency’s internal relocation policy.” FTR 302-16.1(b). The JTR, the internal relocation policy for claimant, provides that “[c]at and dog transportation and quarantine charges” are “reimbursable pet expenses.” JTR 054102 table 5-81; JTR 054103-A. “Non-transportation and handling pet-related expenses are not reimbursable.” JTR 054103-B. We must decide which of the costs claimed are reimbursable as transportation and handling or quarantine charges.

Claimant asserts that the costs for which reimbursement is sought are all required by CDC regulations. Morocco is considered a high risk country for importing dogs with rabies. *See High-Risk Countries for Dog Rabies*, www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/high-risk-countries.html (last visited Sept. 29, 2026). The CDC requires that persons who wish to bring a dog into the United States from a high-risk country obtain several items, including:

- A certification of foreign rabies vaccination and microchip form.
- A valid rabies serology titer report from a CDC-approved laboratory.

² <https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/regulations/federal-travel-regulation/ft-and-related-files/relocation-miscellaneous-expenses-allowance> (last visited Sept. 29, 2026).

³ Relocation allowances and entitlements are determined based upon the regulations in effect on the date that the employee reports to the new duty station. FTR 302-2.1(c).

⁴ <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2026/GS.pdf> (last visited Sept. 29, 2026).

- A reservation at a CDC-registered animal care facility. If you do not have a valid rabies titer, this must include a 28-day quarantine reservation.
- An itinerary that has the dog arriving by air at the U.S. airport where the CDC-registered animal care facility is located.
- A microchip that can be detected with a universal scanner to identify the dog.

Entry Requirements for Foreign-Vaccinated Dogs from High-Risk Countries, www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/foreign-vaccinated-high-risk-countries.html (last visited Sept. 29, 2026).⁵ At the animal care facility, the CDC requires that the dog undergo an examination by a veterinarian. *Id.* If the dog does not have a valid rabies serology titer (test for rabies), the dog will need to be quarantined at the facility for twenty-eight days. *Id.*

Claimant seeks reimbursement of seven different costs. The cabin fee (\$123.39) is a cost of transportation of the pet and is reimbursable. JTR 054102 table 5-81; JTR 054103-A.⁶ Turning to the Pender Pet Retreat costs, we find that the costs of the reservation and rabies titer (\$546), customs clearance and compliance (\$425), and post-entry airline fee (\$275) to be costs related to the transportation of the dog. CDC regulations require that dogs be sent to an animal care facility to be examined and tested for rabies vaccine levels. Therefore, these costs are all incurred as the result of the transportation and handling of the dog as it entered the United States. The agency denied the costs of the Pender Pet Retreat because they were not incurred for the quarantine of the dog. Although the dog was not quarantined, the costs were still incurred pursuant to CDC requirements for entry into the United States, the location of claimant's new duty station. We find these costs to be related to the transportation of the dog and an "integral part of the process of admission" to the new jurisdiction because the dog could not enter the United States without receiving an examination and rabies test at this facility. *John D. Johnson*, B-206538 (Sept. 14, 1982).

⁵ The CDC has less stringent requirements for dogs that receive vaccinations in the United States if the owner can provide a certification issued by a veterinarian before the dog left the U.S. *Entry Requirements for U.S.-Vaccinated Dogs from High-Risk Countries*, www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/us-vaccinated-high-risk-countries.html (last visited Sept. 29, 2026). If the owner does not have this certification, the owner must follow the entry requirements for foreign-vaccinated dogs. *Id.*

⁶ The agency did not dispute this cost. Because the cost of this individual item was less than the lump sum reimbursement amount, the agency directed claimant to seek reimbursement of the lump sum amount of \$905.

The costs for micro-chipping, vaccination and rabies titers for the dog prior to travel, and the trip certificate and medications are not reimbursable because these costs are not transportation or handling expenses. JTR 054103-B; *see Shawnie M. Peters*, CBCA 5520-RELO, 18-1 BCA ¶ 36,952, at 180,062-63; *David J. Mitchell*, GSBCA 16827-RELO, 06-1 BCA ¶ 33,278, at 164,998. Although listed in the CDC regulation, expenses such as vaccination and micro-chipping “serve a routine veterinary purpose.” *John D. Johnson*, B-206538 (Sept. 14, 1982). Claimant argues that these costs should be reimbursable because the costs were incurred to avoid the more expensive requirement to quarantine for twenty-eight days. The fact that these costs were incurred and saved the agency money cannot overcome this explicit limitation. *Joseph P. Piechota*, CBCA 6430-RELO, 19-1 BCA ¶ 37,377, at 181,712. Claimant did not explain how the export certificate issued by the Moroccan government is related to the transportation of the dog or the requirements for entry into the United States, so the cost of that certificate is also not reimbursable. *Mitchell*, 06-1 BCA at 164,998 (finding export certificate not reimbursable). Claimant has not explained why the “after hours fee” is connected to transportation of the dog, and pet boarding fees are not reimbursable, *Peters*, 18-1 BCA at 180,062, so this cost is not reimbursable.

Decision

The claim is granted in part. Claimant should be reimbursed \$1369.39 (\$123.39 cabin fee, \$546 ACF reservation, \$425 customs clearance and compliance, and \$275 post-entry fee).

Marian E. Sullivan
MARIAN E. SULLIVAN
Board Judge