

APPEAL NO. 041031
FILED JUNE 21, 2004

This appeal arises pursuant to the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, TEX. LAB. CODE ANN. § 401.001 *et seq.* (1989 Act). A contested case hearing was held on March 30, 2004. The hearing officer resolved the disputed issue by deciding that attorney's fees in the amount of \$217.50 were reasonable and necessary and awarding attorney's fees in that amount to respondent 1 (attorney herein). The appellant (claimant herein) files a request for review in which he asserts that the attorney charged more than he agreed the services rendered would cost. No response was received from the attorney or from respondent 2 (self-insured herein).

DECISION

Finding sufficient evidence to support the decision of the hearing officer and no reversible error in the record, we affirm the decision and order of the hearing officer.

The hearing officer did not err in awarding attorney's fees in the amount of \$217.50. We review a hearing officer's award of attorney's fees under an abuse-of-discretion standard. Texas Workers' Compensation Commission Appeal No. 92481, decided October 21, 1992. In determining whether there has been an abuse of discretion, the Appeals Panel looks to see whether the hearing officer acted without reference to any guiding rules or principles. Texas Workers' Compensation Commission Appeal No. 951943, decided January 2, 1996, citing Morrow v. H.E.B., Inc., 714 S.W.2d 297 (Tex. 1986). Section 408.222 and Tex. W.C. Comm'n, 28 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§ 152.1 and 152.3 through 152.5 (Rules 152.1 and 152.3 through 152.5) govern fees paid to a carrier's attorney. In view of the record and the applicable law, we cannot conclude that the hearing officer abused his discretion in awarding attorney's fees in the amount of \$217.50.

We affirm the decision and order of the hearing officer.

The true corporate name of the insurance carrier is **(a self-insured governmental entity)** and the name and address of its registered agent for service of process is

**CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY
800 BRAZOS
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701.**

Gary L. Kilgore
Appeals Judge

CONCUR:

Judy L. S. Barnes
Appeals Judge

Margaret L. Turner
Appeals Judge