

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

**TIMOTHY J CONROY**  
Claimant

**MENARD INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 20A-UI-08349-S1-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 03/15/20**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1/R)**

Iowa Code § 96.4-3 – Able and Available  
871 IAC 24.23(10) – Voluntary Leave of Absence

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Timothy Conroy (claimant) appealed a representative's July 8, 2020, decision (reference 01) that concluded ineligibility to receive unemployment insurance benefits as of March 15, 2020, because a leave of absence was granted by Menard (employer) at the claimant's request. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on August 27, 2020. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Krystal Boege, Human Resources Coordinator. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative file.

**ISSUE:**

The issue is whether the claimant is available for work and whether the claimant was on an approved leave of absence.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on October 4, 2017, as a part-time morning stock person. The claimant had underlying health issues and thought he should not go to work due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He signed leave of absence papers on March 16, 2020 and March 18, 2020. The claimant emailed the employer on April 30, 2020, to extend his leave to June 26, 2020. The claimant's leave of absence was from March 17, 2020, through March 26, 2020. The claimant returned to work on June 28, 2020. The employer had work for the claimant had he not been on a leave of absence.

The claimant filed for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of March 15, 2020. His weekly benefit amount was determined to be \$164.00. The claimant received benefits from March 29, 2020, to the week ending June 27, 2020. This is a total of \$2,027.00 in state unemployment insurance benefits after the separation from employment. He also received \$7,800.00 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation for the thirteen-week period ending June 27, 2020.

## REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(10) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

When employees request and are granted a leave of absence, they are considered to be voluntarily unemployed. The claimant requested a leave of absence and the employer granted the request. The claimant is considered to be voluntarily unemployed, or unavailable for work, during the period of the leave of absence and is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits from March 15, 2020.

Even though the claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law, he may be eligible for federally funded unemployment insurance benefits under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("Cares Act"), Public Law 116-136. Section 2102 of the CARES Act creates a new temporary federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) that in general provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits. An individual receiving PUA benefits may also receive the \$600 weekly benefit amount (WBA) under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program if he or she is eligible for such compensation for the week claimed. The claimant must apply for PUA, as noted in the instructions provided in the "Note to Claimant" below.

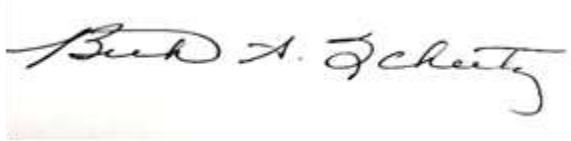
The issue of whether claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

## DECISION:

The representative's July 8, 2020, decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is considered to be unavailable for work and is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits from March 15, 2020.

The issue of whether claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation is remanded to the Benefits Bureau of Iowa Workforce Development for an initial investigation and decision.

*Note to Claimant:* This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Beth A. Scheetz", is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Beth A. Scheetz  
Administrative Law Judge

August 31, 2020  
Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/sam