

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**ROCHELLE C TURNER**  
Claimant

**CUSTOM-PAK INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 17A-UI-11942-NM-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 11/05/17**  
**Claimant: Respondent (1)**

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Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Failure to Accept Work  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(2) – Able & Available - Benefits Eligibility Conditions

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The employer filed an appeal from the November 16, 2017, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on December 13, 2017. The claimant participated and testified. The employer participated through Vice President Ron Zimmer. Claimant's Exhibits A through I and employer's Exhibits 1 through 4 were received into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

Was a suitable offer of work made to the claimant?

If so, did the claimant fail to accept and was the failure to do so for a good cause reason?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having heard the testimony and having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed by this employer from March 2016 until October 2016, when she was separated from employment. On November 7, 2016, the employer extended an offer for claimant to return to work, which she declined. This was the last time the employer made an offer of work to the claimant. The claimant filed her claim for unemployment insurance benefits the week beginning November 5, 2017.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the offer of work made on November 7, 2016 was outside the benefit year.

Iowa Code section 96.5(3)a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits, regardless of the source of the individual's wage credits:

3. Failure to accept work. If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. (1) In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

(a) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.

(b) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.

(c) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(d) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(2) However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.24(8) provides:

(8) Refusal disqualification jurisdiction. Both the offer of work or the order to apply for work and the claimant's accompanying refusal must occur within the individual's benefit year, as defined in subrule 24.1(21), before the Iowa code subsection 96.5(3) disqualification can be imposed. It is not necessary that the

offer, the order, or the refusal occur in a week in which the claimant filed a weekly claim for benefits before the disqualification can be imposed.

The last offer of work from this employer to the claimant was made on November 7, 2016. Claimant did not make her claim for benefits until nearly one year later, on November 5, 2017. The administrative law judge does not have jurisdiction to evaluate the offer or refusal of work since the offer of employment took place outside of the benefit year. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

**DECISION:**

The November 16, 2017, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Claimant failed to accept an offer of work made outside of her benefit year; thus, the administrative law judge has no jurisdiction to determine suitability of the offer. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

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Nicole Merrill  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

nm/rvs