

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**NATHAN C AYERS**  
Claimant

**MENARD INC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 21A-UI-07168-ED-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 12/27/20**  
**Claimant: Respondent (2)**

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Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Able & Available – Availability Disqualifications  
Iowa Code § 96.19(38)a & b – Total and Partial Unemployment  
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Same Base Period Employment

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The employer filed an appeal from the March 4, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on May 19, 2021. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated through Mike Hardman. Employer's Exhibit A is admitted into the record.

**ISSUES:**

Is the claimant eligible to receive partial benefits?  
Is the claimant able to and available for work?  
Is the claimant still employed at the same hours and wages?  
Is the employer's account subject to charge?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was hired to work full-time as an industrial mechanic. From December 23, 2020, through January 6, 2021, the employer did have full-time work available for the claimant as contemplated in the original contract of hire and as established by the base period work history. The claimant submitted a request for a leave of absence in writing to the employer on December 23, 2020. The claimant requested the leave because he tested positive for Covid-19. The leave of absence was allowed by the employer. The claimant returned to work per his usual schedule at the completion of his leave of absence.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant is not able to and available for work effective December 23, 2020 through January 6, 2021

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Code section 96.19(38) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) provides:

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

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis different from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant is not able to work and available for work effective December 23, 2020.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

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.

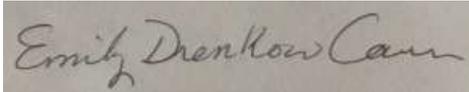
(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

Here, claimant was on a leave of absence due to testing positive to Covid-19. Claimant has not established he is able to and available for work, even under the United States Department of Labor's guidance to flexibly interpret this requirement. See Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 10-20. Therefore, claimant is not eligible for regular, state-funded unemployment insurance benefits from the effective date of the claim.

Even though claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law, the claimant 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.

**DECISION:**

The March 4, 2021, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. The claimant is not available for work effective December 23, 2020, and regular, state-funded unemployment insurance benefits are denied. Claimant may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.



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Emily Drenkow Carr  
Administrative Law Judge  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Bureau  
1000 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209  
Fax (515) 478-3528

May 26, 2021

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Decision Dated and Mailed

ed/kmj

The Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020 (enacted December 27, 2020) and American Rescue Act of 2021 (enacted March 11, 2021) extended PUA benefits for weeks of unemployment to September 6, 2021.

On May 11, 2021, Governor Reynolds announced that Iowa will end its participation in federal pandemic-related unemployment benefit programs effective June 12, 2021. The last payable week for PUA in Iowa will be the week ending June 12, 2021. Additional information can be found in the press release at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/iowa-end-participation-federal-unemployment-benefit-programs-citing-strong-labor-market-and>.