

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section  
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

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Appeal Number: 05A-UI-03517-S2T  
OC: 02/27/05 R: 03  
Claimant: Appellant (1)

**This Decision Shall Become Final**, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319**.

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

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(Administrative Law Judge)

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(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Lisa Klein (claimant) appealed a representative's March 24, 2005 decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with United States Cellular Corporation (employer) for excessive unexcused absenteeism. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on April 25, 2005. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Shawn Taylor, Customer Service Coach, and Shelly Lawless, Associate Relations Manager.

#### 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 December 1, 2003, as a full-time customer service representative. The claimant received a copy of the employer's handbook and signed for its receipt on November 26, 2003. The employer issued the claimant warnings for absenteeism on November 2, 2004, January 28 and February 4, 2005. The claimant understood that further absenteeism could result in her termination. The claimant had depleted her sick leave and vacation time.

On February 17, 2005, the claimant told the employer she would be absent on February 18, 2005, for school. The claimant won a vacation getaway from the radio. She told the employer she would be absent on February 19 and 21, 2005, for the vacation. The employer denied the claimant's request for vacation on February 19 and 21, 2005. The claimant did not appear for work on February 19 and 21, 2005. The employer terminated the claimant on February 24, 2005, when she attempted to return to work.

#### REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the claimant was discharged for misconduct. For the following reasons the administrative law judge concludes she was.

Iowa Code section 96.5-2-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

2. Discharge for misconduct. If the department finds that the individual has been discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment:

a. The individual shall be disqualified for benefits until the individual has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

871 IAC 24.32(1)a provides:

Discharge for misconduct.

(1) Definition.

a. "Misconduct" is defined as a deliberate act or omission by a worker which constitutes a material breach of the duties and obligations arising out of such worker's contract of employment. Misconduct as the term is used in the disqualification provision as being limited to conduct evincing such willful or wanton disregard of an employer's interest as is found in deliberate violation or disregard of standards of behavior which the employer has the right to expect of employees, or in carelessness or negligence of such degree of recurrence as to manifest equal culpability, wrongful intent or evil design, or to show an intentional and substantial disregard of the employer's interests or of the employee's duties and obligations to the employer. On the other hand mere inefficiency, unsatisfactory conduct, failure in good performance as the result of inability or incapacity, inadvertencies or ordinary negligence in isolated instances, or good faith

errors in judgment or discretion are not to be deemed misconduct within the meaning of the statute.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Three incidents of tardiness or absenteeism after a warning constitutes misconduct. Clark v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 317 N.W.2d 517 (Iowa App. 1982). Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). An employer has a right to expect employees to appear for work when scheduled and follow directions in the performance of her work. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by failing to appear for work when scheduled. The claimant used all her vacation time and expected the employer to give her more when she won a vacation. The claimant was told to appear for work and she defied the employer. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such she is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

#### DECISION:

The representative's March 24, 2005 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until she has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.

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