

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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**SHANNON M DUGAN**  
Claimant

**KRISTAT AUTO PARTS LLC**  
Employer

**APPEAL NO. 15A-UI-00474-B2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**OC: 12/14/14  
Claimant: Respondent (2R)**

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Iowa Code § 96.3-7 – Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits  
871 IA Admin. Code 24(10) – Employer Participation in Fact Finding  
Iowa Code § 96.5-1 – Voluntary Quit

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Employer filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated January 6, 2015, reference 01, which held claimant eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a hearing was scheduled for and held on February 5, 2015. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Terry Amato and Daniel Amato.

**ISSUES:**

Whether claimant quit for good cause attributable to employer.

Whether claimant was overpaid benefits.

If claimant was overpaid benefits, should claimant repay benefits or should employer be charged due to employer's participation or lack thereof in fact finding?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on November 4, 2014.

On or around September 23, 2014 claimant told employer of her desire to work for POET rather than continuing her work with employer. On November 3, 2014 claimant was allowed to take the day off work to interview for employment with POET. On November 4, 2014 claimant came into work and met with employer. Claimant stated that she would need 40 hours off work in the next month such that she could take her GED. Claimant employer and employer's wife were the only three full-time employees of employer. Employer stated that claimant could not take the time off as she was needed at work. Employer stated that claimant needed to decide where she wanted to work.

After hearing this information claimant walked out the door from employer, not to return. Although claimant stated that employer fired claimant after this interchange, the court finds claimant's version of events to not make logical sense.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

Iowa Code § 96.5-1 provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

Iowa Code § 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

b. (1) If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual, benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this state pursuant to section 602.10101.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(26) provides:

Voluntary quit without good cause. In general, a voluntary quit means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer from whom the employee has separated. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.5. However, the claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving Iowa Code § 96.5,

subsection (1), paragraphs "a" through "i," and subsection 10. The following reasons for a voluntary quit shall be presumed to be without good cause attributable to the employer:

(26) The claimant left to go to school.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.10 provides:

Employer and employer representative participation in fact-finding interviews.

(1) "Participate," as the term is used for employers in the context of the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6, subsection 2, means submitting detailed factual information of the quantity and quality that if un rebutted would be sufficient to result in a decision favorable to the employer. The most effective means to participate is to provide live testimony at the interview from a witness with firsthand knowledge of the events leading to the separation. If no live testimony is provided, the employer must provide the name and telephone number of an employee with firsthand information who may be contacted, if necessary, for rebuttal. A party may also participate by providing detailed written statements or documents that provide detailed factual information of the events leading to separation. At a minimum, the information provided by the employer or the employer's representative must identify the dates and particular circumstances of the incident or incidents, including, in the case of discharge, the act or omissions of the claimant or, in the event of a voluntary separation, the stated reason for the quit. The specific rule or policy must be submitted if the claimant was discharged for violating such rule or policy. In the case of discharge for attendance violations, the information must include the circumstances of all incidents the employer or the employer's representative contends meet the definition of unexcused absences as set forth in 871—subrule 24.32(7). On the other hand, written or oral statements or general conclusions without supporting detailed factual information and information submitted after the fact-finding decision has been issued are not considered participation within the meaning of the statute.

(2) "A continuous pattern of nonparticipation in the initial determination to award benefits," pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6, subsection 2, as the term is used for an entity representing employers, means on 25 or more occasions in a calendar quarter beginning with the first calendar quarter of 2009, the entity files appeals after failing to participate. Appeals filed but withdrawn before the day of the contested case hearing will not be considered in determining if a continuous pattern of nonparticipation exists. The division administrator shall notify the employer's representative in writing after each such appeal.

(3) If the division administrator finds that an entity representing employers as defined in Iowa Code section 96.6, subsection 2, has engaged in a continuous pattern of nonparticipation, the division administrator shall suspend said representative for a period of up to six months on the first occasion, up to one year on the second occasion and up to ten years on the third or subsequent occasion. Suspension by the division administrator constitutes final agency action and may be appealed pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.19.

(4) "Fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual," as the term is used for claimants in the context of the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.6, subsection 2, means providing knowingly false statements or

knowingly false denials of material facts for the purpose of obtaining unemployment insurance benefits. Statements or denials may be either oral or written by the claimant. Inadvertent misstatements or mistakes made in good faith are not considered fraud or willful misrepresentation.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 96.3(7)“b” as amended by 2008 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2160.

Claimant does not allege that she had good cause attributable to employer to quit her employment. Employer had worked with claimant to allow her to interview for another job during work hours. This type of cooperation does not comport with claimant’s story that employer terminated claimant because claimant wanted to take classes for her GED during work hours. Rather, the action that makes logical sense is that claimant was upset when she was denied the opportunity to further her education, and walked out. This does not constitute a voluntary quit for good cause attributable to employer and, as such, claimant is disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

The overpayment issue was addressed. Claimant received benefits totaling \$984.00 for three weeks. Said payments are deemed to be overpayments.

The issue of employer participation was addressed. Employer substantially participated in fact finding to the extent that employer’s account will not be charged for overpayments to claimant.

**DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated January 6, 2015, reference 01, is reversed. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant’s weekly benefit amount, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

Claimant is deemed to have been overpaid benefits in the amount of \$984.00. Employer’s account shall not be charged for said overpayments as employer substantially participated in fact finding.

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Blair A. Bennett  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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