

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

68-0157 (9-06) - 3091078 - EI

THERESA M SHALLA
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-06256-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
Employer

**Original Claim: 03/22/09
Claimant: Respondent (2-R)**

Section 96.5-1-d – Voluntary Quit for Medical Reasons
Section 96.3-7 – Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The University of Iowa (employer) appealed a representative's April 16, 2009 decision (reference 01) that concluded Theresa Shalla (claimant) was eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for May 19, 2009. The claimant did not provide a telephone number for the hearing and, therefore, did not participate. The employer was represented by David Bergeon, Human Resources Specialist, and participated by Ellen Twinam, Human Resources Generalist.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant voluntarily quit work without good cause attributable to the employer.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on March 27, 2000, as a full-time Clerk 3. The claimant suffered from a non-work-related medical condition and stopped working on March 16, 2009. The claimant requested leave based on her physician's recommendation and the employer consented to the absence. The employer has not gotten any documentation from the claimant that she has been released to return to work without restrictions. Continued work was available had the claimant not resigned.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily quit work without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 96.5-1-d 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. But the individual shall not be disqualified if the department finds that:

d. The individual left employment because of illness, injury or pregnancy upon the advice of a licensed and practicing physician, and upon knowledge of the necessity for absence immediately notified the employer, or the employer consented to the absence, and after recovering from the illness, injury or pregnancy, when recovery was certified by a licensed and practicing physician, the individual returned to the employer and offered to perform services and the individual's regular work or comparable suitable work was not available, if so found by the department, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention. Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980). A claimant is not disqualified for leaving employment if he or she (1) left employment by reason of illness, injury or pregnancy; (2) on the advice of a licensed and practicing physician; (3) and immediately notified the employer or the employer consented to the absence; (4) and when certified as recovered by a physician, the individual returned to the employer and offered services but the regular or comparable suitable work was not available. Area Residential Care, Inc. v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 323 N.W.2d 257 (Iowa 1982).

The claimant left work due to a medical condition under the advice of her physician. The employer consented to her leaving. The claimant has failed to provide the employer with certification that she has recovered. In addition, the claimant has failed to offer her services to the employer. The claimant has failed to meet the requirements of the statute and, therefore, is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. The claimant may requalify by returning to the employer with an unconditional release. The claimant could then receive benefits if regular work or comparable, suitable work was not available.

Iowa Code section 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.

The claimant has received benefits since filing the claim herein. Pursuant to this decision, those benefits may now constitute an overpayment. The issue of the overpayment is remanded for determination.

DECISION:

The representative's April 16, 2009 decision (reference 01) is reversed. The claimant voluntarily left work without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible. The issue of the overpayment is remanded for determination.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/kjw