

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

MICHELLE D EDWARDS
Claimant

APPEAL 15A-UI-12006-DG-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

GAVIN ENTERPRISES INC
Employer

**OC: 06/28/15
Claimant: Appellant (4)**

Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Failure to Accept Work

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the October 29, 2015, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision that denied benefits based upon refusing an offer of work. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was held on November 16, 2015. Claimant participated. Employer participated through John Rich, Staffing Specialist.

ISSUES:

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: Employer made an offer of work to claimant which was comparable to the prevailing rate of pay for similar work that claimant had done over the past year. The offer was made in the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant declined an offer of work because she was not available during the time when she was ill.

Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

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. 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:

- (1) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.
- (2) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.
- (3) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.
- (4) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

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(4) provides:

(4) Work refused when the claimant fails to meet the benefit eligibility conditions of Iowa Code § 96.4(3). Before a disqualification for failure to accept work may be imposed, an individual must first satisfy the benefit eligibility conditions of being able to work and available for work and not unemployed for failing to bump a fellow employee with less seniority. If the facts indicate that the claimant was or is not available for work, and this resulted in the failure to accept work or apply for work, such claimant shall not be disqualified for refusal since the claimant is not available for work. In such a case it is the availability of the claimant that is to be tested. Lack of transportation, illness or health conditions, illness in family, and child care problems are generally considered to be good cause for refusing work or refusing to apply for work. However, the claimant's availability would be the issue to be determined in these types of cases.

Iowa Code § 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 § 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph 1, or temporarily unemployed as defined in § 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 § 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under § 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

The offer may have been suitable, but the reason for the failure to accept the work was because claimant was not available for work because of a temporary illness. Therefore, the claimant is not disqualified from receiving benefits, but is not eligible for the period from October 4 to 2015 through October 10, 2015. She became available for work after that date, and is eligible for benefits except for that one-week period.

DECISION:

The October 29, 2015, (reference 05) unemployment insurance decision is modified in favor of the claimant. Claimant declined an offer of work but was unavailable at the time because of illness. Benefits are withheld for the one-week period ending on October 10, 2015 only. She is eligible for benefits prior to and after that one-week period, provided she is otherwise eligible.

Duane L. Golden
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

dlg/css