

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

KAMERON D WALKER
Claimant

WALMART INC.
Employer

APPEAL 24A-UI-00888-DZ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 12/17/23
Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Able to and Available for Work

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Kameron D. Walker, the claimant/appellant,¹ appealed the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) January 17, 2024, (reference 02) unemployment insurance (UI) decision. IWD denied Mr. Walker REGULAR (state) UI benefits as of December 17, 2023 because IWD concluded that he asked for and the employer granted him a leave of absence, so he is voluntarily unemployed and not available for work. On January 29, 2024, the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL), UI Appeals Bureau mailed a notice of hearing to Mr. Walker and the employer for a telephone hearing scheduled for February 12, 2024.

The administrative law judge held a telephone hearing on February 12, 2024. Mr. Walker participated in the hearing personally. The employer did not participate in the hearing. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

ISSUE:

Is Mr. Walker able to and available for work as of December 17, 2023?
Is Mr. Walker on an approved leave of absence?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Mr. Walker began working for the employer, a base period employer, on July 15, 2020. He works as a part-time stocker. His schedule varies and the employer does not guarantee him any hours.

In July 2023, Mr. Walker began working about four hours per week for the employer because he obtained a full-time job with another employer – Siemens Wind Power Inc (Siemens). Mr. Walker works as a full-time worker in Siemens' paint department. Siemens laid off Mr. Walker for two weeks in December 2023 – the weeks of December 17-23, 2023 and December 24-30. Since he was laid off from his full-time job, Mr. Walker took vacation time from this employer during the layoff. As of January 2, 2024, Mr. Walker returned to work for the employer in his same job, and he returned to work for Siemens in his same job.

¹ Claimant is the person who filed for UI benefits. Appellant is the person or employer who filed the appeal.

Mr. Walker applied for UI benefits effective December 17, 2023. IWD set his weekly UI benefit amount at \$459.00. Mr. Walker has base period wages from other employers.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes Mr. Walker was partially unemployed from December 17, 2023 through December 30, 2023, and this employer is relieved of charges.

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 section 96.1A, subsection 37, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.1A, subsection 37, 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 § 96.1A(37) 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 Code section 96.7(2)a(2)(a) provides:

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

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

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.

A person claiming benefits has the burden of proof that she is be able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.² To be able to work, "[a]n individual must be physically and mentally able to work in some gainful employment, not necessarily in the individual's customary occupation, but which is engaged in by others as a means of livelihood."³ "An evaluation of an individual's ability to work for the purposes of determining that individual's eligibility for unemployment benefits must necessarily take into consideration the economic and legal forces at work in the general labor market in which the individual resides."⁴

In this case, Mr. Walker did not work any hours at his full-time job at Siemens from December 17, 2023 through December 30, 2023 because Siemens laid him off. But this employer continued to offer Mr. Walker the same employment during these two weeks. Since Mr. Walker worked less than his usual hours and earned less than his weekly UI benefit amount plus \$15.00, he is partially unemployed. Since this employer continued to offer Mr. Walker the same employment as it had before he filed for UI benefits, this employer's account is relieved of charges.

² Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22.

³ *Sierra v. Employment Appeal Board*, 508 N.W.2d 719, 721 (Iowa 1993); *Geiken v. Lutheran Home for the Aged*, 468 N.W.2d 223 (Iowa 1991); Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22(1).

⁴ *Sierra* at 723.

DECISION:

The January 17, 2024 (reference 02) UI decision is REVERSED. Mr. Walker is partially unemployed from December 17, 2023 through December 30, 2023. Mr. Walker is eligible for UI benefits from December 17, 2023 through December 30, 2023, as long as no other decision denies him UI benefits.

The employer, Walmart Inc, is relieved of charges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Zeno', written in a cursive style.

Daniel Zeno
Administrative Law Judge

February 23, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

DZ/jkb

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with this decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

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.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL 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.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or 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.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.