

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**MONTRELL M BROWN**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-04781-S2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**EZ PAYROLL & STAFFING SOLUTIONS**  
Employer

**OC: 12/25/11**  
**Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Montrell Brown (claimant) appealed a representative's April 23, 2012 decision (reference 05) that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work with EZ Payroll & Staffing Solutions (employer) for excessive unexcused absenteeism. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for May 17, 2012. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Brittany Ray, Branch Manager.

**ISSUE:**

The issue is whether the claimant was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

**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 August 26, 2011, as a full-time package operator. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on August 26, 2011. The employer issued the claimant a verbal warning on January 19, 2012, for failure to notify the employer of his absence. On January 22, 2012, the claimant signed a written warning/last-chance agreement. The employer notified the claimant that further absences could result in termination from employment and the claimant needed to supply the employer with a doctor's excuse if the claimant were absent. On February 13, 2012, the claimant was ten minutes late reporting to work. On February 14, 2012, the claimant was absent due to illness but did not supply the employer with a doctor's excuse. The employer terminated the claimant on February 15, 2012. On February 16, 2012, the claimant provided the employer with a doctor's excuse.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged for misconduct.

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(7) provides:

(7) Excessive unexcused absenteeism. Excessive unexcused absenteeism is an intentional disregard of the duty owed by the claimant to the employer and shall be considered misconduct except for illness or other reasonable grounds for which the employee was absent and that were properly reported to the employer.

The determination of whether unexcused absenteeism is excessive necessarily requires consideration of past acts and warnings. The term "absenteeism" also encompasses conduct that is more accurately referred to as "tardiness." An absence is an extended tardiness, and an incident of tardiness is a limited absence. Absences related to issues of personal responsibility such as transportation, lack of childcare, and oversleeping are not considered excused. Higgins v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 350 N.W.2d 187 (Iowa 1984).

An employer is entitled to expect its employees to report to work as scheduled or to be notified when and why the employee is unable to report to work. The employer has established that the claimant was warned that further unexcused absences could result in termination of employment and the final tardiness was not excused. The final absence was unaccompanied by a doctor's excuse. The final absences, in combination with the claimant's history of unexcused absenteeism, are considered excessive. Benefits are withheld.

#### **DECISION:**

The representative's April 23, 2012 decision (reference 05) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because the claimant was discharged from work for misconduct. 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.

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Beth A. Scheetz  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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