

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

ELIZA ANNE
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 15A-UI-02162-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

AMERISTAR CASINO CO BLUFFS INC
Employer

OC: 01/25/15
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Eliza Anne (claimant) appealed a representative's February 10, 2015 (reference 01) decision that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits after her separation from employment with Ameristar Casino (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for April 3, 2015. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Heather Nelson, Career Development Manager. The employer offered and Exhibit One was received into evidence.

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 May 19, 2011 as a full-time environmental services attendant. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook and attendance policy on May 19, 2011. The claimant was absent some days due to childcare. She was absent five days and tardy six days. She properly reported absences due to illness twice. On May 20, June 11, and September 2, 2014, the employer issued the claimant warnings for absenteeism. The employer notified the claimant that further infractions could result in suspension or termination from employment. On January 22, 2015, the claimant was absent from work. The employer terminated her on January 22, 2015.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

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

Iowa Code § 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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.32(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 absence was not excused. The final absence, in combination with the claimant's history of unexcused absenteeism, is considered excessive. Benefits are withheld.

DECISION:

The representative's February 10, 2015 (reference 01) decision 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.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/can