

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

RONALD L FIELD
Claimant

TOP GUN PAINTING LLC
Employer

APPEAL 20A-UI-13068-DG-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

**OC: 04/19/20
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Failure to Accept Work
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed an appeal from the October 13, 2020, (reference 01) 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 December 21, 2020. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate. The administrative law judge took official notice of the administrative record.

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: Claimant was not able to work and available to work beginning on April 19, 2020 because he did not want to be exposed to the covid-19 virus.

Claimant began working for employer as a full-time painter in the fall of, 2019. On or about April 19, 2020 claimant requested a leave of absence from work because he was having covid-19 symptoms, and his mother who resides in his home was at risk for becoming very ill if she contracted the covid-19 virus.

Employer granted claimant's leave request. Employer made an offer of work to claimant via text on or about April 19, 2020. The offer was to work at the same hours and wages as he had worked prior to his leave of absence. Claimant is currently unable to come back to work because he continuing concerns for his mother's health.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant declined an offer of work because he was not available.

Iowa Code section 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. (1) 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:

(a) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.

(b) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.

(c) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(d) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(2) 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:

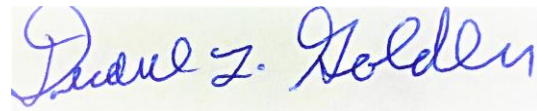
(4) *Work refused when the claimant fails to meet the benefit eligibility conditions of Iowa Code section 96.4(3).* Before a disqualification for failure to accept work may be imposed, an individual must first satisfy the benefit eligibility conditions of being able to work and available for work and 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.

The offer may have been suitable, but the reason for the failure to accept the work was because claimant was not available for work. Therefore, the claimant is not disqualified from receiving benefits, but is not eligible beginning on April 19, 2020. Benefits are withheld until such time as claimant makes himself available for work.

Note to Claimant: If this decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits and you disagree with this decision, you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final, or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.

DECISION:

The October 13, 2020, (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is affirmed. Claimant declined an offer of work but was unavailable at the time. Benefits are withheld effective April 19, 2020, until such time as the claimant makes himself available for work.



Duane L. Golden
Administrative Law Judge

January 11, 2021
Decision Dated and Mailed

dlg/mh