

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

BRANDI N EXLINE
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 14A-UI-02837-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

CARE INITIATIVES
Employer

OC: 01/05/14
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Brandi Exline (claimant) appealed a representative's March 5, 2014, decision (reference 01) that concluded she was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because she was discharged from work with Care Initiatives (employer) for repeated tardiness in reporting for work after having been warned. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for April 7, 2014. The claimant participated personally. The employer was represented by Alyce Smolsky, Hearings Representative, and participated by Cathy Sindelar, Supervisor of Housekeeping and Laundry, and Michelle Kerschner, Administrator. 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 April 23, 2012, as a full-time housekeeping aide. She was supposed to start her shift at 7:00 a.m. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on April 30, 2012. On May 25, July 2, August 21, and December 19, 2013, the employer issued the claimant written warnings for tardiness. The employer notified the claimant each time that further infractions could result in termination from employment. The claimant was tardy due to transportation issues, she did not have a baby sitter her alarm did not go off, she had a flat tire, and she lost her keys. On January 7, 2014, the claimant arrived at work at 7:16 a.m. because her van would not start. On January 8, 2014, the claimant arrived at work at 7:20 a.m. because she could not find her keys. The employer terminated the claimant on January 8, 2014, for repeated tardiness.

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 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 March 5, 2014, decision (reference 01) 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/pjs