

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**WILLIAM L HIXENBAUGH**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 15A-UI-02163-S2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**DECKER TRUCK LINE**  
Employer

**OC: 02/01/15  
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

William Hixenbaugh (claimant) appealed a representative's February 16, 2015, decision (reference 01) that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits after his separation from employment with Decker Truck Lines (employer). After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for March 19, 2015. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Courtney Bachel, Director of Human Resources, and Jennifer Lawler, Safety and Workers' Compensation Coordinator. 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 February 2, 2011, as a full-time over-the-road truck driver. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on January 31, 2011. The handbook indicates the employee must notify the employer immediately of convictions or warnings of violations of law relating to motor vehicle control. The handbook also indicates that drivers must have a commercial driver's license (CDL). On January 6, 2015, the claimant was issued a written warning and six month probation for having a preventable accident. The employer notified the claimant that further infractions could result in termination from employment.

The claimant received a citation for reckless driving in September 2014. He did not notify the employer of receipt of the citation. On January 7, 2015, the claimant was convicted of reckless driving and incarcerated on January 8, 2015. He notified the employer of the conviction. The claimant allowed his mother to drive the employer's truck from the courthouse to the claimant's home. The driver was not an employee of the employer, did not provide proof of her CDL to the employer, and was not authorized by the employer to drive the truck. The employer terminated the claimant on January 12, 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(1)a provides:

Discharge for misconduct.

(1) Definition.

a. "Misconduct" is defined as a deliberate act or omission by a worker which constitutes a material breach of the duties and obligations arising out of such worker's contract of employment. Misconduct as the term is used in the disqualification provision as being limited to conduct evincing such willful or wanton disregard of an employer's interest as is found in deliberate violation or disregard of standards of behavior which the employer has the right to expect of employees, or in carelessness or negligence of such degree of recurrence as to manifest equal culpability, wrongful intent or evil design, or to show an intentional and substantial disregard of the employer's interests or of the employee's duties and obligations to the employer. On the other hand mere inefficiency, unsatisfactory conduct, failure in good performance as the result of inability or incapacity, inadvertencies or ordinary negligence in isolated instances, or good faith errors in judgment or discretion are not to be deemed misconduct within the meaning of the statute.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. *Huntoon v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). An employer has a right to expect employees to follow instructions in the performance of the job. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by repeatedly failing to follow the employer's instructions. He allowed a non-employee to drive the employer's truck without the consent of the employer. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such the claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

**DECISION:**

The representative's February 16, 2015, 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.

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Beth A. Scheetz  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/pjs