

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**JESSICA L MCCUMBER**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 16A-UI-10391-S1-T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES OF IOWA**  
Employer

**OC: 08/21/16**  
**Claimant: Respondent (1)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct  
Section 96.3-7 – Overpayment

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Developmental Services of Iowa (employer) appealed a representative's September 15, 2016, decision (reference 01) that concluded Jessica McCumber (claimant) was eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for October 7, 2016. The claimant did not provide a telephone number for the hearing and, therefore, did not participate. The employer participated by Gina Klein, Human Resources 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 February 10, 2014, as a full-time direct support professional. The employer's handbook was available to the claimant on line. The claimant was suspended on July 26, 2016, pending investigation after an allegation was made. The allegation was not proven to be true. The employer returned the claimant to work on October 3, 2016. The employer plans to pay the claimant lost wages.

The claimant filed for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of August 21, 2016. The employer participated personally at the fact finding interview on September 8, 2016, by Gina Klein.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was not 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). Misconduct serious enough to warrant discharge is not necessarily serious enough to warrant a denial of job insurance benefits. Such misconduct must be "substantial." Newman v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 351 N.W.2d 806 (Iowa App. 1984). The employer did not provide any evidence of job-related misconduct. The employer did not meet its burden of proof to show misconduct. Benefits are allowed.

**DECISION:**

The representative's September 15, 2016, decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The employer has not met its burden of proof to establish job related misconduct. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

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Beth A. Scheetz  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/rvs