

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

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**TRISHA L HUSEMANN**  
Claimant

**FOCUS SERVICES LLC**  
Employer

**APPEAL 20A-UI-05511-AW-T**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE**  
**DECISION**

**OC: 03/22/20**  
**Claimant: Respondent (2)**

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Iowa Code § 96.19(38) – Definitions – Total, partial unemployment  
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Eligibility – A&A – Able to, available for, work search  
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)A(2) – Charges – Same base period employment  
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Eligibility – A&A – Part-time same hours, wages  
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment  
PL 116-136, Sec. 2104 – Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Employer filed an appeal from the May 29, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits. The parties were properly notified of the hearing. A telephone hearing was held on July 23, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. Claimant participated via written statement. Employer participated through Jane Robertson, Hearing Representative, and Angie Greve, Human Resources Assistant. Claimant's written statement was admitted as Exhibit A. Employer's Exhibits 1 – 2 were admitted. Official notice was taken of the administrative record.

**ISSUES:**

Whether claimant is totally, partially or temporarily unemployed.  
Whether claimant is able to and available for work.  
Whether claimant is still employed at the same hours and wages.  
Whether employer's account is subject to charge.  
Whether claimant was overpaid benefits.  
Whether claimant is eligible for Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant has been employed as a full-time Customer Services and Sales Agent with Focus Services since March 28, 2016. Claimant works Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. for an average of 32 – 35 hours per week. Claimant's hourly wage is \$13.00. Claimant requested and obtained a leave of absence from employer due to her concerns about Covid-19 and upon the advice of claimant's physician. From March 18, 2020 until June 7, 2020, claimant was on a leave of absence working no hours and earning no wages from employer. Claimant returned to work on June 8, 2020. Claimant has worked her regular hours since June 8, 2020. Claimant filed an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits effective March 22, 2020.

The administrative record reflects that claimant filed for and has received regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in the gross amount of \$3,550.00 for the 17-week period between March 22, 2020 and July 18, 2020. In addition to regular unemployment insurance benefits, claimant also received Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) in the gross amount of \$9,600.00 for the 16-week period between March 29, 2020 and July 18, 2020.

### **REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant was totally unemployed and not available for work between March 22, 2020 and June 7, 2020 and claimant was not unemployed effective June 8, 2020. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code section 96.19(38) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. R. 871-24.23(26) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis difference from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(10) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(10) The claimant requested and was granted a leave of absence, such period is deemed to be a period of voluntary unemployment and shall be considered ineligible for benefits for such period.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(2) provides:

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(b) An employer's account shall not be charged with benefits paid to an individual who left the work of the employer voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employer or to an individual who was discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment, or to an individual who failed without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work or to accept suitable work with that employer, but shall be charged to the unemployment compensation fund. This paragraph applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

(c) The amount of benefits paid to an individual, which is solely due to wage credits considered to be in an individual's base period due to the exclusion and substitution of calendar quarters from the individual's base period under section 96.23, shall be charged against the account of the employer responsible for paying the workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability or during a healing period under section 85.33, section 85.34, subsection 1, or section 85A.17, or responsible for paying indemnity insurance benefits.

Between March 22, 2020 and June 7, 2020, claimant performed no work and earned no wages; therefore, claimant was totally unemployed. Because claimant was totally unemployed, she is

required to be able to and available for work. Claimant was on a voluntarily leave of absence and, thus, is not considered available for work. Accordingly, benefits are denied between March 22, 2020 and June 7, 2020. As of June 8, 2020, claimant has worked her regular hours and earned her regular wages; therefore, claimant was not totally or partially unemployed. Accordingly, benefits are denied effective June 8, 2020.

The next issue to be determined is whether claimant has been overpaid benefits. For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant was overpaid benefits, which must be repaid.

Iowa Code section 96.3.(7) states:

*7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.*

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

Benefits were paid to which claimant was not entitled. The administrative law judge concludes that claimant has been overpaid UI in the gross amount of \$3,550.00 for the 17-week period between March 22, 2020 and July 18, 2020. Claimant is required to repay those benefits.

PL 116-136, Sec. 2104 provides, in pertinent part:

(b) Provisions of Agreement

(1) Federal pandemic unemployment compensation.--Any agreement under this section shall provide that the State agency of the State will make payments of regular compensation to individuals in amounts and to the extent that they would be determined if the State law of the State were applied, with respect to any week for which the individual is (disregarding this section) otherwise entitled under the State law to receive regular compensation, as if such State law had been modified in a manner such that the amount of regular compensation (including dependents' allowances) payable for any week shall be equal to

(A) the amount determined under the State law (before the application of this paragraph), plus

(B) an additional amount of \$600 (in this section referred to as "Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation").

....

(f) Fraud and Overpayments

(2) Repayment.--In the case of individuals who have received amounts of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to which they were not entitled, the State shall require such individuals to repay the amounts of such Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to the State agency...

Because claimant is disqualified from receiving UI, claimant is also disqualified from receiving FPUC. The administrative law judge concludes that claimant has been overpaid FPUC in the gross amount of \$9,600.00 for the 16-week period between March 29, 2020 and July 18, 2020. Claimant is required to repay those benefits.

**NOTE TO CLAIMANT:** This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If 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 due to disqualifying separations, 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 May 29, 2020 (reference 01) unemployment insurance decision is reversed. Claimant was totally unemployed and not available for work between March 22, 2020 and June 7, 2020 and claimant was not unemployed effective June 8, 2020. Therefore, benefits are denied. Claimant has been overpaid regular unemployment insurance benefits in the gross amount of \$3,550.00 for the 17-week period between March 22, 2020 and July 18, 2020, which must be repaid. Claimant has been overpaid Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation in the gross amount of \$9,600.00 for the 16-week period between March 29, 2020 and July 18, 2020, which must be repaid.



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August 5, 2020  
Decision Dated and Mailed

acw/sam