

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI

JACKIE L PETITHORY
3318 OXFORD
DES MOINES IA 50313

SCOTTISH RITE PARK INC
2909 WOODLAND AVE
DES MOINES IA 50312

Appeal Number: 06A-UI-00945-SWT
OC: 12/18/05 R: 02
Claimant: Respondent (2)

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to the **Employment Appeal Board, 4th Floor—Lucas Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

STATE CLEARLY

1. The name, address and social security number of the claimant.
2. A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
3. That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
4. The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds. It is important that you file your claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Section 96.5-2-a - Discharge
Section 96.3-7 - Recovery of Overpayment of Benefits

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated January 17, 2006, reference 01, that concluded the claimant's discharge was not for work-connected misconduct. A telephone hearing was held on February 13, 2006. The parties were properly notified about the hearing. The claimant participated in the hearing. Nancy Hotchkiss participated in the hearing on behalf of the employer with witnesses, Pamela Kluender, Nicole Hammer, and Carlene Chance.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The claimant worked for the employer as a certified nursing assistant from September 19, 1983, to December 19, 2005. The claimant was informed and understood that under the employer's work rules, she could be disciplined for inappropriate behavior that is disruptive to

others and for using foul language to others on the premises. The claimant had been warned in the past about inappropriate behavior and her language at work.

On December 13, 2005, employees were required to attend a meeting at which employee benefits were discussed. The claimant had been working part time at her request. Both benefits for part-time and full-time employees were discussed during the meeting. The claimant became belligerent during the meeting because she believed part-time workers did not receive enough employee benefits. She rudely interrupted the speaker and asked whether any benefits were available for part-time workers. The speaker stated that there were benefits for part-time workers and that she had discussed those benefits earlier. She interrupted in a loud voice later on with a similar question. Before the meeting had adjourned, the claimant got up from her seat, said in a loud tone of voice, "this is bullshit" and a waste of time, and left the meeting abruptly without permission. As she left, she said "fuck this meeting."

On December 19, 2005, the employer discharged the claimant for violation of the employer's work rule prohibiting disruptive behavior and foul language on the work premises.

The claimant filed a new claim for unemployment insurance benefits with an effective date of December 18, 2005. The claimant filed for and received a total of \$1,104.00 in unemployment insurance benefits for the weeks between December 18, 2005, and February 18, 2005.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue in this case is whether the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law.

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(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 Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

The claimant's violation of a known work rule was a willful and material breach of the duties and obligations to the employer and a substantial disregard of the standards of behavior the employer had the right to expect of the claimant. Work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law has been established in this case.

The next issue in this case is whether the claimant was overpaid unemployment insurance benefits.

Iowa Code section 96.3-7 provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits. 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.

As a result of this decision, the claimant is disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits and was overpaid \$1,104.00 in benefits for the weeks between December 18, 2005, and February 18, 2006.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated January 17, 2006, reference 01, is reversed. The claimant is disqualified from receiving unemployment insurance benefits until she has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible. The claimant was overpaid \$1,104.00 in unemployment insurance benefits, which must be repaid.

saw/kjw