

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**TODD M PRICE**  
Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 12A-UI-07255-H2T**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**JOHN PHILLIPS DECORATER**  
Employer

**OC: 05-06-12**  
**Claimant: Respondent (2)**

Iowa Code § 96.5(3)a – Work Refusal  
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Recovery of Benefit Overpayment

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

The employer filed a timely appeal from the June 13, 2012, reference 01, decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on August 22, 2012. The claimant did participate. The employer did participate through John Phillips, Owner.

**ISSUE:**

The issue is whether an offer of work was made, if claimant failed to apply for or refused an offer of suitable work, and if so, whether the refusal was for a good-cause reason.

Has the claimant been overpaid any unemployment insurance benefits?

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

Having heard the testimony and having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Employer made an offer of work to claimant via telephone call on March 22, 2012. The offer was made to the claimant after his eighteenth week of unemployment. That offer included the following terms: The claimant was offered a return to the same type of work for the same hours as he had previously worked for the employer in Illinois from May or June of 2011 through November 2011. The offer was made for the area where the claimant was living. The claimant refused to return to work. He offered no reason other than he thought he would have work with another contractor. He had no other work with any other employer. All of the employees called back to work since March 22 have worked full time. The claimant could have worked full time had he shown up for the work.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:**

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes claimant did refuse a suitable offer of work.

Iowa Code § 96.5-3-a provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

3. Failure to accept work. If the department finds that an individual has failed, without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work when directed by the department or to accept suitable work when offered that individual. The department shall, if possible, furnish the individual with the names of employers which are seeking employees. The individual shall apply to and obtain the signatures of the employers designated by the department on forms provided by the department. However, the employers may refuse to sign the forms. The individual's failure to obtain the signatures of designated employers, which have not refused to sign the forms, shall disqualify the individual for benefits until requalified. To requalify for benefits after disqualification under this subsection, the individual shall work in and be paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the individual's weekly benefit amount, provided the individual is otherwise eligible.

a. In determining whether or not any work is suitable for an individual, the department shall consider the degree of risk involved to the individual's health, safety, and morals, the individual's physical fitness, prior training, length of unemployment, and prospects for securing local work in the individual's customary occupation, the distance of the available work from the individual's residence, and any other factor which the department finds bears a reasonable relation to the purposes of this paragraph. Work is suitable if the work meets all the other criteria of this paragraph and if the gross weekly wages for the work equal or exceed the following percentages of the individual's average weekly wage for insured work paid to the individual during that quarter of the individual's base period in which the individual's wages were highest:

(1) One hundred percent, if the work is offered during the first five weeks of unemployment.

(2) Seventy-five percent, if the work is offered during the sixth through the twelfth week of unemployment.

(3) Seventy percent, if the work is offered during the thirteenth through the eighteenth week of unemployment.

(4) Sixty-five percent, if the work is offered after the eighteenth week of unemployment.

However, the provisions of this paragraph shall not require an individual to accept employment below the federal minimum wage.

The offer was suitable as it was the same work he had done previously for the same hours and wages and in the same location and claimant did not have a good cause reason for the refusal.

Iowa Code § 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

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.

b. (1) If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual, benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this state pursuant to section 602.10101.

The administrative law judge concludes that the claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits since the week ending March 24, 2012 pursuant to Iowa Code § 96.3-7 as the ineligibility decision that created the overpayment decision has now been reversed.

**DECISION:**

The June 13, 2012 (reference 01) decision is reversed. Claimant did refuse a suitable offer of work. Benefits are withheld until such time as the claimant works in and has been paid wages equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible. The claimant has been overpaid unemployment insurance benefits.

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Teresa K. Hillary  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

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