

**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**

**BERNARD E KENT
1016 B AVE NW
CEDAR RAPIDS IA 52405**

**DIAMOND SHINE FLOORCARE SPEC INC
PO BOX 106
VINTON IA 52349-0640**

**Appeal Number: 04A-UI-08439-BT
OC: 07/04/04 R: 03
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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 for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Bernard Kent (claimant) appealed an unemployment insurance decision dated July 28, 2004, reference 01, which held that he was not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from Diamond Shine Floorcare Specialists, Inc. (employer) for work-connected misconduct. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was held on August 26, 2004. The claimant participated in the hearing. The employer participated through Michael Cox, President.

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 employed as a full-time floor technician from September 2000 through July 2, 2004. He was discharged for repeatedly leaving work and claiming hours that he had not worked. The claimant typically worked from 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. and the employer went to talk to him on June 9, 2004 at 2:00 a.m., but the claimant was not at work. The employer waited in the parking lot but the claimant did not return until 4:00 a.m. The claimant subsequently turned in that he worked almost ten hours that night without deducting any time for being away. He left on vacation that day but returned to work on June 20, 2004. The employer watched the claimant each night he worked from that date to June 30, 2004 and the claimant left each night without notifying the employer. The employer kept detailed records of the claimant's time and the claimant turned in excessive hours with no deductions for the time he was gone. He was confronted and discharged on July 2, 2004.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The issue is whether the employer discharged the claimant for work-connected misconduct. A claimant is not qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits if an employer has discharged the claimant for reasons constituting work-connected misconduct. Iowa Code Section 96.5-2-a.

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 employer has the burden to prove the claimant was discharged for work-connected misconduct as defined by the unemployment insurance law. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). The propriety of a discharge is not at issue in an unemployment insurance case. An employer may be justified in discharging an employee, but the employee's conduct may not amount to misconduct precluding the payment of unemployment compensation. The law limits disqualifying misconduct to substantial and willful wrongdoing or repeated carelessness or negligence that equals willful misconduct in culpability. Lee v. Employment Appeal Board, 616 N.W.2d 661, 665 (Iowa 2000).

The claimant was discharged for leaving his job for up to two hours each night he worked and claiming pay for hours not worked. He admitted taking extra time off during his shift but contends the employer exaggerated the time by at least one half hour every night. The claimant's time theft 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, and benefits are denied.

DECISION:

The unemployment insurance decision dated July 28, 2004, reference 01, is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, because he was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until he has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

sdb/tjc