

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

**BELINDA R QUINONES**

Claimant

**APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-03737-PT**

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE  
DECISION**

**TYSON FRESH MEATS INC**

Employer

**OC: 02/20/11**

**Claimant: Appellant (2)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE:**

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated March 18, 2011, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on April 15, 2011. Employer participated by Kris Travis, Employment Manager and Barbara Larson, Training Coordinator. Claimant did participate. Employer Exhibit 1 was admitted into evidence.

**ISSUE:**

The issue in this matter is whether claimant was discharged for misconduct.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant was employed from December 11, 2007 through February 18, 2011. She was discharged from her employment for fighting on the job. The fight occurred at work on February 18, 2011 in the bathroom and involved another co-worker. The co-worker attacked the claimant and the claimant fought back in self-defense.

**REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF 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.

Greater weight is given to the claimant's sworn testimony as to the cause of the fight. Inasmuch as claimant was physically attacked, the claimant's actions were in self-defense and not misconduct. Misconduct has not been established and no disqualification is imposed.

**DECISION:**

The decision of the representative dated March 18, 2011, reference 01, is reversed. Benefits are allowed, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

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Ron Pohlman  
Administrative Law Judge

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Decision Dated and Mailed

rrp/css