

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

CALEB L CUNNINGHAM
Claimant

SWIFT PORK COMPANY
Employer

APPEAL 16A-UI-09272-DGT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 07/31/16
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quitting

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated August 22, 2016, (reference 01) that held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a hearing was scheduled for and held on September 13, 2016. Claimant participated. Employer did not participate.

ISSUE:

The issue in this matter is whether claimant quit for good cause attributable to employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on August 1, 2016. Claimant resigned from his position because of the way he was treated at work.

Claimant was gone from work for a few weeks undergoing medical treatment until July 15, 2016. When he returned he noticed that someone had written lazy on his helmet, and they had drilled a few small holes. Claimant reported the incident to the second shift supervisor because his supervisor was not around at the time. The second shift supervisor wasn't sure what could be done about the defacing of the helmet, and no other actions were taken at that time.

Claimant felt that people at work were not very nice to him. Co-workers were aggressive, and were loud at work. They would smack the wall and act tough. People at work were not polite or nice to claimant, and he felt that he was not well liked.

Claimant decided to quit his job on or about August 1, 2016. Nothing had ever been done about his helmet being defaced, and co-workers were not very nice to him. Claimant did not want to work in that type of environment any more.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The administrative law judge holds that the evidence has failed to establish that claimant voluntarily quit for good cause attributable to employer when claimant terminated the employment relationship because he did not like the work environment.

Iowa Code § 96.5-1 provides:

An individual shall be disqualified for benefits:

1. Voluntary quitting. If the individual has left work voluntarily without good cause attributable to the individual's employer, if so found by the department.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(21) provides:

Voluntary quit without good cause. In general, a voluntary quit means discontinuing the employment because the employee no longer desires to remain in the relationship of an employee with the employer from whom the employee has separated. The employer has the burden of proving that the claimant is disqualified for benefits pursuant to Iowa Code section 96.5. However, the claimant has the initial burden to produce evidence that the claimant is not disqualified for benefits in cases involving Iowa Code section 96.5, subsection (1), paragraphs "a" through "i," and subsection 10. The following reasons for a voluntary quit shall be presumed to be without good cause attributable to the employer:

- (21) The claimant left because of dissatisfaction with the work environment.

It is the duty of the administrative law judge as the trier of fact in this case, to determine the credibility of witnesses, weigh the evidence and decide the facts in issue. *Arndt v. City of LeClaire*, 728 N.W.2d 389, 394-395 (Iowa 2007). The administrative law judge may believe all, part or none of any witness's testimony. *State v. Holtz*, 548 N.W.2d 162, 163 (Iowa App. 1996). In assessing the credibility of witnesses, the administrative law judge should consider the evidence using his or her own observations, common sense and experience. *Id.* In determining the facts, and deciding what testimony to believe, the fact finder may consider the following factors: whether the testimony is reasonable and consistent with other believable evidence; whether a witness has made inconsistent statements; the witness's appearance, conduct, age, intelligence, memory and knowledge of the facts; and the witness's interest in the trial, their motive, candor, bias and prejudice. *Id.*

Claimant has the burden of proving that the voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code § 96.6(2). A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention. *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980).

Individuals who leave their employment due to disparate treatment are considered to have left work due to intolerable or detrimental working conditions and their leaving is deemed to be for good cause attributable to the employer. The test is whether a reasonable person would have quit under the circumstances. See *Aalbers v. Iowa Dep't of Job Serv.*, 431 N.W.2d 330 (Iowa 1988) and *O'Brien v. Emp't Appeal Bd.*, 494 N.W.2d 660 (Iowa 1993).

While claimant's leaving the employment may have been based upon good personal reasons, it was not for a good-cause reason attributable to the employer. Benefits must be denied.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated August 22, 2016, (reference 01) is affirmed. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

Duane L. Golden
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

dlg/pjs