

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

JAMAL WOODS

Claimant

APPEAL NO: 09A-UI-18936-ET

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

WAL-MART STORES INC

Employer

OC: 05-31-09

Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-1 – Voluntary Leaving
871 IAC 24.25(16) – Unemployed Due to Incarceration

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The claimant filed a timely appeal from the July 21, 2009, reference 02, decision that denied benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held by telephone conference call before Administrative Law Judge Julie Elder on January 27, 2010. The claimant participated in the hearing. The employer did not respond to the hearing notice and did not participate in the hearing or request a postponement of the hearing as required by the hearing notice.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant voluntarily left his employment for good cause attributable to the employer.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant was employed as a part-time cashier for Wal-Mart from December 27, 2008 to February 5, 2009. The claimant acknowledged being incarcerated during scheduled workdays between January 31, 2009 and March 3, 2009. Due to the incarceration, the employer may reasonably consider the absences, reported or unreported, a voluntary leaving of employment without good cause attributable to the employer.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant voluntarily left his employment without good cause attributable to the employer.

Iowa Code section 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.

871 IAC 24.25(16) 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:

(16) The claimant is deemed to have left if such claimant becomes incarcerated.

The claimant has the burden of proving that the voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer. Iowa Code section 96.6(2) (amended 1998). The claimant's incarceration on multiple scheduled workdays was not a good-cause reason attributable to the employer for leaving. The employer's attribution of the absences as a voluntary leaving of employment was reasonable as it is not expected to hold employment for incarcerated employees. Therefore, benefits must be denied.

DECISION:

The July 21, 2009, reference 02, decision is affirmed. The claimant voluntarily left his employment without good cause attributable to the employer. Benefits are withheld until such time as he has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

Julie Elder
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

je/pjs