

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

RONALD R SIMMERMAN
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-03387-S2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

IOWA SELECT FARMS INC
Employer

OC: 02/06/11
Claimant: Appellant (1)

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Ronald Simmerman (claimant) appealed a representative's March 14, 2011 decision (reference 01) that concluded he was not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits because he was discharged from work with Iowa Select Farms (employer) for failure to follow instructions in the performance of his work. After hearing notices were mailed to the parties' last-known addresses of record, a telephone hearing was scheduled for April 7, 2011. The claimant participated personally. The employer participated by Cathy Rieken, human resource specialist; Dave Kitner, department head; and Sergio Puente, farm manager.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether the claimant was separated from employment for any disqualifying reason.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The administrative law judge, having heard the testimony and having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds that: The claimant was hired on January 4, 1999, as a full-time farm technician. The claimant signed for receipt of the employer's handbook on January 4, 1999, April 15, 2008. On June 29, 2010, the claimant signed for receipt of the bio security policy. The policy indicated that it had to be followed or the employee would be terminated. One of the policies indicated that employees must shower in and out each day or be terminated. A department head was terminated for failure to shower in and/or out of the work area. On February 2, 2011, the employer reminded the farm manager to strictly enforce the showering policy.

On February 9, 2011, the claimant did not shower in or out. He admitted this to the farm manager. He said that he had psoriasis and did not want to shower that day because the water might cause pain. He told the farm manager that he told a department head that he had psoriasis back in 2001. The employer terminated the claimant on February 9, 2011.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged for misconduct.

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.

The employer has the burden of proof in establishing disqualifying job misconduct. Cosper v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 321 N.W.2d 6 (Iowa 1982). Repeated failure to follow an employer's instructions in the performance of duties is misconduct. Gilliam v. Atlantic Bottling Company, 453 N.W.2d 230 (Iowa App. 1990). An employer has a right to expect employees to follow instructions in the performance of the job. The claimant disregarded the employer's right by repeatedly failing to follow the employer's instructions. The claimant's disregard of the employer's interests is misconduct. As such, the claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The representative's March 14, 2011 decision (reference 01) is affirmed. The claimant is not eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, because the claimant was discharged from work for misconduct. Benefits are withheld until the claimant has worked in and has been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times the claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided the claimant is otherwise eligible.

Beth A. Scheetz
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

bas/kjw