

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

STACI M LILLARD
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 07A-UI-10458-MT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

ACCESS DIRECT TELEMARKETING INC
Employer

OC: 10/14/07 R: 02
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 November 8, 2007, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on November 29, 2007. Claimant participated personally. Employer participated by Jennifer Coe, Hearing Representative, TALX, with witness Dennis Dorman, Shift Manager. Exhibits One through Five were 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 having considered all of the evidence in the record, finds: Claimant last worked for employer on October 19, 2007.

Claimant was discharged on October 19, 2007 by employer because claimant allegedly failed to answer a call. An outbound call was made by the employer. The customer answered and then hung up, then another person from the same business answered again before the call was disconnected. The calls are disconnected by employer after about 4 seconds. Claimant had dispositioned the call and was hitting F2 when the second person came on. Employer recorded the call but did not offer a copy of the recording. Claimant had a final warning on her record October 16, 2007.

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.

871 IAC 24.32(8) provides:

(8) Past acts of misconduct. While past acts and warnings can be used to determine the magnitude of a current act of misconduct, a discharge for misconduct cannot be based on such past act or acts. The termination of employment must be based on a current act.

In this matter, the evidence fails to establish that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct when claimant violated employer's policy concerning improper call handling. Claimant was warned concerning this policy.

The last incident, which brought about the discharge, fails to constitute misconduct because employer failed to prove that a second call was made and came into claimant for disposition. Employer had a recording which could have solved the question of whether it is a few seconds or 15 seconds between calls. Employer chose to not offer the recording. There was only one call based on the evidence presented. As such, employer has failed to prove a policy violation by a preponderance of the evidence. The administrative law judge holds that claimant was not discharged for an act of misconduct and, as such, is not disqualified for the receipt of unemployment insurance benefits.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated November 8, 2007, reference 01, is reversed. Claimant is eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits, provided claimant meets all other eligibility requirements.

Marlon Mormann
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

mdm/kjw