

**IN THE IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS DIVISION
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

ANNIE M SPAUR
Claimant

BOB'S DISCOUNT FURNITURE
Employer

APPEAL 24R-UI-05477-DZ-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

OC: 03/31/24
Claimant: Appellant (1R)

Iowa Code § 96.5(1) – Voluntary Quit

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Annie M. Spaur, the claimant/appellant,¹ appealed the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) April 22, 2024 (reference 01) unemployment insurance (UI) decision. IWD denied Ms. Spaur REGULAR (state) UI benefits because IWD concluded she voluntarily quit on April 1, 2024 for personal reasons and the employer did not cause her quitting. On June 11, 2024, the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL), UI Appeals Bureau mailed a notice of hearing to Ms. Spaur and the employer for a telephone hearing scheduled for June 24, 2024.

The administrative law judge held a telephone hearing on June 24, 2024. Ms. Spaur participated in the hearing personally. Noah Vanhooose, Ms. Spaur's boyfriend, participated as a witness for Ms. Spaur. The employer participated in the hearing through Christine Rowley, store manager and Elsie Poucel, Equifax hearing representative. The administrative law judge admitted Department's Exhibit 1 and Claimant's Exhibit A as evidence.

The administrative law judge concludes Ms. Spaur is not eligible for UI benefits based on how her job ended with this employer.

ISSUE:

Did Ms. Spaur voluntarily quit without good cause attributable to the employer?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Ms. Spaur began working for the employer in April 2023. She worked as a full-time retail sales representative. Her employment ended on April 1, 2024.

Ms. Spaur was on approved medical leave from January 18, 2024 through March 21. On March 21, Ms. Spaur contacted Ms. Rowley and explained that she was unable to return to work in her same position due to her medical diagnosis. Ms. Spaur is diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and experienced panic attacks when she dealt with customer face-to-face. Ms.

¹ Claimant is the person who applied for UI benefits. Appellant is the person or employer who appealed.

Spaur asked for a different, non-customer facing position, but the employer did not have any to offer Ms. Spaur. Ms. Spaur resigned. The employer marked Ms. Spaur's resignation date as April 1, which was after the employer and its third-party leave administrator completed their processes.

Ms. Spaur continues to be unable to do face-to-face work due to her medical diagnosis. Ms. Spaur's medical provider has advised that she work remotely, or a non-customer facing job. IWD has not issued a decision on Ms. Spaur's eligibility for work based on her ability to and/or availability for work.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes Ms. Spaur's separation from employment on April 1, 2024 was 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.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.25(35) 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:

(35) The claimant left because of illness or injury which was not caused or aggravated by the employment or pregnancy and failed to:

- a. Obtain the advice of a licensed and practicing physician or physician assistant;
- b. Obtain certification of release for work from a licensed and practicing physician or physician assistant;
- c. Return to the employer and offer services upon recovery and certification for work by a licensed and practicing physician or physician assistant; or
- d. Fully recover so that the claimant could perform all of the duties of the job

In general, the employer has the burden to prove that a claimant is disqualified from receiving UI benefits.² But, the claimant has the burden of proving that a voluntary leaving was for good cause attributable to the employer.³ A voluntary leaving of employment requires an intention to terminate the employment relationship accompanied by an overt act of carrying out that intention.⁴ “Good cause” for leaving employment must be that which is reasonable to the average person, not the overly sensitive individual or the claimant in particular.⁵

In this case, Ms. Spaur left employment because of a non-work-related illness, and she has not fully recovered to the point that she can perform all of the duties of her job. Ms. Spaur did what was best for her, but her leaving was not for a good-cause reason attributable to the employer. Ms. Spaur is not eligible for UI benefits.

DECISION:

The April 22, 2024 (reference 01) UI decision is AFFIRMED. Ms. Spaur voluntarily left her employment on April 1, 2024 without good cause attributable to the employer. Ms. Spaur is not eligible for UI benefits until she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly UI benefit amount, as long as no other decision denies her UI benefits.

REMAND:

The issue of Ms. Spaur’s eligibility for UI benefits based on her ability and availability for work is REMANDED (sent back) to IWD for investigation, a decision, and/or any other necessary action.



Daniel Zeno
Administrative Law Judge

June 25, 2024
Decision Dated and Mailed

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² Iowa Code § 96.6(2).

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Local Lodge #1426 v. Wilson Trailer*, 289 N.W.2d 608, 612 (Iowa 1980).

⁵ *Uniweld Products v. Indus. Relations Comm’n*, 277 So.2d 827 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1973).

APPEAL RIGHTS. If you disagree with the decision, you or any interested party may:

1. Appeal to the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days of the date under the judge's signature by submitting a written appeal via mail, fax, or online to:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
Online: eab.iowa.gov**

The appeal period will be extended to the next business day if the last day to appeal falls on a weekend or a legal holiday.

AN APPEAL TO THE BOARD SHALL STATE CLEARLY:

- 1) The name, address, and social security number of the claimant.
- 2) A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.
- 3) That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.
- 4) The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

An Employment Appeal Board decision is final agency action. If a party disagrees with the Employment Appeal Board decision, they may then file a petition for judicial review in district court.

2. If no one files an appeal of the judge's decision with the Employment Appeal Board within fifteen (15) days, the decision becomes final agency action, and you have the option to file a petition for judicial review in District Court within thirty (30) days after the decision becomes final. Additional information on how to file a petition can be found at Iowa Code §17A.19, which is online at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> or by contacting the District Court Clerk of Court <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Note to Parties: YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in the appeal or obtain a lawyer or other interested party to do so provided there is no expense to Workforce Development. If you wish to be represented by a lawyer, you may obtain the services of either a private attorney or one whose services are paid for with public funds.

Note to Claimant: It is important that you file your weekly claim as directed, while this appeal is pending, to protect your continuing right to benefits.

SERVICE INFORMATION:

A true and correct copy of this decision was mailed to each of the parties listed.

DERECHOS DE APELACIÓN. Si no está de acuerdo con la decisión, usted o cualquier parte interesada puede:

1. Apelar a la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo dentro de los quince (15) días de la fecha bajo la firma del juez presentando una apelación por escrito por correo, fax o en línea a:

**Iowa Employment Appeal Board
6200 Park Avenue Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50321
Fax: (515)281-7191
En línea: eab.iowa.gov**

El período de apelación se extenderá hasta el siguiente día hábil si el último día para apelar cae en fin de semana o día feriado legal.

UNA APELACIÓN A LA JUNTA DEBE ESTABLECER CLARAMENTE:

- 1) El nombre, dirección y número de seguro social del reclamante.
- 2) Una referencia a la decisión de la que se toma la apelación.
- 3) Que se interponga recurso de apelación contra tal decisión y se firme dicho recurso.
- 4) Los fundamentos en que se funda dicho recurso.

Una decisión de la Junta de Apelaciones de Empleo es una acción final de la agencia. Si una de las partes no está de acuerdo con la decisión de la Junta de Apelación de Empleo, puede presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el tribunal de distrito.

2. Si nadie presenta una apelación de la decisión del juez ante la Junta de Apelaciones Laborales dentro de los quince (15) días, la decisión se convierte en acción final de la agencia y usted tiene la opción de presentar una petición de revisión judicial en el Tribunal de Distrito dentro de los treinta (30) días después de que la decisión adquiriera firmeza. Puede encontrar información adicional sobre cómo presentar una petición en el Código de Iowa §17A.19, que se encuentra en línea en <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/17A.19.pdf> o comunicándose con el Tribunal de Distrito Secretario del tribunal <https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/court-directory/>.

Nota para las partes: USTED PUEDE REPRESENTARSE en la apelación u obtener un abogado u otra parte interesada para que lo haga, siempre que no haya gastos para Workforce Development. Si desea ser representado por un abogado, puede obtener los servicios de un abogado privado o uno cuyos servicios se paguen con fondos públicos.

Nota para el reclamante: es importante que presente su reclamo semanal según las instrucciones, mientras esta apelación está pendiente, para proteger su derecho continuo a los beneficios.

SERVICIO DE INFORMACIÓN:

Se envió por correo una copia fiel y correcta de esta decisión a cada una de las partes enumeradas.