

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS

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

LORI L VINCHATTLE
3227 - 330TH ST
DAYTON IA 50530-7522

APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-17603-LT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

TRINITY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
ATTN TED VAUGHN ACCOUNTING
802 KENYON RD
FORT DODGE IA 50501

APPEAL RIGHTS:

This Decision Shall Become Final, unless within fifteen (15) days from the date below, you or any interested party appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by submitting either a signed letter or a signed written Notice of Appeal, directly to:

***Employment Appeal Board
4th Floor – Lucas Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319***

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:

The name, address and social security number of the claimant.

A reference to the decision from which the appeal is taken.

That an appeal from such decision is being made and such appeal is signed.

The grounds upon which such appeal is based.

YOU MAY REPRESENT yourself in this appeal or you may 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. It is important that you file your 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.

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

LORI L VINCHATTLE
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 09A-UI-17603-LT

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

TRINITY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
Employer

OC: 10/25/09
Claimant: Respondent (2-R)

Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge for Misconduct
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) - Recovery of Benefit Overpayment

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

The employer filed a timely appeal from the November 13, 2009 (reference 01) decision that allowed benefits. After due notice was issued, a telephone conference hearing was held on January 4, 2009. Claimant did not respond to the hearing notice instructions and did not participate. Employer participated through director of renal services and immediate supervisor since January 2009, Julie Hewitt and director of accounting and human resources Ted Vaughn.

ISSUE:

The issue is whether claimant was discharged for reasons related to job misconduct sufficient to warrant a denial of benefits if she is overpaid benefits as a result.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having heard the testimony and having reviewed the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant most recently worked full-time as a RN in renal services and was separated from employment on October 21, 2009. On October 20 patient care technician Diane Denkclau had set up supplies in anticipation of patient care and coworker patient care technician Cindee Lochray witnessed claimant remove those supplies and make comments that she considered demeaning and rude to Denkclau. Patients were also present and visibly reacted. Claimant had a history of patients asking that she not work with them because of her poor bedside manner, had left some coworkers in tears because of the way she interacted with them, and was otherwise “demeaning,” “snippy,” “rude,” and “unprofessional.” (Employer’s Exhibit 1) Hewitt also noticed that claimant often did not make eye contact when talking to someone, turned her back during conversations and did not reciprocate greetings.

The claimant has received unemployment benefits after the separation on a claim with an effective date of October 25, 2009.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct.

Iowa Code § 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.

Although employer did not offer more descriptive information about how she was being rude and demeaning to coworkers, the consensus was that she had been so consistently over a period of time since December 2008 and continued to conduct herself in that way in spite of warnings to moderate her behavior towards others. Accordingly, claimant's repeated failure to conduct herself respectfully towards coworkers after having been warned is evidence of willful job related misconduct. Benefits are denied.

Iowa Code § 96.3-7, as amended in 2008, provides:

7. Recovery of overpayment of benefits.

a. If an individual receives benefits for which the individual is subsequently determined to be ineligible, even though the individual acts in good faith and is not otherwise at fault, the benefits shall be recovered. The department in its discretion may recover the overpayment of benefits either by having a sum equal to the overpayment deducted from

any future benefits payable to the individual or by having the individual pay to the department a sum equal to the overpayment.

b. (1) If the department determines that an overpayment has been made, the charge for the overpayment against the employer's account shall be removed and the account shall be credited with an amount equal to the overpayment from the unemployment compensation trust fund and this credit shall include both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5. However, provided the benefits were not received as the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation by the individual, benefits shall not be recovered from an individual if the employer did not participate in the initial determination to award benefits pursuant to section 96.6, subsection 2, and an overpayment occurred because of a subsequent reversal on appeal regarding the issue of the individual's separation from employment. The employer shall not be charged with the benefits.

(2) An accounting firm, agent, unemployment insurance accounting firm, or other entity that represents an employer in unemployment claim matters and demonstrates a continuous pattern of failing to participate in the initial determinations to award benefits, as determined and defined by rule by the department, shall be denied permission by the department to represent any employers in unemployment insurance matters. This subparagraph does not apply to attorneys or counselors admitted to practice in the courts of this state pursuant to section 602.10101.

Because the claimant's separation was disqualifying, benefits were paid to which the claimant was not entitled. The unemployment insurance law provides that benefits must be recovered from a claimant who receives benefits and is later determined to be ineligible for benefits, even though the claimant acted in good faith and was not otherwise at fault. However, the overpayment will not be recovered when it is based on a reversal on appeal of an initial determination to award benefits on an issue regarding the claimant's employment separation if: (1) the benefits were not received due to any fraud or willful misrepresentation by the claimant and (2) the employer did not participate in the initial proceeding to award benefits. The employer will not be charged for benefits whether or not the overpayment is recovered. Iowa Code § 96.3(7). In this case, the claimant has received benefits but was not eligible for those benefits.

DECISION:

The November 13, 2009 (reference 01) decision is reversed. The claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct. Benefits are withheld until such time as she has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times her weekly benefit amount, provided she is otherwise eligible.

REMAND:

The matter of determining the amount of the potential overpayment and whether the overpayment should be recovered under Iowa Code § 96.3(7)b is remanded to the Agency.

Dévon M. Lewis
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

dml/pjs