

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS**

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

BRANDON D LINT
Claimant

APPEAL NO. 11A-UI-02838-M2T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
NUNC PRO TUNC DECISION**

CENTRAL ELECTRIC COMPANY
Employer

**OC: 02/07/10
Claimant: Appellant (5)**

Section 96.5-2-a – Discharge for Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed an appeal from a decision of a representative dated March 1, 2011, reference 01, which held claimant ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. After due notice, a telephone conference hearing was scheduled for and held on March 30, 2011. Claimant participated personally for part of the hearing before disconnecting, or being disconnected. Further attempts to reach the claimant before the record closed was unsuccessful. The employer participated.

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 was discharged on December 30, 2010 by employer because the claimant had not worked a complete week for over a month. The claimant had been warned. The absences were generally due to personal matters, not illness or injury, and were not attributable to the employer. The last event was an unexcused absence on December 30, 2010, for personal matters.

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.

The gravity of the incident, number of policy violations, and prior warnings are factors considered when analyzing misconduct. The lack of a current warning may detract from a finding of an intentional policy violation. The Iowa Supreme Court has opined that one unexcused absence is not misconduct even when it followed nine other excused absences and was in violation of a direct order. Sallis v. EAB, 437 N.W.2d 895 (Iowa 1989). Higgins v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 350 N.W.2d 187 (Iowa 1984), held that the absences must be both excessive and unexcused. The Iowa Supreme Court has held that excessive is more than one. Three incidents of tardiness or absenteeism after a warning has been held misconduct. Clark v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 317 N.W.2d 517 (Iowa App. 1982). While three is a reasonable interpretation of excessive based on current case law and Webster's Dictionary, the interpretation is best derived from the facts presented.

In this matter, the evidence establishes that claimant was discharged for an act of misconduct on December 30, 2010, when claimant was discharged for excessive unexcused absenteeism after a warning.

DECISION:

The decision of the representative dated March 1, 2011, reference 01, is modified with no effect. The discharge date is modified from December 29, 2011 to December 30, 2010. Unemployment insurance benefits shall be withheld until claimant has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times claimant's weekly benefit amount, provided claimant is otherwise eligible.

Stan McElderry
Administrative Law Judge

Decision Dated and Mailed

srm/kjw/kjw