

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BUREAU**

PRINCESS A PAYNE

Claimant

APPEAL 20A-UI-05445-SC-T

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
DECISION**

SLB OF IOWA LC

Employer

OC: 04/05/20

Claimant: Respondent (4)

Iowa Code § 96.19(38) – Total, Partial, and Temporary Unemployment
Iowa Code § 96.4(3) – Ability to and Availability for Work
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 – Able & Available - Benefits Eligibility Conditions
Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) – Available – Part-time Same Wages and Hours
Iowa Code § 96.3(7) – Overpayment of Benefits
Public Law 116-136 § 2104(b) – Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation
Iowa Code § 96.7(2)a(2) – Employer Chargeability

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

On June 8, 2020, SLB of Iowa, LC (employer) filed an appeal from the May 29, 2020, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision that allowed benefits effective April 5, 2020 based upon the determination Princess A. Payne (claimant) was not employed in the same wages and hours as her contract of hire but was able to and available for work. After due notice was issued, a telephone hearing was held on July 16, 2020. The claimant participated. The employer participated through Karen Beard, Human Resources Manager. No exhibits were offered into the record. The administrative law judge took official notice of the claimant's claim and wage histories.

ISSUES:

Is the claimant totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed?
Was the claimant able to work and available for work effective April 5, 2020?
Is the employer's account subject to charge?
Has the claimant been overpaid regular unemployment benefits and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)?

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: The claimant began working for the employer on December 22, 2018 as a part-time associate with varying hours. In mid-March, the employer's dining room closed due to Governor Reynold's executive order. The employer no longer had hours available for the claimant.

The claimant filed her claim for benefits effective April 5, 2020 and her weekly benefit amount is \$122. The claimant's base period includes all four quarters of 2019 and the employer reported

wages paid for each quarter between \$849 and \$2,131. She has one other part-time employer in her base period.

The claimant filed for benefits each week for the 14 weeks between April 5 and July 11. She did not report any wages earned for the 11 weeks between April 5 and June 20. During the two weeks between June 21 and July 4, the claimant worked and earned \$60 in wages. She received \$184 in regular benefits and \$1,200 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) for those two weeks. For the week ending July 11, the claimant's gross wages earned were more than her weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars and she did not receive any benefits.

REASONING AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

I. Is the claimant totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed?

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes that the claimant was totally unemployed for the 11 weeks ending June 20 and benefits are allowed, if she meets all eligibility requirements. She was not totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed for the three weeks ending July 11 and benefits for that period are denied.

Iowa Code § 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Code § 96.19(38) provides:

"Total and partial unemployment".

a. An individual shall be deemed "totally unemployed" in any week with respect to which no wages are payable to the individual and during which the individual performs no services.

b. An individual shall be deemed partially unemployed in any week in which either of the following apply:

(1) While employed at the individual's then regular job, the individual works less than the regular full-time week and in which the individual earns less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

(2) The individual, having been separated from the individual's regular job, earns at odd jobs less than the individual's weekly benefit amount plus fifteen dollars.

c. An individual shall be deemed temporarily unemployed if for a period, verified by the department, not to exceed four consecutive weeks, the individual is unemployed due to a plant shutdown, vacation, inventory, lack of work or emergency from the individual's regular job or trade in which the individual worked full-time and will again work full-time, if the individual's employment, although temporarily suspended, has not been terminated.

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26) provides:

Availability disqualifications. The following are reasons for a claimant being disqualified for being unavailable for work.

(26) Where a claimant is still employed in a part-time job at the same hours and wages as contemplated in the original contract for hire and is not working on a reduced workweek basis different from the contract for hire, such claimant cannot be considered partially unemployed.

Under Iowa Employment Security Law, an individual must be totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed to be eligible for benefits. Iowa Code § 96.19(38). Total unemployment occurs when an individual has received no wages and performed no services during any given week. *Id.* Temporary unemployment occurs when an individual is laid off due to a lack of work or various other reasons from no more than four weeks from their full-time employment. In this case, the claimant was not temporarily unemployed because she was not laid off from full-time employment due to a lack of work. However, she is totally unemployed from April 5 through June 20, as she did not work and earn any wages. She will only be eligible for benefits if she is also able to and available for work.

The claimant performed services and earned wages for the three weeks ending July 11 and cannot be totally or temporarily unemployed those weeks. The next question is whether she was partially unemployed during those weeks. In order to be partially unemployed, an individual must be laid off from regular full-time employment or working less than his or her regular full-time work week. *Id.* If an individual is employed in a part-time position working the same hours and wages as contemplated at hire, he or she cannot be considered partially unemployed. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.23(26). The claimant was hired or and worked part-time, varying hours and cannot be partially unemployed. Therefore, she is not totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed for the three weeks ending July 11 and is not eligible for regular benefits.

II. Was the claimant able to and available for work from April 5 through June 20?

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge finds the claimant was able to and available for work from April 5 through June 20. Benefits are allowed.

Iowa Code section 96.4(3) provides:

An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive benefits with respect to any week only if the department finds that:

3. The individual is able to work, is available for work, and is earnestly and actively seeking work. This subsection is waived if the individual is deemed partially unemployed, while employed at the individual's regular job, as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "b", unnumbered paragraph (1), or

temporarily unemployed as defined in section 96.19, subsection 38, paragraph "c". The work search requirements of this subsection and the disqualification requirement for failure to apply for, or to accept suitable work of section 96.5, subsection 3 are waived if the individual is not disqualified for benefits under section 96.5, subsection 1, paragraph "h".

Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22 provides, in relevant part:

Benefit eligibility conditions. For an individual to be eligible to receive benefits the department must find that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. The individual bears the burden of establishing that the individual is able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work.

(1) Able to work. An individual must be physically and mentally able to work in some gainful employment, not necessarily in the individual's customary occupation, but which is engaged in by others as a means of livelihood.

....

(2) Available for work. The availability requirement is satisfied when an individual is willing, able, and ready to accept suitable work which the individual does not have good cause to refuse, that is, the individual is genuinely attached to the labor market. Since, under unemployment insurance laws, it is the availability of an individual that is required to be tested, the labor market must be described in terms of the individual. A labor market for an individual means a market for the type of service which the individual offers in the geographical area in which the individual offers the service. Market in that sense does not mean that job vacancies must exist; the purpose of unemployment insurance is to compensate for lack of job vacancies. It means only that the type of services which an individual is offering is generally performed in the geographical area in which the individual is offering the services.

An individual claiming benefits has the burden of proof that she is be able to work, available for work, and earnestly and actively seeking work. Iowa Admin. Code r. 871-24.22. In this case, there is no indication that the claimant was voluntarily unemployed or unable to work. The employer no longer had hours for her which limited her ability to work. The claimant is able to and available for work from April 5 through June 20. Benefits are allowed.

III. Is the employer's account subject to charge?

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the employer's account will not be charged for the benefits the claimant received through the week ending June 20.

Iowa Code section 96.7(2)a(2)(a), (b), and (c) provides:

Employer contributions and reimbursements.

2. Contribution rates based on benefit experience.

a. (2) The amount of regular benefits plus fifty percent of the amount of extended benefits paid to an eligible individual shall be charged against the

account of the employers in the base period in the inverse chronological order in which the employment of the individual occurred.

(a) However, if the individual to whom the benefits are paid is in the employ of a base period employer at the time the individual is receiving the benefits, and the individual is receiving the same employment from the employer that the individual received during the individual's base period, benefits paid to the individual shall not be charged against the account of the employer. This provision applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding subparagraph (3) and section 96.8, subsection 5.

(b) An employer's account shall not be charged with benefits paid to an individual who left the work of the employer voluntarily without good cause attributable to the employer or to an individual who was discharged for misconduct in connection with the individual's employment, or to an individual who failed without good cause, either to apply for available, suitable work or to accept suitable work with that employer, but shall be charged to the unemployment compensation fund. This paragraph applies to both contributory and reimbursable employers, notwithstanding section 96.8, subsection 5.

(c) The amount of benefits paid to an individual, which is solely due to wage credits considered to be in an individual's base period due to the exclusion and substitution of calendar quarters from the individual's base period under section 96.23, shall be charged against the account of the employer responsible for paying the workers' compensation benefits for temporary total disability or during a healing period under section 85.33, section 85.34, subsection 1, or section 85A.17, or responsible for paying indemnity insurance benefits.

Normally, the employer would be charged for the claimant's benefits, as it did not employ the claimant under the same hours and wages as in her contract of hire. However, due to the pandemic, the current charges to the employer's account are waived.

IV. Has the claimant been overpaid regular unemployment benefits and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)?

For the reasons that follow, the administrative law judge concludes the claimant has been overpaid regular unemployment benefits and FPUC for the two weeks ending July 4.

Iowa Code § 96.3(7) provides, in pertinent part:

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.

PL116-136, Sec. 2104 provides, in relevant part:

EMERGENCY INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS.

...

(b) Provisions of Agreement

(1) Federal pandemic unemployment compensation.--Any agreement under this section shall provide that the State agency of the State will make payments of regular compensation to individuals in amounts and to the extent that they would be determined if the State law of the State were applied, with respect to any week for which the individual is (disregarding this section) otherwise entitled under the State law to receive regular compensation, as if such State law had been modified in a manner such that the amount of regular compensation (including dependents' allowances) payable for any week shall be equal to

(A) the amount determined under the State law (before the application of this paragraph), plus

(B) an additional amount of \$600 (in this section referred to as "Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation").

....

(f) Fraud and Overpayments

...

(2) Repayment.--In the case of individuals who have received amounts of Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to which they were not entitled, the State shall require such individuals to repay the amounts of such Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation to the State agency...

Since the claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment benefits for the two weeks ending July 4, she was overpaid \$184 in regular benefits and \$1,200 in FPUC. The claimant will be required to repay the benefits received unless the Employment Appeal Board reverses this decision on appeal or she is eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).

DECISION:

Regular Unemployment Insurance Benefits Under State Law

The May 29, 2020, reference 02, unemployment insurance decision is modified in favor of the appellant. The claimant was totally unemployed, and she was able to and available for work during the 11 weeks ending June 20. Benefits are allowed, but the employer's account will not be charged for those benefits. The claimant was not totally, partially, or temporarily unemployed for the three weeks ending July 11. As a result, she was overpaid \$184 in regular benefits and \$1,200 in FPUC.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Under the Federal CARES Act

Even though the claimant is not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state law for the three weeks ending July 11, she may be eligible for federally funded unemployment insurance benefits under the CARES Act. Section 2102 of the CARES Act creates a new temporary federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) that, in general, provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits. An individual receiving PUA benefits may also receive the \$600 weekly benefit amount in FPUC. This decision does not address whether the claimant is eligible for PUA. For a decision on such eligibility, the claimant must apply for PUA, as noted in the instructions provided in the "Note to Claimant" on the last page of the decision.



Stephanie R. Callahan
Administrative Law Judge

July 31, 2020
Decision Dated and Mailed

src/sam

Note to Claimant: This decision determines you are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits. If you disagree with this decision, you may file an appeal to the Employment Appeal Board by following the instructions on the first page of this decision. Individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits, but who are currently unemployed for reasons related to COVID-19 may qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). **You will need to apply for PUA to determine your eligibility under the program.** Additional information on how to apply for PUA can be found at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information>. If this decision becomes final or if you are not eligible for PUA, you may have an overpayment of benefits.