

**IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Unemployment Insurance Appeals Section
1000 East Grand—Des Moines, Iowa 50319
DECISION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
68-0157 (7-97) – 3091078 - EI**

**RICKEY L NESS
106 E 8TH ST
MUSCATINE IA 52761**

**TIRE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES INC
TIRE RECYCLERS
301 E 2ND ST
MUSCATINE IA 52761**

**Appeal Number: 05A-UI-03552-LT
OC: 02-27-05 R: 04
Claimant: Appellant (1)**

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 the **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.

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.

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.

(Administrative Law Judge)

(Decision Dated & Mailed)

Iowa Code § 96.5(2)a – Discharge/Misconduct

STATEMENT OF THE CASE:

Claimant filed a timely appeal from the March 28, 2005, reference 01, decision that denied benefits. After due notice was issued, a hearing was held on April 26, 2005. Claimant did participate with Michael Williams. Employer did participate through Dennis Froelich. Larry Alford, David Ocampo, and Christopher Grandberry were witnesses subpoenaed by claimant.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

Having reviewed all of the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge finds: Claimant was employed as a full-time production worker through March 1, 2005 when he was discharged. Dennis Froelich, general manager since February 1, 2005, said “good morning” to claimant and others (Larry Alford, foreman and Christopher Grandberry, production worker) who were talking. All said “good morning” back to Froelich except claimant who looked away.

Froelich said “good morning” to claimant twice more who looked down and then smirked. Froelich then asked claimant if he had a problem with him. Claimant again declined to answer as he had done on prior occasions when Froelich attempted to speak with him. Froelich then fired claimant because of his deliberate failure to communicate with him.

When Froelich first introduced himself to employees in February, he mistakenly called claimant by a wrong name and apologized to him. Alford and Grandberry were present and heard claimant call Froelich a “dumb ass.” Froelich let the comment go at the time.

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 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.

This definition has been accepted by the Iowa Supreme Court as accurately reflecting the intent of the legislature. Huntoon v. Iowa Department of Job Service, 275 N.W.2d 445, 448 (Iowa 1979).

“The use of profanity or offensive language in a confrontational, disrespectful, or name-calling context may be recognized as misconduct, even in the case of isolated incidents or situations in

which the target of abusive name-calling is not present when the vulgar statements are initially made.” Myers v. EAB, 462 N.W.2d 734 (Iowa App. 1990).

An employer has the right to expect basic communication from its employees; certainly about work related issues. Claimant has evinced a pattern of refusal to speak to Froelich when reasonable communication was called for. The refusal to communicate with the employer’s general manager is misconduct and benefits are denied.

DECISION:

The March 28, 2005, reference 01, decision is affirmed. The claimant was discharged from employment due to job-related misconduct. Benefits are withheld until such time as he has worked in and been paid wages for insured work equal to ten times his weekly benefit amount, provided he is otherwise eligible.

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